

## 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. FEDERICA 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

a past president of the Board of Realtors in Yucca Valley. He enjoyed running, spending time with family and friends, football, and horse racing. He was admired by family and friends and was always willing to help anyone in need. Mr. Gibbs is survived by son George Russell Gibbs, daughter Gigi Gibbs, grandson Brandon Will, granddaughter Stephanie Will, granddaughter Julianna McClay, grandson Jack Melvin, and granddaughter Rachel Gibbs. Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Mr. George Gibbs. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends during this difficult time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. KATHY CASTOR**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am not recorded for Roll Call No. 174, Roll Call No. 175, Roll Call No. 176, Roll Call No. 177, Roll Call No. 178, Roll Call No. 179, Roll Call No. 180, Roll Call No. 181, Roll Call No. 182, on Thursday, March 30, 2023.

I have been a proponent of protecting our climate since I have been in Congress. As the former chair of the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, I have championed investing in a clean energy economy of the future, protecting the climate, and the future of all American people.

I unequivocally oppose the corporate giveaway of H.R. 1 the Polluters over People Act. Last Congress, Democrats took decisive action to fight the climate crisis, protect the pocketbooks of the American people, and a healthy environment for all. H.R. 1 is an irresponsible giveaway to polluters at the expense of our neighbors back home and deserves a no vote.

However, due to a death in my family, I was unable to be present for votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 174; YEA on Roll Call No. 175; YEA on Roll Call No. 176; YEA on Roll Call No. 177; NAY on Roll Call No. 178; NAY on Roll Call No. 179; NAY on Roll Call No. 180; YEA on Roll Call No. 181; and NAY on Roll Call No. 182.

HONORING MARY ZAHASKY AND DOUG BOISVERT, OWNERS OF BON VIE BISTRO & A PIECE OF CAKE BAKERY

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mary Zahasky and Doug Boisvert, owners of Bon Vie Bistro and A Piece of Cake bakery on the occasion of their retirement this Saturday, April 8, 2023 after over three decades of operation in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Mary and Doug opened A Piece of Cake Bakery in 1985 and have been serving up hand-made creations from cupcakes to wedding cakes ever since. They expanded their business in 2003 when they opened Bon Vie Bistro, serving up eclectic breakfast and lunch

offerings and frequently going off the menu to make whatever their customers might be in the mood for. They later merged the bistro and bakery together under one roof in St. Paul's Cathedral cozy Cathedral Hill neighborhood and have become a beloved local institution.

They always use fresh ingredients and the most delicious recipes, but their customer-first focus and connection to their community is what really makes them stand out. I have had the pleasure of getting to know Mary and Doug over the years as a patron of their stores, and can attest to the wonderful impact that their small businesses have had on the community. Though the neighborhood will be sad to see them close their doors, I wish them all the best as they enjoy their retirement.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Mary Zahasky and Doug Boisvert and the wonderful legacy they will leave on our St. Paul community.

CELEBRATING THE EXTRAORDINARY CAREER OF FEDERAL JUDGE U.W. CLEMON

**HON. TERRI A. SEWELL**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 10, 2023*

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary career of a legal trailblazer, Civil Rights activist, scholar, former State Senator, pioneering lawmaker, and my special mentor, the Honorable Judge U.W. Clemon, as he celebrates his 80th birthday on April 9, 2023.

A native of Alabama's 7th Congressional District, Judge Clemon was born to Addie and Moses Clemon in Fairfield in 1943. He began his education in the then-segregated Jefferson County School System, graduating valedictorian of Westfield High School in 1961, then attended Miles College.

At Miles College, Clemon excelled in academics and student activism, serving as SGA President and a leading voice for civil rights on campus. Clemon played a pivotal role in the "Selective Buying Campaign" to boycott segregated stores in downtown Birmingham. Because of that boycott, a young Clemon was confronted by "Bull" Conner, when he petitioned the Birmingham Commission to remove its segregation laws. Clemon marched in many student demonstrations under the direction of Dr. King, and blazed trails, successfully desegregating the Birmingham Public Library.

Upon graduating from Miles College as valedictorian of the Class of 1965, Clemon fulfilled his childhood goal of becoming an attorney, receiving his law degree in 1968 from the Columbia Law School in New York City. While a law student, Clemon clerked at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. This clerkship led to a life-long association with the organization as local counsel on numerous civil rights lawsuits brought in Alabama.

After law school, Judge Clemon brought his immense talents back home to Birmingham. He spent the next 12 years as a premier civil rights attorney, dedicated to addressing the racial barriers against Black people in Alabama. Clemon was an effective fearless lawyer taking on Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant to desegregate the "all-white" University of Alabama

football team, leading lawsuits against local school boards, large and small employers, and major corporations, including the United States Steel Corporation, which led to the desegregation of the American steel industry.

By 1974, Judge Clemon made history as one of the first two African Americans elected to the Alabama State Senate since Reconstruction. Serving the 15th District for five years, Senator Clemon took the same fearless advocacy to the Alabama State Legislature, chairing two powerful Senate committees—Rules and Judiciary—and was an unrelenting critic of Governor George Wallace's stance on the death penalty and exclusion of African Americans from state boards and agencies.

His successful legal career gained the attention of United States President Jimmy Carter, who appointed then-Senator Clemon to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama. Ascending to the bench, Judge Clemon made history as Alabama's first Black Federal Judge in 1980 and served as Chief Judge from 1999 through 2006.

During his almost three decades as a federal judge, Judge Clemon presided over numerous federal cases on a variety of issues. His decisions changed the face of our judiciary, and his legacy has had profound effects on Alabama systems and practices in housing, criminal justice, education, employment discrimination, and environmental injustices changing and influencing the landscape of Alabama for generations to come.

Judge Clemon was a highly respected jurist both inside and outside the courtroom, known as a tough but fair judge, demanding that lawyers before him represent their clients competently and effectively. As Chief Judge, the Court developed a better relationship with the community by adopting a more juror-friendly approach, insisting on a diverse jury pool, prioritizing minorities in the court's workforce. In 2009, Judge Clemon retired from the bench submitting his retirement letter to President Barack Obama. It was befitting that Judge Clemon was succeeded by his law clerk Abdul Kallon. Judge Clemon received numerous prestigious awards, holds three honorary degrees, two street names, and an elementary school in his name.

Judge Clemon continues to be a vibrant member of the Birmingham legal community. Now in private practice, he continues to take on cases of the underrepresented, vulnerable, and underserved. A man of faith, Judge Clemon served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for his home church Jones Chapel AME Church and is a current member of the Sixth Avenue Church, where he serves as a deacon. Judge Clemon is a loving and proud husband of Mrs. Barbara L. Clemon for over fifty-five years and the doting father to their daughter Michelle who is a lawyer in Birmingham, following in his footsteps as a graduate of Columbia Law School, and his son Isaac who is a musician in New York City.

On a personal note, Judge U.W. Clemon is a special mentor to me, a trusted advisor and loving father figure. My most formative legal experience was serving as a law clerk for Judge Clemon after graduating from law school in 1992. I learned more about the practice of law and saw first-hand what "justice" looks like by witnessing him in the courtroom. Sitting with him in his chamber was always an educational experience. The Judge tested my knowledge, stretched my legal acumen, challenged my moral values, and inspired me to