

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF COACH CHARLES COVINGTON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Coach Charles Covington, who recently announced his retirement from coaching, weeks after Saltillo secured both the Class 6A boys' and girls' state titles. Hailing from Hereford, Maryland, Covington joined Saltillo in 1984 as a Bible teacher following his graduation from Virginia Tech. Fueled by his passion for the sport, he played a pivotal role in establishing the sports program at Saltillo.

More than three decades ago, in 1984, Coach Covington founded Saltillo High School's inaugural cross-country team. He embarked on his coaching journey, guiding his first cross-country runner in 1988 and forming the first complete team in 1990. Prior to accepting the position, Covington boldly assured his administrators that he would produce a state champion within a few years. Reflecting on those early days, he shared in an article in the Tupelo Daily Journal, "They reminded me of that after three or four years when we weren't state champions yet. They were gracious and didn't hold me to my brag."

After patiently building the program, Covington led his team to their inaugural title in 1999, marking the beginning of an impressive legacy. Throughout his tenure at Saltillo, he accumulated a total of 29 state championships in cross country, comprising twenty for girls, seven for boys, and two for junior high. Covington's achievements include eight State Coach of the Year honors and one National Coach of the Year recognition.

In a statement, Covington expressed, "My real joy and fulfillment has been in the relationships with my runners and their families. Coaching at Saltillo has been a dream job and a great blessing." Although retiring from coaching, Coach Covington will continue teaching Ancient History and serving as a pastor in Tupelo.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Coach Covington for his unwavering dedication and devotion to Saltillo High School and the community over the span of 30 years.

HONORING MRS. PATRICIA O'BANNON

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Patricia O'Bannon, Tuckahoe District Supervisor and member of the Henrico County Board of Supervisors.

Mrs. O'Bannon was first elected in 1995 to represent the Tuckahoe Magisterial District.

With her election, she became the first woman to be elected to the Henrico Board of Supervisors, where she became a strong voice for the communities she serves.

A graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University, Mrs. O'Bannon has proven to be a source of knowledge for the Henrico community. Her expertise is informed by her service on the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization, the Greater Richmond Partnership, and as the former Chair of the Capital Region Airport Commission.

Throughout her tenure, she has focused on bettering Henrico County's infrastructure and improving Henrico schools. She has also been an advocate for revamping the sidewalk policy to increase public safety and accessibility to sidewalks for all in Henrico.

Mrs. O'Bannon has been a dedicated public servant on behalf of her constituents for the last 27 years, working with colleagues across the aisle to find solutions for her community. She has been a steady leader—stepping in as Chairwoman for the fifth time in February 2017 after the passing of Brookland Representative Richard Glover. Her unwavering dedication to working on behalf of Tuckahoe and all of Henrico County has left a lasting impression for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating and thanking Mrs. Patricia O'Bannon for her outstanding service on behalf of Henrico County as Tuckahoe Supervisor, and in wishing her the best as she retires.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, I missed votes due to a positive Covid result. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 698; NAY on Roll Call No. 699; YEA on Roll Call No. 700; NAY on Roll Call No. 701; YEA on Roll Call No. 702; NAY on Roll Call No. 703; and YEA on Roll Call No. 704.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEPHEN SHAM

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the Honorable Stephen Sham, who passed away on November 29, 2023, at the age of 59. As the first Asian and Chinese American mayor of the City of Alhambra, Stephen Sham was a revered visionary, leader, and advocate who dedicated his life to empowering the Asian community, fostering eco-

nomc opportunities, and promoting social equity.

Stephen Sham was born in Beijing, China, in 1964 and later lived in Hong Kong before immigrating to the United States during his teenage years. His educational journey led him to Daniel Murphy High School in Los Angeles, and he went on to earn a B.S. in Business Administration (Entrepreneurship) from Cal State L.A. Alongside his wife, he successfully operated Plaza Printing, a local business, for over 25 years.

When Stephen first started his business, he faced racism and discrimination from residents who resented the growing Asian American community in Alhambra. Motivated by these challenges, he joined the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce to challenge such prejudiced views. Through hard work and dedication, he not only dispelled misconceptions, but also rose to become the Chamber's President. During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in enhancing community outreach and supporting the growth of small businesses. In fact, I was proud to honor Stephen as businessperson of the year in my Congressional District in 2018.

Stephen's journey into the public service began in 2006, when those who knew him and benefitted from his service to the community urged him to run for the City Council. He answered the call and won, ultimately making history as the first Asian American Mayor of the City of Alhambra since its establishment in 1903. His leadership extended over four mayoral terms and 12 years on the City Council.

During his tenure, he prioritized the needs of every resident and led initiatives to increase the city's and Police Department's use of social media platforms to better connect with the Chinese-speaking community. He worked closely with fellow Councilmembers to make Alhambra a more prosperous place during his time in office. He oversaw a 23 percent decline in the crime rate and a strategic investment of over \$4 million into Public Safety equipment, with an additional \$2 million for fire training safety.

Under his leadership, Alhambra attracted new businesses, and the city council invested in new recreational facilities for its growing community. Furthermore, the city successfully built housing to meet the growing needs of its residents, and Stephen collaborating with local non-profit organizations to reduce homelessness.

His influence expanded beyond Alhambra as Stephen served as the President of the Asian Pacific American Municipal Officials (APAMO), the President of the Asian Pacific Islander Caucus, and the President of Chinese American Elected Officials (CEO). Additionally, he contributed to the Board of Directors of Bank Irvine in his most recent role.

Stephen will be remembered by family, friends, community leaders, and residents for his devotion and service to equal opportunity and diversity in the City of Alhambra. I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating the life of this extraordinary individual.

• 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.

HONORING ANDY FLICK

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the distinguished career of Andy Flick, who spent 14 years in service to the United States House of Representatives, before departing recently to serve as Legislative Director to the Vice President at the White House.

Andy's career in the House pre-dates my own. He started in 2009 in former Congressman Ike Skelton's office before serving in senior roles with Representatives COSTA, MOULTON, and TRONE. As the Vice Chair for Policy of the New Democrat Coalition (New Dems), I feel especially fortunate that Andy led the New Dems during the 117th Congress and through much of the 118th Congress. Throughout my time working with him, I have observed that Andy is an incredibly dedicated, thoughtful, and creative staffer and leader.

Under Andy's leadership, the New Dems fully leveraged Democratic majorities in the House and Senate, and control of the White House to pass historic legislation, including the Inflation Reduction Act to lower health care and energy costs and the Chips and Science Act to bolster American competitiveness in a globalized world. I am particularly indebted to Andy for the role that he and the New Dems played in helping me realize the RECOMPETE Act, which passed as a provision of the Chips and Science Act. The RECOMPETE Pilot Program aims to create renewed economic opportunity in communities that have faced persistent economic distress. I grew up in one of these communities, and it inspired me to run for Congress. I can leave Congress more easily after my current term ends, knowing the RECOMPETE Act was brought to life, in large part because of Andy and the New Dems' tireless work and skill.

During the 118th Congress, where Democrats have been in the minority, Andy embraced the Coalition's unique ability to bridge the partisan divide and make progress on the most pressing challenges facing our country. This includes the role New Dems played in helping avert a fiscal crisis by securing the votes needed to raise the debt ceiling and orienting policy task forces around critical legislation. Countless New Dems have Andy to thank for seeing their policy priorities move forward despite tough odds.

Throughout his time in working in the legislative branch, Andy left his fingerprints on policies that have improved the lives of the American people. Even more importantly, he has recruited, mentored, and helped develop countless staffers who want to be like him—with serious legislative acumen and a steadfast commitment to public service. Andy's sharp wit, humor, and unique ability to think of and then pass sound policy ideas are already sorely missed. On behalf of my office and the New Dems, I thank Andy for the legacy he has left on the Hill and for all the remarkable public service he has delivered and will continue to deliver at the White House.

We are so proud of him and will be rooting for him, always.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KATIE PORTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present to cast my votes on December 6, 2023. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 698, NAY on Roll Call No. 699, YEA on Roll Call No. 700, NAY on Roll Call No. 701, YEA on Roll Call No. 702, NAY on Roll Call No. 703 and YEA on Roll Call No. 704.

RECOGNIZING THE 95TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROME CAPITOL THEATRE

HON. BRANDON WILLIAMS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Mr. WILLIAMS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to honor the Capitol Theatre in Rome, NY as it celebrates its 95th Anniversary this year.

The idea for the Capitol Theatre was conceived by brothers Myron J. and Joseph S. Kallet. Kallet Theaters, Inc., of Oneida, New York partnered with the M.E. Commerford Amusement Company of Scranton, Pennsylvania to open the theater on December 10, 1928. It was designed by Leon H. Lempert, Jr. and was the first building in the city of Rome, New York, to be built as a movie house and the first to offer "talking pictures". The opening program included the feature film Lilac Time, starring Colleen Moore and Gary Cooper.

Until 1974, the Capitol Theatre operated as a first-run movie house, and then for the next eleven years was used on occasion for special events. The facility was officially re-opened on the 57th anniversary of the theater, December 10, 1985, by Capitol Civic Center, Inc., a non-profit formed by volunteers.

In November of 2020, a major restoration project was begun to restore the Capital interior to its 1939 period. In July of 2021, the restored theater reopened, and in January of 2022 the renovation project was completed with a recreation of the marquee and blade sign. The theater still hosts its 1928 original installation Mötter theater organ which was restored in 2002 and has been used since then to accompany silent movies.

Today, Capitol Theatre auditorium is part of the Capitol Arts Complex which is the centerpiece of the "Rome Arts District". Live stage plays, dance shows, classic movies and special events are all hosted at the Complex. Also included in the Complex is the two screen Cinema Capitol which offers first-run independent movies. The Capitol Arts Complex currently hosts over 900 performances annually.

It is truly an honor, on behalf of New York's 22nd Congressional District, to congratulate the Capitol Theatre on the occasion of its 95th Anniversary. I wish them continued success for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING BLACK RIVER TECHNICAL COLLEGE

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Black River Technical College on its 50th Anniversary as a two-year degree conferring institution serving the First Congressional District of Arkansas.

Since its founding, Black River Technical College has played a major role in the professional development of the citizens of Northeast Arkansas and Southeast Missouri by offering a wide range of programs, such as associate degrees, technical certificates, certificates of proficiency, and adult and continuing education courses. Located on two campuses in Pocahontas and Paragould, Arkansas, with an enrollment of approximately 2,500 students, Black River Technical College has a vision to "lead [the] community in learning and economic development." BRTC's staff and faculty members are engaged in our community and have truly made a difference in the lives of thousands of people in my part of the country. The First District is better because of their service.

Congratulations to Black River Technical College. I wish them many more years as a successful, integral member of the Northeast Arkansas community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, due to a death in the family, I regrettably missed votes on December 6 and 7, 2023. Had I been present, I would have voted accordingly:

YEA on Roll Call Number 698;
NAY on Roll Call Number 699;
YEA on Roll Call Number 700;
NAY on Roll Call Number 701;
YEA on Roll Call Number 702;
NAY on Roll Call Number 703;
YEA on Roll Call Number 704;
NAY on Roll Call Number 705; and
NAY on Roll Call Number 706.

HONORING MR. FRANK J. THORNTON

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2023

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Frank J. Thornton, Fairfield Supervisor and Chairman of the Henrico County Board of Supervisors.

Since his election to the Henrico County Board of Supervisors in 1995, Mr. Thornton has worked hard to build bridges and bring the Henrico community together. His historic election is a clear example of his perseverance and hard work.

Throughout his career, Mr. Thornton has worked hard to empower all in Henrico. In the