

continued dedication to the people of Northern Michigan and wish them and their staff all the best in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I missed the following Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 560; YEA on Roll Call No. 561; YEA on Roll Call No. 562; and NO on Roll Call No. 563.

HONORING ALFRED PONCIA

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Alfred Poncia, who passed away at the age of 83 on August 28, 2023. Al was a farmer, conservationist, and respected community leader.

Born on February 2, 1940, Al grew up on his family ranch in Marin County. He graduated from Tomales High School in 1958 and joined the Army National Guard. He later moved back home to work at his family's dairy and study at Santa Rosa Junior College. While attending college, he met Cathie Brandeburg; they married in 1964 and settled down on the Poncia family farm in West Marin.

While working on his farm, Al also took on leadership roles in both the county and state farm bureaus. He served 18 years on the Marin County Farm Bureau's board of directors, including three years as board president. For decades, Al has been both a formal and informal leader in the local agriculturist community, notably leading efforts to protect open space and family farms in Marin County during successive attempts to develop rural West Marin.

A passionate advocate and an adept communicator, Al worked with a variety of agricultural groups and committees dedicated to conservation, sustainable farming and ranching. He helped lead the Marin County Committee on Small Family Farms, a collection of both conservationists and agriculturists interested in developing solutions to water problems and fair milk prices. In 1971, Al participated in the California Agricultural Leadership Program, an advanced leadership development program for California agriculturists, where he had the opportunity to travel around the United States and the world, meeting with global leaders in farming to learn more about national and international agricultural policy.

In 1981, Al became a founding board member of the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), the first farmland trust in the nation, representing a broad coalition of ranchers, environmentalists, and community leaders who were dedicated to protecting farming in Marin County. His expertise, insight, and passion were critical to MALT's success at preserving local Marin County farms.

Al is survived by his wife of 59 years, Cathie; three of their children, Jennifer, Melissa, and Loren; and eight grandchildren. Al was predeceased by his daughter, Jessica, and son-in-law, Bill. While he will be greatly missed, Al's legacy will live on through the positive impact he had on his community and beyond.

Today, thanks to Al's lifelong dedication and hard work, Marin County stands as a national example for sustainable agriculture and open space preservation. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you join me in extending condolences to Al's family and friends, and in expressing my appreciation for his decades of work for the public good.

BAPS TEMPLE

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, today, I share an inspiring tale of dedication and unity surrounding the construction of a magnificent Hindu temple in central New Jersey, embodying the values of seva and bhakti. This temple, now celebrated as the largest Hindu temple outside India in the modern era, stands as a tribute to these enduring values. Crafted from marble and limestone, it required about 4.7 million hours of meticulous hand-carving by artisans and volunteers. These stones, originating from Italy and Bulgaria, traveled 8,000 miles to find their place in New Jersey. The Robbinsville temple is one of many built by the BAPS, a worldwide religious and civic organization within the Swaminarayan sect. This project exemplifies volunteerism, personal growth, and universal values that transcend religious boundaries. It symbolizes unity, service, and devotion, reflecting the core principles shared by people worldwide. May it serve as a reminder of the common values that bind humanity together, inspiring us to embrace unity, service, and devotion in our own lives.

DECLARING IT IS THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES THAT A NUCLEAR ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

SPEECH OF

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, while I strongly oppose a nuclear Iran, I will vote against this Resolution because it states that U.S. policy is "to use all means necessary to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon." That language allows for an open-ended war authorization, using all means necessary, which I deem inappropriate. I believe that America's military commitments must be tied to clearly defined strategies, and vague war authorizations have, unfortunately, been used as justifications for unwarranted military actions in recent history. I will vote against this Resolution, the majority of which I agree with, because I do not want to see foreign policy mistakes mirrored.

CONGRATULATING FATIMA SOFTBALL TEAM ON THEIR CLASS 3 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Fatima High School on their victory in Missouri's Class 3 Softball State Championship.

The team claimed the Class 3 title for the second consecutive year by beating St. Francis Borgia 12–2. Senior Taylor Baumhoer led the way in the circle to finish her season with a sub-1.00 ERA as Fatima cruised in five innings. The Lady Comets have now won 68 of their 75 games in the past two seasons. The team should be commended for all their hard work throughout the past year and for bringing home another state championship to their school and community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Fatima softball team for a job well done.

DOGS OF HONOR GRADUATION

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, this month, I had the honor of attending the New Jersey Dogs of Honor Graduation ceremony. The New Jersey Dogs of Honor is a nonprofit program founded in 2018 with a noble mission: to provide rescue service dogs, who faced the prospect of euthanasia, to military veterans diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress. This initiative is a collaborative effort involving Maurice River Township Firefighters, Ted's Pet Country Club, Veterans Affairs, local businesses, and individuals who hold a deep appreciation for the courageous men and women who have served our nation. During the recent graduation ceremony on October 14th, we had the honor of witnessing the bond between these veterans and their loyal canine companions. On this day, we celebrated Roger Asher with his dog Gunny, Diana Pitman with Finn, Thomas Huck with Sasha, David Clemenko with Milo, William Hannum with Bailey, and Mario Bellasci with Tucker. These veterans and their dogs represent the spirit of resilience, hope, and companionship. As we commemorate this occasion, let us recognize the significance of such initiatives in supporting our veterans as they navigate the challenges of Post-Traumatic Stress. God Bless the Dogs of Honor and God Bless the United States of America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 552; NAY on Roll Call No. 553; NAY on

Roll Call No. 554; NAY on Roll Call No. 555; NAY on Roll Call No. 556; YEA on Roll Call No. 557; and NAY on Roll Call No. 558.

HONORING THE WORK OF THE
JUSTICE LEAGUE OF GREATER
LANSING

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a Lansing, Michigan-based organization that is creating innovative partnerships to improve the future for Black residents by assisting them with the cost of higher education, starting a small business, or purchasing a home.

Officially launched in 2022, the Justice League of Greater Lansing has worked tirelessly to engage the faith community in the area in dialogue over the historic harms done to African Americans through the institution of slavery in this country, and to foster greater understanding of its structural and systematic aftermath.

Since the program's launch, ten churches in Greater Lansing have either committed a percentage of their endowment funds, a lump sum donation, or regular contributions from the congregation as a whole and/or individual members to the effort. To date, the League has received more than \$350,000, making it one of the most successful programs of its kind in the nation. That money will be used to provide scholarships for college-bound students, home loans for first-time buyers, and financial assistance for local entrepreneurs.

Among the churches the League has successfully engaged, many of whom have been involved since the organization's infancy, are First Presbyterian Church of Lansing; Edge-

wood United Church of Christ, East Lansing; All Saints Episcopal Church, East Lansing; First Presbyterian Church, Holt; and Red Cedar Friends Meeting, Lansing.

I have had the pleasure of attending meetings of the Justice League of Greater Lansing, and its board members regularly participate in roundtables I host for faith leaders on gun violence prevention and on many other topics related to the betterment of the community. I applaud this organization's commitment to justice, equality, and positive change through meaningful dialogue and mutual understanding. At a time where so many look to further tear the fabric of our society, I am very grateful for their thoughtful efforts to repair and strengthen it. I look forward to seeing how this project will continue to take root in the community.

DECLARING IT IS THE POLICY OF
THE UNITED STATES THAT A
NUCLEAR ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
IRAN IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

SPEECH OF

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise supportive of the general sense of this resolution, affirming the position of the United States that a nuclear Islamic Republic of Iran poses an unacceptable threat to international peace. The evidence provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency and our own national assessments have consistently indicated that Iran's nuclear aspirations are of grave concern.

However, while supporting some of the goals of this resolution, I believe that it is imperative to make clear that my commitment to

"using all means necessary" and allowing the "freedom of action" referenced in this resolution does not alter the constitutional responsibility and power of Congress alone to declare war. Further, as it relates to me, the resolution does not translate to a carte blanche for actions that violate long-standing principles of international law. Lastly, my vote for the resolution is not a vote to authorize the executive branch to take any military action.

No nation or entity should conclude that my vote for the resolution evidences my support of any actions in which they may engage.

In advancing this resolution, let us not only signal our unwavering commitment to preventing a nuclear Iran, but also our steadfast dedication to upholding the rules of constitutional and international law. These principles, which regulate behavior between nations during peace and war, are the bedrock of global diplomacy and security. It is in this adherence to law that our strength and a peaceful future truly lies.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, on the evening of November 2, 2023, I was unavoidably detained attending to matters in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted No on roll call vote 579, No on roll call vote 580, No on roll call vote 581, No on roll call vote 582, No on roll call vote 583, No on roll call vote 584, No on roll call vote 585, No on roll call vote 586, No on roll call vote 587, No on roll call vote 588, No on roll call vote 589, No on roll call vote 590, No on roll call vote 591, and No on roll call vote 592.