

necessitates the inclusion of all voices and reflects the need for us to come together and welcome all people in order to build stronger communities and a stronger Nation.

It goes without saying that the Hispanic community in my district plays an integral role in making the Sixth District a better place to live. In the face of a devastating pandemic, we saw COVID-19 disproportionately impact the Hispanic community. Healthcare groups like Salud Family Health, Servicios de la Raza, Colorado Access, STRIDE Community Health Center, and Aurora Health Alliance were committed to educating the Hispanic community about COVID-19—providing vaccine and healthcare services to ensure our community has an equitable pandemic recovery.

We owe a debt of gratitude to organizations like Village Exchange Center and Mi Casa Resource Center, among many others that foster an inclusive environment and work directly with the Hispanic community—providing resources, healthcare and vaccine access to residents in District Six.

The contributions by Hispanic Americans and community leaders across our District and the State of Colorado are tremendous and play a vital role in the diversity, development, and success of our Nation. I'm proud to celebrate and recognize Hispanic Heritage Month and all the Hispanic Americans that make our community a better and more prosperous place to live.

HONORING ARIS MELISSARTOS

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2022

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary Greek American—Aris Melissartos. Aris was born to Greek parents in Galatz, Romania, on December 3, 1943. The following year the Soviet Union occupied Romania and implemented a process of Sovietization. In 1950 the Melissartos family fled to Greece as refugees. In 1956 they emigrated to the U.S., settling in Baltimore where Aris worked in, and later ran, a bakery with his father. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering at the Johns Hopkins University and a Master of Science in Contents Early life and education engineering management at George Washington University and completed the Graduate Program for Management Development at Harvard University and graduate research in international relations at Catholic University of America.

In 1966, Aris joined Westinghouse Electric Corporation and soon began work as its chief operating officer for defense electronics and aerospace. He left Westinghouse as its vice president of science and technology after 32 years with the company. In 1998, he became Thermo Electron Corporation's vice president of research and development. He also worked as CEO of Coleman Research Corporation, Thermo Coleman Corporation and Thermo Information Solutions. In 2001, Aris founded ArMel Scientifics, a technology incubation venture capital entity investing in more than 30 technology ventures. He also chairs the ArMel Scientifics Center for Technology and Public

Policy and wrote "Innovation: The Key to Prosperity—Technology and America's Role in the 21st Century," which he considers a great accomplishment.

On top of all of his successes in the private sector, Aris found great success in Government service. In 2003 Aris, a lifelong Democrat, was appointed Business and Economic Development Secretary of Maryland in the administration of Republican Robert Leroy "Bob" Ehrlich, Jr., who became Maryland's Governor in January that year after defeating Democratic candidate Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. Ehrlich said Aris' department would be the cornerstone of his administration. Explaining his willingness to work in a Republican Cabinet, Aris said he saw himself as "a bridge-builder". He said the basis of his economic policy would be a focus on Maryland's universities, which he regarded as potential economic powerhouses because of their research innovation capabilities. Aris was popular in the business community and when Ehrlich was defeated in his bid for gubernatorial re-election, his successor, Democrat Martin O'Malley, came under pressure to retain Aris in his Cabinet. The Baltimore Sun newspaper reported that at a conference in the boardroom of First Mariner Bank, "business leader after business leader" urged O'Malley to reappoint Aris, who was described as "the best marketing manager the state has had in recent memory" and as a "visionary".

Aris has lived a life of great success and service. Even with all of his own personal success, Aris says that it's his work mentoring and developing employees under his various leadership roles that has brought him the most career satisfaction.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Affairs, I am pleased to honor this great Greek-American, Aris Melissartos, and offer my sincere gratitude for his many years of service to his community. Axios.

RECOGNIZING GAR BENNETT, LLC

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2022

Mr. VALADAO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate GAR Bennett, LLC, as they receive the King's County Chamber of Commerce Ag Support Business of the Year award.

In 1929, Lon Bennett founded Bennett and Bennett Irrigation Systems in Selma, California. Twenty years later, Gar Tootelian Inc., a crop care company, began in Reedley. For decades, these two family-owned companies were essential to the success of the Central Valley agricultural community. But in 2020, these two Valley institutions merged to form GAR Bennett, LLC. Together, they have helped to provide countless resources and services to the farmers who feed the world.

For nearly 100 years, these two family-run businesses have been dedicated to the success of our farmers and growers in the Central Valley. As they have come together under a single operation, their mission of providing quality fertilizers, fertigation, and irrigation has

never wavered. GAR Bennett continues to expand their resources for farmers and growers, such as providing logistical assistance on agricultural regulations, deep-well drilling, and many other important issues facing farmers today.

GAR Bennett is critical to providing resources to farmers as well as being incredibly involved in the community at large. They regularly support multiple local farmers and agricultural advocacy groups and help to support our future Ag leaders at local schools like California State University Fresno, College of the Sequoias, and Reedley College.

While their name has changed and the leadership of the companies has been passed down to new generations, the mission of GAR Bennett has always remained the same—help the farmers who feed the world. These two families have helped to make the Central Valley agriculture community what it is today, and I cannot think of a more deserving recipient of recognition.

I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating GAR Bennett, LLC for their decades of service to the Central Valley and for being named the Ag Support Business of the Year.

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF DR. MICHELE JOHNSON

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2022

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my sincere congratulations and gratitude to Dr. Michele L. Johnson on her retirement from Pierce College. Throughout her 45 years at Pierce College, Dr. Johnson has been a faculty member, collegiate coach, executive dean, campus president, and, for the last 18 years, Chancellor and CEO. Her leadership has served students, Pierce College employees, and the statewide community and technical college system.

In her current role, Dr. Johnson leads two colleges and an off-campus site at Joint Base Lewis-McChord and oversees two campus presidents and a district administration. Her dedication to student success and innovative leadership promotes Pierce College's mission to create quality educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners to thrive in an evolving world. Dr. Johnson has consistently been committed to the word "community" in community college, developing partnerships that have made our region stronger and that have served as a model for collaboration.

Under her leadership, Pierce College has received national awards, including recognition for serving veterans and community college excellence.

Speaking personally, I've been honored to consider Dr. Johnson a partner and a friend. I am grateful for all that she has done to create opportunities for students in our region and to improve higher education throughout our state.

Madam Speaker, Members of Congress, please join me congratulating Dr. Michele Johnson on her retirement.

HONORING THE 40TH
ANNIVERSARY OF BRESEE

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2022

Mr. GOMEZ. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Bresee on 40 years of service to the district.

Bresee is a non-profit organization whose mission is to battle poverty by empowering youth and families in Los Angeles with the skills, resources, and relationships necessary to thrive. Since its early days, Bresee has evolved significantly to support the continued needs of youth and families in the community. In 2008, Bresee expanded further to include family supportive services through the Wilshire FamilySource Center. Then, in 2012, Bresee joined the city-wide campaign to reduce gang violence in Los Angeles by launching a gang prevention program through the Mayor's Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) initiative.

Thanks to Bresee's dedication, Bresee provides family services for approximately 1,500 adults and family members each year. In addition, Bresee provides youth services for 900 middle and high school students in the public-school system and gang-prevention services for 100 at-risk youth aged 10 to 15 years old.

Bresee is a vibrant community center serving more than 3,000 youth and family members each year. It is an honor to have Bresee as a community partner in my congressional district. Bresee continues to remind us that Los Angeles is a city of hope and inspiration.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and celebrating the 40th anniversary of Bresee.

HONORING BASS PRO SHOPS
FOUNDER AND CEO JOHNNY L.
MORRIS

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2022

Mr. LONG. Madam Speaker, as a member of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and Representative of the state of Missouri, I rise today to recognize an individual that has made significant contributions to our nation's fish and wildlife conservation efforts, as well as America's longstanding outdoor traditions. My district includes Springfield, Missouri, the headquarters of Bass Pro Shops, and I am honored today to recognize the lifelong accomplishments of the Bass Pro Founder and CEO, John L. Morris.

Across the country, Johnny Morris is often referred to as a modern-day Theodore Roosevelt for his leadership, personal commitment and dedication to conservation efforts, a comparison that is anything but embellished.

As an unrivaled conservationist, Johnny Morris has long recognized the need for citizens to take a strong position in the careful management and use of our natural resources for future generations to enjoy. Using his entrepreneurial success as a platform for that cause, he has contributed heavily both in time and resources to many significant conservation causes and initiatives.

Through his leadership with Bass Pro Shops, and now with Cabela's, Johnny has been a long-standing partner of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus through his work with the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) and his advocacy for the great outdoors. Johnny also served as a co-chair of the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources to advance solutions for funding a 21st century model of conservation to develop the landmark Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Johnny's legacy begins with that of a true American success story. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Bass Pro Shops' Founding. What started as a tiny bait shop in the back of his father's Brown Derby gas station in Springfield, has grown into the world's largest outdoor merchandiser with more than 200 stores and 200 million visits annually. Today, Johnny and his companies continue to impact communities and the future of conservation with a mission to inspire everyone to enjoy, love and conserve the great outdoors. Key initiatives such as 'Conserving Wildlife and Habitat,' 'Connecting Kids and Families to Nature,' 'Protecting Sportsmen's Rights Through Access and Advocacy Efforts,' and 'Honoring Military and Veterans,' are just some of the ways Johnny is helping to protect and advance our great outdoor traditions.

A true conservation champion, Johnny has received two of the most prestigious awards in the world of conservation, honored with the Audubon Medal in 2019 and the Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Award in 1990, presented by President George H.W. Bush. Today, he is one of the country's leaders working to ensure natural habitats, wildlife and the outdoors remain healthy and abundant for future generations to protect and enjoy, having established a significant personal legacy that spans national initiatives and extensive partnerships supporting conservation organizations.

Arguably more inspiring than his dedication to conservation is Johnny's dedication to recruiting America's next generation of sportsmen and women. Johnny is often quoted saying "Take a kid fishing. You'll be happy you did." This simple but powerful quote eloquently conveys Johnny's passion for our sporting heritage.

In recognition of Mr. Morris' service to conservation and sportsmen and women—both on the ground and in the policy arena—the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation has elected Mr. Morris to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation Honorary Board of Directors as an Honorary Life Director, marking the first individual to receive this impressive award. This board designation was created by CSF to recognize an individual who has made significant contributions to conservation and hunting and fishing, and who strongly supports the mission of CSF which is to work with congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting, and trapping.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. Morris for his many contributions to America's outdoor heritage and congratulate him for the well-deserved CSF Honorary Life Director designation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REV-
EREND GAMALIEL MANSFIELD
COLLINS

HON. KAREN BASS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 14, 2022

Ms. BASS. Madam Speaker, today I celebrate the life and legacy of civil rights activist and Tuskegee Airman G. Mansfield Collins.

Collins was a key figure in the civil rights movement on the west coast. Under his leadership as executive director, the Western Christian Leadership Conference (WCLC) raised more than \$6 million in the struggle for civil rights, mostly through fundraisers at the homes of stars like Burt Lancaster, Charlton Heston, and Sammy Davis, Jr., and through events that attracted the likes of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Dick Van Dyke and Mahalia Jackson.

In 1963, Collins played a key role in organizing and coordinating the "Los Angeles Freedom Rally," which drew nearly 40,000 people including many celebrities to hear Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1965, Collins personally chartered four airliners to the Selma-to-Montgomery marches. On one occasion, Dr. King asked him to organize a singing tour for his wife, Coretta Scott King. In August of 1965 during the Watts uprising, an LA Times account credited him with saving the life of a white man targeted by a group of rioters.

Born 102 years ago to Reverend H. Mansfield Collins, a pastor in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, and Amelia Davis Collins, a former schoolteacher, Gamaliel Mansfield Collins moved to Los Angeles, California at age 15 when his father was appointed to lead at what is now known as First AME Church. Collins attended high school with Tom Bradley, who would become Los Angeles' first Black mayor.

During World War II, Collins was drafted, and assigned to the 2044th Quartermaster Unit. With recommendations from a Congressman and an army general, Collins tested for the segregated Air Force Flight School and became one of the renowned Tuskegee Airmen. Collins' lifelong fight against racism began when, in 1945, he and members of the 447th Bombardment Group attempted to integrate an all-white officers club. This action led to the arrest of 162 black officers.

Honorably discharged, Collins returned to L.A. and his father's church, serving as assistant pastor and musical director, and singing with famed actor and composer Jester Hairston. This led to bit parts in the films *Mighty Joe Young*, *Imitation of Life* and *Porgy and Bess*. By 1961 he had worked with Rev. Maurice Dawkins, Rev. Larry Odom, Bishop H. Hartford Brookins, Rev. John Doggett, Rev. E.V. Hill, and Rev. James Hargett to establish the WCLC.

Some years later, Collins became an AME minister and served out his years with pastorates in Tacoma, Washington; Perris, California; St. Louis, Missouri; and Oakland, California. In 1995, he served as a founding board member and advisor to his daughter, Lisa Collins, in the establishment of L.A. Focus Newspaper, which has become a significant outlet serving the African-American community. I am proud to honor his memory and to share the story of his century of contributions.