

as a volunteer, activist, and fighter committed to giving a voice to the voiceless. Lois worked tirelessly for decades with dedication and passion, which still inspires me to this day.

As a Congressional Staffer, she served under two U.S. Senators, Senators William Proxmire, and Herb Kohl, and eventually served the American people in my office. She served nearly 10 years on my staff as a case-worker and then as District Director. Lois' contribution to the Milwaukee community as well as her legacy will continue to inspire future generations of public servants.

Lois' true passion was serving working-class Americans and underinvested youths. She served the labor movement as the Regional Representative of the Secretary of Labor for the Midwest Region in Chicago. During the Clinton Administration, she served under Secretaries Robert Reich and Alexis Herman to help provide better living conditions for Americans. Most importantly she served as a union organizer for the Service Employees Union representing workers who cared for the elderly. She ran a non-profit called REACH, a youth organization for underprivileged kids. She also worked with the Milwaukee Job Corps to start an internship program in my district office. Lois cared about the Americans that are often too forgotten about.

Lois lived the reality that so many women with careers juggling work and childcare issues face. She then returned to school with four children under the age of 14 and earned both a BA in Political Science and an MA in Industrial and Labor Relations. Lois understood the struggle of being a working-class mother and committed her life to helping others who faced similar struggles.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I am honored to pay tribute to Lois O'Keefe. She has helped transform the lives of so many people, including my constituents. The people of the 4th Congressional District, the State of Wisconsin, and the United States thank her for her commitment to service.

#### SUSTAINABLE BUDGET ACT

#### HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, can anyone with any halfway working knowledge of government finances seriously dispute that our federal fiscal house is dangerously out of order?

Our national debt is approaching \$32 trillion, doubling in just the last decade alone, and up some \$3 trillion in just the two years since I last introduced my Sustainable Budget Act in February 2021. More directly, our debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP), or the measure of our economy's ability to sustain national debt, now stands at 120 percent, doubling since 2000. The fastest-growing part of our federal budget continues to be interest payments on our debt, increasingly outpacing and crowding out critical defense and non-defense spending alike.

In a Congress where we often repeat the platitude that our budget reflects our values, it is disturbing that the main common value re-

flected is fiscal unsustainability ranging to irresponsibility. We need look no further than a mirror for the root cause: our collective inability to face the music of fiscal responsibility and sustainability.

We clearly need help with our collective inability to confront this reality. My Sustainable Budget Act, again co-introduced yesterday with Congressman STEVE WOMACK, is at least a start toward a solution. It would follow the models of Simpson-Bowles and other such independent, bipartisan commissions charged with focusing on our deficits and debt and recommending a sustainable path for an up-or-down vote by Congress.

Our bill is similar to other proposals, including the TRUST Act that I have reintroduced with Congressmen SCOTT PETERS and MIKE GALLAGHER to save our foundational entitlement programs from similar unsustainability. Together, they offer a far better way to tackle our debt crisis than denial, anger, avoidance, diversion and rhetoric. I urge their prompt consideration and passage.

#### HONORING THE VALOROUS SERVICE OF CW5 BENJAMIN ARPS

#### HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor CW5 Benjamin S. Arps for his remarkable military service and valorous leadership in the War on Terror, and to congratulate him on a well-deserved retirement.

A native of Woodbine, Iowa, CW5 Arps enlisted in the Army in June 1997, marking the beginning of a singularly impressive career of service. After completing One Station Unit Training at Fort Knox, he graduated as a 19D Cavalry Scout. His first assignment was with the 5th Squadron, 15th Cavalry Regiment, where he distinguished himself as a Bradley Fighting Vehicle gunner and instructor. In July 2001, he graduated from the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program at Fort Rucker and was assigned to Bravo Company, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment at Aviano Airbase, Italy. While in Italy, he served as a UH60 Pilot in Command, Unit Trainer, Tactical Operations officer, and Operations Officers.

In January 2005, CW5 Arps answered the call to serve that few will answer. He successfully assessed for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), the most elite special operations night-operating aviation force in the world. Upon his graduation from Officer Green Platoon in February 2006, he was assigned to Delta Company, Task Force, 1st Battalion, 160th SOAR (ABN) at Fort Campbell. Through rigorous preparation, training, and testing, he achieved Fully Mission Qualified and Flight Lead status, and lead as the D Co. Safety Officer and the 1-160th SOAR (ABN) Safety Officer. From November 2014 to January 2017, CW5 Arps served as the 160th SOAR (ABN) Regiment Recruiting Director. Accepting the next challenge in his career, he was assigned to 2nd Battalion where he served as Regiment Flight Lead, ultimately rising to be the Battalion Senior Warrant Officer. He served as the senior warrant

officer for the second battalion for a number of years, multiple combat assignments, many of them classified, and all of them at great risk to his life.

Recognizing CW5 Arps' leadership, he was selected by the US Army Special Operations Command to become the 8th Regiment Command Chief Warrant Officer for the 160th SOAR (ABN). In that position, Command Chief Warrant Officer Arps led every warrant officer assigned to the 160th SOAR, the world's premiere special operations aviation regiment.

After indicating to the Command his intent to retire, CW5 Arps was asked to stay in service for another position. There, he stood up a brand-new office designed to assist special operations aviators transitioning to civilian service. Without hesitation, he said "yes" to becoming the first Officer in Charge for the 160th SOAR (ABN) EXFIL Transition Program.

His 26 year-career has been marked by uncommon valor, honor, and a dedication to excellence on and off the battlefield. He deployed thirty times in support of the Global War on Terror and in several other sensitive, often classified, overseas contingency operations. In all his service, he fulfilled the Night Stalker Creed's mission-focus: to safeguard the honor and prestige of the United States.

CW5 Arps's permanent awards and decorations are numerous and worth recounting: the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal (2 OLC), Air Medal (Numeral 8), Army Commendation Medal (2 OLC), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (3 CS), Iraq Campaign Medal (4 CS), Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal, Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terror Service Medal, Overseas Ribbon (Numeral 2), NATO Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Army Meritorious Commendation, Army Superior Unit Award, Air Force Meritorious Unit Award, Combat Action Badge, and Master Aviator Badge.

CW5 Arps' career exemplifies servant-leadership, a drive to learn, and a relentless pursuit of excellence that should be venerated and emulated by all Americans. No matter what was thrown at him, he always put the mission and his soldiers first. He led with great strength and quiet resolve, commanded high respect, and put his life on the line for his country, his wife of 24 years, and his two children.

We honor his excellence, dedication, fidelity, and courage. As Philippians 4:8 instructs us, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." It is for this reason that we commend and honor CW5 Arps today.

Few answer the call to serve their country, and fewer still serve with as much distinction and honor as CW5 Arps. His service will never be forgotten, and I am proud to represent him and his family in Congress. On behalf of the United States Congress, the American people, and as a fellow Night Stalker, I heartily thank CW5 Arps for his long and distinguished career in service to our great Nation, and I congratulate him on his retirement from military service. Night Stalkers Don't Quit.

## VAISAKHI NATIONAL SIKH DAY

**HON. MARY GAY SCANLON**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 324th anniversary of Khalsa Sirjana Divas (Vaisakhi) which falls on April 14, 2023. On this historic day in Spring of 1699 the sapling of Sikhism planted by Guru Nanak and nurtured by nine successor Gurus came to full blossom with the creation of the Khalsa (Saint-Soldier Sikhs) at a historic Vaisakhi Congregation in Anandpur Sahib, Punjab.

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in the late 15th century in Punjab on the principles of equality, justice, and respect of all human beings. Sikhs started immigrating to the United States about 125 years ago. It is the world's fifth largest religion with around 30 million followers, including many in my district in Pennsylvania.

Sikhs share a strong sense of community, family, and selfless service. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sikh communities across the country, including many of my constituents in Upper Darby, mobilized to deliver meals, groceries, masks, and other supplies to first responders a hundreds of thousands of families in need.

Tragically, Sikhs are frequent victims of hate crimes. In fact, Sikhs are among the most targeted for hate crimes, according to the 2022 FBI Hate crimes report. We must do everything in our power to prevent senseless violence and protect our Sikh brothers and sisters. To that end, I am hopeful that the recognition of Vaisakhi, April 14th as "National Sikh Day" will allow people to learn more about the vibrant Sikh religion and encourage more unity in our community.

I am proud to lead my colleagues in again introducing a resolution supporting the designation of April 14, Vaisakhi as "National Sikh Day" to recognize this exceptional community and the contributions to our country.

## TRIBUTE TO DR. MARIO T. GARCÍA

**HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Mario T. García has recently retired from University of California at Santa Barbara where he was a professor of Chicano and Chicana Studies for the last 47 years. He was among the first generation of scholars who conducted extensive research on the Chicano Movement and Mexican American civil rights struggles. He has helped pave the path for scholars entering the field.

Dr. García describes himself as a self-described liberationist historian aiming to inspire progressive social change. His work encompasses more than a dozen books and several edited collections all of which advance the inclusion of the poor and oppressed and spotlight the leaders of social justice movements. His publications include "Desert Immigrants: the Mexicans of El Paso, 1880-1920," "Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, and

Identity, 1930-1960," "BLOWOUT: Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice (co-authored with Sal Castro)," and "Católicos: Resistance and Affirmation in Chicano Catholic History."

Dr. García has led a distinguished career having been a professor around the country at universities including Yale University, San Diego State University, San Jose State University, University of Texas at El Paso, and University of California at Santa Barbara. His books have demonstrated the numerous contributions that Chicanas and Chicanos have made to U.S. history, including military veterans, teachers, labor organizers, priests, and students who have organized and pushed for democracy and justice for all people.

I am honored to recognize Dr. García for his continued commitment to the expansion and research of the Chicano movement and history on the Central Coast and throughout the nation. I ask all Members to join me today in honoring the exceptional life and legacy of the scholar of the 24th Congressional District, Dr. Mario T. García, for his incredible service and contributions to his community.

## HONORING HECTOR JAVIER ROCCO

**HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, from the 24th District of the great state of Florida, I rise today to recognize and honor the life and legacy of Hector Javier Rocco and commending him for his devotion to the Nation and its ideals.

Whereas, Hector Javier Rocco was born on December 3, 1959, where he was raised, the oldest of 4 children to Hector Rocco and Doris Avalos. He was the son of a school teacher and businesswoman; and husband to Ines Veronica Perea;

Whereas, trained as a systems analyst and having worked in the Chilean fishing and mining industries for many years as a human resource manager; in 2001, Mr. Rocco and his family moved to Hollywood, Florida in the pursuit of the American Dream. There, as is common for many new immigrants to America, he worked a variety of jobs in the construction and furniture industry. He quickly gained skills and found a passion as a handyman. Realizing a life dream of becoming a business owner, Mr. Rocco and his wife opened a cleaning, remodeling, and repair company. For over twenty years, Mr. Rocco worked in Broward and Miami-Dade counties where he renovated homes, businesses, and schools.

Whereas, Mr. Rocco was grateful for America and the opportunities it provided for him and his family, and was known for his talent and dedication to his craft. Mr. Rocco raised children who grew up to be entrepreneurs, public servants, and community leaders: reveled in the successes and accomplishments of his children, and never missed an opportunity to express his love for them.

Whereas, his humor, bright spirit, graciousness, kindness, and joie de vivre were an inspiration to those fortunate enough to know and work with him;

Whereas, a committed brother, husband, father, grandfather and friend, Mr. Rocco was

loved and respected both in the United States and around the world;

Whereas, Mr. Rocco leaves to carry on his legacy his four children: Hector Javier Rocco Jr., Karina Stefania Rocco, Giovanni Paolo Rocco, Antonella Francesca Rocco, and five grandchildren; Walter Aaron Pescador, Sofia Victoria Rocco, Isabella Agatha Agudelo, Amelie Eleanor Agudelo, and Madolyn Olivia Rocco McNellis.

Whereas, left to mourn him are a host of family members, dear cherished friends, and a beloved community who lost a strong, forward-thinking leader and generous and knowledgeable individual;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, FREDERICA S. WILSON, a member of the United States House of Representatives representing the 24th Congressional District of Florida, am honored to recognize the late Hector Javier Rocco for his exemplary career, contributions to his community, and devotion to his family and friends.

## CELEBRATING FLICS MIDDLE SCHOOL ROBOTICS

**HON. RASHIDA TLAIB**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I want to celebrate the achievement of Detroit's Foreign Language Immersion and Cultural Studies School's (FLICS) Middle School Robotics Team's outstanding performance in competition this year. The team is Detroit Public Schools' first team in more than thirty years to travel to the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) International Championship.

Later this month, the FLICS Robotics Team will be taking on the best teams from all over the world in this high stakes, four-day competition. Team Techno Phoenix has worked hard and persevered in competition throughout the season, including an outstanding performance at the state championship. I am proud of this group of young people who have invested time and energy into this challenging pursuit.

Please join me in recognition of FLICS' Team Techno Phoenix as we cheer them on to victory at the FIRST International competition.

## RECOGNIZING MR. GEORGE GIBBS

**HON. DAVID G. VALADAO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. George Gibbs who passed away on March 4, 2023, at his home in Yucca Valley with his children and grandchildren surrounding him. He was 88 years old. The son of William and Mabel Gibbs, he was born Jan. 7, 1935, in Queens, New York. He lived in California for 55 years. Mr. Gibbs graduated from college at Emporia State in Kansas. He was in the Marine Corps for 22 years, serving two tours in Vietnam and retired as a major. A real estate broker for 45 years, Mr. Gibbs was the owner of Glen Realty and