

watched from the backseat. On July 24, 1973, young Santos Rodriguez was taken away from his loved ones in a brutal act of violence, shattering the dreams he had yet to fulfill.

As the Congressional representative for the Little Mexico neighborhood—what is now known as Uptown—I feel a deep responsibility not only to honor the memory of Santos, but also to stand in solidarity with the Mexican-American community of Dallas as we continue the fight for equality. Santos Rodriguez's story remains a stark reminder of the continued need for oversight within our law enforcement system and the devastating impact of unchecked abuses of power. His untimely death exposed the harsh realities faced by marginalized communities and the profound importance of addressing racial injustice.

Residents of the City of Dallas have a right to know the truth of their city. We have a right to live in a city governed by leaders who believe that the only way towards a more equitable future requires us to reconcile with our past. While we remember Santos Rodriguez, let us also honor his memory by recommitting ourselves to creating a safer and more equitable Dallas. In his memory, we must strive for a future where no child or individual lives in fear, where persons in positions of authority are held to the highest standards of integrity, and where the tragedies of our past are never forgotten.

In 1973, the story of Santos' murder inspired the Chicano movement in North Texas. In the five decades since that heart-wrenching event, we have seen the community of Dallas and the nation rally together in solidarity to demand change. Santos Rodriguez's memory has become a symbol of resilience inspiring movements for justice, equality, and meaningful police reform.

Today, as we solemnly remember Santos, let us recommit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and fairness, and strive for a society where no life is ever again lost to such senseless acts of violence. May his legacy embolden us to continue our fight for a more inclusive and compassionate nation, where all citizens can trust in the fairness of our law enforcement and justice systems.

As we offer our heartfelt condolences to the family of Santos Rodriguez and his loved ones, we must honor his memory by taking concrete steps towards a future where every child's dreams can flourish without fear or prejudice. In his memory, let us strive for a Nation that upholds the values of justice, empathy, and equality for all.

I stand with the residents of Dallas as we continue to march forward in a steadfast and unrelenting pursuit of justice. My thoughts and prayers are with all the people whose lives have been touched by the legacy of Santos Rodriguez. May his spirit live forever in our hearts, and may his legacy continue to inspire us to lead with love and guide us towards a more just and equitable society.

COMMEMORATING THE
RETIREMENT OF JOHN ELSESSER

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to enthusiastically honor and congratulate a

true pillar of public service in municipal governance, John Elsesser of Coventry, Connecticut. John is retiring this year from his role as Town Manager for the Town of Coventry—a position he has held since 1988. His almost 4 decades of selfless advocacy for his community and all municipalities has been felt from the halls of local government all the way to the chambers of Connecticut's General Assembly in Hartford and the U.S. Capitol. John's expertise and ability will be sorely missed.

John began his journey in public service when he started as an administrative assistant in Wethersfield soon after his graduation from the University of Hartford with a master's in public administration in 1982. John's competency and skill navigating the complexities of town government were quickly recognized. Not long after his initial employment with the Town of Wethersfield, he transitioned over to the nearby government of Avon, Connecticut as its Assistant Town Manager.

In May of 1988, John rose to the pinnacle of his profession when he began his tenure fully in charge as Coventry's Town Manager. Once there, he quickly established himself as an indispensable advocate for the municipality, while simultaneously he brought an enlightened form of town administration for all the departments under his control. John successfully operationalized his vision for Coventry and has been responsible for countless, necessary upgrades to the town's functioning. He secured funding to update the town's administrative software and oversaw a bond rating upgrade by Moody's in a time of great fiscal instability for Connecticut. John has been wildly successful in securing grant money for Coventry, garnering over \$57 million in state and federal funding the past year and a half alone for the town—money which has been used to spearhead infrastructure upgrades and create more pedestrian-friendly roads.

Collaboration has been a cornerstone of John's leadership style, holding a great respect for Coventry's Town Council and working within the legislative framework they provided. He formed partnerships with organizations like the University of Connecticut and Connecticut Department of Agriculture to improve the quality of life for residents in Coventry. Most importantly, John was paramount in the creation of a positive culture of staff and volunteers. As a municipal leader of a small, eastern Connecticut town, John knew the importance volunteers and administrators play in rural civic ecosystems. It stands as a testament to John's community-centric mindset that he laments being unable to construct a community center during his time.

John's expertise and excellence has been recognized both statewide and nationally. He has served as President of the CT Town & City Management Association, the Council of Small Towns, and the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce. These local initiatives band town leaders together to coordinate resources, fund improvements and boost the economy for participating towns. John's leading role in all these groups indicates how widely he has been recognized for his accomplishments. Governor Ned Lamont appointed John to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations in 2019, an advisory organization dedicated to studying issues and recommend solutions in and for state and local government. In 2021, he was recognized for his re-

markable 40 years of municipal service—a reflection of his successful work with local government. As a former state legislator from a “next door” district in the Town of Vernon in the late 1980's and early 1990's, I saw firsthand his activist work to remind the General Assembly of the importance of small, rural communities to our state's quality of life. As the Congressman representing Coventry for the last 17 years, it has been a pleasure to work with John on securing funding for from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development program, the American Rescue Plan, the new infrastructure law, and the green energy initiatives in the Inflation Reduction Act. John's understanding of the nuances of formula grant funding and competitive grants was extraordinary. I was constantly struck by the realization of how blessed his town was to have such a talented, caring person at the helm.

Mr. Speaker, John Elsesser has been an exceptional public servant throughout his life. He is deserving of a happy and relaxing retirement in this next stage of his life, along with his wife, Holly. Eastern Connecticut's roots are in local leadership. As the longest-known-serving Town Manager at the time of his retirement—throughout our entire state of 169 towns—John has inherently reflected those roots through his loyalty to public service and his neighbors. John leaves behind an immeasurable legacy of stalwart advocacy and stewardship, and his retirement will leave a large gap in northeast Connecticut's civic fauna. We can take solace, though, in the knowledge that John's tireless work will be felt in Coventry, the northeast region, and state, for decades to come.

TRIBUTE TO DELORES SHINE
KERR—30TH CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women during Women's History Month. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Delores Shine Kerr of the Miracle Mile/Mid-Wilshire neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

Delores is an extraordinary woman whose remarkable life and diverse career as an educator, performer and humanitarian has spanned nearly 7 decades.

Born in Alabama, Delores received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing Education at the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University), where she was crowned Miss Tuskegee in 1957. She obtained her teaching credential at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her illustrious career in the health care field began in a Los Angeles hospital in the late 1950's as a Cardiac-Medical Staff Nurse, Psychiatric Nurse, and Psychiatric Treatment Instructor, followed by employment at another hospital where she was Head Nurse of Pediatrics, Assistant Director of Nursing, and an Emergency Room Nurse. In 1968, she began

working as a nurse educator, advisor, and counselor for the Los Angeles Unified School District, where she continued for over 3 decades.

In addition to her nursing educator career, Ms. Shine Kerr was a fashion model for decades, and has been featured on the runways for shows in New York, Los Angeles, and Dallas. Delores and her husband, Ben are currently models for Everybody World. An accomplished singer and performer, Delores has appeared on television, radio, and in magazines, billboards, and newspapers numerous times, whether as a co-host, a singer, or with the 1984 Olympics Organizing Committee.

Delores' humanitarian efforts over the decades have been nothing short of amazing. She has founded many significant organizations, including Mentors for Youth and Adults Worldwide, a rubella clinic, AMVI International Humanitarian Development, and the People for Family Planning support organization. Other non-profit organizations she has held leadership positions in include the California Science Center, Afro-Americans for LA Opera, the Music Center of LA County, the Opera League, Chi Eta Phi Sorority, the Los Angeles Tuskegee Alumni Association, and McCarty Memorial Christian Church. Ms. Shine Kerr has received numerous awards and recognition in her lifetime including from the Los Angeles City Council, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, California State Assembly, NAACP, and President Ronald Reagan.

Delores and her husband, Ben Oliver Kerr, have 2 children, Mark Steven Kerr and Karen Benae Kerr, and a granddaughter, Jade James.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 30th Congressional District, Delores Shine Kerr.

CELEBRATING THE JUBILEE OF
SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor 12 Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio who are celebrating their Jubilees in Christ's service. The Sisters and community came together in celebration of the 12 extraordinary milestones of faithful service on June 24, 2023.

True to the Mission of the Sisters of St. Francis, the Sisters are "Called like St. Francis of Assisi to live the Gospel in joyful servanthood among all people, the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio, as messengers of peace, commit themselves to works that reverence human dignity, embrace the poor and marginalized, and respect the gift of all creation." The Sisters of St. Francis live always the message of Jesus Christ as recorded in Matthew 25:40, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

In all things, daily life, prayer, word and deed, the Sisters of St. Francis emulate the life and love, the call for peace, giving instead of receiving, extending hope and imbued in the joys of nature that defined the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Through more than a cen-

tury, they have cared for our community through "graced encounters." Their unselfish, life-giving commitments have educated, healed and inspired generations of our citizenry to noble callings in building families, community and tending our Earth. These Jubilarians set an ethical standard that permeates our way of life.

Celebrating Jubilees in 2023 are:

75th Jubilee:

Sister Geraldine Paluszak

60th Jubilee:

Sister Brenda Rose Szegedy

Sister Carol Ann Grace

Sister Carol Hoffman

Sister Geraldine Nowak

Sister Janet Snyder

Sister M. Jeremias Stinson

Sister Josephine Dybza

Sister M. Josina Antolak

Sister Mary Thill

Sister Patricia Zielinski

50th Jubilee:

Sister Patricia Gardner

These Sisters' ministries have guided them to serve as administrators, educators, healers, professionals, master gardeners, pastoral associates and more. They have held the hands of the poor and marginalized, the sick and fragile on difficult journeys. They have shown through charisma God's glory. Through decades of caring service these Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio have demonstrated goodness and courage, passion and commitment, faith and grace. We offer them our heartfelt thanks and warmest congratulations upon achieving such milestones in ministry. May all blessing continue to attend to their precious lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT GARCIA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on H.R. 4470. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 366.

CONGRATULATING MAJOR
CHRISTOPHER MATTHAI

**HON. AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN
RADEWAGEN**

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Major Christopher Matthai for his dedicated service to the American Samoa and all the Pacific Islands as a U.S. Army Liaison in the Office of the Chief, Legislative Liaison.

In American Samoa, our men and women of the Armed Forces are very important to us. The people of our islands take great pride in being patriotic Americans and our people are known for a high rate of service in our military. In particular, our U.S. Army recruiting center ranks number one in the nation in enlistment rate.

To that end I would like to recognize all the work MAJ Matthai has done to serve our

country throughout his career, so far. He enlisted in 1999 and was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2009 he earned a direct commission through the Army Reserve.

He has an extensive list of military awards and decorations including the Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with 5 oak leaf clusters. He was awarded the Mark and Debbie Kennedy Frontiers of Freedom award and the Dean of the Business School Merit award. He is a graduate from the University of Baltimore, receiving a Master of Business Administration from there and receiving another Master's in Legislative Affairs from George Washington University.

In congratulating this outstanding officer today, we also express our deep appreciation to all who serve, including the many in uniform from American Samoa serving with distinction all over the world.

I thank Christopher for his outstanding leadership and his commitment to our Soldiers, American Samoa, and our great Nation. Best wishes to him and his family as they depart Washington, D.C., for Indiana and his next duty assignment. I thank him for his service and his time dedicated to our beautiful island.

God bless you on your journey (Fa'amanuia le Atua i ou ala. Soifua.)

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
CHARLES STRICKFADEN

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with Speaker Emerita NANCY PELOSI, and Congressman KEVIN MULLIN, to commemorate Charles (Charlie) Strickfaden upon his retirement from the National Park Service after 39 years of extraordinary public service.

Charlie began his career with the National Park Service (NPS) as a seasonal interpretive ranger at Lava Beds National Monument in northern California. Over the years, he worked in 27 different park units across the United States including Biscayne, the Grand Canyon, the Great Smoky Mountains, and Denali, in a variety of roles including law enforcement, fire management, education and living history, and resource management.

In each of his leadership roles, Charlie has demonstrated a commitment to improving the public's experience with the national park system. This was evident in his work as Chief Ranger of the Flagstaff Area Monuments, which includes the Wupatki, Sunset Crater Volcano, and Walnut Canyon National Monuments in northern Arizona, and the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Baltimore, Maryland. At Fort McHenry, he contributed to the NPS response to 9/11, organized multiple presidential visits, and oversaw a large park and military events program.

As Superintendent of Fort Union National Monument in New Mexico, Charlie created the park's first youth preservation team, increased and prioritized the inclusion of Jicarilla Apache and other indigenous peoples in interpretive activities and performances, and introduced the park's living history program to the State