

to her students. I thank Ann for her work to support new members of our community and her dedication to students.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking her for her service to Iowa and her achievement as Iowa's 2024 Teacher of the Year.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER OF GREATER WASHINGTON

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington.

The Korean Community Service Center (KCSC) of Greater Washington was founded in 1974 by a pastor and his congregation who made a commitment to provide basic transportation and interpretation and translation assistance to newly arrived visitors and immigrants from Korea. This group of individuals also assisted the newcomers with rent for their apartments, set up phone and utility services, and enrolled their kids in school.

Over the decades, KCSC grew and evolved into the largest bilingual and bicultural Korean social service agency in the D.C. metropolitan area. KCSC also began providing services to other Asian immigrant communities living in the metro D.C. area. The organization has served more than 150,000 Asian American immigrant families since it was founded and currently provides services to about 1,000 Asian Americans a month.

Their mission is to assist and empower Asian Americans and new immigrants to become well-adjusted and fully contributing members of the United States through social services, education, advocacy, and development of resources. Offerings such as case management, immigration legal services, housing counseling, comprehensive victims' services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and dating violence, and more help KCSC fulfill their mission every day.

This organization actively serves our community members and strives to improve the overall quality of life for individuals and families. Over the past five decades, KCSC has adapted and changed to meet the changing needs of the Asian American community. With culturally and linguistically sensitive services and programs, clients can feel safe and comfortable at KCSC.

Throughout the lifetime of this organization, volunteers and staff from KCSC have strived to deliver effective, efficient, and accountable services. Their successes over the years are truly successes for the region as a whole. Our diversity is our greatest strength, and KCSC has allowed countless individuals to feel safe and supported here in Northern Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Korean Community Center of Greater Washington on 50 years of service. KCSC, and other groups of service-minded individuals, are why Northern Virginia is an incredible place to live, work, and play. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the staff, volunteers, and supporters of this remarkable organization.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT ESTHER BRUMIT

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Esther Brumit of Denison, Texas, and present her with the Congressional Patriot Award. Esther has dedicated herself to serving and uplifting our community.

Esther was born in Los Alamos, New Mexico, in 1952. She attended Oral Roberts University and the University of Texas Medical Branch, where she specialized in healthcare. After graduation, Esther worked as a physician assistant at Children's Hospital in Oklahoma City and cared for at-risk and underprivileged children. She later taught orchestra in private and public schools, where she always ended her concerts with "God Bless America". She is passionate about Israel and Judeo-Christian values, which spurred her to organize trips for students to travel to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and Washington D.C. so they could learn more about their heritage.

Esther was later asked to serve as an election clerk and judge, which she gladly accepted. She attended her first national convention in New York as a volunteer for President George H.W. Bush's second term. From that moment on, Esther attended all state and national conventions as part of the Republican delegation. Her favorite part of the conventions were the national anthem opening and prayer services. Esther also served as a Precinct Chair and participated in door knocking and phone banking to mobilize Texans to participate in elections. Esther is a true American patriot, and I wish her continued success for many years to come.

It is an honor to bestow Esther with the Patriot Award for her exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR JANILL CASTILLO

HON. MARILYN STRICKLAND

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Ms. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Major Janill Castillo of the United States Army upon her departure from this body as a Legislative Liaison. In her role as a Legislative Liaison, Major Castillo was the face and voice of the Army for Congress, bridging the gap between military leadership and 28 Members of Congress across six states. She built strong relationships with Members and their staff, promoting the Army's message and priorities with exceptional responsiveness and professionalism. Her attention to detail and excellent communication skills while planning CODELS earned her high praise from multiple Members of Congress.

Major Janill Castillo's military career began in 2010 when she commissioned in the Army through officer candidate school, where she became an Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialist. Over the past decade, she has served in various capacities with the Army, including

deployments to Kosovo and Kuwait, and in units in Fort Irwin, California; Fort Cavazos, Texas; Fort Lee, Virginia; Fort Carson, Colorado. She had previously held a nominative position as a fellow on the Joint Staff before joining us in the Capitol. A lifelong learner, Major Castillo has earned three degrees—a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Virginia, a master's degree in biotechnology from the University of Maryland, and a master's degree in policy management from Georgetown University.

I extend my sincere wishes for a smooth transition to Fort Liberty, North Carolina, to Major Castillo and her daughter, Mia, and express my deep gratitude for Major Castillo's continued dedication and service to our great Nation.

CROWN ACT PRESS CONFERENCE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking Rep. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN and the rest of my colleagues here for hosting this gathering today.

The introduction of the CROWN Act is an important step in the national conversation on race-based hair discrimination.

The CROWN Act (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair) helps protect an estimated 2.3 million Black children nationwide who are most vulnerable to race-based hair discrimination.

To date, the CROWN Act has been enacted in 24 states and numerous municipalities.

And while the CROWN Act was signed into law last year in Texas, hair discrimination in Texas is still hurting Black children and minorities across the state.

On February 22, 2024, a Texas judge ruled that the CROWN Act was not violated following the suspension of Darryl George for the length of his locs.

The judge's decision:

"The CROWN Act could've been written to provide the individuals with braids, locs and twists (to be) exempt from any hair length restrictions, but it has no such exemption," said Judge Chap B. Cain III, of the 253rd Judicial District Court in Chambers County. "The CROWN Act is clear and BHISD's dress and grooming code policy is clear regarding male students."

"Courts should always refrain from rewriting legislative text," Cain said, reading what appeared to be a prepared speech. "That's not my job. Where text is clear—it's determinative—judges should not legislate from the bench and I'm not about to start today."

"The immunity that you seek, you can have that from either of those bodies," Cain said. "The legislature can go back, and I suspect they will, and they can decide that hair length cannot be regulated by the school, and then the school board's going to follow it. Or you can go to the school board and ask for a change in their policy."

The CROWN Act is necessary legislation that explicitly prohibits discrimination on the basis of hair texture or hairstyles commonly associated with a particular race or national origin in areas of the law where discrimination

on the basis of race or national origin is already prohibited.

The history of hair braiding dates back 3500 BC or over five thousand years in African culture.

According to hair braiding experts, Braiding started in Africa with the Himba people of Namibia.

For a Himba woman, her hair is her power.

These semi-nomadic people live in one of the most extreme environments on earth, the deserts that border Namibia with Angola.

As water is scarce, they use a mixture of pastes on both their bodies and hair.

These pastes blend the aromatic resin of the omazumba shrub with animal fat and ground red pigmented stone. This 'otjize' paste gives the women's skin and hair a distinctive red glow which symbolizes both blood, the essence of life, and the earth's rich red color.

Hairstyles play a significant role within the Himba community and reflect marital status, age, wealth, and rank within the group.

Hair braiding is a communal activity with a range of styles differing from tribe to tribe.

This origin of hair braiding is a rich and textured art form that speaks deeply to persons of African descent over millennia and resonates to this day.

Hair styles remain very significant in African American culture and are one of the many ways this culture is expressed.

Attacks on hair style are not unique to African people, Sheks, Jews, Pentecostal to name a few have hairstyles that are dictated by culture and beliefs.

Because Africans were enslaved persons does not mean they have lost all claim to African heritage, culture, or beliefs.

In the United States and among persons of African heritage the braiding of men's and boy's hair is accepted and widely practiced.

It has long been my position that discrimination based on hair texture and hairstyle is a form of impermissible race discrimination.

In 2021 the Dove CROWN Research for Girls found that:

53 percent of Black mothers, whose daughters have experienced hair discrimination, say their daughters experienced discrimination as early as 5 years old.

86 percent of Black teens who experience discrimination state they have experienced discrimination based on their hair by the age of 12.

100 percent of Black elementary school girls in majority-white schools who report experiencing discrimination state they experienced the discrimination by the age of 10.

According to a 2019 report, known as the CROWN Study, which was conducted by the JOY Collective (CROWN Act Coalition, Dove/Unilever, National Urban League, Color of Change), Black people are "disproportionately burdened by policies and practices in public places, including the workplace, that target, profile, or single them out for their natural hair styles—referring to the texture of hair that is not permed, dyed, relaxed, or chemically altered."

The CROWN Study found that Black women's hair is "more policed in the workplace, thereby contributing to a climate of group control in the company culture and perceived professional barriers" compared to non-Black women.

The study also found that "Black women are more likely to have received formal grooming

policies in the workplace, and to believe that there is a dissonance from her hair and other race's hair" and that "Black women's hairstyles were consistently rated lower or 'less ready' for job performance."

Among the study's other findings are that 80 percent of Black women believed that they had to change their hair from its natural state to "fit in at the office," that they were 83 percent more likely to be judged harshly because of their looks.

The study indicated that Black women were 1.5 times more likely to be sent home from the workplace because of their hair, and that they were 3.4 times more likely to be perceived as unprofessional compared to non-African American women.

Eight years ago, the United States Army removed a grooming regulation prohibiting women servicemembers from wearing their hair in dreadlocks, a regulation that had a disproportionately adverse impact on Black women.

This decision was the result of a 2014 order by then-Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to review the military's policies regarding hairstyles popular with African American women after complaints from members of Congress, myself included, that the policies unfairly targeted black women.

In 2015, the Marine Corps followed suit and issued regulations to permit lock and twist hairstyles.

The CROWN Study illustrates the prevalence of hair discrimination but numerous stories across the country put names and faces to the people behind those numbers.

In 2017, a Banana Republic employee was told by a manager that she was violating the company's dress code because her box braids were too "urban" and "unkempt."

A year later, in 2018, Andrew Johnson, a New Jersey high school student, was forced by a white referee to either have his dreadlocks cut or forfeit a wrestling match, leading him to have his hair cut in public by an athletic trainer immediately before the match.

That same year, an 11-year-old Black girl in Louisiana was asked to leave class at a private Roman Catholic school near New Orleans because her braided hair extensions violated the school's policies.

The next year, two African American men in Texas alleged being denied employment by Six Flags because of their hairstyles—one had long braids and the other had dreadlocks.

And earlier this year, there were news reports of a Texas student who would not be allowed to walk at graduation because his dreadlocks were too long.

The CROWN Act prohibits discrimination in federally funded programs and activities based on an individual's hair texture or hairstyle if it is commonly associated with a particular race or national origin, including "a hairstyle in which hair is tightly coiled or tightly curled, locs, cornrows, twists, braids, Bantu knots, and Afros."

I strongly support this legislation and I will be working to protect the Constitutional Rights of all Americans in their choice of hair style and I ask my colleagues to join me in this effort.

RECOGNIZING SHEILA ARIAS
IBUJES

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sheila Arias Ijujes for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Sheila has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Sheila, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Sheila's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Sheila Arias Ijujes on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING IAN ANDERSON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ian Anderson, whom I have named the 2024 Climate Crisis Champion for Solano County because of the important work he has done to combat the climate crisis by working to preserve agriculture and create policies which protect agricultural land for future generations in California's 4th Congressional District.

Mr. Anderson was born in Berkeley, California. He has a wife, Margaret, two children, and three grandchildren. He received his bachelor's degree in agricultural business from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

Mr. Anderson is a champion for maintaining our local agricultural land and he has worked to commemorate the history of the Montezuma Hills farming community. He honors it by creating farm structures, sculptures, garden hardscape and home improvements using remnants of the past that others might discard. Further, he also organizes the annual fall festival, the "Pumpkin Patch" in this area, in conjunction with the Western Railway Museum. One of the many goals of this festival has been to get regional urban families out into the countryside to see first-hand the beauty of the farm and ranch lands. He and his wife graciously allow the festival to be held on their land. Mr. Anderson's dedication to ensuring that everyone understands the value and beauty of agricultural lands is incredible.

His leadership in this area also extends to his membership in many organizations that do meaningful work to preserve agricultural land and combat the climate crisis. He has a 25-year membership with the Solano Land Trust, which does important work to preserve wild and agricultural land in our community. He served as President for three years, and as the chair of its Agricultural Conservation committee for 10 years. He currently serves on the Trust's Ag Strategy Committee. His 10-year association with the Montezuma Fireman's Association included serving as the President of