

between India, the world's largest democracy, and the United States, the world's oldest democracy, has demonstrated our shared values for Rule of Law.

I grew up with an appreciation of the people of India, because my father, First Lieutenant Hugh Wilson, served there in the U.S. Army Air Corps Flying Tigers in 1944, where he recognized the industriousness of the citizens of India.

I am particularly grateful for the prosperous Indian-American community in South Carolina and look forward to its continued growth and achievements. In 2014 in New York at Madison Square Garden, I helped welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in 2016 in Washington, I was on the Escort Committee for the Prime Minister's address to Congress, in 2019 in New Delhi at the Red Fort, I attended Indian Independence Day, and in 2019 at the Howdy Modi program in Houston at the Astrodome, I joined President Donald Trump to recognize the Prime Minister.

South Carolina's first female governor in 340 years was appropriately Nikki Randhawa Haley, who served with distinction. The Indian American community, of all immigrant groups in the United States, has achieved the highest per capita income level.

I appreciate the visits with India's Consul General Dr. Swati V. Kulkarni of Atlanta and Mr. KV Kumar, President and CEO of the Indian American International Chamber of Commerce to discuss the bilateral relationship between India and the United States. Bilateral trade in goods between the two countries crossed the \$100 billion mark in 2021, making it the largest volume of goods trade in a calendar year in India-U.S. economic history. This also represents an almost 45 percent jump from 2020, which is the single biggest jump of all the U.S. trade partners. Working together, Indian industry can build dynamic military manufacturing to be independent of foreign suppliers.

The talks with Consul General also covered conversation on mass murder by war criminal Putin in Ukraine, its implications, and current regional developments.

To take U.S. and India ties forward and to realize the full spirit of our strategic partnership, USA and the Republic of India need to cooperate more closely in the Indo-Pacific. Certainly, there are issues of mutual concern with regard to China's malign goals in the region, and the partnership to counter these authoritarian aspirations should be robust.

Throughout her service as India's Consul General, Dr. Kulkarni has been an exemplary representative of the Republic of India. She was proactive across the southeast promoting the shared values of India and America. She will be greatly missed upon her departure from her post, as she continues her productive service for the people of India.

In the current contest of democracy with Rule of Law opposed by authoritarians with Rule of Gun, it is more important for cooperation to establish peace through strength.

STANDING WITH THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the people of Bangladesh. I want to voice my support for human rights defenders, members of minority groups, and civil society in Bangladesh at this moment when the Bangladeshi government is persisting in threatening the basic human rights and civil liberties of its people. The Bangladeshi government, led by Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League, has earned widespread criticism for its deteriorating human rights record, and for its failure to protect the most vulnerable people living in Bangladesh—indigenous people, women, religious minorities, activists, and refugees.

Amnesty International tracks human rights abuses in Bangladesh and has noted their acceleration during the pandemic. Under the draconian Digital Security Act of 2018, Bangladeshi journalists and other human rights defenders are routinely persecuted for reporting on corruption or criticizing any of the government's policies. COVID-19 policies against public gatherings have been used to prevent political meetings, and to quell public protests against the government. Violence against women and indigenous activists has also intensified during the pandemic.

The Bangladeshi government employs a joint task force composed of members of police, military, and border guards called the Rapid Action Battalion, and it has consistently failed to address the excesses of these and other security forces. The Rapid Action Battalion and other Bangladeshi law enforcement entities are alleged to be responsible for more than 600 disappearances since 2009 and nearly 600 extrajudicial killings since 2018. These incidents reportedly target opposition party members, journalists, and human rights activists.

Last August, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, of which I am a member, hosted a briefing on the deeply disturbing uptick in enforced disappearances in Bangladesh. Representatives from Human Rights Watch and the Asian Human Rights Commission participated, as did Bangladeshi photojournalist and activist Shahidul Alam who had been unlawfully arrested after posting criticism of the Bangladeshi Government on Facebook, and the sister of disappeared opposition leader Sajedul Islam Sumon. These violent and illegal forced disappearances have chilling effects on free speech, political opposition, and civil society.

On International Human Rights Day last year, the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced sanctions on the Rapid Action Battalion, citing how their actions undermine the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The United Nations reported that since the sanctions against the Rapid Action Battalion officials were announced in December, the Bangladeshi government has responded by launching a retaliatory campaign of intimidation and harassment. The homes of at least 10 relatives of people forcibly disappeared are reported to have been raided at night, and some relatives were

forced to sign statements saying that their loved ones had not in fact been forcibly disappeared.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in standing with the people of Bangladesh, especially those bravest and most vulnerable, and urging the Bangladeshi government to take immediate action to respect the civil rights and safety of all the people of Bangladesh.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT HUNGERSCHAFER

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Robert A. Hungerschafer from Bellingham, Washington.

Robert is a dedicated volunteer who has served his community with selflessness and compassion by donating blood, plasma and platelets.

His contributions are staggering.

Robert has made 1,100 voluntary donations, potentially saving more than 7,900 lives.

He has donated more than 300 gallons of blood, plasma and platelets and traveled over 74,000 miles to help save lives.

But Robert is more than a donor.

He also volunteers by documenting the lives of Washington state servicemembers who lost their lives in World War I.

Robert's donations help save the lives of people he will never meet. This selflessness is essential to building stronger communities and is a reminder that everyone can play a part in improving the lives of their neighbors.

It is my honor to recognize Robert A. Hungerschafer for his service to his community, Washington state and the United States.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA LEVENSON—CALIFORNIA'S 24TH CONGRESSIONAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, each year, through the Women of the Year Award, my office extends special recognition to women on the Central Coast who have made a difference in our community. I would like to recognize one outstanding Women of the Year Award recipient, Barbara Levenson, of Pismo Beach, California.

After 27 years as a pharmacist at Atascadero State Hospital, Barbara Levenson retired to focus on community service. But even before retirement, Barbara was recognized by the Tribune as an Unsung Hero for her dedication to serving humane causes. This is illustrated by her work with the Wellness Kitchen in Atascadero, where food was prepared for residents with special dietary needs due to health conditions. She was also a member of the Flying Samaritans, a team of medical professionals that flies to different areas of the world to provide free medical services to the needy.

Post retirement, Barbara remains committed to providing support and care to those who need it most and gives her time and energy to a range of organizations nurturing a healthy, welcoming community. She is a member of the San Luis Obispo NAACP, for which she has served as secretary, and is also a member of the SLO County Diversity Coalition.

Barbara served as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman in San Luis Obispo County for eight years, assisting residents of long-term care facilities and their families to resolve problems related to the health, safety, welfare, and rights of those in Long Term Care facilities. She is now the chair of the San Luis Obispo County Behavioral Health Board that evaluates the community's behavioral health needs, services, and facilities and advises the Board of Supervisors and the Behavioral Health Administrator.

As a volunteer, Barbara serves organizations that encourage growth and opportunity. For the San Luis Obispo Community Foundation, she reviews scholarship applications and even created an endowment in the name of her brother, John Renner, supporting students who identify at LGBTQ+. Barbara is also a member of the Central Coast Circle of Friendship Bridge which provides microfinance, education, and health services to build opportunities. In alignment with United Nations Millennium Development goals, the Central Coast Circle empowers Guatemalan women to build a better future. Lastly, Barbara is an avid reader and South County book club member, who volunteers with the Arroyo Grande Library, organizing donated books for the annual book sale.

I am honored to recognize Barbara, one of our community's "quiet heroes," for her commitment to improving the lives of so many. I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 24th Congressional District, Barbara Levenson, for her incredible service to her community.

CELEBRATING THE 57TH
ANNIVERSARY OF HEAD START

HON. JERRY McNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Mr. McNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Head Start, a crucial program that celebrated its 57th anniversary this year.

Since 1965, Head Start has promoted school readiness for children in economically disadvantaged families by offering educational, nutritional, health, and social services. Head Start has served more than 39 million children and their families in urban and rural areas in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories, including American Indian, Alaska Native, migrant and seasonal communities.

Head Start works with and for the communities they serve to improve the lives of children from birth. Growing from an eight-week demonstration project, Head Start now includes full-day and year-round services, which more than one million children and their families benefit from each year. A key tenet of the program is that it be culturally responsive to

the communities it serves, and that the communities have an investment in its success.

The early education services and essential support offered by Head Start provides children the tools they need for future success. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Head Start and its staff for their invaluable contributions over the past 57 years to building opportunities so that every child can thrive.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
FRANK SMITH

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the service of a great Nebraskan, Mr. Frank Smith who recently celebrated his 100th birthday. Mr. Smith (no relation) was recently recognized by the Gage County Board of Supervisors for his service to Nebraskans and our country. I am honored to have the opportunity to join my fellow Nebraskans in thanking Mr. Smith for his service.

On May 5th, he turned 100. A member of the Greatest Generation, he was born in Omaha and raised in Beatrice. He studied agriculture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and he enlisted in the Army on June 10, 1942. He served during World War II and was awarded the World War II campaign medal with three Bronze Stars and the Good Conduct medal. He was honorably discharged as a corporal. Corporal Frank Smith, USA, Retired, enlisted because he loves our great country, and his volunteerism has continued in the years following his military service.

Upon returning from tours in Africa and Italy with a heavy weapons company, he went on to work in farming, then as a prison chaplain. When asked about his patriotic dedication, he said, "My government's important to me, although it's not always so good as it should be, but it's mine."

At 100 years old, he continues to volunteer with Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, delivering meals to fellow senior citizens every day. To put it simply, his life story is extraordinary. It would be easy for someone who has done and given as much as Frank to sit back and relax, but he continues serving others.

I thank Mr. Smith for all his service and sacrifice.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINNESOTA HUMANITIES CENTER

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Minnesota Humanities Center as they celebrate their 50th anniversary of "sparking change" in our communities using the power of the humanities to explore, interpret, and engage. The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC) is a collaborative

non-profit working with individuals, organizations and communities to bring humanities programming to all Minnesotans, and is rooted in the belief that the humanities have the power to connect, bridge differences, interpret the complexities of the world and positively shape our future.

Founded by the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1971, MHC was one of the very first humanities councils in the nation. In their first few decades they focused on a range of education initiatives that explored Minnesota's people and their history, and used televised or in-person programs to enhance the way that educators taught about these subjects in their classrooms. As MHC continued to grow they expanded by creating traveling exhibits and public events, bringing in international speakers and publishing books. Their burgeoning programming in the 1990s eventually led to the opening of their full-service event center in the former wing of Gillette Children's Hospital in Saint Paul in 1996. This center on the east side of Saint Paul is still the home of the Minnesota Humanities Center today, and houses a full-service meeting and event center, 15 administrative offices and 15 overnight guest rooms.

As MHC moved into the 21st century, their programming continued to expand and shift to serve the needs of Minnesotans. They began to focus on providing culturally responsive and linguistically relevant literacy initiatives in White and Green Hmong, Somali, Dakota and Ojibwe, and they broadened partnerships with school districts while engaging new audiences in a deeper understanding of history, culture and identity. One example of this programming is a documentary they co-produced with Twin Cities Public Television called "Iron Range: Minnesota Building America" that highlights the history and future of the Iron Range in northern Minnesota and won an Emmy Award for Best Cultural Documentary in 2009. Another example of their important work is their Veteran's Voices program which began in 2013 and honors Minnesota Veterans by celebrating their written and spoken stories about their experiences serving their country.

Grant-making is also central to the work of MHC. For 50 years they have worked hard to champion the work of individuals, nonprofits, schools and other collectives across Minnesota through their own competitive grants and by administering grant funds appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature. In the last year, MHC distributed over \$4.7 million through 180 grants across Minnesota, and through the CARES Act were awarded an additional \$538,500 to support COVID-19 relief efforts. I was proud to vote in favor of those funds, and I continue to support funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities through my role as Vice-Chair of the Interior-Environment Appropriations Subcommittee.

Led today by CEO Kevin Lindsey, MHC continues to be a beacon for learning and positive change in Minnesota, seeking to fulfill their vision of a just society that is connected, curious, and compassionate as they look to their next 50 years of service to the community. Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Minnesota Humanities Center and their excellent humanities programming as they celebrate their 50th anniversary.