

HONORING CIVIL SOCIETY AND
IL-03 STAFF

HON. DELIA C. RAMIREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, as we get close to the end of the 118th Congress, my first term representing the greatly diverse Illinois Third Congressional District, I rise in full gratitude for all of those who have supported me and held me during these not-so-easy two years in what we call the People's House.

And we've heard that it takes a village to represent, to fight, and to deliver for our communities.

But recently, 219 members of this body opted to persecute the village, passing a bill that puts all of civil society at risk.

They took that action at the precise moment we should be uplifting and celebrating civil society as the first and most resilient line of defense for many vulnerable communities.

Without a robust civil society, countries can descend into instability, their governments becoming prone to authoritarianism, human rights abuses, and the erosion of democratic freedoms.

So, while some of my colleagues came to the floor to do harm to civil society, I have come to the floor to commend the countless nonprofit organizations, faith communities, schools and universities, advocacy groups, and cultural institutions that compose the powerful civil society of Illinois' 3rd Congressional District.

Since my time as the executive director of a nonprofit in Chicago, I have seen community organizations nurture and sustain a healthy democracy by providing life-saving services including housing and warm meals—while holding those in power accountable.

It is clear that strengthening, repairing, and defending our democracy is not solely the work of government. It requires the fabric of our communities, civil society organizations, weaving their work together on the frontlines to protect, defend, and enrich our communities and our neighborhoods.

So today, I am grateful for faith communities like the member institutions of the Logan Square Ecumenical Alliance and DuPage United; for community organizations like Onward Neighborhood House, La Casa Norte, and Habitat for Humanity DuPage; for schools and universities like Northeastern University El Centro and North Park University; for early childhood centers like EduCare DuPage and Chicago Commons; for human rights advocates like Palenque LSNA and AFIRE; for cultural organizations like the National Veterans Art Museum and the Mexican Cultural Center of DuPage.

There are too many strong civil society organizations to name. I thank the many, many civil service organizations across IL-03. Gracias.

I appreciate the opportunities and possibilities they create for our neighbors—independent of their zip code, citizenship status, or past actions—and the way they keep me rooted in a community ready to fight like hell for our neighbors.

As I celebrate the work of our civil society, I also want to uplift the team that puts in the long hours; that makes so many sacrifices for

the people of IL-03; and who is seldomly mentioned, seldomly seen in public. And that is my staff.

My staff, who despite the challenges of this Congress and despite a Congress that often-times negates the humanity of their own family, has used their professional and lived experiences to introduce and champion transformative and progressive legislation, has pushed the government to work for our constituents and deliver resources back to Illinois Third, and has ensured our neighbors receive the lifesaving services that they deserve.

I thank my entire team: Ellen Meredith Ray, Luis Miguel Carrizales Castillo, Claudia Dolores Peralta, Karsen Patrick Bailey, Deepa Pinakin Patel, Noemi Avelar, Jowen Halber Ortiz Cintrón, Marina Kristine Sangit, Daniela A. Guerrero Diaz, Valeria Nicolle Metzgen Castro, Katherine Gitsel Carranza Bahena, Jennifer Ho, Nataly Miranda-Castañeda, Vianey Luna Lopez, Micaela Unzueta, Magda Karina Herron, Levi Casmir Iseminger Todd, and Rogelio Elizondo-Juarez, as well as the countless interns, fellows, and past staffers who have supported our work.

I thank them for their time, energy, emotion, and passion they pour into our fight for working people.

They are seen. They are appreciated. I am so proud of the work we have begun together in this term and will continue in the next.

Through gratitude, I find hope.

Because both the community at home and the team I have here in Congress have reminded me that in uncertain times, one thing is certain—our communities are prepared to organize, to protect each other, and to unite no matter what the next four years bring us. I am forever grateful. And I am ready.

RECOGNIZING THE DISTINGUISHED
CAREER OF ANTHONY J. MAIELLO

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished career of Anthony J. Maiello.

Anthony Maiello received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Music Education from Ithaca College in 1965 and 1967. He then went on to the Crane School of Music, Potsdam College of SUNY, Potsdam, New York where he served as a Professor of Music and Chairman of Performance. He spent 20 years at the Crane School, and taught Advanced Instrumental Conducting, Applied Clarinet, Woodwind Techniques, Percussion Techniques and conducted the Crane Wind Ensemble.

In 1986, Maiello joined the faculty at George Mason University (GMU) as a Professor of Music. He taught applied lessons in Conducting, Aural Skills, and classes in Instrumental Conducting. From 1996 to 2009, he conducted the Mason Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra. Under his direction, the ensembles commissioned new works, made numerous recordings, and appeared at national and international conferences. In 2007, Maiello was awarded the title of "University Professor" by the GMU Board of Visitors, the highest rank given to Mason faculty members.

Anthony Maiello also has made professional appearances both nationally and abroad conducting music festivals, adjudicating ensembles, and presenting clinics, lectures, and workshops throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, and Europe. He conducted musical activities for the Gold Medal Ceremonies at the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, New York; served as Musical Director for Music Festivals International; was selected as President of the International Association of Jazz Educators—New York State Chapter; and is a guest clinician for Yamaha Corporation and Warner Bros. Publications. In March of 2010, he was inducted into the Bands of America Hall of Fame at Music for All's Indianapolis headquarters.

Throughout his career, Maiello accumulated an impressive list of recording credits. This includes conducting the American Wind Symphony and additional studio ensembles for Alfred/Belwin Publications. Locally, Maiello has served as Associate Conductor of the McLean Orchestra, was appointed an Honorary Conductor of the United States Navy Band, and was a participant in the National Conducting Institute with Leonard Slatkin and the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C.

In addition to his service in music and education, Maiello is a volunteer police officer for Fairfax County and is very involved with his church. He has been administering the Eucharist on Sundays for decades, and since retiring, he plans to administer the Eucharist during the week to the sick at their homes.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Anthony J. Maiello on an incredible career. He has been able to impact countless lives and help shape the futures of his students over the past 60 years. Best wishes for a happy and safe retirement, filled with time with his loving wife, Susan Maiello, and his daughters Carol and Nancy. I ask that my colleagues join me in applauding this inspired and dedicated educator, conductor, and mentor.

CELEBRATING BANGLADESH
VICTORY DAY

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, today we join the people of Bangladesh and Bangladeshi communities around the world in celebrating Victory Day on December 16, 2024. It acknowledges a day of triumph, remembrance, and persistence through the courage and unity of the Bangladeshi people.

As we honor this significant moment in history, we must remember the sacrifices made by the patriotic individuals who fought for freedom, peace, and justice. Victory Day serves not only as a celebration but as a demonstration of the steep costs of liberty. This inspiring commemoration exemplifies the values of democracy, human rights, and self-determination.

In a short period of time, Bangladesh has shown power of determination and innovation. On December 16, 1971, after a 9-months-long liberation war, Bangladesh claimed victory. With a skilled workforce, technological advancement, strong healthcare, and a vibrant

youth population, Bangladesh is emerging as a leader, building on its rich history. With more transformative innovation, the country is developing adaptation strategies to combat the climate crisis with leadership in protecting the environment and strengthening its climate resilience.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating Bangladesh Victory Day as we acknowledge and celebrate the sacrifices made by countless brave souls and citizens who fought for a future of justice and sovereignty. Let us also take this moment to recognize the vibrant Bangladeshi-American community throughout our country. Their dedication to cultural contributions enriches our Nation, and we are all the better for it.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND KEVIN
MOUANOUTOUA

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the pastoral life of Reverend Kevin Mouanoutoua of the Lao Evangelical Church of Fresno.

Reverend Kevin dedicated his life to serving the Central Valley of California, serving as Pastor of the Lao Evangelical Churches of Tulare, Porterville, and Fresno, where he taught about God's love and grace to many faithful congregations. He also spent decades as a social worker for the Fresno County Department of Social Services' Child Protective Services. Reverend Kevin has served as a strong leader to his congregations and someone who represents the compassion of Christ in both his words and actions.

On behalf of my constituents in the Central Valley of California, I would like to congratulate Reverend Kevin Mouanoutoua on his decades of devoted service to faith and to others. As he enters this exciting new chapter in his life, I thank him for his many contributions to our community.

CELEBRATING WILLIAMSON COUNTY
EMS DIRECTOR MIKE
KNIPSTEIN

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize Williamson County EMS Director Mike Knipstein for his exemplary 30-year career of service to residents. A career of such longevity and impact is truly commendable and deserving of recognition. Throughout his tenure, Director Knipstein has demonstrated unwavering dedication to public safety and healthcare, leaving a lasting legacy of excellence and compassionate service to the community.

Mike began his career as a paramedic in 1994 and has earned the Williamson County EMS Paramedic of the Year award twice for his exceptional care. Following his promotion to Lieutenant, he pioneered the creation of a medical continuing education program that re-

mains instrumental in training medics and first responders today.

From 2003 to 2014, as a Commander, Mike shaped the department's future through professional development initiatives, infection control management, and strategic growth planning. As Division Commander of EMS Operations, he introduced budgetary tracking measures that improved overtime cost management.

In 2015, Mike became Deputy Director, leading Williamson County EMS to achieve and maintain accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services, the EMS industry's "gold standard." Since 2016, as Director, he has enhanced services by securing stable funding for the Community Health Paramedic Program, implementing innovative safety policies, and ensuring resource readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director Knipstein's leadership has profoundly elevated EMS services and improved countless lives in Williamson County. On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I extend my deepest gratitude for his remarkable service and wish him continued success.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER
PENNSYLVANIA STATE REP-
RESENTATIVE ISABELLA V.
FITZGERALD

HON. DWIGHT EVANS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the extraordinary life and enduring legacy of Former Pennsylvania State Representative Isabella V. Fitzgerald, a beloved leader, trailblazer, and pillar of the Northwest Philadelphia community. Affectionately known as "Izzy," Representative Fitzgerald departed this earthly life peacefully on December 6, 2024, leaving a legacy of service, compassion, and transformative impact.

In 2017, Representative Fitzgerald made history as the first African American woman elected to serve as State Representative for the 203rd Legislative District, a role she held with distinction for three terms. During her tenure, she championed many issues, including public safety, small business development, community revitalization, and healthcare access. Her dedication to her community is exemplified by her efforts to modernize public spaces, her creation of the Community Angel Awards to honor unsung heroes, and her revival of Super Saturday, a celebration of Northwest Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Representative Fitzgerald's legislative accomplishments included sponsoring House Bill 579, which improved insurance coverage for breast imaging and was signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf in 2020. Her advocacy for affordable housing, health care, and education reflected her deep commitment to addressing the challenges faced by families in her community. A staunch supporter of public engagement, she fostered partnerships with local law enforcement and organized events such as National Night Out to promote community safety.

Even in retirement, Representative Fitzgerald's dedication to her neighbors and

community never waned. She continued to organize grassroots efforts, advocate for breast cancer awareness, and provide mentorship to countless individuals.

Beyond her professional achievements, Isabella Fitzgerald was a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend.

In recognition of her incredible contributions, the intersection of Stenton Avenue and Washington Lane in Philadelphia was renamed "Isabella Fitzgerald Way" on December 15, 2024—a fitting tribute to a woman who dedicated her life to uplifting her community.

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP OF
PHIL BADDOUR

HON. WILEY NICKEL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor Phil Baddour, a distinguished North Carolinian whose career has been defined by a commitment to public service, advocacy, and leadership.

Phil Baddour served in the North Carolina House of Representatives from 1993 to 2002, representing the 11th district with integrity and dedication. As House Democratic Leader for two terms, he was a key voice in shaping policy that benefited working families across our state. His leadership extended beyond the General Assembly, as he chaired the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, working tirelessly to preserve North Carolina's natural resources for future generations.

A lifelong resident of Goldsboro, Phil has spent more than fifty years practicing law in his hometown, advocating for justice and fairness. His contributions to the legal profession are profound, having served as President of the North Carolina Advocates for Justice, one of our state's leading groups of attorneys. His dedication to public service is reflected in his leadership roles with the North Carolina Economic Development Board, the Board of Transportation, and the Commission for the Future of the Courts in North Carolina.

Beyond his work in the legal and public policy arenas, Phil Baddour has also served his country. He retired as a Colonel in the North Carolina National Guard, where he provided distinguished leadership as Staff Judge Advocate.

Please join me in recognizing Phil Baddour for his lifetime of service, his commitment to justice, and his profound contributions to the people of North Carolina.

HONORING LEROY SOMMER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize and commend Mr. Leroy Sommer, the Airport Manager of College Park Airport in College Park, Maryland, on his retirement after a decade of exemplary service to the aviation community.

For the past ten years, Mr. Sommer has led one of our Nation's most historic airports with