

RECOGNIZING 22 YEARS OF SERVICE OF COCONUT CREEK COMMISSIONER BECKY TOOLEY

HON. JARED MOSKOWITZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 22 years of service by Coconut Creek Commissioner, Becky Tooley.

Born in 1948 in Newark, Ohio, Mayor Tooley has a long history of service to the community of Coconut Creek. Before her election to the Coconut Creek City Commission, she served on the City's Environmental Board and the Planning and Zoning Board.

Her public service continues beyond city government, mentoring the youth of Coconut Creek at the Atlantic Technical Center and Coconut Creek High School. She also serves on the Boards of numerous community organizations, including the Coconut Creek Woman's Club, Alzheimer's Family Center Board of Trustees, Northwest Medical Center, Coconut Creek Democratic Club, the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 157, and the board of the Broward League of Cities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in recognizing Mayor Becky Tooley for her outstanding service to the people of Coconut Creek in Florida's 23rd Congressional District.

HONORING AIYANNA ZAKIA SANDERS—A CELEBRATED SCHOLAR

HON. SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise during Women's History Month to celebrate an incredible woman from California's 37th Congressional District, Aiyanna Zakia Sanders. Aiyanna was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1997. In just 25 years she has made incredible strides. In 2015, Aiyanna was an honored graduate from the Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies High School; In 2019, she graduated from Emory University with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and African American Studies. Recently, in 2022, she and her family celebrated her graduation from the prestigious Harvard Law School.

While pursuing her rigorous education, Aiyanna went the extra mile to serve her community. While at Emory University, she was a member of the local NAACP chapter, the Head Step-Mistress of Ngambika, Co-founder and President of the Black Pre-Law Society, and a member of Black Mental Health Ambassadors. Proudly, Aiyanna also became a member of the illustrious Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. while at Emory. While studying law at Harvard University, Aiyanna was the Secretary of the Black Law Student's Association and an editor of the Black Letter Law Journal. Her many extracurricular activities and roles demonstrate her immense talent and leadership capabilities.

In addition to her extensive leadership, Aiyanna has earned numerous awards for her commitment to public service. She was awarded the Dr. Herman L. Reese Community Service Award, the Delta Research and Edu-

cational Foundation Golden Anniversary Award, and the 2018 NAACP Peoples Award. In 2019 she was honored as a California Change Lawyers Scholar and received the Graduating Woman of Excellence Award. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the achievements and dedication of this incredible woman.

Beyond her academics, Aiyanna is a cherished daughter, granddaughter, and friend. Her parents, Mr. Aaron L. and Mrs. Chawn B. Sanders, her grandparents, Mr. Clifton Byron Ray, III and Mrs. Willa Ray, and countless friends and sisters have rooted for her along the way. I stand here today, proud. When we talk about representation, this is what we mean. Aiyanna is a trailblazer, an inspiration, and a role model for many. I thank her for all she has done and look forward to what she will accomplish.

HONORING THE PENNGROVE SOCIAL FIREMEN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Penngrove Social Firemen and the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Penngrove Social Welfare Club House.

The Penngrove Social Welfare Club was established in 1919 by a group of women from Penngrove, California, who were holding monthly social meetings at their homes. They held dances and card games at other halls in the area, but needed a place of their own to serve their community. The Penngrove Social Welfare Club and the Penngrove community pitched in to donate their time, money, and energy to construct the Penngrove Community Clubhouse where a Grand Opening was held on March 10, 1923. One month later they hosted the club's first public dance, charging a 50 and 75 cent admission fee.

In 1929, the Penngrove Social Welfare Club donated a parcel of land to build the much-needed firehouse for the Penngrove Volunteer Fire Department. More than two decades later, the fire department purchased four acres of land to develop the Penngrove Community Park. At this time the Penngrove Social Firemen were formed. In 1963, the Penngrove Social Welfare Club sold the clubhouse to the Penngrove Social Firemen. Since then, the clubhouse has served as a meeting place for folk dancers, Finnish community members, 4-H meetings, voting, and fundraiser dinners. In 1976, the Penngrove Parade was established by the Social Firemen to honor the country's Bicentennial and the parade has continued to be held ever since. Community members have fond memories of their elementary school graduations and Christmas pageants in the grand building on the corner of Woodward and Oak Streets.

From its humble beginnings the Penngrove Social Firemen has been an entirely self-funded, non-profit organization. The dedicated team of directors, officers, and members volunteer their time to maintain the clubhouse and the community park with an emphasis on supporting the community. The Firemen support many beloved community organizations

such as Penngrove School, Rancho Adobe Fire District, Petaluma Little League, Boys and Girls Scouts, Christmas for Kids, Penngrove 4-H, and Petaluma FFA.

Mr. Speaker, it is evident that the Penngrove Social Firemen have devoted themselves to serving our community. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor them here today.

CELEBRATING JOHN GIBBONS' SERVICE AS A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER FOR THE BELLEROSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroic accomplishments and career of John Gibbons.

A lifelong resident of Nassau County, Mr. Gibbons grew up in the Floral Park Bellerose community, graduating from Archbishop Molloy High School. He then moved to Bellerose Village in 2001. Mr. Gibbons is a family man, raising 4 kids: Anthony, Olivia, Katherine, and Elizabeth. In June, Mr. Gibbons will celebrate 30 years of marriage with his wife, Lori. On top of being a decorated fireman, John has worked in the banking and finance industries for nearly 3 decades.

John Gibbons has been a member of the Bellerose Volunteer Fire Department for 21 years on Long Island. John has risen through the ranks throughout his time there, holding many different positions because of his character and dedication to serving his community.

Mr. Gibbons has held both corporate officer positions and Firematic officer positions. During his time in the corporate office of the Bellerose Fire Department, Mr. Gibbons held the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, and Vice President. While working as a Firematic officer, Mr. Gibbons served in all Firematic officer positions: 1st Lieutenant, 2nd Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Chief, and is now serving as Chief of the Department.

While bravely serving the Bellerose community, Mr. Gibbons managed different programs and initiatives vital to the Department. While Mr. Gibbons was a Captain, John organized, supervised, and conducted 40 fire drills within a year. These drills incorporated all phases of firefighter training, preparing each firefighter for the next incident. As Chief of the Department, John is Incident Commander for all Fire Emergencies; in addition, John is the Incident Commander for 4 weeks of training at the Nassau County Fire Academy for Bellerose firefighters.

As an Ex-Chief of the Island Park Fire Department, I understand the importance of Mr. Gibbons' contributions to the Bellerose Fire Department and the surrounding community. John's long career is inspiring to other firefighters and his neighbors, but more importantly, John embodies the characteristics of an excellent fireman.

On behalf of New York's 4th District, I am esteemed to recognize his astounding career and his brave service as a firefighter. I wish John a bright, healthy, and exciting future.

RECOGNIZING ATTORNEY NEIL O'DONNELL, GREATER WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I honor Attorney Neil O'Donnell who was named the Man of the Year by the Greater Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. He was honored at the group's annual gathering on March 17, 2023.

Neil graduated with honors from Kings College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, before matriculating at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar in 1987 and began practicing law that same year.

Neil spent three years working for the Philadelphia-based law firm of Baskin, Flaherty, Elliott & Mannino. He returned to Northeastern Pennsylvania in 1990 and started the O'Donnell Law Offices. Over the past 30 years, Neil has grown the O'Donnell Law Offices into one of the leading legal practices in Northeastern Pennsylvania. He has cultivated an impressive reputation through his commitment to practicing to the highest standard.

In addition to the Pennsylvania Bar, Neil is admitted to the Middle District of Pennsylvania and Eastern District of Pennsylvania District Courts, the United States Third Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court. For his legal acumen, he has been named to the Pennsylvania Super Lawyers Top 100, the National Trial Lawyers Top 100, Best Lawyers, American Society of Legal Advocates Top 100 Lawyer, Rue Ratings Best Attorneys of America and National Association of Distinguished Counsel. He also received a Martindale Hubble AV Preeminent Rating and is a Litigation Counsel of American Fellow. Neil has shared his extensive legal experience with his peers as a presenter for leading attorney groups like the Pennsylvania Association for Justice, Melvin Belli Society and the Brain Injury Association of California.

In addition to his legal practice, Neil has served as the chair of the Senatorial Advisory Committee Panel for the Selection of United States Attorneys and U.S. Marshals for the Eastern, Western and Middle Districts of Pennsylvania. He is the co-chair of the Senatorial Advisory Panel for the Selection of the U.S. District Court. This past November, Neil was named to the 11-person board for the Governor Josh Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis's Transition after their election.

I am honored to join with the Greater Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons to recognize Neil as the Man of the Year. His career has been marked by impressive integrity and service to the legal profession, and I am proud to celebrate his many achievements and contributions to the field of law and our community. I wish him the best.

HONORING CHUCK McMINN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chuck McMinn, the St. Helena Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year for his excellent work in our community.

Mr. McMinn is a graduate of Harvard business school and a successful Silicon Valley entrepreneur. Mr. McMinn and his wife Anne purchased the Vineyard 29 winery in the Napa Valley in 1999. They began producing Cabernet Sauvignon and established a beacon of environmentally sustainable winemaking, combining a passion for excellent wine with responsible production. The winery uses an on-site well and generates electricity on-site, minimizing its impact on the Napa Valley ecosystem. These and other sustainability practices allow Vineyard 29 to be 250 percent more efficient in how it utilizes natural resources, ensuring that the area can continue to supporting winemaking for generations to come.

After moving to Napa Valley, Mr. McMinn has also worked tirelessly in various philanthropic pursuits to improve our area. Mr. McMinn founded Napa-Learns, a nonprofit devoted to providing students in Napa County with valuable skills and resources through innovative public education programs. He also founded the Rail Arts District, a contemporary outdoor art museum designed to extend the benefits of public art to the semi-industrial neighborhoods of Napa Valley. As a board member of the St. Helena Hospital Foundation, the St. Helena Viticultural Society, and Appellations St. Helena, Mr. McMinn has extended his time, passion, and energy to the Napa Valley community.

In addition, Mr. McMinn is the founder and board president of the nonprofit Napa Valley Vine Trail Coalition. Under his leadership, the Vine Trail board team has grown to include members and organizations representing a broad spectrum of community and civic interests. This dedicated all-volunteer team share a vision to build a continuous trail connecting the entire Napa Valley from Vallejo's Ferry Terminal to the foot of Mount St. Helena. The Vine Trail will link the entirety of Napa Valley, physically, culturally, and artistically. The benefits of such a trail include increased tourism, a safe and environmentally friendly commuting alternative, and greater access to the beautiful and diverse Napa community.

Mr. Speaker, it is evident that Mr. McMinn has worked selflessly for the betterment of the Napa Valley community. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
RICHARD JOHNSON

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Richard Johnson, who retires this March from 42 years of consummate service to the Town of Glastonbury—nearly 30 of

which have been as Town Manager. Richard's leadership has helped Glastonbury maintain its standing as a highly successful community in Connecticut, which I am proud to say has a large footprint in the Second District of Connecticut as a result of redistricting under the 2020 census. I have had the pleasure of knowing of Town Manager Johnson's work over the years as a Member of Congress, a state legislator and a town attorney from the neighboring town of Vernon and can personally attest to his dedication to the Town of Glastonbury.

Born in Avon, Richard has always been a true-blue, central Connecticut native and was destined to serve one of that region's many thriving communities. Armed with a Connecticut education—a bachelor's from Southern Connecticut State University and an MBA from the University of Connecticut—Richard was uniquely equipped to ensure Glastonbury's upward trajectory. Richard's career with the Town of Glastonbury began in 1980, first as Glastonbury's Parks and Recreation Director and then as Assistant Town Manger. With nearly 13 years of experience, he was appointed to the permanent position of Town Manager in 1993. Since becoming Town Manager, he has become an institution of knowledge in service of the town's interests.

As Town Manager, Richard has worked with 15 town councils, including some 50 community leaders. Richard brokered more than 60 land acquisitions and preservation projects, totaling more than 2,500 acres, that in his words, "helps shape the community, preserves our farms, open spaces, and riverfront land". Under his visionary leadership, the town acquired and converted brownfields into what is now the iconic Riverfront Park and Riverfront Community Center and Boathouse, the very location where his retirement celebration is to be held. His persistence and tenacity over the years also must not go unappreciated. For example, he recently helped the town achieve a multigenerational goal by way of the acquisition of a roughly 540-acre property, previously owned by the Metropolitan District Commission. Town Manager Johnson's leadership in this land acquisition demonstrates the strength of Glastonbury's officials and process, setting an example that ought to be emulated across the state and nation.

Richard has also famously worked to strengthen the town's capital improvement program, which led to its receiving of an AAA bond rating from both Standard and Poor's and Moody's Investors Service. These ratings have and will continue to bolster Glastonbury's ability to attract capital for municipal projects well beyond his retirement. As Glastonbury's steward for more than a generation, countless projects under Richard have rightfully been recognized on the national and local level.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Johnson's unwavering loyalty to and love for the Town of Glastonbury public has made him a fearless leader and honorable civil servant. Throughout his tenure, the town has been recognized with accolades including the Engineering Excellence Award, the National Recreation and Park Association's Innovation in Park Design Award, Climate Leader Designation, Nationally Accredited Police Department, and countless others. Richard's conscientious approach to leadership has forged him into the epitome of a good public servant. Though Glastonbury is