

well-deserved rest and relaxation, filled with quality time with Christine, his wife of 34 years, and his children Will, Lane, and Natalie as he enters this new chapter.

UNITED STATES-TAIWAN INITIATIVE ON 21ST-CENTURY TRADE FIRST AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 21, 2023*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4004, the United States-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade First Agreement Implementation Act.

This bill expresses the approval of Congress for the June 1, 2023, agreement regarding trade between the United States and Taiwan.

The bill also imposes requirements on the negotiations of certain further trade agreements between the United States and Taiwan.

The bill also imposes requirements on the negotiation of further agreements under the United States-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade, such as requiring the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to:

(1) share any U.S. negotiating texts with Congress prior to sharing the text with Taiwan or any parties outside of the executive branch.

(2) share any negotiating texts from Taiwan within three days of receipt, and

(3) provide daily briefings to certain Members of Congress during negotiating rounds.

A further agreement shall not take effect unless

(1) the President, at least 60 days before entering into the further agreement, makes the text publicly available on a USTR website; and

(2) a bill is enacted into law expressly approving the further agreement.

The United States and Taiwan signed a first agreement under the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade, announced in June 2022.

The initial 2022 agreement aimed to streamline customs procedures, help smaller businesses navigate the regulatory procedures in both markets, and prevent corruption.

This agreement is not a formal free-trade agreement that regulates tariffs, but rather aims to strengthen U.S.-Taiwan trade ties amid heightened tensions.

Taiwan and the United States have maintained commercial ties since 1979.

Although the United States does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, we maintain a strong unofficial relationship that must continue, and H.R. 4004 will allow the United States to do such that.

REVEREND DR. PAULSON RAJ SANGALA: A TESTAMENT TO FAITH, RESILIENCE, AND SERVICE

**HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 23, 2023*

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today. I am privileged to rise in this esteemed

chamber to speak about a man of incredible faith, resilience, and dedication, the Reverend Dr. Paulson Raj Sangala. Born on March 7, 1973, in the humble village of Bheemaram, Telangana State, India, Dr. Sangala's life is a testament to overcoming adversities and committing oneself to a life of service.

The son of a mason and a school attendant, Dr. Sangala grew up amidst financial challenges after his family lost their wealth due to his grandfather's alcohol addiction. Despite these hardships, his spiritual zeal led him to regular Bible study and prayer. His faith would be tested further when he lost his father at a young age, taking on the family burden as the eldest son. When a mysterious illness left him bedridden, Dr. Sangala found solace in his faith, and it was this faith that carried him through his healing and ultimately led him to his calling.

In 1991, Dr. Sangala began his ministry in a small hut following a vision he received during prayer and fasting. Starting with one woman receiving healing from cancer, the ministry steadily grew, bringing the Gospel and the healing power of Jesus Christ to many. This was the beginning of a remarkable journey that would see Dr. Sangala overcome opposition and adversity to serve his community and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, the culmination of Dr. Sangala's journey is the Christ Jyoti Church, inaugurated recently in a grand ceremony attended by pastors and devotees from all over the world. Built on 11 acres of land and capable of hosting an impressive 40,000 people, the Church, with its vast prayer hall and four towers named Moses, David, Peter, and Dr. Paul, is a testament to Dr. Sangala's vision, faith, and years of dedication.

Beyond the grandeur of the Church, Dr. Sangala's work in his community is truly astounding. His organization runs a Bible College and operates 500 churches in different cities and villages. It has commissioned over a thousand pastors for the ministry, prepared a thousand prayer warriors for continuous offering of prayers, and provides spiritual comfort and guidance to thousands through various prayer services, gospel meetings, and media outreach.

Dr. Sangala's life journey serves as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of faith and service. His story shines brightly as a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration, demonstrating how adversities can be converted into opportunities for serving others. His extraordinary path from a small village in India to the founding of a Church that serves thousands testifies to his unwavering faith, unyielding dedication, and his steadfast commitment to his divine calling.

As we stand here in this chamber, dedicated to service and leadership, let the story of Dr. Sangala remind us of the profound impact that unwavering faith, resilience, and dedication to service can have on our communities.

Mr. Speaker, may we carry his spirit of service, resilience, and dedication in our hearts as we continue to serve our constituents and our great Nation.

NEW RISE OF ASSAD

**HON. J. FRENCH HILL**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 23, 2023*

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, recently, Syrian President Bashar Al Assad was invited back into the Arab League after 12 years of being in exile.

I can't tell you how incredibly frustrating and disappointing this is to many, particularly the innocent people of Syria who have endured more than a decade of war, murder, and torture.

Assad's readmittance to the Arab League sends the wrong signal.

It sends the signal to the rest of the world that his atrocious war crimes against his own citizens over the past twelve years are acceptable.

A recent Reuters article had the headline Arabs bring Syria's Assad back into the fold, but want actions, action on the drug trade.

Well that's rich, because the only reason there is an epidemic in the drug trade in the Gulf and the region, is because of Assad.

Assad turned Russia and Iran to maintain his death machine, and now the Captagon drug trade, led by his cousins, led by his military, providing an independent source of funding for his regime while he poisons his neighbors and takes their money and fuels terrorism in the region.

And yet he's invited back to the Arab League meeting.

It's preposterous.

My bill that passed last year's National Defense Authorization Act was called the Captagon Act and requires the U.S. Government to develop a multilateral and all of government approach to disrupting and dismantling the production of the Captagon drug right in the heart of Syria.

Recently, the Treasury Department along with our ally the United Kingdom, took steps to sanction key actors in Assad's inner circle who are producing and trafficking Captagon.

This is a good step, but it's months late Mr. Speaker

It's in the right direction of disrupting and dismantling the trafficking networks associated with this illicit drug.

But it's just a good start, and it comes years after we know the deadly impact of Captagon in the region, on families, but also fueling of terror by Assad through the billions of dollars transferred from that illicit trafficking.

So it's critical that governments across the globe to continue to show their support for the Syrian people by denouncing those who seek to normalize relations with the repulsive regime, granting Assad admittance to the Arab League once again sends the opposite message, it rewards barbaric behavior.

The United States government has an obligation to sanction Assad in our efforts to dismantle the Captagon drug trade and hold Assad accountable for his war crimes.

And that's why I'm pleased this week to co-sponsor the Middle East Subcommittee Chairman JOE WILSON's new bill H.R. 2302, The Assad Regime Anti-Normalization Act.

This bill was passed this week unanimously in the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Congress will act where this administration has continuously failed to consistently do so.

I look forward to supporting this bill on the House floor and seeing it signed into law.

**RECOGNIZING A CIVIL RIGHTS  
AND GRASSROOTS ICON, REV-  
EREND MARIE GALATAS ORTIZ,  
A PROMINENT MATRIARCH IN  
THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

**HON. TROY A. CARTER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 23, 2023*

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend Marie Galatas Ortiz, Louisiana's Matriarch in the Civil Rights Movement locally and across the country. Marie Galatas Ortiz, born in New Orleans in 1939, became increasingly involved in the Civil Rights Movement after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When Ortiz reflected on how she felt following the passing of Dr. King, she said "I just said I'm going to get so active, I'm going to help keep his work going on . . . They can't stop us!"

Ortiz furthered her commitment to the Civil Rights Movement by founding the nonprofit organization Grass Roots Organization for Women (GROW) in 1975. The organization started in New Orleans, located at 1610 Basin Street, and participated in many demonstrations, marches, and boycotts. Ortiz wanted an organization that encouraged women to serve in their communities and further the movement through peaceful protests, rallies, and street marches. GROW challenged the traditional patriarchal social systems that prevented women from participating in leadership roles. Reverend Ortiz took on the challenge of fighting for anti-crime, including rape treatment and prevention, when no one was advocating for these victims and speaking out against these atrocities.

Ortiz was a force in the later years of the Civil Rights Movement. In 1976, she led demonstrations for the family of Stanley Magee who suspiciously passed away while in custody. The protest and subsequent march over Stanley Magee's death began at the 22nd Judicial Courthouse and included many African American residents of St. Tammany and Washington Parishes. It was one of the largest demonstrations ever held in Covington. Ortiz explained that some of the more difficult and passionate Civil Rights cases, especially those involving racially motivated deaths and violence, were passed on to her organization from the NAACP. "It was GROW that did the work," Ortiz said. Ortiz remains politically active today.

Her most recent work was taking down monuments dedicated to Confederate leaders in New Orleans. In December 2015, the City Council of New Orleans voted 6 to 1 to take down three Confederate statues: those of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Gen. Robert E. Lee, and Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard. In January 2016, a federal judge dismissed an attempt by preservation groups and a chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans to stop their removal. Reverend Ortiz remained committed, fighting to the end, assuring every statue was removed!

Reverend Marie Galatas Ortiz is also the president and pastor of New Creation Christian Church, founded over 35 years ago,

where she continues her spiritual mission of working closely with women and underserved communities. She is also the president of Broadway Rehabilitation and Economic Development & Jobs Skills Academy, Inc., an organization assisting formerly incarcerated people and marginalized groups to develop training to join the workforce.

I am so blessed to have this opportunity to acknowledge a true Matriarch of Civil Rights. My prayer is that she continues her fight assuring a successful and bright future for all men and women. God Bless Reverend Marie Galatas Ortiz on her continued path blessing our great community.

**SUPPORTING HILLSBOROUGH  
COUNTY VETERANS TREATMENT  
COURT**

**HON. LAUREL M. LEE**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 23, 2023*

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Hillsborough County Veterans Treatment Court and the volunteers who are the heart of this program.

Hillsborough County is proud to be home to Florida's largest population of veterans—nearly 94,000 veterans. Hillsborough is also home to the number one Veterans Treatment Court in the country.

One in five veterans has a diagnosed mental illness or cognitive impairment, and one in six veterans has a substance abuse problem. In some cases, upon returning home, these men and women commit a criminal offense that is directly attributed to a service or combat-related injury.

The Hillsborough County Veterans Treatment Court, in addition to its Mentor Program run entirely by volunteers, integrates alcohol and drug treatment programs, mental health services, and justice system case processing, while focusing on the successful reintegration of veterans back into their communities.

I'd like to not only recognize but extend a sincere thank you to the wonderful volunteers who have had a hand in getting our veterans the care they require and deserve.

**HONORING THE LIFE OF IRA  
SHARP**

**HON. MIKE LEVIN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 23, 2023*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and achievements of Ira Sharp, who passed away on Saturday, June 10, 2023. He is survived by his wife Rose Ann Sharp, daughter Elizabeth Sharp, son Andrew Sharp, daughter-in-law Carine Harambillet Sharp, grandson Samuel Sharp as well as his sisters, Jacqueline Schroeder, Barbara Jensen, and Sally Harman, as well as their families.

Mr. Sharp received a bachelor's degree from Washington University in St. Louis before earning a J.D. at Columbia Law School. After law school, Mr. Sharp became a practicing attorney before moving to D.C. to take over a

then struggling family business. For the next two and a half decades, Mr. Sharp would use his expertise and perseverance to transform the company into a thriving business, later selling it to a Fortune 1000 company.

As a resident of the California 49th Congressional District, Mr. Sharp was an active member of the community. He was appointed to the San Diego County Civil Service Commission as well as sat on several Del Mar City Council committees and the Del Mar School District Independent Citizens Oversight Committee. Additionally, Mr. Sharp contributed to the Del Mar Foundation, the Rancho Santa Fe Democratic Club, and the Chairmen's Round-Table, a group that provides mentorship to businesses in San Diego County.

Mr. Sharp's true passion was advocacy for gun violence prevention. Following the Parkland Shooting in February of 2018 and the birth of his grandchild, Mr. Sharp along with his wife Rose Ann Sharp founded NeverAgainCA. Mr. Sharp then went on to create SafeStorageCA in 2019, where he brought together elected officials and gun violence prevention groups. The impact of Mr. Sharp's work can be seen in the passage of AB 452, which requires California public school districts to send students home with information about the importance of safe firearm storage, as well as the passage of AB 893 and SB 264, which ban the sale of firearms and ammunition at the Del Mar and Orange County Fairgrounds.

More recently, Mr. Sharp spent time as a board member for the Brady Campaign, a national nonprofit whose mission is to ensure that every community is safe from the epidemic of gun violence in our country.

Ira Sharp's tireless advocacy is a reminder of the immense impact an individual can have on their community and the importance of collaborating with others to make our community a safer place. It has been an honor to celebrate Ira Sharp's remarkable life and his success which continues to inspire.

**RECOGNIZING MIKE FLANNERY  
FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
JOURNALISM**

**HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 23, 2023*

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize Mike Flannery's distinguished career as a political reporter in Illinois and to congratulate him on his well-earned upcoming retirement from Fox 32-Chicago. For decades, Illinois residents have relied on Mr. Flannery's sharp analysis to make sense of top political stories. Through his weekly television program, "Flannery Fired Up," Illinois residents have come to trust Mr. Flannery as a voice of insight, fairness, and integrity.

Mr. Flannery grew up in Washington D.C. in a family that understood the importance of public service and its demands. His father, a World War II veteran and Purple Heart recipient, imparted on Mr. Flannery a sense of patriotism and a desire to find a career that benefited others. Despite financial hardships, Mr. Flannery won a scholarship to attend Georgetown University, where he discovered a passion for journalism and became editor of the