

Ms. Smith is revered by her colleagues not just for her work but also for her friendliness and collegiality. When she is not working, she also loves to spend time with her family including her husband, Tim, her mom, Barbara, her stepchildren, Katie Mason, Nick Smith, and Emily Angelopoulos, and her grandchildren, Cam, Nick, Sidney, Ben, Anthony, and Dominic.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is therefore fitting and proper that we recognize Suzanne Smith for her longtime service at the Sonoma County Transit Authority and Regional Climate Protection Authority.

RALPH CONTINI

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is my honor and privilege to commemorate the induction of Ralph Contini as the National President of UNICO National. Ralph, an exceptional leader with forty years of dedicated service to UNICO at all levels, currently serves as its Executive Vice President and Chairman of the UNICO National Columbus Day Committee. Throughout his tenure, he has been recognized for his unwavering commitment and received prestigious awards, including the Dr. Anthony P. Vastola Gold Medal Award and the Outstanding District Governor Award. Born and raised in Italy, Ralph's deep connection to Italian heritage has shaped his remarkable journey. Beyond UNICO, Ralph actively participates in several Italian American organizations, holding esteemed positions such as Treasurer/Executive Director at the Tri-State Italian American Congress and serving on the Board of Trustees for The Columbians. His dedication was further recognized with the honorable title of Cavaliere by the President of the Republic of Italy. As District Governor of New Jersey Districts Six and Seven, Ralph received the "Outstanding" and "Distinguished" UNICO National District Governor Awards, recognizing his outstanding leadership and dedicated efforts in managing the chapters within each district. Today, as the proud owner of Ralph A. Contini, CPA, LLC in Paramus, he provides top-tier accounting, tax, consulting, and financial planning services. Now residing Hackensack with his family, Ralph finds joy and fulfillment in his family life and values the support they provide as he continues to make a meaningful impact to their community. His legacy as an outstanding leader and advocate Italian heritage stands as a testament to his deep commitment and passion to the cause. Congratulations to Ralph for his induction as National President at UNICO and I thank him for his dedication to his community. God Bless Ralph Contini and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF THE YEAR: LISA TINBRINK HOWARD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Lisa Tinbrink Howard as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Lisa is a leader who serves her community through her work, advocacy, and volunteer efforts. Early in her career, Lisa worked as an engineer, where she broke down barriers and was a trailblazer for other female engineers. She later founded Tolenas Winery, which she operates with her husband in the Suisun Valley. There they provide wine education and help others understand the invaluable contributions of local agriculture to our community. Lisa has served on the Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee and is Secretary of the Suisun Valley Vinters and Growers Association where she works with elected officials to advocate for farmers and winemakers. Furthermore, Lisa serves her community through her volunteer work, which includes work with the local 4H, advocating for women in the wine and agricultural industries, and supporting military personnel. She is also a proud and caring mother of three children and inspires others with her dedication to her faith, family, business, advocacy, and community service. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Lisa Tinbrink Howard for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR JOSEPH THALLEMER'S SERVICE TO WARSAW, INDIANA

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I am proud to recognize and congratulate Mayor Joseph Thallemer, who is completing his tenure of dedicated service to Warsaw, Indiana at the end of this year.

Currently serving in his third term as Mayor, Joe Thallemer has long advocated solutions that make Warsaw a better place to live, work, and raise a family, and that maintain and build on Warsaw's status as the Medical Device and Orthopedic Capital of the World.

Prior to becoming Mayor, Joe Thallemer also served on the City Council and the Warsaw Plan Commission, meaning his record of faithfully serving Warsaw runs nearly three decades deep.

Beyond City Hall, many Hoosiers know Joe through his Optometry practice that he established in Warsaw in 1980.

Outside of his medical practice and elected office, Joe has also given back to the community he and his wife Jill call home by serving on the local YMCA board as well as in church and school activities with Jill and their four children.

As he prepares to step down as Mayor, spend more time with his family, and write the

next chapter of his life, I am proud to congratulate Joe Thallemer on a distinguished career and a job well done. The Warsaw community is unquestionably better off thanks to this good man with a servant's heart.

I join Hoosiers throughout Indiana's Second Congressional District in expressing our gratitude to Mayor Thallemer for his service and in wishing him and his wonderful family nothing but the very best going forward.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF THE YEAR: MARINDA ELAINE KEITH

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Marinda Elaine Keith as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Marinda has been a community leader and owner of Marinda's Family Daycare for decades. After operating her daycare center for 35 years, she has served roughly 400 children and families. She is passionate about educating every child in her care and works to ensure that every child receives food, education, and the support they need. Her love and commitment to the children she cares for is evident in the educational and career pursuits her students have accomplished. She is also an active member of the church, where she volunteers and gives back to those in need. Through her church she has organized the annual backpack drive for underprivileged children and numerous food giveaways. During the COVID-19 Pandemic she donated, prepared, and delivered baskets of food and supplies to seniors. In addition, she volunteers to cook and serve meals for the unhoused in the parks throughout Richmond. Marinda's compassion, selflessness, and dedication serve as an inspiration to all who meet her. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Marinda Elaine Keith for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING CHIEF GARY GACEK OF CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Chief Gary Gacek on his retirement from the Concord Police Department and to honor his many years of faithful service to the people of Concord, North Carolina.

Gacek began his career in law enforcement with the Milwaukee Police Department, where he served in a variety of roles over the course of 25 years. He began his role as Chief of Police of the Concord Police Department in July 2015. Under his leadership, Concord became one of the safest cities in the state, with crime

rates hitting their lowest levels in over twenty years.

Gacek implemented numerous reforms and initiatives that helped modernize the department, reduce crime and develop the community. Some of these reforms include the implementation of an evidence-based community policing strategy, updating the department's technology and information systems, expanding the department's analytical and intelligence capabilities, and developing several community engagement initiatives, among many others. Perhaps one of his greatest initiatives was the creation of the Concord Police Foundation, which supports Concord Police Department employees and their families and helps make Concord a safer community to live and work. Gacek established this program in 2021 in honor of Concord Officer Jason Shuping who was tragically killed in the line of duty on December 16, 2020.

I have known Chief Gacek for many years and witnessed firsthand the tremendous work he has done for the people of Concord. I am proud to call him my friend and know I speak for the whole community when I wish him well in this next chapter of his life.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, please join me today in congratulating Gary Gacek on his retirement and to thank him for his many years of dedicated service.

NOAH WERTZBERGER

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I celebrate the accomplishments of Noah Wertzberger and his recent achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout. Noah embarked on his scouting journey as a K-cub during his kindergarten years. Throughout his scouting experience, he remained actively involved and just recently completed his Eagle Project in October. His project involved the removal of two Osprey nests situated on the Great Egg Harbor Watershed. Once those were removed, he constructed and installed replacement Osprey Nests with the help of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association. Noah is extremely grateful for Troop Seventy-Nine and the Boy Scouts for imparting invaluable lessons and fostering friendships. After achieving the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout, he now serves as an assistant scoutmaster, providing ongoing assistance to the Troop. In the upcoming fall, he will be attending Seton Hall University. Noah should be incredibly proud of his accomplishments, and I know he has a bright future ahead of him. God Bless Noah Wertzberger and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: MARGARET KOLK

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Margaret Kolk as she is honored as

one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Maggie is a passionate public servant who demonstrates a tireless dedication to serving her community. For the past nine years, Maggie has served as Chair of the Benicia Human Services Board, directing funding to local nonprofits that serve low-income Benicia residents and improving funding for city agencies. She is also the Secretary of Sustainable Solano, an environmental organization championing renewable energy and sustainable food production services. Along with her public service, Maggie has demonstrated equal dedication to serving her community through her volunteer work and political activism. For the past three years, Maggie has served as manager of the Benicia Community Garden helping to maintain an important resource that brings local sustainable food to Benicia residents. In 2016, Maggie co-founded Progressive Democrats of Benicia, now the city's largest political organization, and is currently spearheading a local ballot initiative to raise revenues to fix Benicia roads. She is known to never back down from the toughest challenges and to always offer her complete commitment to any undertaking. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Margaret Kolk for her positive contributions to our community.

NATO SUPPORTS UKRAINE AND
ISRAEL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this past weekend, I was grateful to participate with the U.S. Delegation for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen, Denmark, led by Delegation Chairman MIKE TURNER and Assembly former President GERRY CONNOLLY.

On Friday, the focus was on war criminal Putin's murderous invasion of Ukraine. NATO and the European Union have surpassed America with aid for Ukraine and incredibly Finland is now a NATO member with an 830-mile border with Russia, as Sweden gives up 200 years of neutrality to stop dictators. The West is united as never before in history to protect democracies.

On Saturday, with the sadistic invasion of Israel, there was extraordinary unanimity supporting Israel's territorial integrity. Clearly the axis of dictatorships of Putin, the regime in Tehran, and the Chinese Communist Party, had collaborated again with the invasion from Gaza. Sadly, the war we did not choose, Dictatorship with Rule of Gun against Democracies with Rule of Law, is proceeding and must be faced with Peace Through Strength.

On Sunday, Resolutions were presented from the five standing committees with amendments to be considered with debate. Parliamentarian Michal Szczerba of Poland presented Towards Reconstruction of Ukraine emphasizing payment by seized Russia assets, while Parliamentarian Njall Fridbertsson of Iceland explained Enhancement of Protection of allied critical maritime infrastructure.

Senator Rodrigue Demeuse of Belgium proposed the resolution on Protecting Allied De-

mocracies from Disinformation with provisions for addressing war crimes. Assemblyman Utku Cakirozer of Türkiye explained implementing NATO's new Deterrence and Defense Baseline. It is crucial we continue to stand with Türkiye as it is attacked by terrorists, just as we defeat the barbarian terrorists of Gaza. MP Alec Shelbrooke of Britain presented a Resolution Strengthening Stability and Security to the Black Sea Region following Russia's invasion, emphasizing grain deliveries for Egypt and African countries which are being destroyed by war criminal Putin.

On Monday, unanimously provided statements were issued supporting Israel as Iran's chants of Death to Israel, Death to America unfolded. Resolutions previously presented unanimously of 27 countries present were inspiring for the courageous citizens of Ukraine and Israel. There was unprecedented solidarity for freedom, democracy, and rule of law.

Stirring addresses were made of determined support for Ukraine and Israel for territorial integrity by NATO Parliamentary Assembly President Michal Szczerba, Danish Parliamentary Speaker Soren Gade compared the Hamas attack to 9/11 and Pearl Harbor, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen expressed concern that many are naive as to Russia and China, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised Israel's resolve and thanked all for help to Ukraine, Deputy Secretary General of NATO Mircea Geoana cited Europeans killed by Iran proxy Hamas in Israel, with NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation General Philippe Lavigne emphasizing importance of all countries to reach two percent for defense to achieve Peace Through Peace.

The sessions concluded with presenting the 2023 'Women for Peace and Security' award to Leader of Democratic Belarus Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya who courageously works for a democratic Belarus and political prisoner release including her husband.

NOAH BROWN

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I celebrate the accomplishments of Noah Quinton Brown and his recent achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout. Noah began scouting at the age of five, following in the footsteps of four generations of family before him. Now, having reached the highest rank in scouting, we celebrate his achievements. During his time in the Scouts, Noah has participated in countless fundraising and community service activities along with many different camping and hiking adventures. In July of 2022, Noah completed a 60-mile Trek at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico where he achieved the Boy Scout 50 miler award. For his Eagle Scout Project, he built benches, a water station, and rehabilitated a pavilion for use by spectators at cycling events put on by Camp Edge in Alloway, South Jersey. His remains active in the scouts with his current position of Junior Assistant Scoutmaster at Troop 60 in Daretown, South Jersey. Noah is now a junior at Woodstown High School, consistently earning his way on to the