

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ANDREA COHEN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable cancer survivor, Mrs. Andrea Cohen.

Mrs. Andrea Cohen is the daughter of Annie Lee Jones. She is a native of Grenada, MS. She is also the wife of Pastor Darien Cohen and the amazing mother of three beautiful children—Deshawn Cohen, Shakeeria Atkins, and D'Ashley Cohen. She has 4 beautiful grandchildren—Laniah, Deshawn Jr. (DJ), Kendall, and Addison.

Mrs. Cohen is a full-time teacher at the Grenada Lower Elementary School. She has been teaching for over 10 years. Mrs. Cohen loves her students dearly and she enjoys teaching them. She goes above and beyond to make sure her students learn the material is being taught to them.

She graduated from the University of Mississippi with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education. She then returned to the University of Mississippi and received two master's degrees.

Mrs. Cohen was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018. She fought through chemo and two years later Mrs. Cohen was cancer free.

Mrs. Cohen is a living testimony, and she does not mind telling other young women what she has gone through and how she fought through her dark times.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Andrea Cohen for being a light that shines even in her dark times.

RECOGNIZING RUSTIC BUFFALO ARTISAN MARKET AS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF TONAWANDAS' BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to honor Rustic Buffalo Artisan Market, a local market that was opened during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a dedicated effort to help local artisans and their families who would be affected by COVID safety regulations. It filled the void of craft shows, festivals, and large events to sell handmade items. On November 14, 2020, the Western New York community embraced this venture and waited in line for hours.

Since then, Rustic Buffalo Artisan Market has been actively running among its three buildings with over 120 award-winning curated artisans. In addition, Rustic Buffalo Sip &

Shop events are hosted four times a year to promote their partnerships with local non-for-profits and charities. In just the past two years, Rustic Buffalo has raised over \$117,000 for local charities and not-for-profit organizations.

This idea was borne by necessity; the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted so much of our local economy, and it would have had even more devastating consequences had Rustic Buffalo Artisan Market not been created. I know that I speak for countless Western New Yorkers when I say that its operation saved many careers and livelihoods. Looking forward, the Rustic Buffalo Market looks to expand into new territory, which is sure to be just as successful.

Perhaps most impressive, Rustic Buffalo has one hundred percent retention since their opening. Understandably, they have attained many accolades since their opening in 2020. These include the Best New Business of 2020 (Buffalo Spree), Best Gift Shop (Buffalo News), Best New Business in WNY (Buffalo News), and most recently Best Unique Gift Shop in WNY (Buffalo Spree). Rustic Buffalo leadership is also a contributor to Buffalo Business First New Paper on the importance of retention and the continuous need to look for strategies to grow your business.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize this new staple to the local economy and commend their team who remain dedicated to giving back to our community.

IN MEMORY OF REVEREND CHARLES MELVIN SHERROD

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding man of God, iconic civil rights pioneer, dedicated leader and friend of long-standing, Rev. Charles Melvin Sherrod. Sadly, Rev. Sherrod transitioned from labor to reward on Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at the age of 85. He leaves in his wake many heavy hearts among his family, friends, community and across the nation. A homegoing service celebrating his life was held Saturday, October 15, 2022 at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia at 11:00 a.m.

Charles Sherrod was born on January 2, 1937 in rural Surry, Virginia to the late Mr. Raymond Sherrod and Ms. Martha Mae Gibson. After moving with his grandmother and siblings to nearby Petersburg, Charles would go on to become president of his student body at the all-black Peabody High School where he played sports, participated in theatre, and served as school chaplain (Quiros, 2022). Having heard the call to God's ministry at an early age, his strong Christian faith steeled his resolve to challenge the stain of racial segregation in the Jim Crow south and in 1954 at

the age of 17, he participated in a kneel-in at a segregated white church.

Following graduation from high school, Charles attended Virginia Union University in Richmond where he earned a Bachelor's in Sociology and a Master's in Theology. In February 1960, he and 33 other student activists staged a sit-in at the lunch counter of Thalheimer's Department Store in downtown Richmond, were arrested and became known as the "Richmond 34". In April of that year, Sherrod and other students attended a meeting at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina where the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was founded. Sherrod volunteered to be placed anywhere and was sent by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to Albany in Southwest Georgia as SNCC's first field secretary along with Cordell Reagon and Charles Jones.

Working with others in Albany, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he launched a full assault against racial violence and segregation through nonviolent demonstrations and the registration of thousands of disenfranchised Black Americans in the region. Unfortunately, Police Chief Laurie Pritchett, "unlike so many other Southern lawmen, avoided the spectacle of publicly attacking protesters" and just jailed successive waves of them in separate remote locations in surrounding counties until there were no more protesters (Quiros, 2022). The "Albany Movement," as it was called, ended and Dr. King left, but Sherrod persevered with successful Black voter registration. Ultimately, within months the Albany City Commission voted to repeal all segregation laws from its books. Charles Sherrod continued his work in Albany, Americus, Moultrie, and other cities, later changing the focus to school integration.

In 1964, Sherrod left Albany and went to Union Theological Seminary in New York to earn a Master's of Divinity. Meanwhile, he impacted the greater American Civil Rights Movement by recruiting for the 1963 March on Washington and marching for voting rights in Selma on Bloody Sunday. He returned to Albany and brought with him white seminarians to create a moral society where Black and white Americans could live and work together in unity and peace (Quiros, 2022). By 1966 SNCC became more militant, the Black Power Movement emerged and Sherrod broke with SNCC and worked with the Georgia Freedom Project (Quiros, 2022). Also in 1966, Charles Sherrod married Shirley Miller of Baker County and they founded a farming collective, New Communities, which was the largest Black-owned plot in the United States where they worked the land and helped people (Quiros, 2022).

Unfortunately, a severe drought occurred in 1980 and the Sherrods were repeatedly denied help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the farm was taken by foreclosure (Quiros, 2022). Devastated by the loss of the farm, Charles and Shirley nevertheless continued their work in southwest Georgia. Charles was elected to the Albany City Commission serving 14 years, was a prison chaplain and a professor at Albany State University.

• 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.

The Sherrod's sued USDA, alleging racial discrimination and were awarded a settlement for wrongful dispossession of New Communities; they used the money to purchase Cypress Pond Plantation, an antebellum plantation now managed by descendants of slaves, to help rural Black landowners profit from farming and to be a model for solving the nation's affordable housing shortage (Quiros, 2022). "From marching in the Albany Movement, being beaten and jailed, registering rural folks to vote, serving in local politics, and founding New Communities," wrote Professor Ansley L. Quiros in a piece published by the Washington Post, "Sherrod stayed with the course of freedom and the beloved community until his death" (2022).

Rev. Charles M. Sherrod accomplished much in his life, but none would be possible without the grace of God and the love and support of his wife, Shirley; his two children, Russia and Kenyatta; his 5 grandchildren, and other family and loved ones who will miss him dearly.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House of Representatives join my wife, Vivian and me, along with the 730,000 people of the 2nd Congressional District of Georgia in honoring the life and legacy of Rev. Charles Melvin Sherrod and in extending our deepest condolences to his family, friends and all who mourn his loss. May they be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 13, 2022]

A VITAL CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST YOU NEVER
HEARD OF HAS DIED

(By Ansley L. Quiros)

Charles Melvin Sherrod died on Tuesday at the age of 85 in Albany, Ga., a place he went to in 1961 and never left. If you are not from southwest Georgia, his name might not be familiar. But Charles Sherrod is the most important civil rights figure you've never heard of. Recovering his story offers us a chance not only to honor a civil rights hero, but also to better understand the struggle for freedom to which he committed himself for so long.

Sherrod was born on Jan. 2, 1937, in Surry, Va., a place he described as a "speck." He never knew his father and was raised primarily by his grandmother within a broad community of friends and cousins. Even as a young child, Sherrod possessed a deep faith in God and a precocious theological imagination. Probably inspired by the sermons he heard at Mount Olive Baptist Church, he would often play church, preaching to other children and soon sensing a real call to the ministry. "I was preaching when I was about 6 years old," Sherrod told me, adding, "I was born a preacher." He would carry that preacher's zeal and deep moral vision with him for the rest of his life.

Despite the racism and suffocating poverty he experienced in childhood, Sherrod excelled in school. He attended the all-Black Peabody High School where he played sports, acted in plays and served as student body president and school chaplain. Sherrod then attended Virginia Union University where he earned his undergraduate degree in sociology, and then an M.A. in theology, fulfilling his ambition to become a minister.

During this time, Sherrod's Christian commitments first led him to challenge the dehumanization of Jim Crow. He participated in a "kneel-in" at a segregated church in 1954 and later joined a picket in front of Thalheimer's department store. "I saw the [lynching] rope in my mind," he confessed,

but he also felt a sense of responsibility since people were "coming to me, asking me for leadership."

Sherrod was a natural leader: smart and calm with a ready, broad smile.

In April 1960, his civil rights activities took Sherrod to a meeting at Shaw University, where the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was founded. SNCC's vision—nonviolence, collective action and the pursuit of a beloved community in which all people are afforded dignity, respect and care—appealed to Sherrod's calling, both to Christianity and racial justice. After the meeting, Sherrod told Ella Baker, the veteran activist who was then the executive secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference who convened the students, that "I'd be willing to be placed anywhere." She sent him to southwest Georgia, a place W.E.B. Du Bois had once called the "Egypt of the Confederacy," where he would spend the next six decades working for freedom.

Sherrod arrived in Albany as SNCC's first field secretary, "full of zeal and empty of almost everything else." But soon, he and the men and women of Albany launched a full-scale assault on Jim Crow unlike anything that had been seen before. The Albany Movement, as it became known, was a dramatic mobilization of people against racial violence and segregation.

In traditional accounts of the civil rights movement, Albany is depicted as a failure, a place where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was outmaneuvered by Police Chief Laurie Pritchett, who unlike so many other Southern lawmen, avoided the spectacle of publicly attacking protesters, and simply locked them up. This is why Sherrod's story is crucial. The Albany Movement was only a failure when considered from the perspective of King. The movement continued after King left, making important, if slow, gains. "Nothing could stop the people," Sherrod said, "certainly not jail or the threat of jail, not [even] death."

Sherrod stayed, organizing in the rural counties, though he did take a "Movement sabbatical" in 1964, heading to Union Theological Seminary in New York. He earned a Master's of Divinity and then returned to southwest Georgia, bringing White seminarians with him as part of an exchange program called the Student Interracial Ministry. For Sherrod, this was a continuation of his civil rights work. He insisted, always, that the end was not simply political but moral: a society where Black and White Americans, all created in the image of God, could live and work together in unity and peace.

In 1966, this philosophy led to a breach with SNCC, which was moving away from interracialism and Christian nonviolence and toward a more militant stance of Black Power. As Sherrod put it: "I didn't leave SNCC, SNCC left me." But he stayed with the work of racial justice—voter registration and community organizing—under the auspices of the Southwest Georgia Freedom Project.

In the late 1960s, Sherrod, along with his wife, Shirley Miller Sherrod, a Baker County native whom he married in 1966, helped found New Communities, a farming collective that was, at one point, the largest Black-owned plot of land in the United States. For decades, New Communities was the fulfillment of a dream for the Sherrods, a place where they could work the land and care for others.

But in the 1980s, when a devastating drought afflicted southwest Georgia, they were repeatedly denied relief and the farm was foreclosed on. In asking for a loan, Sherrod heard from White loan officials the same message he'd heard from segregation-

ists decades earlier when trying to vote: "Over my dead body."

Though devastated by the loss of New Communities, the Sherrods kept working faithfully in southwest Georgia. Charles Sherrod had been elected to the Albany City Council in 1976, a post he held until 1990, and also served as a prison chaplain, while Shirley worked for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives before being named the U.S. Department of Agriculture Georgia Director of Rural Development in 2009. Shirley was fired after conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart posted selectively edited, misleading video clips from a speech she gave. The White House and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack apologized to Sherrod two days after her firing.

After seeing her name dragged through the mud, Shirley got better news. She heard about a class-action lawsuit, *Pigford v. Glickman II*, alleging systemic racial discrimination toward Black farmers by the USDA. The Sherrods filed a claim and were awarded a settlement for the wrongful dispossession of New Communities. They used the money to purchase a new farm. It was a bittersweet moment.

And one that reveals how long the Black freedom struggle has been. Charles Sherrod embodied this enduring struggle over the long haul, in all of its breadth and character. From marching in the Albany Movement, being beaten and jailed in Americus, Ga., registering rural folks to vote, founding New Communities, to serving in local politics, Sherrod stayed with the cause of freedom and beloved community until his death.

His story reminds us that the work of racial justice is ongoing, that it occurs in rural spaces as well as urban ones and that it can look like political organizing, preaching, farming or just the ordinary miracle of Black love in America.

CONGRATULATING THE LADY FALCONS ON THEIR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Blair Oaks Lady Falcons on their victory in the Class 3 Girls Volleyball State Championship.

The Lady Falcons had a stellar season, with a 33–3–1 record. The Lady Falcons should be commended for all their hard work throughout the past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

Please join me in recognizing The Lady Falcons for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING HOWARD BUFFETT

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize my friend from Decatur, Illinois, Howard Buffett, and his foundation, The Howard G. Buffett Foundation, for their work to rebuild communities and the agriculture sector in Ukraine in light of Russia's invasion of the country.