

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CELEBRATING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF GWENDOLYN NAVY

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and celebrate the 80th birthday of Mrs. Gwendolyn Navy. Mrs. Navy is a shining example of resilience, dedication, and love. A woman whose life story is a testament to her strength of character and deep commitment to family and community.

Born on December 6, 1944 in Mobile, Alabama, Gwendolyn Navy grew up under the guidance and love of her parents, Melvin and Edna Wells. At eighteen, she moved north to Buffalo, New York, where she would build a life that exemplifies hard work and service.

For ten years, Mrs. Navy worked at Fisher-Price, contributing to the joy of countless children through her role on the assembly line and toy making. She then devoted twenty-seven years of service to the State of New York as a Corrections Officer at the Attica Correctional Facility, where she upheld her duties with strength and integrity.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Mrs. Navy's greatest pride is her family. She is the beloved mother of two children, Gerard Navy and Felicia Williams. Her legacy extends to six grandchildren and one great-grandchild, who are undoubtedly inspired by her wisdom and love. Mrs. Navy was married eighteen years to her late husband, Walter Navy, whose memory she cherishes deeply.

Mrs. Navy is known for her many talents including her culinary expertise. Her collard greens, okra, peach cobbler, and sweet potato pie are legendary within her family and community.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Gwendolyn Navy, a woman with poise and resilience to her beloved family and community. On this milestone birthday, we celebrate her extraordinary life, her legacy, and the profound impact she has made on who knows her.

HONORING BRANDON HORNE

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the outstanding service of Brandon Horne, my intern who served with distinction in my office and dedicated his time to serving the people of Florida's 24th Congressional District.

Brandon, a proud alumnus of Southern University, brought his background and passion for creating meaningful change to my office. He was a member of the Student Government Association serving as President and a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated. His commitment to improving trans-

portation and infrastructure across South Florida was evident in his diligent support of my work on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

One of Brandon's greatest strengths is building bridges and fostering collaboration. His dedication to empowering others and uplifting underrepresented voices has left a lasting impression on our team and the communities we serve.

His next chapter will undoubtedly be marked by his continued success and impactful work in public service.

On behalf of Florida's 24th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Brandon Horne for his drive and dedication to public service.

CONGRATULATING INDIAN VALLEY BRAVES FOOTBALL ON FIRST STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

HON. MICHAEL A. RULLI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. RULLI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleague, The Honorable TROY BALDERSON, to congratulate the Indian Valley Braves on their victory over the Sandusky Perkins Pirates in the 2024 Ohio High School Athletic Association Division IV Football State Championship.

Attendance topped 7,000 in Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium that Saturday night, December 7, 2024. Amidst freezing and rainy conditions, the Perkins Pirates scored first to lead 7-0. The Braves responded with a touchdown but missed the extra point making the game 7-6. On the following kickoff, Sandusky Perkins fumbled, and Indian Valley recovered. They capitalized by driving down the field for a touchdown and successfully executed a two-point conversion pulling ahead 14-7. This back-and-forth battle characterized the game as neither team punted all night.

Heading into the fourth quarter, Indian Valley trailed Sandusky Perkins 36-29. The Braves drove back down the field and scored their fifth rushing touchdown of the game making the score 36-35. They took a risk by trying for a two-point conversion and were successful. The Braves' defense held strong and forced a turnover with just over four minutes of regulation left to play. They ran out the clock to clench the win with the final score reading 37-36.

This Division IV state final was historic as it marked the Braves' first football state championship in school history as well as the first for a Tuscarawas County school. The team finished with an overall record of 16-0 in the regular season and 5-0 in conference.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Indian Valley Braves' players, coaches, staff, families, and friends as we cel-

brate this victory of an undefeated season and a state championship title. Go Braves.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF REV. DR. WILLIAM R. SAUNDERS

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the remarkable life and legacy of Rev. Dr. William R. Saunders, a trailblazer who broke barriers as the first Black full-time chaplain in a correctional institution in the United States. His steadfast commitment to faith and community left a profound impact on Michigan and beyond.

Born in Selma, North Carolina in 1917, William Saunders dedicated his life to ministry and service. He earned a Bachelor of Theology degree from Lynchburg Theological Seminary and College in Virginia, pursued further studies at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, and was later awarded an honorary doctorate from Temple University in Illinois.

He became a minister of the gospel and was ordained in 1941 by the late Doctor A.B. Johnson, Superintendent of Missions of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. In 1948, he made his way to Michigan, where he served as Assistant Minister of Second Baptist Church in Detroit. It was during this period of his life, in 1952, that he married his beloved wife, Mary E. Debnam.

Two years later, in April 1950, Rev. Saunders made history when he was appointed Chaplain of the State Prison of Southern Michigan. His tenure spanned 34 years, working under eight wardens and alongside twelve other chaplains before retiring in 1985. In a role defined by his compassion and resolve, Chaplain Saunders ministered to incarcerated individuals, offering guidance, spiritual support, and hope for renewal.

Rev. Saunders' influence extended far beyond the prison walls. He founded and pastored Southside Baptist Church in Jackson, Michigan, and held leadership roles with numerous community organizations. He served as President of Family Service, President of Potential Developmental Homes, Inc., and Board Member of the Inner City Child Day Care Center. A committed civic leader, he was an active member of the NAACP, Civitan International, and the Jackson County Ministerial Association, where he served as Treasurer. His dedication to public service earned him recognition from President Gerald Ford for his contributions as a member of the United States Draft Board.

A passionate advocate for youth and education, Rev. Saunders supported the Boy Scouts of America and served on the Jackson Public School Advisory Committee, where he helped empower generations of young leaders.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Rev. Saunders' decades of tireless efforts to uplift others exemplified his compassion, integrity, and dedication to service. Though he passed away in 1987, his values live on through his three children, Theresa, William, and Anne (Percy Brown), as well as his two grandchildren, Jason and Haile.

It is with deep respect and gratitude that I celebrate the life of the Rev. Dr. William R. Saunders and recognize his legacy. May his example continue to inspire those who seek to serve others and foster positive change in our communities.

HONORING DEPUTY JIM LAU

HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, it is with sorrow and gratitude that I rise today to honor the life of Deputy Charles James "Jim" Lau for his service to our country and community as a security officer at the Macon County Courthouse in Western North Carolina. Jim drowned in the floodwaters of Hurricane Helene and was found dead on September 28.

Jim lived a life dedicated to public service in every role he undertook. Jim served in the U.S. Air Force, rising to the rank of Master Sergeant and fighting in the Vietnam War, before beginning his successful career in law enforcement.

As a member of the Volusia County Sheriff's Office in Florida, Jim spent over 20 years working as a deputy, working primarily in the Major Case and Crime Scene units and pioneered a crime scene program which trained hundreds of deputies.

Jim was described by the Sheriff's Office as a hard worker, dependable and was well-liked. After full retirement from the police force in 2005, Jim moved with his then wife Millie to Franklin, North Carolina to be closer to family; Millie died in 2007 after a battle with breast cancer.

Even in his retirement, Jim felt called to serve others and chose to serve his community as a volunteer with REACH of Macon County, a domestic violence, rape crisis, and human trafficking center, and as a security officer at the Macon County Courthouse.

On Friday, September 27, Jim showed up to work to serve the people of Macon County amidst the devastation of Hurricane Helene, with the worst storm conditions Western North Carolina has seen in recorded history. Jim was reported missing after he failed to return from lunch and his body was found in his truck, still trapped in the floodwater, the following day.

Jim was known as a family man and loved nothing more than being a grandfather. Jim leaves behind his wife, Judie; children, Kimberly, Destiny, Cameron, Brittany and Tyler; and many grandchildren and extended relatives.

After decades of working to protect others, Jim made the world a better and safer place, and I thank him for his lifetime of public service. I offer my deepest condolences to the Lau family and will continue to keep them in my thoughts and prayers.

CELEBRATING DIWALI IN CARY,
NORTH CAROLINA

HON. WILEY NICKEL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the celebration of the Diwali Festival in Cary, North Carolina, my home and part of North Carolina's 13th Congressional District.

This year's Diwali Festival was made to happen thanks to the great work of the Cary Town Council. The event is being hosted in commemoration of Cary's Diwali Proclamation, which will be presented to Manoj Pandya, the President of the Hindu Society of North Carolina.

It is also important that I recognize Councilwoman Sarika Bansal of the Town of Cary, for her efforts in organizing this event. Councilwoman Bansal is the first ever Indian-American woman to serve on the Cary Town Council. Councilwoman Bansal ran on the platform that including more voices and citizen engagement would help us to make investments in the town of Cary that will benefit many generations to come. She understands the importance of diversity and uplifting those voices.

North Carolina is a place of abundance, where diverse communities and their traditions contribute to the prosperity of our great state. Specifically, the Indian-American and Hindu communities make great and important contributions to the economic, social, and cultural fabric of North Carolina.

From business and technology to education and healthcare, our Hindu neighbors continue to make a lasting impact on our state. The tradition of Diwali is a testament to the strength that comes from our community's diversity.

Diwali is a time that holds immense significance and marks the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil. It is a time to come together with friends and family to enjoy dancing and delicious food. It is also a holiday of hope; an important opportunity to reflect on the importance of light, particularly in times of great darkness and social discord. Diwali stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of resilience and optimism that unites us as a community and a Nation.

I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in reminding our communities and ourselves to shine our light in darkness, to fight for peace, for justice, and for understanding, even as powerful forces work to sow hate and division. In North Carolina y'all means all.

May we all dedicate ourselves to the beauty of diversity, and pursuit of a brighter future for everyone.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SISTER
BERNADETTE KENNY

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Sister Bernadette Kenny, who passed away on December 7, 2024.

"Sister Bernie" came into the world on December 8, 1938. She was born in Boston,

Massachusetts, and raised in Massachusetts. Her Catholic faith and interest in caring for others resulted in her joining the Medical Missionaries of Mary at age 19. She went to study nursing at Ireland's Lady of Lourdes Hospital.

After completing her training as a nurse and midwife, she served several missions in Africa, which included stints in Tanzania, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic.

In 1978, Sister Kenny moved to Southwest Virginia. Soon thereafter, she founded the Health Wagon in Norton, Virginia.

Southwest Virginia is a sprawling rural area, and access to health care services has always been a challenge for the local communities. For many people, it takes hours of driving to simply reach a hospital.

Sister Kenny founded the Health Wagon to address this challenge head on. The Health Wagon consisted of a Volkswagen Beetle filled with medical tools and supplies. Sister Kenny traveled in her Beetle throughout the coalfields region to meet the health care needs of the local communities.

She administered services to struggling residents free of charge in her quest to heal their bodies as well as heal their souls. She underscored the emotional aspects to health care, saying "in most health care the emotional part is ignored." She added: "health care is social; it's a way of identifying what's inside a person."

Thanks to Sister Kenny's support, the Remote Area Medical (RAM) project, a popular and overwhelmingly successful venture that delivers free health care to various underserved communities in America, has hosted clinics in Southwest Virginia.

Because of Sister Kenny's strong leadership and fierce advocacy, the Health Wagon has sustained operations to this very day. The group takes pride in providing compassionate, quality health care to the medically underserved people in the mountains of Appalachia.

The indispensable endeavor to deliver vital health care to Appalachian communities, including the region's coal miners, would not have been so emphasized today if it were not for Sister Kenny. I join the people of Southwest Virginia and all of Appalachia in mourning her loss, but the lasting impact she had on the region will forever be cherished.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF JEFFERSON
TOWNSHIP COUNCILMAN
RON SMITH

HON. MIKIE SHERRILL

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Councilman Ron Smith, who will retire at the end of this month after years of dedicated service to Jefferson Township.

After earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Seton Hall University and a Master's Degree in Supervision and Administration from Kean University, Councilman Smith embarked on a career as a School Business Administrator. Over his career, he has worked for Essex County Vocational Schools and as an Interim School Business Administrator for numerous school districts,