

IN RECOGNITION OF THE MASONIC  
PALESTINE LODGE NO. 357 F. &  
A. M. OF DETROIT

**HON. RASHIDA TLAIB**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the many contributions of one of Detroit's longest-serving fraternal and service organizations, Palestine Lodge No. 357 F. & A. M.

Founded January 26, 1881, Detroit's Palestine Masonic Lodge has operated for one hundred forty years. The Palestine Lodge can count among its past members many high-profile residents, including James Vernor, originator of Vernor's Ginger Ale, a Detroit staple, and automotive pioneer Henry Ford. More recently, the Palestine Lodge, in affiliation with the Michigan Masons, has helped make significant contributions to its charitable foundation to make meaningful impacts on the lives of countless Michigan residents. These actions are not limited to its scholarship programs for students, its bikes for books child literacy incentive program, as well as its S.A.Y. Detroit tutoring and literacy program. In addition, the Palestine Lodge members give countless hours of volunteer time on local community initiatives.

Please join me in recognizing Detroit's Palestine Lodge No. 357 F. & A. M.'s many contributions to the residents of Michigan and the 13th Congressional District over the past one hundred forty years.

AYUDA ACT OF 2021

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO  
SABLAN**

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Assuring You Uniform Dietary Assistance (AYUDA) Act, making the Northern Mariana Islands part of the national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). My bill ensures individuals and families in our islands who rely on this help to put food on the table are treated equitably and receive similar levels of assistance available in other parts of our nation.

Inclusion in SNAP for the people I represent remains a priority goal for me. I first introduced the AYUDA Act in the 112th Congress. And in the years since, a pilot program has demonstrated the feasibility of including the Northern Marianas in SNAP. Taking this action will avoid future disruption in vital food aid. And it will relieve the administrative burden on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to manage a one-off, block grant for our islands when right next door in the U.S. territory of Guam SNAP works perfectly well.

The current block grant approach to food aid for the Northern Marianas continues to reduce assistance to those in need compared to other Americans. Because the arbitrarily capped block grant funds do not automatically respond to changing economic conditions, families in need face the prospect that their benefits will be reduced or cut off completely.

In fact, just last October, the Commonwealth government stated it had no choice but to remove households from eligibility for the new fiscal year due to insufficient funds. Moreover, benefits were substantially cut by 25 percent on October 1, 2020.

The time has now come to right the disparity that keeps the majority-minority community I represent excluded from this critical safety net program that has kept millions of Americans from going hungry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At a time when the Marianas economy continues to be shut due to the coronavirus crisis, I urge my colleagues to support this bill so that those in need are not treated differently simply because of where they live in America.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SAFE AND  
QUIET SKIES ACT

**HON. ED CASE**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. CASE. Madam Speaker, today I am reintroducing my Safe and Quiet Skies Act from the 116th Congress to ensure that commercial air tour flights are adequately regulated to ensure in-air and on-ground safety and address widespread and accelerating community disruption. I extend a special thanks to my colleagues, Congressmembers NADLER, NEGUSE, NORTON, SHERMAN, and SIRES, for co-introducing this necessary measure.

In 2019 alone, there were 17 sightseeing tour flight and skydiving accidents nationwide with 37 tragic deaths from six of those crashes. In my Hawaii alone, we saw three dead in the crash of a commercial air tour helicopter into a residential neighborhood, eleven more dead in the crash of a commercial skydiving plane, and then seven more dead in a commercial air tour helicopter crash in a remote mountain region. Many other areas of the country have been equally impacted, especially those with high commercial usage, more dense populations, valuable natural resources, significant defense installations and other factors.

These tragedies occurred amidst a rapid increase in commercial helicopter and small plane overflights including residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods, cemeteries and memorials, land and marine parks and other recreation areas, and sensitive military installations. These have disrupted whole communities with excessive noise and other impacts, destroyed the peace and sanctity of special places, increased risk to not only passengers but those on the ground, and weakened security and management of defense operations.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) currently has virtually exclusive jurisdiction over these aircraft operations. Following these and other recent tragedies across the country, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which is responsible for investigating accidents but not for direct safety regulation, strongly recommended to the FAA that safety-related regulation of commercial tour helicopters and small aircraft skydiving operations is generally insufficient.

Regarding ground disruption and risk, the FAA takes the position that its responsibility is

strictly operational safety and national airspace efficiency and does not extend to ground disruption and other negative impacts. As a result, the operators, aside from strict takeoff and approach, avoidance of established flight paths and other limited circumstances, are virtually free to fly wherever, whenever, and as often as they want. And they do, with little to no self-regulation.

This situation is unacceptable for both safety and community impact concerns. It is also not limited to Hawaii, with growing concerns in other areas with high commercial tour usage, more dense populations, valuable natural resources, significant defense installations and other factors.

This bill would first require the FAA to implement the NTSB's recommended enhanced safety regulations. It would also prohibit flights over federal property that requires privacy, dignity, and respect, to include military installations, national cemeteries and national parks, wildlife refuges and wilderness. It would further require the use of standard equipment to monitor the location of flights, apply the "sterile cockpit rule" to tour flights (meaning in part that the pilot could not also be the tour guide), prohibit flights lower than 1,500 feet over actual ground, and limit decibel levels to those commonly applied to operations in residential areas. Additionally, the bill would allow states, localities, and tribes to impose stricter regulations on tour flights in their jurisdictions with required public engagement.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this bill into law.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILEY DECK

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, today I wish to honor a great American and steadfast public servant. James Wiley Deck is leaving the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) after having served in critically important roles of increasing responsibility over the last four years. A polished leader and expert communicator, Wiley worked tirelessly throughout his time at DOT to keep the public safe on our nation's roadways while helping to build the infrastructure needed to accommodate the future of American transportation.

Wiley joined DOT in 2017 as the Director of Government Relations for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). While in this role, he served as the principal advisor to the FMCSA Administrator with respect to legislative affairs, Congressional relations, and all policy matters affecting Federal, state and local governments, as well as public and private interest groups. His innate ability to collaborate with a variety of government stakeholders led to multiple legislative successes—including the securing of \$100 million in autonomous vehicle research and development funding for DOT.

In 2019, Wiley transitioned to the Office of the Secretary, where he served as Senior Policy Advisor to Secretary Elaine L. Chao. In that role, he served as the principal strategic advisor to the DOT Secretary on issues pertaining not only to the FMCSA, but to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Office of Drug and Alcohol

Policy and Compliance (ODAPC). He served as the Department's representative on the White House COVID-19 Supply Chain Task Force and the White House Food Supply Chain Policy Coordinating Committee, where he helped shape the Federal response to the pandemic. He also led the Department's efforts to create the National Freight Strategic Plan to guide strategic Federal initiatives for multimodal investments to reduce congestion and improve intermodal connectivity.

In 2020, Secretary Chao asked Wiley to lead FMCSA. As Acting Administrator of a Federal agency with a \$680 million budget and nearly 1200 employees, Wiley led the implementation efforts on two significant regulatory reform efforts: Hours of Service and the Definition of Agricultural Commodities, two issues which are of vital importance to my Congressional District. More importantly, however, he diligently worked with Congress to secure \$30 million in Federal funding for a new Large Truck Crash Causal Factors Study. The last comprehensive large truck crash causation study provided the DOT, and safety research community, valuable insight into the factors which contribute to crashes involving at least one commercial motor vehicle, but the data was collected nearly 20 years ago. A new updated study—one that accounts for the changes in technology, vehicle safety, driver behavior and roadway design over the last two decades—is sorely needed and will serve as Wiley's lasting legacy in the Department.

Prior to transitioning to DOT, Wiley served for 22 years on the staff of my friend and the former Chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Congressman John L. Mica of Florida, the last six as his Chief of Staff. He is also a proud graduate of the University of Central Florida, although I would remind the Speaker that the last time UCF played my alma mater, Virginia Tech, in football was August 31, 2003, and Virginia Tech won 49-28.

Wiley, his wife, Elizabeth, and their two children, Emilia and Enslie, live in Stafford, VA.

Madam Speaker, I am thankful for Wiley's leadership, dedication to public service throughout his 26-year career in the Federal government and his work on issues of vital importance to the economic vibrance of our great nation.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE BIKESHARE TRANSIT ACT OF 2021

#### HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Bikeshare Transit Act of 2021. This legislation passed the House last session in Sections 1210 and 2102 of the Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2, 116th Cong.) and would make bikeshare systems eligible to receive funding to enhance related public transportation service or transit facilities.

America is in the middle of a bikeshare revolution: at least 119 communities have bikeshare systems, supporting a network of more than 100,000 bikes. In 2019, riders took 50 million trips on bikeshare systems, and the number of trips and systems has grown every year since 2010. The COVID-19 pandemic

has further increased demand for bicycles and bikeshare systems as people seek transportation options. Systems are operating in communities of all sizes from Los Angeles and Portland to Topeka and Conway, Arkansas.

While some existing bikeshare programs received federal dollars to develop their systems, the lack of an established source of federal financial support has proved an impediment to many other projects. Since the term "bikeshare" is not included in federal law or described as a form of transit, bikeshare systems and departments of transportation are forced to operate in a gray area, creating challenges for funding and maintaining bikeshare systems.

This legislation makes bikeshare systems eligible to receive funding to enhance related public transportation service or transit facilities. Federal funding can be used for acquiring or replacing bikeshare-related equipment and constructing bikeshare facilities. Bikeshare systems will also be listed as eligible projects under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program. The Bikeshare Transit Act will remove significant barriers facing new and existing bikeshare projects applying for federal funding while underscoring that bikeshare programs drive economic development and are an important part of bringing choice and adding value to America's transportation system.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate to include this legislation in a long-term surface transportation reauthorization package.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, on July 20, 2020 I missed recorded vote No. 142 due to travel delays. Had I been present I would have voted YEA (Passage of H.R. 6395).

#### HONORING THE LATE LOUIS AYALA

#### HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Louis Ayala, a beloved member of our north Fort Worth community, who died of COVID-19 and pneumonia last week. Mr. Ayala was known for his dedication to the barber shop industry and was honored by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation last year as the oldest active barber in Texas.

At the age of 14, while still in middle school, Louis learned how to cut hair. Years later, he opened Ayala's Barber Shop on North Main Street in the same neighborhood where he grew up and where our community went for decades to get a good haircut. Since 1945, Louis Ayala has kept our community happy and looking sharp. Louis Ayala's hard work and spirit is an outstanding example of Amer-

ican ingenuity and perseverance. His commitment to his small business and community must be commended and remembered.

#### THANK YOU SECRETARY ROBERT WILKIE

#### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I appreciate Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Robert Wilkie for his service to our country. Last Thursday, the VA shared a review by Secretary Wilkie, discussing recent accomplishments. Wilkie writes that,

"... over the last few years, VA was reborn. Today our approval rating stands at about 90 percent for health care, and among our fastest growing population—women—we have an 86 percent approval rating.

"Recent studies show VA measures up to the private sector on access and quality. Veterans liked what they saw and started voting with their feet. VA completed a record number of appointments in fiscal year 2019—59 million—the same year the MISSION Act took effect. The more Veterans we served, the more Veterans trusted us. Trust in VA care hit a record high in April 2020.

"VA achieved what all the experts in Washington said was impossible by rolling out a modernized health record that will make it easier than ever for health professionals to access Veterans' medical history."

#### CELEBRATING THE INDEPENDENCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Independence Chamber of Commerce on one hundred years of support and advocacy for local businesses across Independence, Missouri. For an entire century, the Independence Chamber of Commerce has nurtured the entrepreneurial spirit that serves as the economic backbone of my district.

President Harry Truman, born and raised in Independence, emphatically believed that "America was built on courage, on imagination, and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand." For one hundred years, the Independence Chamber of Commerce has given local business leaders the tools to be courageous and imaginative, along with the determination necessary to succeed. The Chamber represents over five hundred businesses in Independence, each doing their part to make a difference in the lives of their friends and neighbors. Every year, the Chamber's incredible staff and Board of Directors organize nearly two hundred events, from roundtable discussions with burgeoning business leaders, to seminars with professionals on how to grow new enterprises. These business-centered events bolster the economic