

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE VALLEJO PHILIPPINE CULTURAL COMMITTEE UPON THE CELEBRATION OF PISTA SA NAYON

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend the Vallejo Philippine Cultural Committee, upon the occasion of Pista Sa Nayon, the anniversary of the Philippines' proclamation of independence and a time to celebrate the rich culture and contributions of our Filipino-American community.

Each year, the hard work and dedication of the Vallejo Philippine Cultural Committee, a program of the Filipino Community of Solano County, makes the Pista Sa Nayon Festival possible. This meaningful celebration unites Solano County in appreciation of our Filipino-American community and is an opportunity to recognize the importance of their role throughout California's history.

Our Congressional District is fortunate to include the City of Vallejo, the most diverse city in our country. The Vallejo community alone is home to over 30,000 Filipino-Americans. From community leaders to healthcare professionals to educators, and beyond, the Filipino-American community is as remarkable and impactful as it is diverse. Today, and every day, we celebrate our Filipino-American neighbors and the vital role they play in enriching our community.

On behalf of the constituents of California's Eighth Congressional District, I would like to honor the Vallejo Philippine Cultural Committee as they celebrate Pista Sa Nayon and reassert my continued support and pride for our Filipino-American neighbors.

RECOGNIZING THE KENT ISD STUDENT LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

HON. HILLARY J. SCHOLTEN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of some incredible young leaders from Michigan's Third Congressional District. As the school year comes to a close, I commend these Kent Intermediate School District scholars for their leadership, initiative and community service. Their contributions provided an important perspective to community members and school leaders which will undoubtedly improve the educational experience for students throughout Kent ISD.

The Kent ISD Student Leadership Community is composed of 40 high school students from 20 school districts in Kent ISD. These students answered a necessary call to help district leaders make crucial decisions about

education with an eye towards improving the educational experience of all Kent ISD pupils.

This past year, the Kent ISD Student Leadership Community was hard at work. It is no surprise that they found numerous avenues to provide their input and affect change. At the inaugural Listen. Learn. Lead. State of the Student event on October 24, 2022, Kent leaders addressed district representatives and local community and business leaders. Through sharing their experiences in school, the challenges they face, and their hopes for the future, they were able to help shape district-level plans for students' academic engagement and success, mental well-being, and sense of belonging as schools navigate and adapt to post-pandemic life. On behalf of myself and our proud West Michigan community, I applaud these students for the enduring impact that their leadership will have in their schools.

Mr. Speaker, once more I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Kent ISD Student Leadership Community. There is no doubt that their futures are bright, and that their voices will continue to be forces for good in the days and years ahead.

HONORING SHREYA TOLANI

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the service and accomplishments of Shreya Tolani, my intern who has completed her Spring 2023 semester serving the people of Florida's 24th Congressional District. Shreya has proven to be a very articulate young woman and shows great promise for her future endeavors. Shreya has assisted my office in various areas, such as legislative research, constituent outreach, and writing. She had demonstrated an excellent drive and a continuous willingness to learn.

Shreya Tolani was born and raised in Vienna, Virginia. She is a current student at the Madeira School. At Madeira, Shreya plays three varsity sports: soccer, basketball, and tennis. She is currently a member of the South Asian Student Association at her school. During her sophomore year, Shreya volunteered as a 3rd grade assistant at Garfield Elementary School for five weeks. Her experiences have empowered her to advocate for women pay equality in sports, as well as education.

Upon transitioning from her internship, Shreya will complete her studies at the Madeira School. Upon graduation, she will attend the college of her choice and obtain a bachelor's degree in engineering.

On behalf of Florida's 24th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Shreya Tolani for her exemplary character, dedication to teamwork, and willingness to learn.

RECOGNIZING JOHN MAINELLA'S 44 YEARS OF SERVICE TO PLAISTOW

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. John Mainella, a dedicated educator and committed member of the Timberlane Community Music Association. As one of the esteemed conductors of the Timberlane Community Band and as Director of the Pollard Elementary and Sandown Central School Bands, John's love of music has inspired countless students to begin playing instruments and encouraged fellow music lovers in the community to continue following their passion.

Since receiving his Bachelor of Music degree from Berklee College of Music in 1976, John has remained a fixture of the Plaistow community through both his teaching and his involvement around town. John has had the unique opportunity to watch his own students that he first taught in school become members of the local community band, and he continues to foster this intergenerational love of music in the students he interacts with every day.

Passionate educators like John remind us of the importance of the arts and the critical role they play in shaping our students into well-rounded individuals. After 44 years of selfless service to the students and music lovers of Plaistow, John embodies all that the arts can do to enrich our personal lives and uplift the quietest voices in our communities.

On behalf of the constituents of New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I congratulate John on a well-deserved retirement and look forward to seeing what his next chapter has in store. I wish John and his loved ones all the best in the years to come and hope that they continue to inspire the next generation of musicians here in the Granite State.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CLEMENCY HOME RULE ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Clemency Home Rule Act, which would give the District of Columbia exclusive authority to grant clemency for D.C. crimes. Currently, the president exercises the authority to grant clemency for D.C. crimes, though rarely do so. D.C. residents deserve a say in whether their fellow residents deserve mercy. Last Congress, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform passed this bill as part of the District of Columbia Home Rule Expansion Act of 2022 (H.R. 8861).

● 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.

While D.C. law appears to give the mayor authority to grant clemency (D.C. Code 1–301.76), under current practice, clemency petitions for D.C. crimes, like federal crimes, are submitted to the Department of Justice for the president's consideration.

This bill would remove all doubt that D.C., and not the president, has the authority to grant clemency for D.C. crimes. D.C. should have full control over its local criminal justice system, the most basic responsibility of local government, like the states and territories have over their criminal justice systems. Since the D.C. Council has the authority to enact local laws, D.C. officials are in the best position to grant clemency for D.C. crimes. This bill would give D.C. the discretion to establish its own clemency system.

This bill is an important step in establishing additional autonomy for D.C. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF ARMY PFC DAVID EVANS, JR., WHO WAS KILLED IN ACTION PROTECTING OTHERS WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and accomplishments of David Evans, Jr., on the 20th anniversary of his passing. He was an exemplary young man who lost his life serving our country.

David enlisted in the Army after graduating in 2002 from Kensington High School, in Buffalo, N.Y. His dream was to become a military police officer and FBI agent. He was killed in an explosion May 25, 2003 while on duty with the 977th Military Police Company, guarding a ammunition site in Diwaniyah, Iraq.

His mother, Esther Macklin, stated that at first, she questioned his decision to join the military, but once he had his mind made up, there was no changing it. "I had to let David go and become the man he wanted to become." She went on to state, "I'm so very proud of him, even now, I've come to accept the loss. I have faith that God has my son now."

David had hoped that the military would lead him to a career in law enforcement. He had a calling to public service that led him to intern at Buffalo City Hall while still in high school. He also liked hip-hop music, basketball, football and cross country running. Most of all, when speaking of David, his friends, family, and teachers all brought up his smile. People talked about how infectious it was, and that when you looked at him, it made you want to smile too, and no matter what the circumstances were, he was happy and always wanted to look on the bright side of everything.

Today, I ask that you join me in remembering and honoring the life of PFC David Evans, Jr., an exemplary young man who is remembered and missed by many.

HONORING PRESIDENT THOMAS CROPPER ON HIS DECADES OF SERVICE

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate President Thomas Cropper upon his retirement as President of the California State University Maritime Academy. Throughout President Cropper's illustrious career, his innovation and leadership provided critical support to both his community and our country.

President Cropper demonstrated his persevering and industrious spirit from a young age. He graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor's degree in engineering operations, before receiving his commission from the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program in 1981. For over 30 years, President Cropper bravely served our country in the United States Navy. His critical leadership as the commanding officer of an F/A–18 squadron and as commander of the air wing aboard USS *Nimitz* was instrumental in strengthening our country's position in the international community and protecting Americans at home and abroad.

Following his selfless service in the Navy, President Cropper continued his commitment to supporting America's maritime priorities, as the 14th president of California State University Maritime Academy. For over a decade, President Cropper worked tirelessly to shepherd the Academy through a period of change and renewal. He spearheaded efforts to integrate the Academy with the broader maritime industry, the California State University System, and the communities of Solano County and Vallejo. His crucial contributions not only ushered the Academy into a new era of prosperity, but also undoubtedly improved the quality of life for its students.

President Cropper's genuine passion for service is characterized not only by his career in the Navy and at the Academy, but also by his proud involvement in multiple community organizations, including the San Francisco Marine Exchange, Vallejo Education Business Alliance, and Leadership Vallejo. Most recently, President Cropper was awarded the New Dawn Vallejo Agent of Change award and the Chamber of Commerce Spirit of Solano award for his crucial contributions to the Solano community.

While his presence at California State University Maritime Academy will surely be missed, President Cropper's years of service have undeniably enhanced the Solano County community and will continue to improve the lives of Californians for many years to come. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for

President Cropper's dedication and commitment to service and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF ISAAC SEILER

HON. HILLARY J. SCHOLTEN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of a very important member of my team, Mr. Isaac Seiler, who will be returning to complete his studies and ending his time as my Communications Director on June 1. We are so very grateful for his service to our office, to this Congress, to the community of West Michigan and to our country.

When the people of West Michigan chose me, the first woman in history to represent our part of the country in Congress, I knew I would need a smart and energetic person by my side helping me set up my new office—someone who could match my drive and commitment to excellence, someone who cares just as deeply as I do about giving a voice in Congress to people who had never had theirs represented. I was so lucky to find that person in Isaac Seiler. From day one, Isaac showed up for our community in ways big and small. As the youngest Communications Director on the Hill, he quickly proved that no job was too big for him; but more importantly, in embodying the West Michigan ethos of servant leadership, he also showed that no job was too small.

In addition to helping establish our new office, Isaac leaned in enthusiastically and expertly to help me tell West Michigan about the great work we were doing in Congress. He worked tirelessly to get newsletters out to constituents, to secure local media appearances and answer tough questions to make our office accountable to the people we serve. Constituents consistently tell me—I've never felt more connected to my Representative and the work you're doing. That's what representation should be about. That's because of Isaac.

I've drawn great personal inspiration from Isaac as well, as he navigated deeply challenging circumstances of his own with courage and grace well beyond his years. Guided by a deep faith and abiding love, when Isaac faced profound adversity, he met it not as a roadblock, but a springboard to action—for personal growth and community transformation. A moment in his life that could have caused bitterness, but instead moved so many to expand their hearts, and open their minds.

Isaac brings joy to any space he inhabits not only with his infectious laughter, but his drive to do good that inspires others to want to do the same. He truly has the heart of a public servant and West Michigan is better because he chose to serve. On behalf of the people in Michigan's 3rd district and personally from me, I offer him our deepest gratitude. I thank Isaac.