

my honor to celebrate the institute's 10th anniversary. God Bless AtlantiCare Cancer Care Institute, and God Bless our United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF  
THE YEAR: VIRGIE ROY

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Virgie Roy as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Virgie is a dedicated and caring nurse at the David Grant Medical Center on Travis Air Force Base. Her patients and colleagues describe her as a talented nurse who is dedicated to patient care and staff development. Her colleagues describe her as the backbone of her hospital unit and a talented nurse dedicated to patient care and staff development as well as a mentor to others. Virgie has also used her firsthand experience to advocate for solutions to the United States' nurse shortage. When not tending to her patients or advocating for reform, Virgie volunteers with the Red Cross Northern California Coastal Region and Service to Armed Forces. Virgie is a beloved part of her community and has been nominated for numerous local and state awards celebrating her positive impact on the lives of her colleagues, patients, and the community.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Virgie Roy for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING TRANSFIGURATION  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**HON. CORI BUSH**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, St. Louis and I rise to commemorate Transfiguration Lutheran Church on 120 years of faith, community, and service.

Transfiguration Lutheran Church was organized on November 8, 1903, and became the first African American Lutheran Congregation west of the Mississippi River. They have committed themselves to improving the lives and wellbeing of their community by providing meals, athletics, dance, music, art classes, and field trips at their TLC Summer Day Camp, established in 2016. Their women's ministry emphasizes the strength and contributions of biblical women, women in history, and the women who currently make up their congregation.

Many lives have been forever changed due to the efforts of Transfiguration Lutheran Church, and a thank you will never feel quite adequate to reflect our immense gratitude as a region for their work. St. Louis honors their dedication and may we all commit to paying their efforts forward.

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, as the Congressman from South Jersey, I am proud to celebrate Italian Heritage Month. This month is a time to honor the rich contributions of Italian Americans to our nation's culture, history, and progress. Italian Americans have left an indelible mark on our Nation, from the arts and sciences to public service and community building. Their dedication and resilience have strengthened the fabric of America. In New Jersey, we are fortunate to have a vibrant Italian American community that has enhanced our state's identity and unity. Italian Heritage Month serves as a reminder of the enduring spirit of the Italian American community and of the many heritages that make up our great country. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Italian American community in South Jersey and across the United States. Their enduring legacy of hard work, creativity, and resilience serves as a testament to the limitless opportunities that America offers to those who seek a better life. May Italian Heritage Month inspire us to appreciate the diverse tapestry of our Nation and remind us that, together, we can continue to make America a beacon of hope and opportunity for all. God bless America.

HONORING KIWANIS NEW YORK  
DISTRICT GOVERNOR LUCIEN  
GIANCURSIO

**HON. BRANDON WILLIAMS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. WILLIAMS of New York. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to honor Kiwanis New York District Governor Lucien Giancursio.

Kiwanis International is a global community of clubs, members, and partners dedicated to improving the lives of children, one child and one community at a time. Each community has different needs, and Kiwanis empowers members to pursue creative ways to serve the needs of children through local service projects and fundraising. The organization includes more than 600,000 members from Aktion Clubs, K-Kid Clubs, Builders Clubs, Key Clubs, Circle K Clubs and Kiwanis Clubs in over 80 countries. Kiwanis members have staged more than 150,000 service projects and have historically devoted more than 6 million hours of service. They have also raised over \$250 million for communities, families, and projects via the Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) program and the Maternal Neonatal Tetanus (MNT) project.

The New York District of Kiwanis International, comprised of Kiwanis Clubs throughout New York State, this year marks the 108th anniversary, and the Ontario Division is hosting the 2023–24 District Governor's Official Visit in Syracuse, New York.

New York District Governor Lucien Giancursio joined the Kiwanis Club of Rochester West Central on September 1, 2004, and is a Life Member. Serving people and his

community has been a life-long tradition for Governor Lucien. His Governor's Project this year is sending 1000 Kampers to Kamp Kiwanis in Taberg, NY, and his theme for 2023–24 is "Excelsior, a Future of Hope".

On behalf of New York's 22nd Congressional District, I would like to thank Governor Lucien Giancursio for his leadership of the New York District of Kiwanis and recognize the impact and commitment of the New York District's service.

**JOHN RUGA**

**HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today, I highlight the exceptional achievements of John Ruga, the CEO of Northeast Precast, one of the leading precast fabricators in the United States. Mr. Ruga's journey in construction began in 1998 when he founded J. Ruga Contractors in Vineland. He later expanded into precast manufacturing in 2003, leading to the renaming of the company as Northeast Precast in 2008, marking a pivotal moment in its diversification and growth. Headquartered in Cumberland County, NEP is a leader in precast manufacturing with over two decades of experience. They handle a range of construction projects, from residential to public infrastructure, and have received accolades such as the PCI Design Award in 2010 and 2013. Furthermore, NEP contributes significantly to our local economy, providing over 400 jobs in Cumberland County and contributing to South Jersey's prosperity. Mr. Ruga is also recognized for his partnership with sports figures Mike Trout and Tiger Woods to develop Trout National—The Reserve, a significant golf course project in Vineland set to be completed by 2025. Mr. John Ruga's leadership and Northeast Precast's contributions to the construction industry are commendable and I thank him for this dedication to our South Jersey community. God Bless John Ruga and Northeast Precast and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF  
THE YEAR: VELMA WILSON

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Velma Wilson as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Velma is a dedicated parent and passionate community member who finds every opportunity to help others. Velma currently serves as Executive Vice President of the District Parent Teacher Association for Contra Costa, engaging with parents, teachers, and community members to promote the wellbeing of schoolchildren. For her efforts, Velma was awarded the prestigious National President Award. Velma also serves as Parent Liaison for Antioch Unified School District, ensuring

parents are informed and involved in their children's education. In addition, Velma is Director of the Delta Veterans Group and holds executive positions at the Celebrate Antioch Foundation and Antioch School Education Foundation. Her variety of volunteer pursuits demonstrates her dedication to providing resources to all parts of our community. Velma gives generously of her knowledge, expertise, and time to help others.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Velma Wilson for her positive contributions to our community.

THOMAS TRAN

### HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this August, I had the pleasure of attending Thomas Tran's Eagle Scout Court of Honor. Thomas has been actively involved in the Scouts since the third grade when he joined as a cub scout. He quickly climbed the ranks and became an active member of Troop 94, leading the group as their Patrol Leader. Since then, he has earned an impressive 28 merit badges for his hard work and dedication. The proudest moment of Thomas's Scouting journey was his Eagle Scout project where Thomas organized the removal and replacement of an old billboard welcome sign at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8098 in Egg Harbor Township. This massive undertaking demanded 130 hours of his time and the South Jersey community is thankful for his efforts. God Bless Thomas Tran and God Bless the United States of America.

### INTRODUCTION OF THE NO FENCING AT THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL COMPLEX ACT

### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today, I introduce the No Fencing at the United States Capitol Complex Act, which would prohibit the installation of new permanent fencing on the grounds of the United States Capitol complex. I am pleased that Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN is introducing this bill in the Senate.

After the insurrectionist attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021, the Capitol complex became an untraversable fortress surrounded by frightening fences capped with barbed wire—typical of authoritarian regimes. Although more needs to be done to protect the Capitol complex, the failure of Capitol security leaders to plan for the predictable and openly announced attack on the Capitol on January 6th does not justify closing the complex to the public, to whom it belongs. We can and must maintain our commitment to security without sacrificing public access by using the least restrictive means necessary to address security.

The January 6th attack on the Capitol, which had little to do with the lack of perma-

nent fencing, was the greatest intelligence and security failure in the history of our nation's capital. There were countless security failures on January 6th that we can and must address, including: taking threats of extremist violence seriously at an earlier stage; closing the Capitol building grounds during high-profile and high-threat events, as is typically done, but was not done on January 6th; manpower; building security; and training. Permanent fencing, which is incredibly imprecise, would not address those security lapses. It is more likely to keep out children, joggers and tourists than a coordinated attack on the Capitol. In fact, it is a form of security theater—it would make the Capitol “look” safer but mask the lack of state-of-the-art security measures that could prevent attacks in the future. Every threat to the Capitol since January 6th has been stopped by longstanding and new security measures and the excellent work of the Capitol Police. Permanent fencing would not aid the Capitol Police in stopping threats but it would create an image of authoritarianism, secrecy and inaccessibility. The Capitol complex is for all the American people, and, with proper security, must remain open to them.

Permanent fencing would send an un-American message to the nation and the world, by transforming our democracy from one that is accessible, transparent and of the people to one that is closed off, secretive and fearful of its own citizens. It would tell the world that the most powerful nation must rely on crude barriers for safety instead of state-of-the-art intelligence and security protocols. The Capitol has welcomed First Amendment protests and demonstrations for centuries without becoming a fortress. The openness of the Capitol and our democracy is our strength, not a security weakness that needs to be rooted out. Any further consideration of permanent fencing is desperate, distasteful and disrespectful of our history and institutions.

Furthermore, the Capitol complex does not exist in a vacuum. It is immediately surrounded by residential neighborhoods and local businesses, which form the heart of the District of Columbia. Permanent fencing would cause serious damage to the fabric of these communities. After January 6th, these residents and businesses were more than understanding as their neighborhoods turned into militarized zones. They waited patiently as officers checked their identification on their walks home or took alternative routes when they found blocked streets. Permanent fencing would infringe on their ability, as well as the general public's ability, to enjoy the public spaces that define our nation's capital.

The distance between government and the people has grown, with trust in government at historic lows. Installing permanent fencing at the Capitol complex would only increase that distance.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

### HONORING KOUNTRY KITCHEN SOUL FOOD PLACE

### HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I rise in celebration of the grand reopen-

ing of Kountry Kitchen Soul Food Place, a beloved Indianapolis establishment specializing in southern-style soul food.

Located in Indiana's 7th Congressional District, Kountry Kitchen was established in 1988 by Ms. Jessie White to bring her southern-style home cooking to the neighborhood, under the name Jessie's Place. Ms. Jessie's daughter, Nell Wilson, later joined to grow the family business and introduce her own recipes. Nell and her husband, Isaac, renamed the diner to Country Kitchen. After Nell's passing, Isaac remarried, and with his wife Cynthia, they renamed the business Kountry Kitchen. Isaac and Cynthia continue to honor this legacy by serving the recipes passed down to them by Ms. Jessie and Nell.

A nationally recognized restaurant, Kountry Kitchen has caught the attention of many notable figures, including Jimmy Fallon, former President Barack Obama, and Indianapolis native Mike Epps.

In early 2020, Kountry Kitchen suffered a devastating fire. Thankfully, there was no loss of life, but the establishment suffered extensive damage. With the help of a \$400,000 grant, assistance from local organizations, and the entire Indianapolis community coming together, Kountry Kitchen broke ground on its new location in the summer of 2022. One year later, we are proudly celebrating their grand reopening.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our congratulations and thanks to a beloved community staple and recognizing the enduring legacy of this iconic Indianapolis destination.

DOROTHY DOUGHERTY

### HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2023*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today, I honor the 100th birthday of Dorothy Helen Dougherty, a woman of great character and dedication. Dorothy was born on October 7, 1923, and grew up in a loving, multi-generational household in Pennsylvania. After attending secretarial school in Philadelphia and working as a secretary for several years, she married her husband in January 1948. Together, they settled in Ocean City, South Jersey and built a successful residential construction and real estate business while raising three sons. Dorothy remained active in her church and community, and she volunteered in various charitable efforts, including helping the less fortunate through food and clothing donations. Tragically, she lost her husband at 58 but found solace in Lake Worth, Florida, where she became an active member of her church and excelled as a shuffleboard champion. Most importantly, Dorothy's legacy continues through her loving family, including three sons, eight grandchildren, and thirteen great-grandchildren who affectionately know her as “GiGi.” So, on Dorothy's 100th birthday, we honor her remarkable life and her enduring impact on her family and community. God Bless Dorothy Dougherty and God Bless the United States of America.