

also volunteered for morning lawn sign efforts at fire stations, churches, and lawns on each Election Day. Even to this day, those passing Pat's front lawn are made aware of all the candidates that she believes are best for the community.

Every community has its well-known leaders but has even more leaders that rarely make headlines. Patricia LaVell is the epitome of quiet leadership—the type of person that works tirelessly behind the scenes to put the community ahead of their own interests. It is my honor to recognize her, and I know that everyone wishes her the best in her future endeavors with the Committee.

CELEBRATING MICHAEL ANTHONY
MERCADANTE'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JAY OBERNOLTE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and recognize the 100th birthday of my constituent, Mr. Michael Anthony Mercadante of Helendale, California. Mike was born on September 20, 1923, to Joseph Mercadante and Maria Santa Padre, who immigrated from Italy to pursue the American Dream.

Mike grew up in Providence, Rhode Island. At a young age, he began working a variety of difficult jobs, including at a steel mill and as a delivery boy using a horse and carriage. At age 18, Mike answered the highest of callings—serving his country during a time of war. He and his friends joined the Army during WWII, serving in the Artillery tank division in the South Pacific repairing tanks and overseeing communication between troops. Following the war, Mike continued to serve in the Army in the Active Reserves, attaining the rank of Master Sergeant and training troops for the Korean and Vietnam Wars for 23 years.

In addition to his long military career, Mike taught high school for over 25 years. After graduating from Bryant University, he taught machine and auto shop and Redondo Union High School in Redondo Beach, California and eventually coached baseball at St. Hedwig's School in Los Alamitos. As a coach, teacher, and mentor, Mike was known for his passion for baseball and for helping kids achieve success.

After moving to Helendale, Mike served as the commander and chief of Citizens on Patrol for nearly 25 years. His service, work ethic, and passion for our community serves as an inspiration for all of us.

Mike's passion for his students, his community, and his country is equaled by his love for his family. He married Leonardi Cathrine (Kay) in Lawton, Oklahoma in 1946 and together they proudly raised 7 children—Connie, Cathy, Michael, Mary, Stephen, Robert, and Linda. They are blessed with 30 grandchildren.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Michael Mercadante's 100th birthday. His contributions have had a profound impact on our High Desert Community.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ROCIO
OCAMPO

HON. RASHIDA TLAI

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Ms. TLAI. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Rocio Ocampo, a community mother, whose contributions had an enormous positive impact on the families of southwest Detroit, as we honor her memory.

I first met Rocio when I served in Michigan's State Legislature at a parent advocacy meeting at Phoenix Elementary. I was instantly impressed with her tenacity and drive to pursue a better quality of life and future for all the children. She was involved with numerous community organizations, serving on the board of Urban Neighborhood Initiatives and City of Detroit's Property Assessment Board of Review, as well as the Parent Teacher Association at the school her children attended. Rocio's active involvement in the community was marked by her dedication, not only to making it a safer and healthier place to live, but to making it a more beautiful place to thrive.

Above all, Rocio loved her children and grandchildren deeply. Her love extended out to the children of the neighborhood where she lived. She could always be counted on for a kind word, warmth, and generosity of spirit.

Rocio Ocampo's vibrant presence will be sorely missed. Please join me in recognition of her contributions and services to our community in Detroit as we honor her memory.

RECOGNIZING THE OPERATION OF
THE INTEGRATED WASTE
TREATMENT UNIT

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, alongside my esteemed colleagues Senators MIKE CRAPO and JIM RISCH, to recognize the committed staff at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) Site's Integrated Waste Treatment Unit (IWTU). In the face of many challenges, the employees who supported IWTU demonstrated professionalism, expertise, dedication to the mission, and exemplified the spirit of American innovation.

IWTU engineers, scientists, crafts specialists, plant operators, and administration professionals always believed they could overcome the challenges of this first-of-a-kind radioactive liquid waste treatment facility. Following its construction from 2007 to 2011, the IWTU underwent testing of its steam-reforming process, which was chosen to solidify 900,000 gallons of liquid sodium-bearing waste from an underground tank farm. This waste was generated during the INL's spent nuclear fuel reprocessing mission during the height of the Cold War.

From the first demonstration run at the IWTU in 2012, mechanical problems were apparent as metal filters became plugged, resulting in a quick shutdown of the facility. During subsequent runs, further mechanical problems surfaced as well as chemistry challenges with-

in the IWTU's primary reaction vessel. The Department of Energy (DOE) and its contractors didn't give up. Together, they devised a plan to systematically identify and resolve all problems. They employed some of the brightest scientists at the INL and across the country, worked with academia in several states, and utilized the resources of corporate and small businesses. In all, engineers, scientists, and fabricators made hundreds of modifications to the IWTU, and with each subsequent demonstration run, the facility became more reliable and predictable.

On April 11, 2023, 16 years after construction began, IWTU operators were given permission to start radiological operations. At first, 10 percent radioactive liquid waste was blended with 90 percent simulant. This ratio was increased to 50:50 and later to 100 percent sodium-bearing waste. For those on the project who sacrificed countless weekends, holidays, and quality time with family, this moment was the culmination of years of committed work for a greater cause.

I want to thank all the Idaho Environmental Coalition employees who have supported this project. Their contributions are protecting the Snake River Plain Aquifer, which is the primary source of drinking water and agricultural water for more than 300,000 Idahoans. Furthermore, their actions in treating legacy Cold War waste and closing these sites pave the way for future nuclear research work in Idaho.

I would like to join my distinguished colleagues Senators CRAPO and RISCH, in congratulating the IWTU team on this extremely important achievement. They represent the most talented and committed individuals in the DOE Complex. Perhaps more importantly, they represent the greatest of our country and the ingenuity that makes the United States stand out in the world.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF
CARL THOMAS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize a stalwart figure in the Buffalo community, Carl Thomas. After roughly 4 decades of leading by example at Roswell Park Cancer Institute and Kevin's Guest House, it is only proper to acknowledge and give gratitude for a lifelong dedication to those in need of help.

A graduate of Lafayette High School, he has always put the needs of his hometown neighbors ahead of his own. At the very beginning of his professional career, Carl recognized an unfortunate and common challenge for so many cancer patients—having a stable place to stay during treatment. As a volunteer at Kevin's Guest House, a local hospitality guest house, he undoubtedly recognized that a community effort can make the bleak reality of cancer a little easier on a patient and their loved ones. Of course, Carl was familiar with cancer treatment and hospital care due to his father's employment at Roswell. As he began his own career at Roswell Park (later earning the role of Chief of Public Safety), Carl devoted his time and energy toward the needs and safety of the entire Roswell campus. He

saw these 2 institutions, Kevin's Guest House and Roswell Park, as inherently intertwined and was one of the earliest to recognize Roswell Park's leading role in the fight against cancer. Carl's passion for Roswell's success earned him the position as Chief Organizational and Community Liaison. In essence, he has worked as an ambassador for Roswell with community organizations, government officials, churches, and block clubs in Western New York.

As an African American executive, Carl Thomas has often cited his responsibility to lead a new generation of achievers. Those who know Carl understand retirement will not result in the end of his mentorship; as a resident of the University District, he has already expressed an interest in maintaining his position as a role model within the community. Nonetheless, retirement will allow Carl some much-deserved time with his wife of over 4 decades. Betty, along with their children, Mario, Samantha, and Phylcia. Buffalonians and Roswell Park patients, alike, owe Carl an incredible debt of gratitude, and it is my pleasure to recognize his career as a capable worker and generous man.

RECOGNIZING MR. BENJAMIN
ZELENKO

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Mr. Benjamin Zelenko, a distinguished constituent and exemplary citizen who helped shape the revival of our national commitment to equality through the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Mr. Zelenko has accomplished a lifetime of excellent service to this great Nation and this body, making vital contributions to our journey towards a more perfect union.

Mr. Zelenko served as a top aide to Representative Emanuel Celler, the legendary Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee during the apex of the Civil Rights Movement. Mr. Zelenko played a critical role in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and the Gun Control Act of 1968. Mr. Zelenko helped Representative Celler shepherd these bills through fraught Committee debates, floor debates and final passage.

Later in his career, Mr. Zelenko represented Japanese Americans in their fight for reparations and redress for their unlawful and outrageous internment by the U.S. Government during World War II. He argued their case in *United States v. William Hohri, et al.* before the U.S. Supreme Court. This case helped pave the way for the enactment of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 which awarded \$20,000 in reparations and an official apology from the U.S. Government to tens of thousands of Japanese Americans.

Throughout his career in several of our Nation's leading law firms, Mr. Zelenko championed human rights, workers' rights, and intellectual property rights. Mr. Zelenko documented his experiences helping to pass monumental legislation for an oral history project conducted by this body's Office of the Historian for the public record. His encyclopedic recollection of the minutiae of the events of

1964 reminds us that landmark civil rights protections were not inevitable but rather were won through grueling and sustained efforts spanning decades of social struggle. A Princeton University and Harvard Law graduate, Mr. Zelenko contributed his great knowledge and gifts to the unending quest for a more perfect union. We are fortunate as a Nation that he chose to use his immense talents to serve the causes of social justice and equality.

Mr. Zelenko is a beloved husband, father and grandfather. He married Barbara (Saltz) Zelenko in 1961. In 1964, the Zelenkos moved to Maryland's beautiful Eighth District where they raised their 3 children, Brian, Laura and Carin. Ben and Barbara Zelenko still live in the same house they first occupied. This year, Mr. Zelenko celebrated his 90th birthday surrounded by his loving children and 6 grandchildren, Leslie, Jennifer, Sasha, Katya, Lia and Kayla. Mr. Zelenko is known by his family for being a gracious and captivating host, performing magic shows at all 6 of his grandchildren's birthday parties and seizing any opportunity to tell a great story. I am proud to salute Mr. Zelenko for his lifetime of service and extraordinary character.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, on September 12, 2023, I was unable to be present for the recorded suspension votes on Roll Call No. 383, 384, and 385. Had I been present, I would have voted: Yes on Roll Call No. 383, H.R. 3152, Fight CRIME Act, as amended; Yes on Roll Call No. 384, H.R. 589, MAHSA Act; and Yes on Roll Call No. 385, H. Res. 492, Condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

On September 14, 2023, my vote was recorded as YES on Roll Call No. 391 for H.R. 1435, the Preserving Choice in Vehicle Purchases Act. I intended to vote No.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRANDON WILLIAMS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. WILLIAMS of New York. Mr. Speaker, due to technical issues with my member voting card, my vote was unable to be recorded.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 384/H.R. 589.

RECOGNIZING THE PUBLIC
SERVICE OF SUSAN GRELICK

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize the first

woman elected Town Supervisor and Town Clerk of Amherst, Susan Grelick. She embodies the very best of our community, and has shaped Amherst, NY into one of the best rated and safest places to live in the entire country.

A graduate of Union College, Susan would later earn her MBA, JD, and master's degrees in Information Science and American Economic History. She utilized her extensive education to the town's benefit—always in search of ways to improve its financial stand, promote local businesses, and preserve neighborhoods and green space. Indeed, during her 9 years as Supervisor, Amherst had the highest bond rating of any municipality in Western New York. Susan also initiated the Town's first Vision Summits, a tool she used to develop a comprehensive plan for her future agenda. Once her time had finished as a town official, Susan became the legislative director and counsel to New York Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins. This is in addition to involvement in countless local organizations, including as a Trustee Emeritus of the Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village, as a Board member of the Amherst Youth Foundation, and as Vice President of the Chautauqua Institution Women's Club Board of Directors. She previously worked as President of the Amherst Youth Foundation, President of the Buffalo Amherst Business and Professional Women's Association, and sat on the Board of Directors for YMCA of Greater Buffalo, the UB Alumni Association, and the Erie County Industrial Development Agency. Her commitment to public service goes beyond the listed organizations. She is unquestionably sincere in her desire to help others, and she has gone above and beyond to deliver for her neighbors and community.

Many groups have recognized Susan over the years, so it is only fitting that the Amherst Democratic Committee recognizes her efforts over the last 25 years as a member. Susan Grelick has been a steadfast friend to so many in the Western New York area, and all its citizens (particularly those in Amherst), owe her a debt of gratitude. She has been an asset to the growth of our region, and I am thrilled that she is being honored for her inspiring achievements. I wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR INTERIM APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS AND RELATED AGENCIES WITH RESPECT TO ANY FISCAL YEAR FOR WHICH APPROPRIATIONS ARE NOT OTHERWISE PROVIDED FOR SUCH COURTS AND AGENCIES

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce a bill that would exempt from federal government shutdowns the federal and independent agencies that are exclusively or primarily federally funded but have jurisdiction over local District of Columbia civil and criminal justice matters. This bill is modeled on a provision I have gotten enacted each year