

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE CAREER OF  
MICHELLE ROMAN

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2023*

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Michelle Roman for 10 years of dedication and leadership on the Kingsburg City Council.

Throughout her distinguished career, Michelle Roman has been a pioneer for women within local politics. She was the first female Mayor Pro-tem and Mayor for the City of Kingsburg. She was also the first female to chair the Fresno County Council of Governments and Fresno County Rural Transportation Authority. Consistently breaking down the barriers of gender norms, Michelle Roman has become an inspiration for women throughout the Central Valley.

Ms. Roman has a relentless passion for serving the community. Following her prior roles, Ms. Roman has served as the chair of Selma Kingsburg Fowler (SKF) County Sanitation District. A proven leader, Michelle was then elected to serve on the board for the State California Association of Sanitation Agencies, also known as CASA.

Throughout her ten years on City Council, she was able to complete many projects, including: establishing Kingsburg's first skateboard park, a new trolley for transportation, started the Kingsburg Youth Council, added a youth Commissioner to the city's Community Services Committee, created a mini mural project which added six new murals to Kingsburg's beautiful downtown area, and was instrumental in bringing T-Mobile to the city, which provided over 1,000 jobs.

She also created incentives for new businesses which have attracted many other businesses that are new to the city and have resulted in a waiting list for those wanting to open a business in town. Ms. Roman's efforts were vital in establishing a city tour for 3rd grade classrooms in Kingsburg, which inspired other cities to follow suit. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she worked hard with state and county elected officials for Kingsburg to receive its own vaccination clinic and assisted local businesses with writing grants to ensure they received funding to survive, when so many businesses were forced to close. She also started the first Fresno County Elected Women's Dinners, which brought together all elected women in Fresno County for networking, fellowship and mentoring new elected women.

Ms. Roman has been married to her husband, John, for almost 24 years and they have two kids, Justin and Lindsey. Their family has rescued 2 dogs, Nani and Ash.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Michelle Roman for her retirement. May we continue to be inspired by her story.

TOM RICE APPRECIATION

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2023*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, throughout my time in Congress, I have been grateful to serve with my South Carolina colleague, Congressman TOM RICE of the Grand Strand.

Not only is TOM a valued friend, but a fellow Gamecock, as we both received our law degrees from the University of South Carolina. We were also both born in the Holy City of Charleston—at Roper Hospital (10 years and six days apart).

I am eternally grateful for his ten years of service to South Carolina's Seventh congressional district and to the nation.

Traveling with TOM on a 2018 CODEL to Israel will remain a highlight of my time with him in Congress. There, in the capital city of Jerusalem, we were fortunate to have participated in the opening of the new U.S. Embassy. It was an historic event.

We also served on a delegation together to Kabul, Afghanistan, where he so appreciated our courageous military, including my son Hunter, an engineer with the South Carolina National Guard.

TOM began his career working for an accounting firm in North Carolina, where he earned his CPA certificate. He then returned to South Carolina where he worked for a tax law firm, and ultimately established his own practice in Myrtle Beach.

During his time on the House Ways and Means Committee he used his professional experience to fight for policies that were fiscally responsible and helped America be more globally competitive. There he focused on issues such as job creation, reforming the tax code, and growing the economy.

TOM is a good person who further serves the people of South Carolina through his work with many charitable and civic organizations.

Today, I honor his service to the American people and wish him and his wife Wrenzie, the best in their future endeavors.

HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND CYBER SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2023*

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, as Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Energy, the Environment, and Cyber in the 117th Congress and Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment in the

116th Congress, I have led the Subcommittee during one of the most pivotal times in terms of the Europe's importance to global peace and stability. As such, I am proud that from the very beginning I have been dedicated to strengthening the resolute relationship between the United States and Europe. Together our transatlantic alliance has the greatest combined economic power coupled with a security alliance greater than any other in history. As we face heightened threats from Russia and China, I believe the strength and effectiveness of our coalition is more important than ever. As such, I have focused on transatlantic efforts to combat challenges facing our liberal, democratic world, underscored the need for greater efforts to respond to climate change, and worked to ensure transatlantic unity in the face of Russia's unprecedented and illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This final Summary of Accomplishments will provide a brief overview of the work that this Subcommittee has undertaken in the 116th and 117th Congress.

In response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, the Subcommittee has taken a direct role in shining a light on the horrors the Russian government is committing in Ukraine and ensuring that all perpetrators, regardless of level or rank, are held accountable. As such, the Subcommittee has held three hearings on Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine; bringing expert witnesses to provide firsthand accounts of atrocity crimes committed by Russian soldiers in Ukraine as well as the efforts by national and international bodies to prosecute individuals for said atrocity crimes. Based on this expert testimony, including testimony provided by the Prosecutor General of Ukraine Andriy Kostin, Ranking Member FITZPATRICK and I, along with 40 bipartisan members of Congress, introduced H.R. 8532, the Atrocity Crimes, Relief, and Accountability Act, to ensure Ukrainian refugees in America are able to tell their stories to international investigators, further U.S. support for international efforts towards justice, and establish a victims' trust fund to assist individuals and families affected by Russia's war of choice. Furthermore, along with 20 bipartisan Members of Congress, I introduced and co-sponsored a resolution calling on the President to support the creation of a Special Tribunal for the punishment of the crime of aggression against Ukraine. Overall, the Subcommittee has worked diligently in support of the Ukrainian people's fight for freedom and independence, and I am confident our efforts will have a lasting impact.

In addition, the Subcommittee has endeavored to better understand the Russia of today and the ways in which the U.S. government can more effectively counter Russian malign aggression. To that end, the Subcommittee held a hearing in 2021 with author and professor Masha Gessen, Bellingcat CEO Christo Grozev, Dr. Yuval Weber, and Mr. Edward Lucas to discuss Russia's ongoing influence operations around the world and how disidents continue to push back against Kremlin

• 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.

malfeasance. Furthermore, the Subcommittee held a joint hearing with Chairwoman Karen Bass and the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights to discuss Russian malign influence in Africa. In the lead up to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Subcommittee organized two classified briefings to ensure Members of Congress were aware of Russia's buildup of troops on the Ukrainian border as well as in Belarus and adequately briefed on our government's assessments of the Kremlin's true intentions in Ukraine. Finally, the Subcommittee held a hearing in November 2022 with Secretary Ernest Moniz, Ms. Heather Conley, Mr. Jim Townsend, Mr. Daleep Singh and Ms. Rebecca Heinrichs to discuss Russia's changing role on the global stage following their full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Throughout the past four years, it has been clear that Russia has been and will continue to present a dangerous threat to the liberal, democratic order, and the U.S. government must continue to do everything in its power with a whole-of-government approach to counter the threat that Russia poses globally.

In addition, the Subcommittee has deepened and strengthened the transatlantic alliance. Over the past four years and in the lead-up to the 70th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Subcommittee held four hearings on the importance of the transatlantic alliance and the future of NATO. In fact, two of the first hearings this Subcommittee held in the 116th Congress focused on "The Historic American Alliance with Europe" and "The Future of NATO: New Challenges and Opportunities." Further, as Chair I have continuously engaged with transatlantic partners both here in Washington and abroad to exchange best practices, establish new partnerships, and redouble our efforts to achieve shared goals. Finally, when our allies in Sweden and Finland voiced their desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, I was proud to introduce and pass a House resolution welcoming them, as interoperable security partners into our historic alliance. The transatlantic alliance has and will continue to represent our greatest alliance in our fight to protect our democracy and values, and I am proud of the Subcommittee's focus on our enduring relationship.

Moreover, as Chair, I have taken a special interest in furthering policies and initiatives that are crucial to U.S. interests and leading policy discussions on some key issues facing Europe today. For example, on the issues of European integration, I have continued to advocate for the accession of North Macedonia and Albania into the European Union. The Balkans, as a region squarely belonging in the European community, should continue to receive U.S. and European support as developing democracies. North Macedonia and Albania, in particular, have made great strides in terms of democratic development. As such, I encouraged Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Balkans and the Office of Public Diplomacy Gabriel Escobar to prioritize support for this matter with our allies in the European Union, and I sent a letter to key players involved in the accession decisions expressing my support for North Macedonia and Albania's accession. At the same time, I have also long foreseen the dangers of European energy dependence on Russian sources and have

worked to support initiatives that would foster energy independence in Europe. For example, I have worked with my colleague, Representative MARCY KAPTUR, a Member of the Appropriations Committee, to encourage the Biden administration to provide robust funding for the Three Seas Initiative, a critical effort led by our Central and Eastern European allies to correct infrastructure patterns left from the Soviet Union, encourage interconnectivity throughout the region, and counter Russian malign influence through energy. In addition, in June 2022, I held a hearing with Biden administration officials to better understand U.S. efforts to support European Energy Security as well as the ways in which Congress can continue to assist our Ukrainian partners as Russia bombards their electricity grid causing massive blackouts during Russia's brutal invasion. These are just two examples of the thematic issues the Subcommittee took on with regard to our transatlantic alliance, and I am proud of our efforts.

On the issue of the environment, this Subcommittee has taken an active role in the fight against climate, having held six hearings in the 116th and 117th Congress on issues related to climate change and global warming. For example, in the lead-up to the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2021, the Subcommittee heard expert testimony from Patricia Espinosa, then-Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Frans Timmerman, Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal at the European Commission, and Ms. Rachel Kyte CMG, Dean of the Fletcher School at Tufts University and former Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary General. In addition, the Subcommittee held hearings on issues related to Arctic security—inviting experts on the changing political, security, and environmental aspects of the region—as well as the growing relationship between the U.S. and our transatlantic alliance in an effort to build stronger and more robust wind energy infrastructure in the United States. Finally, as Chair, I introduced a bill establishing specific diplomatic posts for climate change attachés at major diplomatic hubs. I am proud that the Biden administration has moved forward with this plan, establishing ten such positions this year, with ten more positions established in the coming year.

In the face of democratic backsliding and the rise of authoritarianism abroad, the defense of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and a free press are essential for preserving our liberty and values. To that end, I have made it a major focus of the Subcommittee to support democratic resiliency efforts and shine a light on concerning issues related to democratic backsliding in the region. As such, the Subcommittee held a landmark hearing with the founding Mayors of the Pact of Free Cities partnership from Budapest, Hungary; Prague, Czech Republic; Bratislava, Slovakia; and Warsaw, Poland. During this hearing, we heard powerful testimony and highlighted the importance of local leaders from across the political spectrum to protect democratic values. In addition, the Subcommittee also held a briefing on the erosion of democracy and the rule of law in Hungary. During this briefing, expert witnesses such as Professor Kim Lane Scheppelle, Mr. Daniel Hegedus, and Ms. Marta Pardavi provided a

detailed analysis of the path the Orban regime has taken in slowing chipping away democratic principles as well as protection for minority groups, such as the LGBTQI+ community and the Roma. To that end, I am proud that the Subcommittee also held the first-ever House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on protecting LGBTQI+ rights. During this hearing, the Subcommittee heard testimony from human rights defenders from Russia, Hungary, Ukraine, and Brussels on efforts to protect the rights of the LGBTQI+ community in Europe. Further, in January of 2020, I held a hearing on the issue of Rising Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia in Europe, where I invited expert witnesses to provide expert testimony, including Dr. Alfred Munzer, Holocaust Survivor, Volunteer, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Dr. Deborah E. Lipstadt, Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies, Tam Institute for Jewish Studies and the Department of Religion, Emory University, and current Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism. Finally, on International Women's Day in 2021, the Subcommittee held a briefing with female journalists from the post-Soviet space who are fighting every day for fair treatment against undemocratic and often authoritarian regimes. These women highlighted the very real opportunities and challenges facing female journalists in the post-Soviet space.

Following fraudulent elections in Belarus in 2020, the Subcommittee followed closely as a renewed Belarusian opposition movement emerged, led by female leaders, as an alternative to the authoritarian rule of Aleksandr Lukashenka. To support the opposition movement in Belarus, the Subcommittee held its first hearing of the 117th Congress in March 2021 and invited Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya to provide testimony. Further, as Chair of the Subcommittee, I, along with a bipartisan group of Members, established the Friends of Belarus Caucus to continue to support democracy in Belarus. In addition, I introduced H. Res.124, a House resolution supporting the people of Belarus, which passed the House of Representatives in April 2021. Finally, working together with my colleague Representative MARCY KAPTUR of the House Appropriations Committee, I worked to increase funding for democratic development in Belarus to \$30 million dollars in FY22. Bipartisan Members of the Subcommittee will continue to support the democratic movement in Belarus, and I will continue to advocate for continued support for civil society in Belarus.

Further, the Subcommittee has taken a vocal stance in support of the Good Friday Agreement and the ongoing peace process in Northern Ireland. As we approach the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement in April 2023, I look forward to continuing to work on this issue with Members from across the aisle and representatives from across the Atlantic. As Chair, I have consistently advocated for the appointment of a U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, and I am pleased that President Biden recently appointed former Member of Congress Joe Kennedy to that position. In addition, the Subcommittee has held two hearings on the Northern Ireland peace process, hearing testimony from female leaders involved in the peace process and youth leaders, as well as a briefing, focused on the continued search for justice for those victims who experienced violence during the Troubles as

well as their families. Based on the testimony from these official events, I also introduced and passed House Resolution 888, condemning the killing of 14 individuals and the violence on Bloody Sunday as well as calling on all parties to take meaningful steps toward peace and reconciliation. Finally, to further these efforts, I led a Congressional Delegation in November 2022 to Dublin, Ireland and Belfast, United Kingdom to meet with stakeholders across communities and traditions and ensure the continued positive role of the United States as a good-faith actor in the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. The CO DEL met with local leaders, representatives from the Irish and UK governments as well as all five of the main political parties in Northern Ireland. While I believe our efforts have been very impactful, I recognize that more work still needs to be done. I am thankful for the Members of the Subcommittee who have worked diligently on this issue over the past two years, and I will continue to make this issue a focus of mine in the coming Congress.

Finally, as Chair I have endeavored to utilize the platform we have on the Subcommittee to highlight the voices of young people as well as individuals on the ground. For example, during the 116th Congress I led a joint hearing with the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis titled "Voices Leading the Next Generation on the Global Climate Crisis." During that hearing we were honored to hear from young climate activists such as Greta Thunberg, Jamie Margolin, Vic Barrett and Benji Backer. Together they underscored the important need for politicians to enact progressive policies to combat global warming. In addition, I also held a hearing titled "the Role of Young People in Fostering Peace in Northern Ireland," where young people from both committees testified on urgent need for continued implementation of the Good Friday Agreement as well as an increased focus on the creation of economic and educational opportunities in the region. At the same time, through the use of virtual hearings the Subcommittee has continually endeavored to hear from people in the region. In taking this approach, we have been able to be flexible and responsive to changing dynamics in the region, while hearing from those who understand firsthand the situation on the ground, and we have been able to hear from a more diverse set of voices who have shared new perspectives.

As the 117th Congress comes to a close, I look forward to continuing the work of the Subcommittee in the next two years in the 118th Congress and I am immensely proud of the successes of this Subcommittee. I want to thank Chairman GREGORY MEEKS and Chairman Eliot Engel for their partnerships during the 116th and 117th Congresses. In addition, as we move into the 118th Congress, I want to acknowledge the efforts of this Subcommittee and its Members, including Ranking Member for the 117th Congress, BRIAN FITZPATRICK and Ranking Member for the 116th Congress, Adam Kinzinger, for their commitment to work in a bipartisan manner on issues within the Subcommittee's jurisdiction.

The U.S. commitment to Europe and our transatlantic alliance is resolute and steadfast, and I will continue to advocate for the important issues outlined above as we move forward.

In addition to this Summary of Accomplishments, I have compiled three appendixes outlining the hearings and briefings as well as CODELS we have organized, which can be viewed on <https://keating.house.gov/>.

#### HONORING THE CAREER OF TOM BIRMINGHAM

#### HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2023*

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Tom Birmingham who has served as the General Manager of Westlands Water District over the last 22 years.

Spanning 1,000 square miles within Fresno and Kings County, Westlands Water District is the largest in the country. Serving as the General Manager, Mr. Birmingham's diligence and leadership has been advantageous to the greater Central Valley for more than 2 decades.

During this time, Tom embraced the full scope of his role, and guided the district through countless projects, including the settlements of drainage litigation and litigation concerning the renewal of the district's 1962 water service contract. He also oversaw the acquisition of additional Central Valley Project water supplies to the district, the conversion of the district's water service contracts to repayment contracts, as well as the implementation of a significant land retirement program, which balanced the demand for water with available supplies. In addition to this, under Tom's leadership, Westlands Water District also implemented several water conservation programs, developed large scale renewable energy projects, constructed habitat restoration projects, and developed integrated water management programs.

Furthermore, Tom and the Westlands team should also be proud of the instrumental role they played in advancing good water policy. Due to their exemplary efforts, they were able to influence major state and federal legislation, including the California 2009 Bay-Delta Reform Act, the CALFED authorizing legislation, the San Joaquin River Settlement and Restoration Program authorizing legislation, and the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act. Tom and his team were also integral in negotiating the water purchase agreement for the Yuba River Accord, which amended the 1986 coordinated operations agreement. Lastly, Tom and company were successful in restoring flexibility for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project operations through the 2019 biological opinions, which resulted in greater protections of listed species.

After 22 years of dedication, Tom will be remembered for all of his hard work at Westlands. He states that he will remember the priceless interactions between himself and the staff of both Westlands and other water agencies, elected officials with whom he worked diligently, and the farmers he represented for so long.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Tom Birmingham for a distinguished career. May we continue to be inspired by his good work.

HONORING HARVEST HOME ANIMAL SANCTUARY'S LIFESAIVING ANIMAL RESCUE EFFORTS AND COMMITMENT TO CREATING COMPASSIONATE CHANGE

#### HON. JERRY MCNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2023*

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an extraordinary organization in California's 9th Congressional District. Since its founding in 2004, Harvest Home Animal Sanctuary, located in Stockton, California, has been a beacon of light for animals in need. Over the past 18 years, they have worked tirelessly to provide life-long care for abused and neglected animals—rehabilitating them both physically and psychologically and, if possible, finding appropriate homes for them. To date, Harvest Home Animal Sanctuary has rescued over 10,000 animals who, in turn, have become the catalyst for an important dialogue about compassion in our community.

The story of Harvest Home Animal Sanctuary began when co-founder Karen Courtemanche saw an online ad for free rabbits and ended up walking into a horrific and life-altering scene. Upon arrival at the listed home address, Karen found nearly 50 malnourished and filthy rabbits surrounded by garbage, waste, and the remains of other deceased rabbits. While she was only able to rescue one rabbit that day, Karen wasted no time alerting the authorities to this horrendous abuse. Following the homeowner's arrest, the rabbits were removed and placed in a shelter where Karen and others visited until they were medically cleared. But rather than being put up for adoption, the rabbits were scheduled to be euthanized, spurring Karen to spring into action. She immediately retrieved them all and brought them to her small home in the East Bay, but as she began to try to find these rabbits loving homes, only one rabbit was adopted. That's when Karen discovered her new mission: to help these rabbits and other unwanted and abused animals. She soon sold her house and purchased two acres of land to create a sanctuary that would not only serve as a home for rescued animals, but would also become a teaching tool for members of our community.

In an effort to prevent cruelty to animals, Harvest Home Animal Sanctuary educates the public on caring for companion animals as well as on issues concerning farmed animals and many widespread practices that result in their inhumane treatment and living conditions. They regularly host animal-centered literacy activities, humane animal care workshops, and discussions on farm animal awareness topics. Additionally, they partner with local libraries to hold events such as the Rescue Readers Club, a program where children read to rescue animals—an engaging way of embracing both compassion and literacy. Harvest Home Animal Sanctuary also partners with school districts and youth organizations to hold Compassionate Classrooms Programs, providing free in-person and virtual educational presentations on the topics of humane care and animal welfare that help bolster kindness and compassion for animals. The sanctuary is open to members of the public, who are invited to take