

over 30 years—retiring in 1990 as Chief of the Seed Division. Mr. Deppen astoundingly still maintains his independence in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania and is a blessing to his family and all those that have the privilege of sharing his company.

Mr. Speaker, I'm honored, privileged, and humbled to recognize Corporal (Army, Retired) Richard Deppen on his 100th birthday. His tireless, faithful, and selfless service to the Nation and our Commonwealth sets the standard by which we all should be judged. I wish him continued Godspeed.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS
MONTH

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2024

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and join the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation in celebrating the unveiling of the BIG hope sculpture by Chicago artist Matthew Hoffman.

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer present in women in the United States. Over the course of 2024, it is expected that about 310,720 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in women, and about 42,250 women will die from breast cancer. These numbers are far too high.

Since 1985, the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation has led the fight against breast cancer, raising funds for breast cancer research and doctors in the Chicagoland area. This organization is named for Lynn Sage who died at only 39 years old as a result of her breast cancer. The Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation provides funding for research grants and fellowships. The organization also holds the annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium which assembles breast cancer research leaders from across the world. The BIG hope sculpture is yet another example of their dedication to raising awareness of the fight against breast cancer. This sculpture serves as a symbol of hope for those impacted by the disease, and it will raise funds which will support the Chicago Breast Cancer Research Consortium.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and all our colleagues in the House of Representatives in recognizing the work of the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation and congratulating them on the unveiling of this artwork.

COMMEMORATING THE 80TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF POLISH AMERICAN
CONGRESS

HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2024

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Polish American Congress, which was established by over 2,600 individuals and representatives of Polish organizations in Buffalo on May 28, 1944, just days before the Normandy Invasion.

The purpose of the Polish American Congress was to fight for a free and sovereign Poland which had been attacked in 1939 by Nazi Germany, the Slovak Army, and by the Soviet Union.

As a result of the Second World War, Poland lost between five and 11 million people due to the genocide committed by the occupying forces and border changes.

After the Yalta Conference of 1945, Poland fell under communist rule and lost 20 percent of its territory. It was then that the Polish American Congress was founded and committed itself to helping the Polish nation.

The achievements of the Polish American Congress include:

1948: advocacy for legislation that allowed 140,000 Polish displaced persons and veterans of the Polish armed forces, who fought against Nazi Germany, to settle permanently in the U.S.

1950: supporting the creation of Radio Free Europe as a voice of truth for the people of Eastern Europe.

1952: pressuring the House of Representatives to investigate the Katyn Forest Massacre. The investigation found that the Soviet Union was responsible for the mass execution of Polish military officers in World War II.

1980s: support for Solidarity, a movement that eventually contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the fall of communism in Poland in 1989.

1999: support for Poland's admission into NATO, signed and supported by President Bill Clinton.

2019: successful conclusion of the multi-year lobbying effort to include Poles in the Visa Waiver Program.

2022: raising thousands of dollars for the Polish Red Cross and Ukrainian Relief efforts to welcome over one million Ukrainian refugees into Poland in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The bond between the United States and Poland dates back to the Revolutionary War.

Casimir Pulaski, known as the 'Father of the American Cavalry', was a leading commander in the South and died in the 1799 Battle of Savannah. Andrew Kosciuszko was a colonel in the Continental Army, a military architect credited with the construction of fortifications at West Point in New York, and a close friend of Thomas Jefferson who dedicated his U.S. assets to the education and freedom of American slaves.

Millions of Poles have since emigrated to the United States. During the Industrial Revolution, Polish immigrants contributed enormously to the economic flourishing of this country. Polish values and culture, like the love of freedom, hard work, hospitality, and pride in family and community, are woven throughout the fabric of America.

Throughout its 80 year history, the Polish American Congress has remained committed to its mission: A free and sovereign Poland. I congratulate this organization, which advocates for the nearly ten million Americans of Polish descent. The Polish American Congress will meet this weekend in Chicago to celebrate its history of accomplishments, and I wish it many more decades of success as it plans for the future.

GOLD STAR SPOUSE HEALTHCARE
ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2024

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the immense debt our Nation owes to the surviving family of servicemembers killed defending US interests and the cause of Liberty abroad. Today, I am joined in bipartisan fashion by Congressman DON BACON of Nebraska in introducing a bill that recognizes their sacrifice by expanding healthcare benefits for Gold Star spouses.

Currently, surviving spouses retain healthcare coverage through TRICARE in the "active-duty family member" category for just three years after their servicemember passes away. After three years, they automatically shift to "retired family member" status, which forces them to pay higher fees and out-of-pocket costs.

The debt our Nation owes to the brave men and women who make the ultimate sacrifice while serving overseas is not a debt that can be repaid within three years. It is our sacred responsibility to honor their sacrifice by caring for their surviving spouses.

It is in this spirit that Representative BACON and I are proud to introduce the bipartisan Gold Star Spouses Healthcare Enhancement Act. This Act effectively removes the three-year limitation for spouses who meet criteria for the Gold Star lapel button. It enables them to remain in "active-duty family member" status, reducing the costs and burden on those who have already sacrificed so much for our country.

Military service requires our young men and women to risk their lives fighting and defeating America's enemies. They selflessly accept this risk to secure Liberty across the globe. I encourage each of my colleagues to support the Gold Star Spouses Healthcare Enhancement Act as one small way to honor the debt we as a Nation owe those who answered the call to service and perished in defense of our Nation.

RECOGNIZING JORGE RODRÍGUEZ

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary contributions of Jorge Rodríguez. Originally from Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, he has called Grapevine his home since 1995. Jorge's passion for education and unwavering commitment to his community has made a lasting impact on the Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District. For 15 years, Jorge served as an elected member of the Grapevine-Colleyville ISD Board of Trustees, where his leadership and vision played a pivotal role in elevating the district's academic performance. Under his stewardship, Grapevine-Colleyville ISD achieved the distinguished rank of sixth in Texas for its advanced studies program, a reflection of his dedication to fostering academic excellence and creating opportunities for all students.

Jorge's leadership was further highlighted in 2018 when the Grapevine-Colleyville ISD Board was awarded the Texas School Board of the Year, an honor that speaks to his forward-thinking approach and commitment to education. His contributions have left an indelible mark on the district, shaping its future and enhancing the educational experience for countless students. In addition to his work on the school board, Jorge founded the Éxito Hispano program in 2011, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering Hispanic parents through educational workshops. These workshops provide essential information about public school programs, scholarships, universities, and academic opportunities, helping to bridge gaps and ensure that all Hispanic students in Grapevine-Colleyville ISD have the tools to graduate and pursue higher education.

Jorge Rodríguez's efforts to expand educational opportunities, empower Latino families, and promote youth development have made him a true champion for progress, inclusion, and a brighter future for all in Grapevine and the Hispanic community.

It is my pleasure to recognize Jorge Rodríguez for his exemplary contributions and unwavering dedication to North Texas, as well as congratulate him on receiving the 2024 Latino Service Award.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRIS SORESENSEN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2024

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Chris Sorensen, who passed away on Friday, March 8, 2024. Mr. Sorensen was an artist in Fresno who founded the city's beloved ArtHop, bringing artists and the community together to share and enjoy the talent and creativity that Fresno's residents have to offer.

Mr. Sorensen was born on June 30, 1925, in Fresno, CA. He grew up in Mendota, CA before moving to Fresno where he graduated from Fresno High School in 1944. After graduating, he served our country and joined the U.S. Navy during World War II. When he came back home, he worked at his family's machine works business in Mendota until he moved back to Fresno and started WECO, a welding supply business.

Art was not Mr. Sorensen's initial career. Prior to his legacy as an artist, he had been a draftsman, inventor, a partner in farm equipment and manufacturing, and a welder. His interest and career in art started because of his son, John, who took an art class at McLane High School and asked him for help with welding. After that, Mr. Sorensen took art classes as well—kickstarting his legendary career as one of Fresno's most revered artists.

Sorensen's impact extended beyond his beautiful sculptures when he began the Chris Sorensen Studio in the early 1990s. This studio brought artists in Fresno together to work

on their art, providing the original home for Fresno's ArtHop. Now, ArtHop is spread out through multiple locations in the city and is held on the first and third Thursday of every month, providing a space for the community to come together to appreciate and enjoy the work of our local artists. Sorensen's gallery and art studio has been proclaimed the "The Heart of Art in Fresno," bringing together artists for more than 30 years.

His specialty in welding landed him the nickname of "Man of Steel," as he became known for his large metal sculptures. His impressive sculptures and artistic prowess can be witnessed throughout the Valley, including a massive heart at St. Agnes Hospital, a metal tree on Friant Road, a life size mammoth in Madera, and a bulldog at his welding company, WECO.

Mr. Sorensen has also demonstrated his generosity and dedication to the arts extensively in his time. He has organized a fundraiser for the Mariposa Arts Council when they lost their headquarters in a fire, put on an annual Pink Show to raise money for breast cancer research, supported the Timberline Gallery in Oakhurst in keeping their gallery open, among many other instances of philanthropy.

Chris was a loving husband to Mitzi Christensen and loving father to their two children, Vicki and John. He was also a grandfather and great-grandfather to 7 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Chris Sorensen for his dedication and achievements in advocating for local artists and bringing the community together. May we never forget his contributions and continue to be inspired by his legacy.