

friend and former colleague here in the House of Representatives—has been an indefatigable defender of human rights and human dignity.

To add to the list of his many accomplishments, Frank recently finished his term on the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, which was established by the landmark International Religious Freedom Act he authored in 1998.

Upon completion of his term, Frank wrote a compelling reflection on what remains to be done to strengthen and advance our work to ensure religious believers worldwide can faithfully practice their beliefs. As Frank's profound insights provide an excellent blueprint for religious freedom advocates the world over, I include in the Record his statement in its entirety.

In May I finished my term on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) and I want to offer some thoughts for action going forward which I believe could help promote religious freedom internationally and domestically.

The recently released Pew Survey on religious freedom reports that over 80% of the world's population lives in a religiously repressive environment, up from 70% in 2009. We see religious persecution in China, North Korea, Iran, Nicaragua, Cuba and many other countries. All one has to do is look at the 2024 USCIRF Annual Report, which documents that people of all faiths and beliefs are being persecuted in many places around the globe.

In our own country, we see troubling violations of religious freedom—Christian schools and churches facing threats, assaults on parental rights, the FBI visiting pro-life families, some businesses canceling people and organizations because of their political and religious beliefs, and Jewish students facing rampant antisemitism on American college campuses. We witness an insidious relativism that teaches that concepts of right and wrong are old-fashioned and even judgmental. Vices are elevated, virtues are mocked, and faith is squeezed out of the public square. Our culture is coarsened because of it.

The late Cardinal Francis George, former president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Archbishop of Chicago, predicted in 2012, "I expect to die in bed, my successor will die in prison, and his successor will die a martyr in the public square." At the time I thought this was alarmist, but seeing what is happening today, his statement gives me pause.

Cardinal George went on to say, "This tendency for the government to claim for itself authority over all areas of human experience flows from a secularization of our culture. If God cannot be part of public life, then the state itself plays God."

Chuck Colson warned us of many of these things in his later writings, especially "My Final Word," which was published posthumously and was almost prophetic about the world we now face.

I believe the following three ideas would help in the fight for international and domestic religious freedom.

First.

There should be a total ban on lobbying for China. One of the recommendations on China in the 2024 USCIRF Annual Report reads "The U.S. Congress should: Ban foreign lobbying by agents representing the Chinese government and its state-affiliated commercial entities that undermine religious freedom and related human rights." At the end of the China section, there is an additional view signed by all nine Commissioners, both Republican and Democrat, that shows how

China is involved in the persecution of all religious groups in their own country and shows their influence around the world. It states:

"It is imperative to ban lobbying for the Chinese government, its state-affiliated commercial entities, and their interests while the government continues its egregious acts of religious persecution. These harsh actions impact every faith group in China with the leaders of the Catholic Church and Protestant house churches imprisoned and even 'disappeared.' Cultural genocide devastates Tibet where Buddhist monks die in prison. Physical genocide ravishes Uyghur Muslims, with millions in detention camps and children taken from their parents. Organs are harvested from Falun Gong and Uyghurs, some while still alive. Hong Kong represses Christians, including 92-year-old Cardinal Zen. China's influence spreads worldwide. China supports Iran, which provided training and weapons for the attacks on Israel by Hamas and they supply arms to Hezbollah and the Houthis. China aids Russia in its war on Ukraine and supports North Korea, one of the world's worst religious persecutors. China supports both Nicaragua and Cuba where Christians are being aggressively persecuted. Concerns are rising over China threatening to attack Taiwan, which many experts believe may lead to direct U.S. involvement and the loss of American military lives. Amidst all of this, the words of 18th-century British parliamentarian William Wilberforce about the evils of the slave trade come to mind:

'You may choose to look the other way, but you can never say again that you do not know.' Congress cannot look the other way. For the good of our country and religious freedom worldwide, Congress must ban lobbying for the Chinese government and its interests."

Recently I attended the ROTC commissioning ceremony at the University of Virginia for all military service branches. I was impressed that these young men and women are stepping forward to serve our country. To think that anyone could lobby for an adversary like China that could lead us into war and put these young people in peril is unacceptable. There must be a total ban on lobbying for China.

Second.

Do everything possible to help and support groups like Alliance Defending Freedom, First Liberty, the Becket Fund, and other outstanding groups that pursue legal action in defense of religious freedom so they can bring more cases to protect individuals and groups facing religious discrimination and establish legal precedent that carries the weight of law. Frankly, these groups have been more effective than Congress in preserving religious freedom and they need the resources necessary to expand their work. This should include fighting the rapidly rising antisemitism we are seeing around the world.

We currently have the best Supreme Court we are likely to have for a generation. This is leading to dangerous efforts to pack the court which must be resisted. Religious freedom cases reaching the Supreme Court today are generally successful, but these cases can take up to five years to work their way through the courts. It is an expensive proposition to carry a case from pre-filing through many appeals and to the Supreme Court. That is why these groups need help and support for the long term.

Many people of faith are unaware that they can protect their First Amendment freedom of religion through the active use of the courts. Many people and houses of worship do not have the resources to bring cases on their own. The fact that people don't

know their rights, nor have the resources to defend those rights, encourages school boards, government agencies, the military, employers, and others to discriminate as they believe their actions will not be challenged.

For a more in-depth study of this, see Judge Ken Starr's excellent book, "Religious Liberty in Crisis."

Perhaps an 800-telephone number and email address could be set up and advertised on Christian and other religious media for people to contact for help with their religious discrimination complaints.

Third.

While many groups have their own government affairs outreach, which is good, many groups are too small to support their own lobbying efforts. I believe there should be a lobbying firm set up in Washington to focus entirely on international and domestic religious freedom issues. The firm should be staffed by former high-level Congressional Hill staffers from both the House and Senate who know the inner workings of the Congress and government agencies. These would be people who worked on key committees and in Senate and House leadership offices.

Working with religious freedom advocacy groups they would be another set of eyes and ears on the Hill, following and helping shape legislation dealing with international and domestic religious freedom. A board of directors made up of various religious freedom groups could oversee the work of this firm. I believe this would be a direct help to all groups working on these issues.

There have been very few successes lately on Capitol Hill to further religious freedom. In the international arena, some countries that have been designated by USCIRF as egregious violators of religious freedom have been given massive amounts of U.S. foreign aid and some have expensive lobbying efforts in Washington. USCIRF has worked in a bipartisan way and has been faithful in its mission of researching, reporting, and naming international religious rights violators. Yet at the same time, USCIRF has seen its budget frozen, even cut, and it has not received the necessary permanent or long-term reauthorization from Congress.

Having worked on religious freedom issues for many years, I believe these steps would make a significant difference here in the United States and around the world. I share these thoughts with the hope that the religious freedom community will take on some of these ideas to help advance the cause of religious freedom and improve the lives of those who are persecuted.

Frank Wolf, June 2024.

RECOGNIZING PAUL AND SANDY PIMENTEL

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Paul and Sandra "Sandy" Pimentel. Both raised in Quincy, Massachusetts, Paul and Sandy first met as kids and began a friendship that would last a lifetime and eventually grow into a marriage spanning five decades. After graduating high school, Paul went on to attend Harvard University, where he received a degree in engineering and applied physics, before serving in Vietnam as a lieutenant in the United States Army. Sandy went on to attend the University of Massachusetts Boston and the Lynn Hospital School of Nursing, where she respectively received her

Bachelor of Arts in management of human services and a degree in nursing. After Paul and Sandy got married in 1965, the young couple moved to Long Beach, California, while Paul completed his military training, before moving to Albion, Michigan, where the Pimentels settled for many years with their children. In Albion, Sandy and Paul became active in forums and discussions at their church regarding racial integration and inequality as the civil rights movement continued to progress. It was also during this time that Sandy became friends with Barbara Gladney, and together the Pimentels and Gladneys started a dinner club called the "Melting Pot." The multicultural social group gained such popularity that the dinners had to be moved to large event halls. After returning to Massachusetts, Sandy and Paul continued their important work advancing social change. Paul became the youngest Deputy Secretary of State for Massachusetts and helped to create Vineyard Power, a clean energy cooperative bringing offshore wind power to the Cape and Islands. Sandy served as the Director of Human Services for the Norfolk County District Attorney's office and received awards from the Department of Interior for her work implementing the Alliance Against Racism and Violence Program and from the State of California for her efforts to empower young people to address racism in their communities.

Sadly, we lost Paul too soon on February 5, 2019, at the age of 76. Beyond their professional achievements, what Paul and Sandy valued most during their 53 years of marriage was their family. Together they raised their five children, Lisa, Christopher, Susan, Courtney, and Joanie, and many foster children. The hallmark of the Pimentel family has always been their dedication to uplifting those in their community and willingness to provide a warm and welcoming home for those who need it most. Over the years, the Pimentels have established themselves as a pillar of the Martha's Vineyard community, serving on countless committees and boards for local organizations, including Martha's Vineyard Community Services and the Martha's Vineyard Diversity Coalition Board of Trustees. To celebrate Sandy and Paul's work and commitment to helping others, Martha's Vineyard Community Services is holding a dedication ceremony for the newly named Paul and Sandra Pimentel Early Childhood Center on June 26, 2024.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Paul and Sandy Pimentel, and I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking them and celebrating their dedication to supporting and advocating for those in their community.

**CELEBRATING ROSEN HOTELS
AND RESORT'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY**

HON. MAXWELL FROST

FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, this month, I celebrate the significant contributions of Rosen Hotels to the Central Florida region. Starting with only one hotel, the Rosen organization has grown to over seven hotels, employing over 4,000 Central Floridians. The Rosen Ho-

tels were established starting in 1974 and are now celebrating 50 years of service.

Every year, the Rosen organization provides over 500 scholarships that benefit students in the Tangelo Park and Parramore areas. Most notably, Rosen Hotels has donated millions over its 50 years to creating the UCF Rosen School of Hospitality Management, which now ranks No. 1 in the Nation.

The Rosen hotels have provided employment, welcoming stays, and memories to last a lifetime for many Floridians. I thank Rosen Hotels, for 50 years of dedication and service. Their contributions make a profound difference in our community, and we are grateful for their support and commitment to make Central Florida a better place for all.

**RECOGNIZING REAR ADMIRAL
DANA THOMAS**

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the accomplishments of Rear Admiral Dana Thomas as she retires from the United States Coast Guard this year. I applaud RADM Thomas for her dedication and service and congratulate her on this milestone.

Promoted to Rear Admiral (Upper Half) in March 2019, RADM Thomas has had an exemplary military career, previously serving seven years in the U.S. Coast Guard and seven years in the U.S. Army. She received her Doctor of Medicine and Master of Public Health degrees from George Washington University School of Medicine and Public Health, and her Bachelor of Science in Honors Biology from the University of Maryland, College Park. She completed Command and General Staff College in 2005. She served her Internship in General Surgery at Tripler Army Medical Center and her residency at the Naval Aerospace Medicine Institute.

From her work with the Centers for Disease Control and service on the Physician's Professional Advisory Committee to the U.S. Surgeon General, to her current role as Director of Health, Safety, and Work-life for the U.S. Coast Guard, RADM Thomas has continued her commitment to service and public health. Her experience, knowledge, and steadfast initiative have distinguished RADM Thomas as an outstanding leader who has exemplified honor, integrity, and professionalism throughout her career.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in leading this body in acknowledgement of the extraordinary contributions of Rear Admiral Dana Thomas. She has tirelessly devoted her time and expertise to the advancement of public health and I thank her for her honorable service to our great Nation.

**RECOGNIZING THE ASSOCIATED
EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTORS**

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge members of the Associated Equipment

Distributors from all over the country who came to D.C. for their annual fly-in. These great men and women are entrepreneurs who provide millions of pieces of equipment to all kinds of industries in our country every year that help our country's economy. They deserve our admiration and thanks. They certainly have mine.

**HONORING RIP DANIELS' 30 YEAR
RUN ON JZ 94.5**

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated broadcaster from Gulfport, Mississippi, Rip Daniels.

Rip Daniels has made a significant impact on the field of broadcasting through his diverse content and raw nature for 30 years. He is a trailblazer and an insightful commentator.

Mr. Daniels is the founder and CEO of radio station JZ 94.5, The People's Station. JZ 94.5 was the first and is the only black-owned FM station on the Gulf Coast. In its 30-year run, the show has featured guests such as former President Barack Obama.

Rip Daniels' impact on broadcasting is seen through his dedication and commitment to his craft. He has broadcast from his studio, on the road, and abroad, capturing stories from Senegal, Tanzania, South Africa, Greece, and more. He has also witnessed and provided coverage of notable events such as Obama's presidential inauguration and the Million Man March.

Beyond his broadcasting efforts, Mr. Daniels has launched a nonprofit called the People's Station Corporation. He is the CEO of the Almanette Restaurant and Hotel and the CEO of the American Blues Network, the Nation's only 24/7 blues broadcast station.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 30 years of JZ 94.5 as well as Rip Daniels' contributions to the field of broadcasting.

RECOGNIZING ERIC JENKINS

HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eric Jenkins, who was named Indiana Teacher of the Year.

An Indiana native, Eric teaches English at Franklin Community High School, a high school in my district. Those who know him say that Eric is dedicated to his students and passionate about instilling a love of reading.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Eric for his work to grow our next generation of leaders.