

COMMEMORATING THE 10TH  
MOUNTAIN DIVISION'S 80TH AN-  
NIVERSARY

### HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the 10th Mountain Division. On November 6, 1944, during the height of America's involvement in World War II, the 10th Mountain Division was activated to master mountain and winter warfare in order to prepare themselves for operations in some of the world's most unforgiving climates and terrains.

After rigorous training in the Colorado Rockies, these brave soldiers made their mark during the Italian Campaign where they seized German positions on Riva Ridge and Mount Belvedere and broke through the German mountain defenses into the Po River Valley. During nearly five months of intense ground combat in Italy, the 10th Mountain Division fought against 100,000 German troops, effectively defeating five German divisions and drawing enemy forces away from other theaters. Their success in these critical battles contributed to the eventual liberation of Italy and showcased the effectiveness of specialized warfare in extreme conditions.

Following World War II, the division was reactivated in 1985 at Fort Drum in Upstate New York, which the unit has since called home. The North Country's austere environment and cold winters were chosen to host the newly reactivated light infantry division to ensure it was ready to fight and win in every environment.

Between 1984 and 2001, 10th Mountain Division soldiers deployed around the world, from supporting Operation Desert Storm in the Middle East to providing disaster relief in Florida after Hurricane Andrew, the 10th Mountain Division's commitment to service never wavered. In 2001, the 10th Mountain Division provided the first conventional combat forces to respond to the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States. Since that first deployment in support of the Global War on Terror, the 10th Mountain Division has become the most deployed unit in the United States Army.

The 10th Mountain Division has a proven and unique ability to adapt to rapidly changing combat environments. Whether operating in the steep, high-altitude terrain of Afghanistan or conducting urban operations in Iraq, 10th Mountain Division soldiers have consistently demonstrated that they are always able to innovate to meet the demands of the mission. Their dedication, skill, and professionalism have been vital in the fight against terrorism, defending American interests and promoting stability in some of the world's most volatile regions.

The 10th Mountain Division has set a high standard for service, exemplifying leadership, resilience, and innovation. Because of this the 10th Mountain Division is now at the forefront of Army modernization efforts and 10th Mountain Division soldiers are closing the Army's most critical capability gaps including developing solutions for counter-drone, drone, and electronic warfare problems. Over the last 40 years, the 10th Mountain Division has integrated itself into the North Country community,

where soldiers and their families form a strong network of support that strengthens the entire force. As we reflect on the division's distinguished history, we must also honor the sacrifices made by their families, who stand alongside their soldiers every step of the way.

On behalf of New York's 21st district, we commemorate the 10th Mountain Division's 80th year and will honor its past by ensuring a strong future for the 10th Mountain Division and for all who serve in our Armed Forces. Climb to Glory.

### BERING RIVER COAL FIELD

### HON. JEFF DUNCAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a piece of property in South Central Alaska known as the Bering River Coal Field located in the magnificent Copper River Delta. This issue goes back to the days of Theodore Roosevelt as a conservation effort.

The United States government has the opportunity to purchase the mineral rights to this field.

This Congress provided the U.S. Forest Service \$8 million to buy the Bering River Coal Field through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, but the appraisal came in at \$6 million.

The Korean Alaska Development Company that owns it will sell for \$8 million, and I want to thank a gentleman, Joe Shinn, and the KADCO board of directors for staying at the table.

We have an opportunity, and I believe the members on both sides of the aisle would agree if you could by acclamation to give the Forest Service the ability to purchase this remarkable property for conservation. But the United States government cannot pay more than appraised value unless we in Congress authorize them to do that.

The difference is between \$6 million and \$8 million dollars, and I ask my colleagues, if not now then, in the future, to help the United States of America to set aside the Bering River Coal Field in perpetuity for all future generations to enjoy.

THANKING REPRESENTATIVE  
CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS FOR  
HER SERVICE

SPEECH OF

### HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and thank my colleague and dear friend, Chairwoman CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS.

For two decades, CATHY has committed herself to this body and this country, working tirelessly in pursuit of public service. She was established as a leader early on, and this was no accident. CATHY is a light and a voice of reason. Her faith guides her above all else, and for that, she stood apart. Her colleagues knew that she was someone they could trust, someone who could support them—and they

were right. However, while the country knows her as a political leader, she's much more—she's also a leader in faith and fellowship.

Relationships can be complicated in this town, but CATHY uncomplicated them. She brought people together. I have been blessed to witness her leadership firsthand in our work together on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. I built my career in the energy business, and she gave me the opportunity to speak to what I know best. I'm proud of all we accomplished over these last four years, but that's only a part of CATHY's legacy.

I thank CATHY for leading us with passion and grace. I look forward to seeing her journey continue, and God bless her and her beautiful family.

### HONORING MARK COOPER

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Mark Cooper for his exemplary career in public service and his dedication to education and community health.

Dr. Cooper was born in San Francisco, California, and earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of the Pacific. As a dentist, he generously supported Lake County's Healthy Start program, ensuring that every child in the community received dental sealants and treatment for major dental issues before entering kindergarten.

Dr. Cooper is a committed and hard-working public servant. Dr. Cooper was first elected in 1992 to the Lake County Board of Education where he worked tirelessly to advocate for Lake County students. Prior to his service on the Lake County Board of Education, he served for 12 years as a member of the Konocti Unified School District Board of Education. In 2001, he was elected President of the California County Boards of Education, where he helped shape the California School Boards Association's Professional Governance Standards. These standards have guided school board members statewide, while raising public awareness about the critical role school boards play in advancing educational excellence.

Dr. Cooper's contributions extend beyond the fields of education. Dr. Cooper served as a president of Rotary Club of Clear Lake and has continued to advocate for youth dental health as a member of the Oral Health Coalition of Lake and Mendocino Counties. Dr. Cooper was instrumental in the establishment of the Kenocti Wellness Center, the first school-based clinic in a rural community in California, ensuring that all students have access to quality healthcare.

Additionally, Dr. Cooper resides in Clearlake with his wife, Janice. They are the proud parents of their three children: Benjamin, Brian, and Jacqueline. In his free time, Dr. Cooper enjoys playing the drums, a passion Dr. Cooper will continue into his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I extend our community's heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Mark Cooper for his decades of service to education, health, and our community. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING PA-1's HOMETOWN HEROES: BUCKS COUNTY WOMEN'S SENIOR A DRAGON BOAT TEAM

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—A team that has gone above and beyond their call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize the Bucks County Women's Senior A Dragon Boat Team:

Deb Bray, Jan Buhler, Kelly Chase, Gwen Coverdale, Bonnie Gepner, Lisa Hearn, Deb Jennings, Kimbriell Kelly, Christine Kerrigan, Kim King, Cynthia Laggan, Heidi Lengel, Angie Lin, Lorraine Lodise, Karen Lust, Heydi Lynch, Leanne Lyons.

Cindy Manzo, Chezza Martineau, Margie Milburn, Christy Murphy, Carrie Myers, Kimmel Nacewicz, Kelly Noonan, Lina Peterson, Maureen Petrosky, Kelly Quinn, Olivia Quinn, Marie Quizon, Laura Scaperotto, Jackie Squares, Joanne Stein, Jacquelyn Wetzel, Chris Wetzel (Coach), Tommy Leonardi (Coach).

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades, but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. The Bucks County Women's Senior A Dragon Boat Team has embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

This remarkable group has brought honor to our community on the global stage and demonstrates what it means to be a champion in every sense of the word. Led by the incredible Chris and Jacquelyn Wetzel, the Bucks Dragon Boat Association recently competed on the world stage in Ravenna, Italy, against the top dragon boat teams from around the globe. They brought home two silver medals and a gold—an achievement that speaks volumes about their talent, determination, and dedication. But as impressive as these victories are, their most profound accomplishment wasn't measured in medals but in saving a life.

On September 3rd, following a grueling 2000-meter race that earned them the silver medal, Christy Murphy and her Women's Senior A teammates were paddling back to the docks when they saw a man in the water, struggling to stay afloat. It was a moment that could have paralyzed many with fear, but instead, it became a moment of pure heroism. Without a second thought, Christy sprang into action, drawing on the same strength, precision, and teamwork that had carried them through the race. She knew every second was crucial.

With her teammates rallying behind her, Christy plunged into the water and swam to the struggling man. With the help of her teammates, they pulled him onto their boat and safely transferred him to the motor rescue they had flagged down. On that day, this re-

markable group of Bucks County women did not just prove themselves as world-class athletes—they showed us all what it means to be true heroes. This extraordinary and selfless act transcends any medal or title, reminding us of the power of human connection, teamwork, and what we are capable of when we come together.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to The Bucks County Women's Senior A Dragon Boat Team for their extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional organization, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

**HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JIM McMILLAN**

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with Representative DESAULNIER, to honor the life and legacy of James "Jim" McMillan, a devoted public servant and trail-blazing leader within Contra Costa County. Mr. McMillan passed away on November 28, 2024, at the age of 96. He leaves behind a legacy of dedication, integrity, and the relentless pursuit of justice.

Born in Mineral Wells, Texas, Mr. McMillan moved to Richmond, California in the 1950s, where he opened McMillan Pharmacy—the first Black-owned pharmacy in the city. McMillan Pharmacy became a vital gathering place for Richmond's African American community, fostering dialogue and action on critical social issues.

Mr. McMillan made history as the first African-American graduate of the College of Pharmacy at Oregon State University. He was also the second Black graduate in the university's history. He brought his pioneering spirit to every endeavor, whether as a pharmacist, mentor, or elected official.

In 1983, Mr. McMillan was elected to the Richmond City Council, where he served with distinction for three terms. He worked to combat systemic racism and police brutality in Richmond, calling for reform and accountability within the police department. He was instrumental in creating Richmond's first police review commission, which served as a model for oversight and community trust.

Beyond his political achievements, Mr. McMillan was a compassionate neighbor and mentor. Mr. McMillan was known for his sharp sense of style and unwavering kindness and was deeply respected and loved by those who knew him. He devoted his life to uplifting others by mentoring aspiring leaders, delivering local newspapers to keep his neighbors informed, or simply offering a kind word and a helping hand.

As a community health leader, he provided care and counsel to countless individuals in Richmond, often visiting patients in hospitals and ensuring they received the medical attention they needed. His contributions extended far beyond his profession. His work laid the

foundation for lasting change, and his legacy will continue to inspire generations to come. On behalf of the constituents of California's 8th and 10th Congressional Districts, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Mr. McMillan's loved ones. We know they and the people of Contra Costa County will join us in celebrating his life and legacy.

**HONORING JOHN D. FRESHMAN**

**HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished and long career of John D. Freshman, whose unwavering commitment to ensuring clean water for the United States spanned over fifty years.

After graduating from Middlebury College in Vermont, John began his career working for Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania, followed by Governor (and then Senator) Robert Stafford of Vermont. When Senator Stafford joined the Senate, he was appointed to the Public Works Committee, and it was here that John found himself in the heart of the 1972 Clean Water Act conference. In a 2003 interview with Bates College, John recalled the significance of that experience, saying, "This is the most interesting, stimulating, important thing I've ever seen in my life. This is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life."

John's passion for the Clean Water Act continued with his service on the National Commission on Water Quality, chaired by Nelson Rockefeller, with Senator Edmund Muskie serving as one of the vice chairs. John became Senator Muskie's right hand on the Committee, working tirelessly on the Clean Water Act, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

After his distinguished service in Congress, John continued his work in public service under President Jimmy Carter. He first contributed to the President's Reorganization Project, focusing on emergency preparedness, natural resources, and economic development. John later served as the Associate Director for the U.S. Regulatory Council and as Special Advisor to the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, working closely with Administrator Douglas Costle.

Throughout his career, both in and out of government, John remained dedicated to advancing clean water initiatives and investments. He worked with communities in California and across the nation to ensure access to clean water, building on the protections and principles established by the Clean Water Act.

It has been a great privilege to work with John Freshman over the years. His partnership and perseverance in ensuring that communities have access to clean water and his tireless efforts to protect the principles of the Clean Water Act will have enduring impact. I thank John for his lifelong service and unwavering commitment to clean water and to our country.