

represented their fellow classmates with unmatched pride and skill and it is heartening to see this program be rewarded with such an honor.

I also want to pay special recognition to the members who graduated with the Class of 2023. Since they began high school in 2019, their graduating class has faced a gauntlet of trials and tribulations that many of their contemporaries or even most adults have not. After the tragic shooting in November of 2019, they were immediately confronted with the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns, and virtual learning which forced them to press on with rehearsals over Zoom. These challenges were of course coupled with the typical obstacles a teenager faces when navigating high school: homework, crushes, college applications, and anxiety about the future. As their representative in the halls of Congress, I could not be prouder of their resilience in the face of the impossible, and the manner in which they relied on each other to overcome the odds.

Once again, I want to extend my sincerest congratulations to the Marching Centurions for this great honor that they had to commemorate our Nation's heroes who have been killed in the defense of freedom on Memorial Day. As a Saugus alumnus myself, my heart swelled with pride seeing these students clad in blue and silver marching along the streets of Washington to honor our great country.

---

V–J DAY 2023

---

**HON. KEVIN HERN**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 11, 2023*

Mr. HERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the end of World War II and the 78th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day, otherwise known as V–J Day. The sacrifices of our World War II veterans paid for the end to what was one of the most horrific wars in human history.

On this day in 1945, Japan signed the terms of surrender aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. This day marks the heroic triumph of American forces for the good of the whole world.

Our World War II veterans may be dwindling in number, but their legacy as the greatest generation continues to grow. We must continue to esteem the truly incredible men and women who showed what a unified America can do to secure hope and liberty in the face of the most formidable adversary.

I am grateful for the work of Frank Reisinger who recalls the celebrating of V–J Day in downtown Tulsa with his father as a young man. Frank has diligently held a celebration of this important day in Broken Arrow for the last 8 years so that his community understands the cost of war and the price of freedom.

May we never forget that freedom is never free and that we are but 1 generation away from losing what so many have fought and died to secure.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF  
THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS,  
ADMIRAL MIKE GILDAY

**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 11, 2023*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the diligent and honorable service of Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Gilday. On August 14, Admiral Gilday is slated to retire from his four-year term as the U.S. Navy's 32nd Chief of Naval Operations, and it is more than fitting that this chamber take a moment to recognize his extraordinary record leading our Nation's Navy.

A New England native hailing from Massachusetts, Mike Gilday was raised in a family with a strong Navy tradition. His innate intelligence, his patriotism and his leadership qualities stood out at an early age, foreshadowing a promising career as a naval officer. Upon graduating high school, he received a congressional nomination to the U.S. Naval Academy, and after graduation was commissioned as a Surface Warfare Officer in 1985. During his career he continued his passion for learning and obtained an MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School and an MS from the National War College.

Admiral Gilday's record at sea is impressive. He commanded the Destroyers USS *Higgins* and USS *Benfold*, was Commodore of Destroyer Squadron 7, and Commander of Carrier Strike Group 8. As Vice Admiral, he was the fourth commander of U.S. Fleet Cyber Command developing and enhancing the Navy's information network operations, offensive and defensive cyberspace operations, space operations and signals intelligence. In the 21st century, proficiency in cyber command—something which didn't exist until recently, provides an immense benefit to naval readiness. Admiral Gilday is the first to bring skill to the CNO position.

Ashore he served our Nation with distinction during a remarkable career. He completed several tours as a staff officer working for the Chief of Naval Operations and the Vice Chief of Naval Operations. He served as the executive assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and naval aide to the President.

His commitment to our allies and partners were not only reflected during his work as the Chief of Naval Operations, but during his distinguished service as the director of operations for NATO's Joint Force Command Lisbon and as Chief of Staff for Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO.

Appointed to the role of Chief of Naval Operations in August 2019, Admiral Gilday has, in conjunction with the Congress's constitutional mandate in Article One, Section 8 "To provide and maintain a Navy", done outstanding work to keep our fleet relevant and oriented to challenges across the globe. Equipped with his striking educational background, as well as his history of deployments and command, his competent service as the head of naval operations has come to no surprise. It speaks volumes that he was the first three-star admiral to be appointed, to the position of Chief of Naval Operations in nearly half a century.

Each of his prior missions have influenced a modernized national security perspective with-

in him, and by extension from the top of the U.S. Navy down. As our Nation has shifted emphasis of our security strategy toward the Indo-Pacific region over the last decade-plus, Admiral Gilday has been a pioneer in adapting cyber preparedness and how best to prepare for and respond to competition or challenges to our collective freedom of the seas. He has been a steady presence in touring our Nation's industrial base capabilities, testifying to the U.S. Navy's needs before the House Armed Services Committee and a particular spokesperson in successfully advancing the cutting-edge vision of the AUKUS alliance.

Mr. Speaker, as both Ranking Member and Chair of the House Armed Services' Seapower Projection Forces Subcommittee, I have had a front row seat to view his tenure. It was not an easy time, contending with an unstable budget environment, historic turnover in the Office of Secretary of the Navy from 2017 until 2020, and a global pandemic. Through it all, he maintained a steady hand on the helm of our fleet and the marine corps. Overcoming adversity is I believe the sternest test of leadership, and in my opinion, Admiral Gilday passed that test with flying colors. The weightiness of his sea legs will be incredibly difficult to replace, but we will welcome the new perspective brought on by the next Chief of Naval Operations. As Admiral Mike Gilday enters this new era of retirement with his wife, Linda, I ask that my colleagues in the House, and particularly those who serve on the House Armed Services Committee, to join me in recognizing his life of service to the Navy and the United States.

---

HONORING THE LIFE OF LEE ANN  
EAGER

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 11, 2023*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, today we gather to honor the remarkable contributions and career of Lee Ann Eager, a dedicated leader who has played a pivotal role in the economic development and growth of Fresno County. As she embarks on a new chapter in her life, retiring from her role as President and CEO of the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), we take this moment to express our gratitude for her tireless efforts in building a thriving economic base and fostering long-term economic resiliency.

Throughout her tenure at the Fresno County EDC, Lee Ann Eager demonstrated exemplary leadership in guiding economic development and attracting investments to the region. Her visionary approach and strategic thinking allowed the EDC to expand its influence beyond the local sphere, engaging stakeholders from the private, public, philanthropic, and academic sectors at both national and international levels.

Lee Ann's dedication to supporting families in her community was evident throughout her career. Before joining the EDC, she championed the cause of survivors of sexual violence as the Executive Director of the Rape Counseling Services of Fresno, empowering and advocating for those in need. Her passion for making a positive impact on the lives of others continued in her work at the EDC,

where she tirelessly focused on creating opportunities for employers, workers, and job seekers to partake in the region's economic growth.

Governor Newsom's appointment of Lee Ann Eager to the California Transportation Commission in June 2020 and her subsequent role as Chair exemplify her commitment to prioritizing programs and funding that uplift families throughout the Central Valley. Additionally, her involvement in various state boards, councils, and advisory groups showcases her dedication to public policy initiatives that benefit the entire community.

Lee Ann's passion for infrastructure development and workforce empowerment led her to work diligently on the High-Speed Rail project for over 14 years. Her efforts in assisting local businesses impacted by the project and advocating for workforce development

across California demonstrate her dedication to creating inclusive economic opportunities.

Her commitment to Fresno County extended to numerous local boards, including the Mayor's Advisory Council, Fresno State Transportation Institute, Fresno State's Lyles College of Engineering, and Five Cities JPA, among others. Through her active engagement with these organizations, Lee Ann contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of the region.

A fourth-generation Fresnan, Lee Ann Eager's unwavering dedication to her community and her exemplary service as the President and CEO of the Fresno County EDC have left an indelible mark on the region's economic landscape. Her leadership and vision have transformed the EDC into a dynamic, agile, and award-winning organization,

earning accolades both nationally and internationally.

As we celebrate Lee Ann's retirement and the impact she has had on Fresno County's economic development, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for her exceptional service. Her dedication to improving the lives of others, promoting economic growth, and advancing the well-being of the community will continue to inspire future generations of leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in recognizing and honoring Lee Ann Eager's significant contributions to Fresno County, the Central Valley, and beyond. In closing, we express our warmest wishes to Lee Ann Eager on her well-deserved retirement and commend her for leaving a legacy that will continue to shape the economic future of Fresno County for years to come.