

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 PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. 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

Montezuma Fire Commission for two years. He also spent a decade as a member of the Solano County Agricultural Advisory committee and participated in Solano County's General Plan Update committee from 2006 to 2008. Lastly, he was a founding member of the Solano County Orderly Growth committee. Mr. Anderson's lifelong commitment to advocating on behalf of preserving land for future generations is why he is so deserving of this honor.

His life-long membership in various farm and agricultural organizations shows his understanding of the connection between agriculture and climate advocacy. He has been a member of the Solano County Farm Bureau for 45 years, a member of the California Wool Growers Association for 40 years, a member of the California Wheat Growers Association for 30 years, and of the California Grain Foundation for 12 years. His sustained dedication to conservation through his work with these organizations is admirable.

Mr. Speaker, it is evident that Ian Anderson is a leader dedicated to preserving agricultural land for future generations as well as combatting the climate crisis. Therefore, it is fitting that we honor him here today as Solano County's 2024 Climate Crisis Champion.

HONORING JE'KARI CORDE'
DOUGLAS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant, Je'Kari Douglas.

On June 7, 2007, Je'Kari was born at the Natchez Community Hospital to a resilient single mother which he credits his good behavior and his understanding of the value of perseverance and compassion.

Je'Kari proudly serves as a Student Ambassador for Natchez High School, a member of the National Honor Society, a varsity football player, having been chosen as an All-District wide receiver in the 5A Region 3 and received offers from several universities.

With hard work and dedication, Natchez High salutes this honorable student for maintaining a stellar 3.8 GPA, ranking number 10 out of 137 students in his graduating class.

Je'Kari's passion for learning extends beyond academics. He enjoys exploring different cars and animals, spreading joy through humor, and cherishing moments with loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable student, Je'Kari Corde' Douglas, for his actions and achievements in the Natchez, MS, community.

APPRECIATING MICHAEL GEFFROY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to recognize Michael Geffroy for his dedicated congressional staff service

as General Counsel to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

During the 118th Congress, Michael has been a valued member of the Commission, and I am grateful for his important work for the American people and protecting democracy. Michael's rich national security, legal, and military background contributed greatly to the work of our team. I value his counsel and it has been a pleasure working together to advance the Commission's noble mission of promoting human rights, bolstering military security, and furthering economic cooperation across the expansive landscape of 57 countries spanning Europe, Eurasia, and North America.

Prior to his service as General Counsel to the U.S. Helsinki Commission, Michael served in the Congress as the General Council to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, as the Deputy Staff Director and Chief Council to the Committee on Homeland Security in the U.S. House of Representatives, and as the Deputy Special Council to the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina. He also served as an Assistant Director in the Office of Foreign Assets Control at the Department of the Treasury, as a Counselor to the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division at the Department of Justice, and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the District of Columbia.

Michael is a decorated veteran and Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (ret). His more than 25 years of commissioned service includes tours with the First Marine Expeditionary Force in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I am grateful to Michael for his service to the Helsinki Commission and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING JAKE WOOD ON HIS
OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO AT-
TEND THE UNITED STATES AIR
FORCE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Jake Wood of Perrysburg, Ohio, has been offered an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Jake's offer of appointment permits him to attend the United States Air Force Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2028. Attending one of our Nation's military academies offers the opportunity to serve our country and receive a world-class education. At the same time, these young men and women undertake one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Jake brings a tremendous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2028. While attending Perrysburg High School, he participated in National Honor Society, Spirit Club, Boy Scouts, and was on the honor role. Throughout high school, Jake was involved in wrestling, earning his varsity letter. I am confident that he will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the Air Force Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jake Wood on his offer of appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available, and I am positive that Jake will excel during his career at the Air Force Academy. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to our Nation.

HONORING THE EXTRAORDINARY
AND PROLIFIC MINISTRY OF THE
REVEREND DOCTOR WAYNE
DEAN BAKER

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to a loving husband, dedicated father, exceptional mentor, devoted leader, faithful servant of God, and friend of long-standing, The Reverend Doctor Wayne Dean Baker, as he concludes 40 years of dedicated service as the Senior Pastor of the Spirit Filled Ministries Church in Columbus, Georgia. A special celebration commemorating this special occasion will occur at the church on Sunday, May 5, 2024.

Reverend Dr. Wayne Dean Baker, a man of humble beginnings, was born and raised in rural Russell County, Alabama. His thirst for knowledge led him to graduate from Oliver High School in 1966 and later, in 1971, from Grambling State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. However, it was in the same year that his life took a significant turn when he met the love of his life and lifelong sweetheart, Rita Delynn Howard. They were united in Holy Matrimony in 1974.

Dr. Baker experienced another life-altering event in 1975 when he was converted to Christianity in a shopping center in Cleveland, Ohio. Subsequently, Dr. Baker was licensed to preach in 1976 and was ordained in 1979. His ministerial journey led him to Pastor several churches, including Pleasant Grove, Peace and Goodwill, and Wayman Chapel in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The scripture says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Frustrated by the tenets of liberal theology, Dr. Baker founded Spirit Filled Ministries in 1984. During his tenure as Pastor, he has preached over Ten Thousand Sermons, but more importantly, he has brought countless souls to Jesus Christ. Under his guidance, the church has flourished spiritually, numerically, and in its physical facilities. Doctor Baker has used his television ministry at Spirit Filled to reach the community in furtherance of Kingdom business here on earth.

Dr. Baker has never been one to rest on his laurels and has constantly expanded his educational horizons for the advancement of God and His people. He enrolled in Moody Graduate School to pursue a Master of Arts in Ministry. In 2018, he earned his Master of Divinity from Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Georgia. He also earned his Doctor of Ministry from Luther Rice. Furthermore, he has pursued Ph.D. studies at Columbia Biblical Seminary.