

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING SARAH BUSSINEAU FOR BEING NAMED THE MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS SECONDARY GRADES STUDENT TEACHER OF THE YEAR FOR 2020

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 7, 2021

Mrs. McCLAIN. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize a future leader of my community, Sarah Bussineau of Macomb, for being named the Michigan Association of Teacher Educators Secondary Grades Student Teacher of the Year for 2020.

This award recognizes student teachers who have demonstrated outstanding performance during their student teaching tenure in an academic school year. Sarah's award-winning year took place at Cousino High School in Warren, where she taught band and choir students in grades 9–12.

Sarah's achievement is all the more impressive when you think of the dual task student teachers face in balancing teaching with their own educational pursuits. As a student herself during this time, Sarah pursued a degree and graduated in December 2020 from Oakland University. She took on both the role of teacher and student with passion, dedication and commitment. I know there were probably bumps in the road, but I hope Sarah is able to recognize her hard work has paid off.

Again, I congratulate Sarah on this well-deserved recognition. I wish her the best of luck as she begins her new job as a full-time teacher at St. Regis Catholic School in Bloomfield Hills, where she will teach general music, band and choir. I am confident Sarah will continue to excel and inspire in this exciting new role. We are proud of Sarah and we thank her for her dedication to our students, and we support her in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING 30 YEARS OF UZBEK INDEPENDENCE

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 7, 2021

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 30-year independence of Uzbekistan from the former Soviet Union and their progressive efforts to democratize and create a positive impact on the international stage. Since 1992 the United States and Uzbekistan have enjoyed strong diplomatic and economic relations. In recent years Uzbekistan has made significant steps in redirecting their actions towards furthering democratic, political, economic, and social reforms. I am proud to see Uzbekistan work towards such worthy goals.

In addition to domestic democratic actions Uzbekistan has made strides to increase

strong, robust diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Currently, Uzbekistan and the U.S. maintain an important, multifaceted relationship that benefits both parties in the advancement of domestic and international interests. Uzbekistan remains a critical ally in the southeast Asian regions to stop the spreading Chinese influence.

Uzbekistan has been a participant in Annual Bilateral Consultations, which produced agreements on issues such as terrorism, regional security, trade, and human rights reform. The country also ambitiously laid out a night year plan, the "National Development Action Strategy on Five Priority Areas 2017–2021," which defines governance, judicial reform, economic progress, social development and a balanced foreign policy as key goals to work towards. Uzbekistan is on track with these goals as they are preparing for an election in the fall, are actively working to be a stabilizing force in Central Asia and have made great efforts to be a partner with the United States on the world stage.

I am proud to be a friend to the country of Uzbekistan and I congratulate them on marking 30 years of progress since leaving the Soviet Union. The strides made have brought Uzbekistan far and they have made a great ally on the world stage.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF IRENE B. WEST

HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 7, 2021

Mr. BERA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the life of Irene B. West. Mrs. West was born on July 3, 1932 in Crowley, Louisiana and she graduated Valuedictorian of her high school class. She moved to Nashville, Tennessee where she met her late husband. Mrs. West received her Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University Sacramento (CSUS) and obtained a Master of Arts degree from the University of San Francisco.

Mrs. West, whose older sisters were teachers, was hired as the first black teacher in Elk Grove, CA in 1962. With virtually no representation in the area, she showcased true dedication to her career in education during the era of the Civil Rights movement. During her 27 years in service of the Elk Grove Community, she taught at James McKee and Florin Elementary schools and then served as principal at John Reith and Cosumnes River Elementary schools.

As a mother of four, Mrs. West was not only dedicated to her students and their education but raised talented and devoted children while working full time. In fact, The Sacramento Observer named her Mother of the Year in 1963. All her children excelled in their chosen fields of study, and two followed in her footsteps teaching at the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology (MIT) and Sunday school. We know she would be proud of their future endeavors as her children continue her legacy.

Because of her impact as a mother, educator, a wife and a pillar to society, Mrs. West has left a lasting legacy for the city of Elk Grove and will continue to inspire young women of color for generations to come.

I want to extend my condolences to the West family, and to everyone Mrs. West positively affected throughout her lifetime. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Irene B. West for her work in our community and her impact on our educational system.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COVID-19 MEMORIAL QUILT ACT OF 2021

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 7, 2021

Mr. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce the COVID-19 Memorial Quilt Act of 2021 to again honor all the victims of this pandemic with a national memorial quilt.

The horrors of the COVID-19 pandemic have touched every corner of our country, wreaking unprecedented devastation on Americans' lives. As I reintroduce this legislation today, COVID-19 has infected at least 32 million Americans. Tragically, this disease has quickly robbed our country of at least 578,000 of our fellow citizens. We need to remember that these numbers are not just statistics: they are people. They are our moms, dads, children, grandparents, neighbors, teachers, religious leaders and fellow Americans who have been taken from us due to this pandemic.

Moreover, these numbers do not capture the depth of this disease's devastation. While our television screens are often filled with images of empty streets and packed hospitals, we often don't see the private isolation and loneliness of the individual struggles against COVID-19. In order to slow the spread of this disease, our hospitals, nursing homes, funeral homes, and businesses have had to impose strict social distancing and protective measures. While necessary for our public health, these restrictions come at a great human cost and deepen the private pain caused by this disease.

For the thousands of brave patients fighting COVID-19, including the hospitalized patients, nursing home residents, and individuals at home in quarantine, the struggle against COVID-19 is a lonely, scary, and isolating fight. In hospitals and nursing homes, often a patient's only human contact is a health care worker in full personal protective equipment (PPE). Family, friends, and loved ones can't be there to provide comfort, to hold their hands, or to pray with them in this terrifying time. At best, loving words and support might be shared over the telephone or video call. At worst, there is only an isolating silence where

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

a loved one should be. These scars need to be acknowledged and hopefully healed.

The death toll from COVID-19 is even more wrenching. At least 112,000 Americans—whether in the hospital, the nursing home, or at home—have met the end of their lives without the comfort of their family, friends, or loved ones. Yesterday, more than 700 Americans died from this disease, and many were forced to close their eyes without the support of their loved ones nearby.

In my home state of Indiana, we have lost at least 12,966 Hoosiers to COVID-19 at nursing homes. We also know that African Americans are dying at disproportionate rates from COVID-19. African Americans in Indiana. Institutional racism, compounded by environmental and economic injustices, have made COVID-19 particularly devastating for African Americans. My heart grieves for my fellow Americans who took their last breath, because of this terrible disease, without the loving comfort and support they deserved.

For the family, friends, and loved ones of those who died from COVID-19, the isolation and loneliness brought by this disease only grows after their loved one's passing. Social distancing and the isolating fear of this disease prevent us from adequately honoring and memorializing the many victims of COVID-19. Large memorial services are not possible. Family gatherings to celebrate lost loved ones are curtailed, with supportive hugs replaced by six feet of distance and protective masks. Private funeral services—if not cancelled or postponed altogether—have often had to take place with only 10 people or less.

In addition to its sickness, death, and disruption, COVID-19 has robbed us of traditional ways of honoring our lost loved ones. Holding smaller funerals or forgoing them entirely because of social distancing measures has denied us the opportunity to fully celebrate the lives of the deceased. Our ability to publicly grieve together, and to adequately honor and celebrate the lost has been largely denied due to this isolating and frightening disease.

Many Americans will also remember another isolating and frightening disease: the AIDS epidemic. Ryan White, a brave and remarkable Hoosier, faced isolation and many frightening obstacles because of his AIDS diagnosis. However, Ryan's courage, bravery, and advocacy for AIDS research galvanized many in support of AIDS treatment, research and recognition of this disease's horrific impact. Since no official commemoration existed, concerned Americans decided to celebrate and honor the lives of those who died from AIDS—often isolated and alone—by creating a memorial quilt. As a result, in 1987, the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt was displayed and stretched the length of the National Mall. This remarkable quilt allowed us to honor and celebrate the lives of those tragically lost to a frightening disease, which at that time, had no cure, vaccine or effective treatment. More than 105,000 individual lives are commemorated through this quilt's 50,000 individual panels that contain photographs, correspondence, and news clippings to remember those who died from AIDS. In these panels, the memory of the victims were able to live on in public view.

Inspired by the brave advocacy and powerful legacy of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, I am proud to introduce the COVID-

19 Memorial Quilt Act of 2021. This legislation honors and celebrates the lives of those we have lost to the COVID-19 pandemic through the creation of a memorial quilt. Like the AIDS quilt, creating a memorial quilt to remember the lives lost due to COVID-19 will allow Americans to publicly grieve our lost loved ones, but also commemorate their lives in permanent, visible, and dignified way.

The COVID-19 Memorial Quilt Act of 2021 authorizes the design, creation, and display of a memorial quilt and other commemorative programming and exhibits to honor the victims of the COVID-19 pandemic. My legislation does this by creating a Congressional Advisory Panel which will submit plans to the Smithsonian Institution and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress for how the quilt should be developed and displayed. Once complete, this memorial quilt will be displayed on the United States Capitol Grounds with a subsequent display on the National Mall and other locations, continuing the legacy of the AIDS quilt. This legislation also supports the powerful creativity of artists around the country by providing them with grants from the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) to help design and prepare panels for the memorial quilt.

All Americans have been affected by COVID-19. All have felt the disruption wrought by this pandemic to our families, our workplaces, our businesses, our places of worship, and our social lives. But that is nothing compared to the Americans who have not only faced disruptions, but also the wrenching loss of loved ones from this disease. Because of social distancing and protective restrictions, we have been denied the ability to adequately honor, commemorate, and publicly celebrate those we have lost. And unfortunately, as more Americans continue to die in isolation from this disease, this deficit in our collective grief will only grow. As a result, my legislation builds on the powerful legacy of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt and will help our country to collectively grieve and appropriately honor the victims of COVID-19.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join us in supporting the COVID-19 Memorial Quilt Act of 2021, and I urge the House to support this legislation.

HONORING TRISH BERGREN AS
IOWAN OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 7, 2021

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Trish Bergren of Clarinda, Iowa as Iowan of the Week. Trish is a respected leader in the Clarinda and Page County community who has touched countless lives through her work as the Executive Director of the Clarinda Carnegie Art Museum and as the curator for the Nodaway Valley Historical Museum. Trish has a deep love, and passion for preserving the history of her community and being a guardian of the knowledge of the past for future generations.

Trish's family is no stranger to Page County and has family roots in the area that go back more than 160 years. This deep-seated passion for local history and helping young people

engage in this history drove her to a career she loves and even a book that covers the subject. Despite having moved away from the area for a time, she made the decision to return and couldn't imagine being anywhere else. Her love for the community she works is truly heartwarming to hear. Those who work with her claim she has both improved their lives and changed their outlook for the future for the better.

As part of her duties with the Historical Museum, Trish formed the Adopt-A-Grave program in 2013. The program, under the Historical Society, has worked to clean, find lost headstones, and rehab more than 750 headstones across the 50 pioneer cemeteries in Page County. This undertaking has a group of students at Clarinda High School who manage the program, while more than 39 students and 12 adults have assisted with various projects. This is just one tangible initiative run by Trish to give dignity to the history of those who came before us and ensure the pride the community holds in honoring the past.

In addition to her already busy service to the community, Trish serves on the Clarinda School Board, where she was elected in 2019 as a new member.

In consideration of the dedication to serving the community, Trish is a pillar of the community in not only Clarinda but the State of Iowa. Her reputation as a kind and selfless person precedes her and her work speaks for itself. Clarinda is a strong community because of the individuals, like Trish, who make it such a wonderful place. The work Trish has performed, and that which she has inspired others to take upon themselves will ensure that the history of the community will endure. Stemming from this dedication to serve the community and preserve the story of its past for future Iowans to learn from and enjoy, I am proud to recognize Trish Bergren as Iowan of the week.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MEMBERS OF THE SIKH COMMUNITY
AND ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY THE FEDEX SHOOTING
IN INDIANAPOLIS

HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 7, 2021

Mrs. SPARTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor eight Hoosier lives lost at the FedEx facility in Indianapolis. I joined my fellow Indiana delegation members in leading our colleagues in a moment of silence on the house floor in their honor on April 21, 2021.

Of the eight lives lost, four of those individuals belonged to the Sikh community in central Indiana. This community is small and tight knit. They are friends and colleagues who work together and worship together. The loss this community is feeling in the wake of this tragedy is unimaginable. I stand with the Sikh community and all those affected by this senseless act of violence.

My deepest condolences are with all the families and friends who are experiencing unimaginable pain and loss. Our state and Nation mourn with them.