

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING NATIONAL INFERTILITY AWARENESS WEEK

HON. ANDY KIM

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Infertility Awareness Week. Commemorated annually since 1989, this week serves as a salute to the patients, doctors, researchers, parents, children, families, and all of those who love, support and have been touched by infertility. It also serves to recognize the extraordinary progress we have made over the last four decades toward destigmatizing infertility and bringing awareness to the many barriers people face when trying to start and build their families.

Approximately one-in-five Americans are impacted by infertility. It affects both men and women of all races, religious backgrounds, and economic status, and has an impact spanning millions of Americans across the country. Through research and considerable medical advancements, fertility treatments have vastly improved since the first successful IVF pregnancy and live birth in 1978. Organizations across the country have devoted their mission to achieving continued research and advancement, and I commend them for their dedication to helping families.

I'm grateful to have met with women from my district in South and Central New Jersey through the help of organizations like RESOLVE, the National Infertility Association, which advocates for millions of people who need medical assistance to have a family. We discussed the pain and isolation that too frequently goes hand-in-hand with infertility and the importance of lowering the barriers to infertility care including cost and coverage. That's why I'm also proud to represent one of just 16 states that has laws requiring health insurance companies to provide coverage for infertility treatment.

But we cannot rely on state legislatures alone. I'm proud to have cosponsored pieces of legislation like the Access to Infertility Treatment and Care Act and the Expanding Access to Fertility Care for Servicemembers and Dependents Act to address this issue on a national scale. In the absence of comprehensive and reliable fertility preservation and family building healthcare coverage, the option of having children may not otherwise be available for millions of Americans without the financial assistance and support of organizations like RESOLVE, the Alliance for Fertility Preservation, the Military Family Building Coalition, and many others.

For more than 30 years, millions of Americans have been able to receive care that resulted in safe and successful treatment for moms and babies. While medical advancements have been a substantial step forward for family planning and building, we also understand that significant medical, financial, and

health equity barriers still exist for people that want to start a family.

During National Infertility Awareness Week, I hope we can recommit ourselves to removing the barriers that currently exist for people experiencing infertility challenges. I am honored to recognize the millions of infertility advocates throughout the country, who champion the rights of everyone to build a family.

HONORING SANDRA SOTO

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and thank, upon her retirement, Sandra Soto who served for 22 years as Chief of Staff in my San Jose District Office.

During these years our country faced many challenges. From Y2K, 9/11, the Great Recession, January 6th, droughts, floods, earthquakes . . . you name it, Sandra provided steady, practical leadership for my staff and in service to my constituents.

Sandra provided important mentorship for many young staffers who, with her important guidance, went on to important professional careers both inside and outside of government.

Her dedication was particularly admirable when it came to the needs of children, seniors and veterans and members of our community who lacked opportunity.

Sandra Soto is both wise and kind. If there was an elderly vet who just needed to be heard, she was always ready with a fresh cup of coffee and a sympathetic ear.

She is a fierce advocate for those who have been mistreated, overlooked, or let down. As federal agencies in Region IX can attest, Sandra—and, under her leadership our District Office staff—got results when a bureaucratic snafu damaged a constituent.

Because of these qualities Sandra is beloved by my District Office staff, by my constituents and by the staff of other Bay Area elected officials. Since her retirement I have heard from many how they admire Sandra and miss her.

I admire Sandra as well. She was not only a valued employee, but also a friend to all . . . including me.

I wish Sandra and her wonderful family well during her well-deserved retirement. I look forward to continuing to see her around the community we both call home.

CONGRATULATING TULANE UNIVERSITY'S FOOTBALL TEAM AMERICAN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE AND COTTON BOWL CHAMPIONS

HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Tulane University football team for winning the American Athletic Conference championship, and for then winning the 2023 Cotton Bowl Classic! The Tulane football team, under the leadership of Coach Willie Fritz, just completed the greatest turnaround in NCAA football history with a commanding 12–2 record after finishing 2–10 in their 2021–2022 season. This magical turnaround season was crystallized on Monday, January 2, 2023, when No. 14 ranked Tulane faced off against the No. 8 University of Southern California in the Cotton Bowl and won a thrilling instant-classic by a score of 46–45, with sixteen of Tulane's points scored in the final four minutes.

Tulane finished the season ranked No. 9 in all of college football, which is their highest national ranking since 1998. Tulane's march to victory included: defeating three top 25 teams in the nation; defeating the three teams leaving the American Athletic Conference for the Big 12; and defeating Kansas State who went on to be the Big 12 champion. Prior to winning the Cotton Bowl, Tulane defeated the No. 22 University of Central Florida in a rematch for the AAC championship to capture the university's first-ever AAC title.

Tulane's electric championship season also included individual honors. Tyjae Spears, a native of Ponchatoula, LA, was named AAC Offensive Player of the Year, and Coach Willie Fritz won the AAC Coach of the Year award, the Bobby Dodd Coach of the Year award, and was a finalist for both the Bear Bryant and George Munger Coach of the Year awards. This is the fourth time in the last five years that Coach Fritz has led his team to a bowl game, and I commend him for his continued leadership of these talented young men. Roll Wave.

HONORING CHIEF RICHARD THOMAS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Woodland Fire Department Battalion Chief Richard Thomas in honor of his retirement and service to our community.

Chief Thomas was born in Vallejo, California and grew up in Crockett, California. At the age

• 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.

of 16, he joined the Crockett Fire Department as a volunteer and later went on to obtain an Associate of Arts degree in Fire Science from Columbia Junior College. While in college, Chief Thomas worked and lived at the firehouse as a member of the sleeper program. He eventually joined CalFire as a sleeper serving at the Twain Harte and Sonoma stations.

In 1986, Chief Thomas joined the Woodland Fire Department as a Firefighter after ranking first on their fire service test. His dedication to fire service and Woodland persisted while commuting from Crockett for his first year of service. Seventeen years after joining the Woodland Fire Department, Chief Thomas was promoted to the rank of fire captain in August of 2003. While serving in the Woodland Fire Department, he was acknowledged by the City of Woodland with a Proclamation for rescuing a victim from a house fire in zero visibility conditions.

Chief Thomas was promoted to battalion chief in December of 2012. He has been involved in many aspects of the Woodland Fire Department, including the Fire Department Honor Guard, Arson Investigation Team, and he is President of the Woodland Firefighters Association. Additionally, he built the department's first-grade program, an educational program dedicated to teaching kids about fire service. This program is still in use today throughout all schools in Woodland.

When not on duty, Chief Thomas loves spending time with his fire family and his non-fire family. He has also been a baseball coach for the last twelve years and enjoys volunteering.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Richard Thomas is deeply appreciated for his decades of selfless service and commitment to the Woodland Fire Department and our community. His efforts have made our district a safer and more enjoyable place to live. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this spring, we mark the 30th anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act, known as FMLA. This groundbreaking law allows millions of workers to take unpaid leave from their jobs when necessary, without the fear of losing their jobs or being forced to choose retaining a job over the needs of themselves or their families.

Prior to the passage of the FMLA, there were no uniform laws or guaranteed leave for workers. None. In 1993, with bipartisan support, Congress passed, and President Bill Clinton signed into law, the Family and Medical Leave Act.

FMLA has remained crucial for workers all over the United States for three decades. It has provided workers across the country with 12 weeks of leave to care for a new child, an ill family member, or their own health. During this time, one's job is guaranteed. Unfortunately, FMLA leave is entirely unpaid, only

about 56 percent of workers are eligible for the program due to strict eligibility requirements regarding tenure and worksite size, it restricts the definition of family to exclude millions of caregivers, and the stark reality is that many workers cannot go without income.

As we celebrate 30 years of FMLA, Congress should recognize that paid family and medical leave is long overdue. The pandemic made crystal clear that the current patchwork system fails to cover many workers, especially low-paid workers, and harms our economy by removing millions of workers from the labor force and hundreds of millions of dollars in earnings. Limiting leave to those who can afford time off without pay harms workers of color and lower-wage workers, in particular. For example, Black workers are 86 percent more likely to be unable to take leave when they need to care for others or themselves. Indeed, 68 percent of Black women are the sole breadwinners in their households, making any loss of pay due to illness or caregiving a tremendous hardship. Families should not face the unethical choice of earning a paycheck or caring for their loved ones or themselves.

As the lead Democrat of the Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee on Worker and Family Support, which has jurisdiction over paid leave, I am proud that House Democrats passed out of the House the first-ever, universal, comprehensive paid family and medical leave program. Had the Republicans in the Senate not blocked its final passage, this program would have provided all U.S. workers with up to 4 weeks of paid leave to address a serious personal or family health issue, or to care for a newborn or newly-adopted or fostered child.

Universal paid leave is not a gamble; we have decades of research from state and international implementation that comprehensive protections help businesses retain qualified workers and government support helps level the playing field for small businesses while supporting workers and strengthening the economy. Fourteen states and the District of Columbia have passed laws to provide or require paid leave: Arizona; California; New Jersey; Rhode Island; New York; District of Columbia; Washington; Massachusetts; Connecticut; Oregon; Colorado; New Hampshire; Maryland; Virginia; and Delaware.

Research by the Rutgers University Center for Women and Work found that implementing universal paid family and medical leave would result in higher post-birth wages for women who take paid leave than for those that do not. Given that women are more likely to serve as primary caregiver and, therefore, are more likely to need leave, a federal paid leave program would strengthen the economic security of women. Additionally, research by Zero-to-Three found that the well-being of children would improve dramatically given the availability of parents to care for children and help obtain needed healthcare. Finally, the improved economic well-being of families would boost the economy and business revenue. In fact, paid leave policies creating gender equity would boost GDP by \$2.4 trillion by 2030, and policy allowing caregiving for older adults \$1.7 trillion by 2030.

I am proud to recognize my home state of Illinois is one of three states (i.e., Illinois, Maine, Nevada) that has enacted mandatory earned time off, a policy that is a substantial leap forward to universal paid family and med-

ical leave. The Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act will begin in 2024. It allows workers to accrue one hour of paid leave for every 40 hours workers, with a limit of 40 hours per year. Importantly, workers can use this leave for any reason, not just health care. I also am proud to recognize that ordinances in Cook County and Chicago proved that these policies benefit both workers and employers. This flexible time off for shorter life events coupled with paid family and medical leave for longer periods could substantially support workers, allowing them to remain in the workforce and advance their careers over time while still meeting the needs of themselves and their families.

We must take action to ensure equity for women, workers of color, and low-income workers through comprehensive, universal, paid family and medical leave legislation. Although my Republican colleagues have repeatedly blocked Democratic efforts to enact paid family and medical leave, I promise to continue to champion comprehensive paid family and medical leave legislation to give workers the protections they deserve that will strengthen families, communities, and our country. As we recognize the 30th anniversary of the Family Medical Leave Act, we must commit ourselves to moving toward a future in which all workers enjoy the right to paid leave.

HONORING TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of a special group of women from Transylvania University. Transylvania is located in Lexington, Kentucky and holds a special place in Kentucky history as the first institution of higher learning west of the Alleghenies.

Today Transylvania is honored for another place in history. The women's basketball team, under the direction of head coach Dr. Juli Fulks, won the NCAA Division III Women's National Championship. This is the first NCAA Championship in school history. The women completed a perfect 33-0 season and defeated Christopher Newport University 57-52 for the championship: Madison Kellione, from Harrison County, Kentucky, was named Most Outstanding Player of the NCAA Division III Tournament.

Members of the team include Amara Flores, Gracie Haywood, Madison Kellione, Keaton Hall, Sierra Kemelgor, Aubree Littlejohn, Sadie Wurth, McLain Murphy, Samantha Cornelison, Sydney Wright, Kennedy Stacy, Laken Ball, Kennedy Harris, Dasia Thornton, Micayla Hurdle, and Emile Teall. The coaching staff includes Juli Fulks, Hannah Varel, Loren Bewley, Tim Whitesel, and Lea Wise Prewitt.

This team and its perfect season, culminating in a championship, brings pride not only to the Transylvania campus, but to the city of Lexington and indeed the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I congratulate Coach Fulks, all the staff members, and especially the players on winning the NCAA Championship and having such a memorable season. I am proud to honor them before the United States Congress.