

These non-governmental community organizations are pillars of Pacific Islands society; they often fill critical gaps in delivery of foreign assistance and reach important sectors of the population. The Committee will also be required to submit a strategy on enhanced engagement with civil society organizations in the Pacific Islands.

Second, the bill requires the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Administrator of USAID and the Secretary of Defense, to refine our overall communications strategy in the Pacific Islands. The United States is and for centuries has been a Pacific nation, deeply engaged as a partner in our mutual present and future. This strategy is crucial to fully and adequately communicating the breadth and depth of American efforts throughout the Pacific.

Third, the bill codifies the Indo-Pacific Media Advancement Program (IPMAP). IPMAP promotes free media in the Indo-Pacific, including in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands, through training in countering misinformation and business sustainability, small grants for equipment and content sharing agreements. IPMAP is currently running under a two-year, \$2 million Countering PRC Influence Grant from the Department of State. With those limited resources, IPMAP has already been able to work with 30 media outlets and has been incredibly well-received. Officially establishing this program under the Department of State and authorizing appropriations for it will ensure that IPMAP's important work can continue for years to come.

Fourth, this bill establishes the Pacific Islands Training and Resources for Advancement in Development, Education and Skills (TRADES) Program under USAID. Many Pacific Islands leaders have commended American efforts in the realm of professional development through higher education scholarship programs, and they have advocated for efforts to expand such programs to technical and vocational education and training. This provision of the bill seeks to rectify that by authorizing USAID to assist with workforce development in the region through scholarships, training and grants in sectors of critical importance to the Pacific Islands, such as construction, tourism, boat maintenance and fisheries. The Pacific Islands TRADES Program will support the region's economic resilience and capacity to maximize the benefits of national investment and business opportunities.

Finally, this bill supports and requires a report on American Spaces in the region. American Spaces are public diplomacy facilities operated or supported by the Department of State that promote effective engagement with foreign audiences toward the full understanding of the United States. These facilities are a crucial component of American outreach in the region, allowing residents to learn about opportunities to study in the United States, participate in mentorship programs and more. The report requires a description of any additional resources needed for the expansion of this program.

These provisions represent and enhance the sustained commitment of the United States to the Pacific Islands. This bill serves as a testament to the United States' enduring presence in the region and demonstrates that we are willing and able to respond to the region's specific needs in a way that is fully consistent with American national interests.

Together, let us Engage the Pacific—for today, for tomorrow and for generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SANDRA MAE KING HALL

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. DeSAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Sandra Mae King Hall.

Sandra was raised in Fresno, California alongside her eleven siblings. She graduated from San Joaquin Memorial High School and went on to pursue a career in real estate investment, property management, and newspaper distribution. Sandra played a critical role in protecting local journalism, operating a newspaper distributorship with her husband, Frank Hall, providing local news to Pleasant Hill residents from 1977 through 2009. She has received numerous accolades for her contributions to the business community, earning the Pleasant Hill Business Person of the Year Award in 1986 and the 2010 American Association of Independent News Distributors Award. Additionally, Sandra was selected as former Congressman George Miller's delegate at the 1986 White House Conference on Small Business.

Outside of her work as an entrepreneur, Sandra loved music, travel, and giving back to her community. Her passion for music was evident to all who knew her, practicing international folk dances and singing in the choir. Throughout her life, Sandra was very dedicated to her community and was involved with the Kiwanis Club of Martinez, Boys and Girls Club of Martinez, and St. Catherine of Siena parish.

Sadly, Sandra passed away at the age of 77 on September 15, 2024. She is survived by her husband of 44 years, Frank Hall; her children, Janene Sides (David) and Michael Nicol (Christina); her grandchildren Robert (Kaitlyn), Christina, Daniel, Sarah, and Madisen; her great-grandchildren, Quinn, Soleil, and Elijah; and numerous nieces, nephews, and other family members. She will be remembered for her entrepreneurial spirit, sense of humor, and remarkable leadership. Please join me in recognizing Sandra Hall for her many contributions to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DANIEL WOOLDRIDGE

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Daniel Wooldridge, who passed away on August 20, 2024.

Born on June 5, 1934, in Lynchburg, Virginia, Mr. Wooldridge grew up in the foster care system. He was ready to support and provide for his foster family from an early age. He sold hot dogs, ran a paper route and drove a school bus before he reached 16 years of age.

Interested in athletics, Mr. Wooldridge attended Lynchburg College (now the University

of Lynchburg) where he played basketball, soccer and baseball. He is a member of the school's athletics Hall of Fame.

At Lynchburg College, he met his wife Nancy, whom he was married to for 65 loving years before her passing in 2020.

After graduating from Lynchburg College in 1956 and later completing graduate coursework from the University of Virginia, Mr. Wooldridge pursued a 30-plus year career as a life insurance salesman.

As an athlete, Mr. Wooldridge played minor league baseball for the Salem Pirates and coached baseball and football at William Fleming High School in Roanoke. His heart and strong belief in fair play was displayed through his time as a referee, officiating college basketball games for 23 years, including 13 NCAA postseason tournaments.

In 1976, Mr. Wooldridge became the very first commissioner of the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC). The athletic league consisted of small Division III schools, including his alma mater Lynchburg College. He served in this post for 21 years before his retirement.

Additionally, Mr. Wooldridge was one of two American basketball officials at the 1976 and 1980 Olympic Games.

Mr. Wooldridge's service to the Roanoke Valley community cannot be overlooked. He served as president of the Salem Rotary Club and Roanoke Valley Sports Club, dedicated time as a member of the Roanoke City School Board, and contributed as a deacon at Oakland Baptist Church.

Him and Nancy also founded the Roanoke Valley Fellowship of Christian Athletes in 1964. They took great pride in developing student-athletes and promoting the Christian faith.

Mr. Wooldridge is survived by his daughters, Rebecca (Wyatt) Ewell, Diane (Rob) Laing, and Sarah Wooldridge; his grandchildren, Rachel (Scott) Forrester, Tyler (Erin) Ewell, Alex Ewell, and Daniel Laing; his great-grandchildren, Clara, Thomas and Anna Ewell; his sister, Martha Smith; his sister-in-law, Katherine Cochran; his nephews, Preston (Tonja) Cochran and Neil Smith; his great-niece, Kalei Cochran; and cousin, Betty Bailey (Clyde Evelyn).

Faced with adversity from an early age, Mr. Wooldridge's story of perseverance and success is powerful and inspiring. The legacy he leaves behind will be remembered by the sports community and the larger Roanoke Valley.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding votes I missed on November 20, 2024. Had I been present for Roll Call No. 474, on the North Korean Human Rights Reauthorization Act of 2023, I would have voted yea. This is common sense, bipartisan legislation that will promote human rights activities in North Korea.

RECOGNIZING CHIEF DAVID C. ORTOLANO FOR HIS CAREER OF LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO THE CITY OF DUNKIRK, NEW YORK

HON. NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my constituents in recognizing one of Dunkirk's finest: Chief David C. Ortolano, who has retired after thirty-nine years of public service in law enforcement.

Chief Ortolano leaves behind a record of distinguished service as a mentor, leader and guardian for the City of Dunkirk. He has consistently gone above and beyond, fostering deep connections within the city through D.A.R.E., National Night Out, his involvement in youth programs, like Mock DWI and Trunk-or-Treat. Chief Ortolano fostered relationships that continue to make profound and positive differences in our community.

David led the City of Dunkirk Police Department through challenges with unwavering integrity, while always prioritizing the safety and well-being of both his officers and the citizens we serve. His critical work in establishing the Special Response Team and his two Medals of Valor are testaments to his leadership and commitment to excellence. He has received recognitions from local, state, and federal agencies for his contributions to law enforcement and community policing.

Chief Ortolano's leadership has shaped the Dunkirk Police Department into a strong, united force. His mentorship and dedication have inspired future leaders, and the values he instilled will guide this department long after he departs.

I ask that this body join me in recognizing Chief David C. Ortolano for his commitment to keeping the people of Dunkirk safe. On behalf of the United States Congress, and the constituents of the 23rd Congressional District, I thank him—and hope he enjoys a well-deserved retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I missed the following votes, but had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 474; YEA on Roll Call No. 475; and YEA on Roll Call No. 476.

RECOGNIZING YOM HAPLITIM,
JEWISH REFUGEE DAY

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jewish Refugee Day, or Yom Haplitim. On November 30th, we remember the 900,000 Jews who were exiled

from Arab and Muslim-majority nations during the early years of the State of Israel.

For over 2,500 years, Jews lived in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Gulf region. Over generations, Jews were subjected to discrimination and even second-class citizenship in many cases. But, nevertheless, they were loyal citizens who made substantial contributions to the culture and development of Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Morocco, and several other Arab countries.

In the wake of the Holocaust and the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, entire Jewish communities were forcefully exiled from the countries in which they had lived for millennia. Their homes and property were stripped from them along with their citizenship. These women, men, and children fled in a mass exodus, leaving everything behind to start new lives in the lands of their ancestors, as many of them were absorbed by Israel and now form an indispensable part of the fabric of the Jewish homeland. Other refugees became part of the Jewish Diaspora, including in the United States.

I had the privilege of meeting with researchers and historians in Davie, Florida who are crucially documenting and preserving the life stories of Jews who lived for millennia across the Middle East and North Africa.

I was honored to have the opportunity to hear survivors share testimonies of experiencing exile from their countries and bravely navigating a new life. It is critical that these stories are preserved for future generations.

Their struggle and resilience—along with the hundreds of thousands of Jews who also stood in their shoes—is inspiring. It is a testament to the improbable survival of the Jewish people throughout history.

In 1910, the first Jewish person permanently settled in Broward County. From then on, our community has only grown, diversified and thrived.

Throughout my time in Congress, I've always fought to embrace the diversity of our Nation and the immigrant heritage that follows us to this day.

I am proud to represent the Jewish American community in my district and to use my platform to amplify the voices of Jewish Americans.

Since the horrors of October 7, antisemitism has risen sharply around the world. Many Jewish Americans are fearful and isolated as threats reemerge from the darkness.

But I and the Jewish American community—and Jews all over the world—will not be deterred. The history of the Jewish people is characterized by our strength and resilience in the face of strife. We must acknowledge the history of the Jewish refugees to keep their stories alive.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call Vote No. 475 on H.R. 8368, I mistakenly recorded my vote as NAY when I should have voted YEA.

NATIONAL AMUSEMENT PARK
RIDE SAFETY ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the National Amusement Park Ride Safety Act. This month, 22 patrons were suspended in the air for two hours on a pinwheel ride at Knott's Berry Farm in Orange County, California. Incidents like the Knott's Berry Farm accident happen far too often, and it is time for the federal government to start regulating permanently affixed amusement park rides to protect the American public. This should never have happened and was preventable. I believe that we need better oversight and enforcement of existing laws, and we also need to close the gap in coverage, particularly since there is currently no federal oversight of permanently affixed amusement park ride safety. That's why I'm introducing this legislation today.

Over 300 million people visit amusement parks every year in the United States. From school groups to family vacations, amusement parks are an integral part of our culture and have a significant impact on our economy. Ensuring that every rider has a safe experience on these rides is of paramount importance.

The National Amusement Park Ride Safety Act will investigate accidents, develop and enforce action plans to correct defects, help improve safety training for ride operators, and act as a national clearinghouse for accidents and defect data. These enforcement efforts would be under the jurisdiction of the Consumer Product Safety Commission and would increase their budget to ensure that experts in the commission can effectively develop safety standards for permanently affixed amusement park rides.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation and ensuring every American can enjoy a safe experience on permanently affixed amusement park rides.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF
ANGIE GIANCARLO

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Angie Giancarlo, who recently retired from an exemplary career in public service. I had the privilege of getting to know Angie during her time working on the House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, on which I serve as a longtime member and former Chair.

Angie began her career in the Senate, including 12 years on the Environment and Public Works Committee, before coming to her senses and joining the House Appropriations Committee in 2011. Angie began as professional staff on the Energy and Water Subcommittee covering the "water" portion of that bill. As my colleagues know, Army Corps projects are prevalent in congressional districts throughout the country, and when they face issues, they are some of the most complicated things to tackle. Angie demonstrated