

Bill was a fun-loving guy, who was frequently the life of the party. Bill's positive and playful outlook on life touched the lives of so many. I am saddened by the loss of such a valuable member of the community and extend my heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

CONGRATULATING MS. ANN DUNNING FOR 50 YEARS OF OPHTHALMOLOGIC DIAGNOSTIC SERVICE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the distinguished career of my constituent, Ms. Ann Dunning, who has served the Town of Vienna, Virginia for 50 years.

For her decades of comforting and welcoming patients at Mitchell Eye Institute, a local ophthalmologist's office, Ms. Dunning received the inaugural Town of Vienna Outstanding Service Award from Mayor Linda Colbert in a ceremony on Monday, September 26, in a celebration that included generations of her patients.

This honor was initiated by the Mayor and the Town Business Liaison Committee to recognize the individuals in local businesses who have gone above and beyond to better their community. Ms. Dunning's dedication for five decades has earned her the respect, admiration, and trust of her patients and colleagues.

Dr. John Mitchell, the lead ophthalmologist who nominated Ms. Dunning for this award, noted that she has made her patients "feel secure with a continuity of care she has provided them throughout the years." It is no surprise that patients regularly request appointments on days when Ms. Dunning will be working.

Ann Dunning's lifelong dedication to her patients is not only the mark of a passionate individual, but of a community member who recognizes the profound impact we can have on one another in everyday interactions. In her capacity as a medical practitioner, she could have easily adopted a routine that did not account for the feelings of those seeking care.

Instead, Ms. Dunning puts people first. It is exactly this care and kindness that has made her an iconic fixture in the community. I hope that her lessons of gentleness and service will inspire further generations to find ways to make others feel welcome, wherever they may be.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ann Dunning for her 50 years providing ophthalmologic diagnostic service to the Town of Vienna. From her measured demeanor and kind words to her boundless perseverance and dedication to service, Ms. Dunning has illuminated herself as an example to all of us of the comfort we can provide by the smallest actions. I am proud to represent such an upstanding and compassionate citizen in Congress, and I wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

BRAD KARBOWSKY: THE UNION LIFE

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of my union brother Brad Karbowsky. Brad is a longtime labor leader, who got his start installing fire protection systems as a member of UA Local 669.

In his career that's spanned nearly three decades, he oversaw apprenticeship programs to train the next generation of workers. He secured pension and health care funds, and established worker protection initiatives to stand up for those being treated unfairly. This is critical work that upholds a core belief of the American Dream: that if you work hard and play by the rules, you should earn a living for you and your family and retire with dignity.

So today, I want to honor Brad's work and wish him the best in retirement. He's earned it.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RARE DISEASE ADVANCEMENT, RESEARCH, AND EDUCATION (RARE) ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce the Rare Disease Advancement, Research, and Education (RARE) Act. This important legislation will address many of the issues facing rare disease patients and families. This legislation will make a meaningful difference in the lives of those struggling with rare diseases by using increased research to help provide more accurate diagnoses and increased treatment options.

During my service in Congress, I have been honored to represent and meet with many brave Hoosier families that are struggling with rare diseases. I have been moved by their courage. Their strength in midst of trying conditions is not only inspiring, but also instructive. They have educated me and my colleagues about the necessity of increased research and rare disease surveillance in order to provide more treatment options and better diagnoses.

Nearly one in ten Americans live with one or more of the roughly 7,000 known rare diseases. These largely inherited diseases—defined as affecting 200,000 or fewer people—often lack substantive research investments and treatment options. In particular, African-Americans are especially vulnerable to certain rare diseases, including Sickle cell disease and beta-thalassemia. Specifically, the blood disorder Sickle cell disease affects 73 out of every 1,000 African American babies versus only three out of every 1,000 Caucasian babies.

While rare diseases cross the medical spectrum, individuals with rare diseases face some

common challenges. Largely due to their limited patient population size, these individuals may have difficulty obtaining an accurate diagnosis, finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their disease, and ultimately finding appropriate treatment options and cures. Frighteningly, roughly 90 percent of rare diseases still lack a treatment approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). While over 450 drugs have been approved for the treatment of rare diseases, millions of Americans who are suffering from a rare disease have no approved treatment options.

Past Congressional action has helped support research at NIH and CDC, supported in part by the bipartisan appropriations letter I lead each year—signed by over 220 House members—in support of increased NIH funding. However, much more work needs to be done to help these agencies improve rare disease awareness, education, research, surveillance, diagnosis, and treatment. This is why the RARE Act is so important. It will expand the ability of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) to study rare diseases by improving treatment, research, and diagnostics of rare diseases through new and existing programs. I am proud to introduce the RARE Act to help address the many unique challenges facing the rare disease patient community.

The RARE Act would provide an important step forward by addressing some of the common challenges faced by rare disease patients and improving rare disease treatment, research, and diagnostics. The RARE Act would expand an existing and successful program at NIH: the Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network (RDCRN). The RDCRN's 21 research "centers of excellence" support the research and clinical trials of over 190 rare diseases and increase the availability of rare disease information to doctors and patients.

The RARE Act would also fill critical gaps in our healthcare system by improving coordination, surveillance, and awareness of rare diseases. For example, the RARE Act would require the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to create a National Rare Disease or Condition Surveillance System. This formalized infrastructure would track rare disease data and help researchers to understand commonalities between diseases and possible treatments, ultimately helping patients like Derrian to find better treatments. The RARE Act would also require the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to expand and intensify its work to ensure that health professionals are aware of rare disease diagnoses and treatments, leading to fewer misdiagnoses like Jocelyn experienced. The RARE Act would also mandate an updated report on rare disease efforts from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to ensure that Congress has the best tools possible to address these issues.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this bill to help combat rare diseases. I urge the House to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING PAUL WEBSTER FOR
50 YEARS SERVING WITH HOUS-
ING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize a leading figure in the practice of community and economic development, Mr. Paul Webster.

Mr. Webster serves as the Director of the Financial Management Division in the Office of Community Planning and Development for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Webster's commitment to public service is unparalleled, his five-decade-long career focused on creating resilient communities, suitable living environments, and economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons and families.

Mr. Webster joined the Department in 1972 and has served as Director since 1983. In this role, Mr. Webster oversees the Section 108 loan guarantee program, a transformational program and resource for low-income communities, including funding for critical economic development projects and facilitation of affordable housing solutions that would otherwise not be possible.

He spearheaded the expansion of the Section 108 program. Over the course of his career, Mr. Webster has overseen an unprecedented 2,000 loan guarantee commitments with a total value close to \$10 billion. These numbers underscore his work to provide the much-needed resources that revitalize American communities and ensure everyone has a chance to succeed.

Mr. Webster also championed legislation that established the Economic Development Initiative (EDI), which provided grant funds to support and enhance the use of Section 108 loan guarantees and the subsequent Brownfields EDI to help address environmental cleanup efforts, returning contaminated property to sustainable use. His expertise also extended to long-term disaster recovery work and neighborhood stabilization activities targeted at addressing the effects of abandoned and foreclosed housing.

He is one of the leading experts on financial management and is happy to provide guidance and advice to individuals, organizations, and federal, state, and local partners for the Department. Equally important, Mr. Webster has been and continues to be a mentor to the next generation of community development and financial management professionals, reflected in the esteem of his colleagues, staff, and external partners.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring this remarkable public servant, whose expertise, tenacity, and creativity in economic and community development has helped to transform hundreds of communities for the better. Paul Webster has tirelessly dedicated himself to making life better for countless Americans. I hope his continuing legacy inspires us all to renew our commitments to serving our communities.

RECOGNIZING RANIA
ALAFIOYIANNIS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate Rania Alafioyiannis for her outstanding contributions to the fields of e-commerce, marketing, advertising, and customer sales and development. Ms. Alafioyiannis is a groundbreaking entrepreneur with a vibrantly diverse background and a myriad of achievements.

Ms. Alafioyiannis obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Communications from Hofstra University in New York. She continued on to earn a master's degree in Media Ecology from New York University in 1997.

After completing her education, Ms. Alafioyiannis dedicated herself to further professional development by working with a number of notable communications companies. She served as an intern for Technology Solutions, New York, National Greek Television, and HBO.

Ms. Alafioyiannis has held positions with Shandwick International, Hill and Knowlton, Inc., and OTE International where she served as Head of Corporate Reputation for two years prior to becoming Head of Corporate Communications. In this role, Ms. Alafioyiannis directed the communications programs for OTE International's investment activities in Southeastern Europe. Ms. Alafioyiannis went on to work with OTE—COSMOTE (Hellenic Telecommunications), where she assisted with the implementation of the company's residential marketing and advertising programs, with an emphasis on broadband & fixed telephony products and services.

In 2017, Ms. Alafioyiannis founded JEWELSOPHY, an international jewelry design company conducting wholesale and retail trade of fine and demi-fine jewelry based in Athens, Greece. Ms. Alafioyiannis was driven to build this company based on her desire to design and create jewelry inspired by the rich culture and timeless symbols of the ancient Greek civilization.

Ms. Alafioyiannis' work has been recognized a number of times. In 1999, Ms. Alafioyiannis was the recipient of the Creativity in Public Relations Award (CIPRA). She also received the 2001 SABRE Award. Ms. Alafioyiannis currently serves as Vice President of the Euro-America Women's Council (EAWC).

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Rania Alafioyiannis for her outstanding achievements and contributions to the fields of communication and commerce.

HONORING THE LATE DR.
MILDRED FAY JEFFERSON

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we are blessed in the First District of Texas to have been home to a multitude of extraordinary individuals who have made significant impacts

upon not only the State of Texas and our nation, but the entire world. One of those east Texans is whose life we honor today, the late Dr. Mildred Fay Jefferson.

Dr. Jefferson was a young prodigy raised in the town of Carthage, Texas. Her early education was complete before she reached the age of fifteen, graduating from Carthage Colored High School—later known as Turner High School—in 1943.

The determined young woman obtained a Bachelor's degree in Medicine from Texas College at the age of eighteen, then completed her Master's degree in Biology from Tufts University in 1947. Dr. Jefferson then conquered the odds and earned her M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1951, making her the first African American woman to graduate with that degree from the Medical School.

After becoming a medical doctor, Dr. Jefferson continued to make history with a long string of "firsts" for women—including the first woman to serve on staff of Boston City Hospital, the first woman to be granted membership in the Boston Surgical Society, and the first female surgeon general at Boston University Medical Center.

Dr. Jefferson married former Navy Lieutenant Shane Cunningham in 1961. After their divorce in 1978, Dr. Jefferson turned her life to activism by establishing the Massachusetts Citizens for Life Counsel.

A 1970 decision by the American Medical Association to allow member physicians to perform abortions ethically in states where the procedure was allowed sparked a passion in Dr. Jefferson's soul, as she viewed this decision as abandoning the Hippocratic Oath which demands a doctor to "do no harm." She began a nationwide outcry against abortion.

Dr. Jefferson helped form the Value of Life Committee which was one of the organizations that initiated the national "right-to-life" movement which endures today. She quickly became one of the most sought after and fervent spokespersons in the nation to represent the pro-life stance. In 1981, Dr. Jefferson testified before Congress as a result of the historic 1973 Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade*.

Dr. Jefferson was quoted as saying, "I became a physician in order to save lives, not to destroy them." She also said, "I am not willing to stand aside and allow this concept of expendable human lives to turn this great land of ours into just another exclusive reservation where only the perfect, the privileged, and the planned have the right to live."

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) was co-founded by Dr. Jefferson in 1973. She then entered the world of politics, running for the U.S. Senate from Massachusetts in 1982, 1990, and 1994.

Dr. Jefferson was honored with twenty-eight honorary degrees from numerous universities and colleges. Although Dr. Jefferson passed away at the age of eighty-four on October 15, 2010, her life's mission continues today. She will be forever remembered as one of the most notable and unwavering crusaders for the rights of unborn children.

It is truly a distinct privilege to honor this remarkable woman, whose exceptional life, steadfast devotion, and landmark accomplishments will endure as long as there is a United States of America.