

GERALD THORNTON

**HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mr. VAN DREW. Madam Speaker, I want to honor Gerald Thornton, also known as Gerry, who started his career in 1974 as a District Committeeman in Lower Township, Cape May County. He was then appointed to Cape May County Freeholder in 1976. Later on, Gerry became the Chairman of the Board of Elections for six years and eventually was appointed as the Director of the Board. He was placed in the New Jersey Association of Counties Hall of Fame and was recognized as Freeholder of the Year for all 21 counties in New Jersey. Over the years, Gerry has directly participated in developing many South Jersey projects including building the Cape May County Special Services School, building the Gerald M. Thornton Veterans Cemetery, and helped to bring a Veterans Clinic to Cape May County. After 44 years serving Cape May County, he has decided to retire. Gerry should be very proud of his lifelong service in South Jersey, and it was my honor to have had the opportunity to recognize him for all his accomplishments. God Bless Gerry, and God Bless America.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO PERMIT COMMERCIAL FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE GROUNDS OF THE U.S. CAPITOL

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce a bill that would permit commercial filming and photography on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol Complex, beyond east of Union Square, the only area where such filming and photography is currently authorized. This bill would allow commercial filming and photography outside of the Capitol and congressional office buildings by permit, so long as neither the House nor Senate is in session. In many countries, freedom of expression is limited, and while the January 6th insurrection was one of the greatest threats to American democracy in history, the Capitol and the United States remain beacons of democracy for the world. We should encourage commercial filming and photography at the Capitol to share this symbol of democracy with the world. Movies and television shows that involve the Capitol should not have to go to other cities or use fake capitol buildings for filming.

The current policy allowing commercial filming and photography near the U.S. Botanic Garden shows that the Capitol Police can handle commercial filming and photography at the Capitol Complex, especially when Congress is not in session. However, that vantage point captures the least familiar view of the Capitol. Preventing commercial filmmakers and photographers from shooting in front of the Capitol is neither business-friendly nor true to the nation's democratic traditions. Encouraging commercial filming and photography at the Capitol would help spread the story of our national legislature around the world.

There is no good reason why commercial filming and photography should be confined to Union Square. Specifically, my bill would give the Capitol Police complete discretion to issue a permit for commercial filming and photography at the Capitol Complex under the same terms and conditions as those for commercial filming and photography in Union Square. No policy or security reasons exist to justify limiting commercial filming and photography at the Capitol Complex to only one location, Union Square, especially considering that permits are necessary. Visitors are regularly seen on East Capitol Street (east of 2nd Street) taking pictures, where they get a full view of the Capitol, demonstrating the arbitrary nature of limiting commercial filming and photography to Union Square.

This bill would provide the Capitol Police authority to charge fees to cover any costs incurred by the Architect of the Capitol from permit approval. The fees would be deposited into the Capitol Trust Account, which was established to accept fees collected for commercial filming and photography permits for Union Square. Amounts in the Capitol Trust Account would be available without fiscal year limitation for maintenance, improvements and projects the Architect of the Capitol considers appropriate, subject to the approval of the Appropriations Committees.

Views of the Capitol are among America's most iconic. Limiting commercial filming and photography of the Capitol, an important vehicle for telling the nation's story, does not serve the American people. Indeed, most of the world reveres our system of government largely through commercial films and photos of the Capitol, a symbol of our democracy at work. Commercial films and photographs of the Capitol, the seat of our democracy, are perhaps the best modern vehicles for telling the nation's story and showcasing its democratic system of government. Republicans and Democrats alike revere the image of the Capitol as a symbol of democracy. My bill would enable appropriate, permitted commercial filming and photography of the Capitol, and would create economic benefits for the nation, the District of Columbia and private businesses.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

**HONORING BONNIE SUE GRAHAM****HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today along with Congressman JARED HUFFMAN, to honor Bonnie Sue Graham for her outstanding career at the U.S. Veterans Affairs Department, helping our veterans secure the proper care they need and deserve.

Mrs. Graham was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and grew up in the nearby suburb of Winthrop, where she attended public school. She then graduated from Tufts University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy. Following her graduation, Mrs. Graham spent years in the private sector, working at medical centers in Connecticut and New Mexico. Eventually, she became the vice president of the Lovelace Health System, the largest healthcare provider in New Mexico.

After her service at Lovelace Health System, Mrs. Graham became a senior administrator at Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Albuquerque. In 2007, Mrs. Graham became Associate Director of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Later, in 2013, Mrs. Graham became the director of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in San Francisco, where she cultivated a culture of support, openness, and a commitment to excellence.

As Director, Mrs. Graham has served on numerous national Veterans Affairs committees and mentored several Veterans Affairs executives and administrators. In 2000, she began a trailblazing program to educate Veterans Affairs workers on how to address matters of diversity and equity, an effort that has achieved widespread recognition today.

As Mrs. Graham prepares to retire from her excellent service at the end of this month, she looks forward to spending more time with her husband, Glenn, and their son, Garrett.

Madam Speaker, it is evident that Bonnie Sue Graham has spent her life serving and supporting our brave service members. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

**ROBERT RALPH MACMURRAY****HON. DONALD NORCROSS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, SPC Robert Ralph MacMurray was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Ralph and Catherine MacMurray in 1946. As a child he belonged to the Boy Scouts of America and supports the organization today.

In 1966, at the age of nineteen he signed up for the United States Army. He served in the Third Armor Infantry Division stationed in Freiburg, Germany, as a cook for four years and completed two years in the United States Army Reserves.

In recognition of his service to our country, SPC MacMurray earned the National Defense Service Medal, the Camden County Veterans Service Medal, and the Vietnam Service Medal. In 1972, Mr. MacMurray completed his time in the United States Army Reserves after six total years of courageous service.

Upon returning home from his military service, SPC Robert MacMurray married Ms. Janet Wilson on June 5, 1972. They had two sons Robert and Jonathan and two daughters-in-law Beth and Megan. They have five grandchildren Ryan, Aidan, Connor, Brenna, and Aubrey. They have been happily married for 50 years.

Back in his hometown, SPC MacMurray worked for Bond Bread Company for over nine years. SPC MacMurray continued his service to our nation through his work at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard and with the Navy Public Works Center Norfolk Detachment Philadelphia, with over thirty-three years of federal service.

In his retirement, SPC MacMurray is a member of the American Legion and a part of the American Legion Post 17's "Thank a Vet" program, providing any veteran an opportunity to have a cup of coffee and a donut with other veterans.

## HONORING ISABEL DIAZ

**HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Isabel Diaz for being chosen as the 2022 American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) Direct Support Professional (DSP) of the Year for the State of Texas.

Each year, ANCOR chooses one outstanding DSP from every state. This year, Ms. Diaz, a resident of the Rio Grande Valley, was chosen as the Texas Direct Support Professional of the Year. From helping patients travel for medical care to providing open and honest communication, and volunteering to shelter-in-place with those who needed it most at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Diaz exemplifies what it means to go above and beyond for her community.

Ms. Diaz has dedicated her time to giving members of our community with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) the care they deserve. She has gone to great lengths to ensure the safety, wellness, and inclusion of patients in her care. This not only makes her an exceptional DSP but also a leader. This recognition is well-deserved, and I look forward to hearing about all that she will accomplish for our community.

Madam Speaker, I stand here today to celebrate the countless achievements and successes of Ms. Isabel Diaz, who has devoted her life to providing the highest quality care to South Texans with I/DD. For that and much more, South Texas will be forever grateful.

HONORING ELIZABETH QUIROZ AS  
WOMAN OF THE YEAR**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Elizabeth Quiroz, whom I have named the 2022 Woman of the Year in Sonoma County, California. Woman of the Year recognizes women who have made important contributions to California's 5th Congressional District in Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation or Community Service.

Mrs. Quiroz was born in San Francisco, California. At a young age, she became a victim of human trafficking. After escaping trafficking, she pursued an education with the hope of learning how to help other victims of human trafficking recover and move forward. In 2014, Mrs. Quiroz began attending Santa Rosa Junior College, where she volunteered for the Bear Cub Scholar Program, which provides academic counseling for foster youth. She graduated from Santa Rosa Junior College with highest honors in three associate degrees: social advocacy, behavioral science and human services. In 2021, she graduated from Sonoma State University with a bachelor's degree in sociology with distinction.

While in school, Mrs. Quiroz worked as a substance use disorder counselor and co-

founded the nonprofit Redemption House of The Bay Area, which helps victims of human trafficking reclaim their lives. Mrs. Quiroz received many awards recognizing her incredible work, including the 2019 American Red Cross Humanitarian Hero Award, the 2019 Achievement and Community Service Award from the Sonoma County Lowrider Council, and the 2021 Inaugural Spirit of Sonoma County Award. She also received the Unconditional Governor's Pardon from Governor Jerry Brown in 2018.

Mrs. Quiroz currently serves as a substance use disorder counselor at Athena House Residential Treatment Center for women in Santa Rosa, while pursuing a master's degree in Social Justice and Human Rights from Arizona State University.

Outside of her community work and her education, Mrs. Quiroz finds joy in her family, including her husband, Jose, their five children and one grandson. She is also looking forward to publishing her memoir, *Purified in the Flame*, on March 31st of this year.

Madam Speaker, it is evident that Elizabeth Quiroz has devoted her life to helping and supporting vulnerable individuals in our community. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

CELEBRATING APRIL AS FAITH  
MONTH**HON. MARY E. MILLER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, this April Americans all over the country, led by Concerned Women for America, the Nation's largest public policy organization for women, and other faith-based organizations are celebrating April as Faith Month. I rise to join and commend this noble effort calling all people of faith to join in prayer, thanksgiving, and celebration of their faith.

The United States of America was born of the unanimous Declaration that we are "endowed by [our] Creator with certain unalienable Rights," based on "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God," "appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world," and acknowledging our "reliance on the protection of divine Providence." We are a people of faith. That is why religious freedom is known as America's first freedom, as laid out in the Establishment and the Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The freedom of speech guaranteed by the First Amendment also supports America's unique focus on freedom of expression, including in matters of faith.

America's Judeo-Christian founding promotes religious diversity and tolerance. Our motto, "In God We Trust," further emphasizes the importance of faith in our nation's founding. From our first president to the last, we have always acknowledged America's faith. President George Washington recognized "it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and President Joe Biden, most recently acknowledged Thanksgiving as a "time to reflect on our many blessings—from God, this Nation, and each other."

Religious liberty serves to strengthen our country's appreciation of all peoples, regardless of faith. But eternal diligence is needed to preserve religious freedom. Attacks on religious liberty and people of faith continue to plague our nation with some religious charities even being forced to betray the tenets of their faith in order to participate in certain government programs. We must actively reject all efforts to criminalize or cancel religious beliefs in certain controversial areas as somehow incompatible with our democracy.

Religious organizations in America have a rich history of charitable engagement helping the sick, poor, and afflicted, and they should be celebrated, not maligned for their contributions to our way of life. According to the Pew Research Center, more than 75 percent of Americans practice some type of religious faith. This rich, diverse religious heritage is to our credit and should be commended.

Therefore, I join millions of Americans celebrating their personal faiths freely and openly, with public displays and celebrations, including prayer and expressions of thanksgiving, during the month of April, also known as "Faith Month," as a way to reaffirm our commitment to the religious liberty principles of our founding.

HONORING LISA DIAZ-MCQUAID AS  
WOMAN OF THE YEAR**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 4, 2022*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lisa Diaz-McQuaid, whom I have named the 2022 Woman of the Year in Sonoma County, California. Woman of the Year recognizes women who have made important contributions to California's 5th Congressional District in Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation or Community Service.

Ms. Diaz-McQuaid was born and raised in Santa Rosa, California. She is a survivor of human trafficking and has been committed to helping human trafficking victims. In 2018, Ms. Diaz-McQuaid co-founded the Redemption House of the Bay Area, a non-profit organization based in Sonoma County that helps victims of human trafficking reclaim their lives. Ms. Diaz-McQuaid is currently a student at Santa Rosa Junior College, working toward three associate degrees in human services, advocacy and addiction studies.

Ms. Diaz-McQuaid has dedicated her life to supporting human trafficking victims. She is a member of the Sonoma County Human Trafficking Task Force, an advocate in the Missing Murdered Indigenous Women movement, and the co-facilitator of the first peer-lead human trafficking victims support group in Sonoma County. Ms. Diaz-McQuaid is also a team leader of a monthly street outreach program that helps human trafficking victims leave their abusers.

Furthermore, Ms. Diaz-McQuaid participates in community activities that support at-risk youth and recovering addicts. She mentors youth survivors of human trafficking and works at the Girls Circle of Valley of the Moon, an emergency shelter center for children who are unsafe with their parents or guardians.