

positively impacted the health and well-being of many of our low-income residents.

Since the Foundation's inception nearly two decades ago, founders Billy and Nancy Thompson have fostered an environment that places families and their concerns first. To date, the Thompson Family Foundation has helped conduct over 5,000 autism spectrum disorder diagnostic evaluations through the Thompson Center for Autism & Neurodevelopment at the University of Missouri.

In addition, the foundation contributes equipment, like that used for cardiac and vision screening, and has recently led the expansion of patient examination rooms at the Lestonnac Clinic. The Foundation is currently funding efforts to open the Nation's first dedicated free surgery center, which would allow uninsured community members to receive non-life-threatening surgery procedures, like hernia repairs or colonoscopies, that are often neglected.

Providing quality health services to our community is critical—and through the Thompson Family's involvement and leadership, the Lestonnac Clinic will be able to continue providing essential preventative care to their patients.

I'd like to thank Billy and Nancy, important leaders in our Orange County community who have demonstrated their commitment to caring for our children and families. The work of the Thompson Family Foundation continues to be an important cornerstone of support for healthcare services to our district's low-income and uninsured residents, and I join our community in thanking them for the great work they do.

RECOGNIZING INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY 2024

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 16, 2024

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the International Day of Democracy, which was Sunday, September 15. This day is an opportunity to promote the principles of democracy and freedom against an alarming resurgence of authoritarianism and fanaticism across the globe.

The enemies of freedom seek to destabilize and destroy the constitutional democracies.

It is estimated that in 2024 alone, two billion people across 64 countries will have exercised their right to self-determination at the ballot box. But already, we have also witnessed sham elections, most notably in Bangladesh, Belarus, Venezuela and Russia, where the incumbent regimes suppressed political opposition and manipulated the electoral process.

Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy and the foundation of a free society. Yet, far too many dictators, budding autocrats and monarchists of the world have undermined the will of the people, using coups d'etat and electoral autocracy to stifle democratic voices. According to Freedom House, a leading American organization devoted to the support and defense of democracy around the world, in 2023, political rights and civil liberties were diminished in 52 countries, while just 21 countries made improvements.

In June, I met Dr. Amir Khasru Chowdhury, a leader in the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). Dr. Chowdhury was arrested on dubious charges three months before Bangladesh's January 2024 elections. He languished in prison for six months until the Bangladeshi government, then controlled by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, conveniently released him two months after ballots had been cast. Dr. Chowdhury was not alone in his politically motivated imprisonment; his was one of nearly 8,000 arrests of BNP leaders and political dissidents. But despite the government's sinister ploy to subvert the electoral process, Dr. Chowdhury and the other jailed Bangladeshi dissidents were vindicated, and their cause ultimately prevailed. After a historic youth-led movement to end Prime Minister Hasina's despotic reign, the Bangladeshi people have earned the right to redirect their future. It's now time for the international community to support the fundamental principles of democratic governance in Bangladesh.

Meantime in Hong Kong, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues to erode the city's political independence. In July, a Hong Kong court taken over by the CCP denied a request to resume the trial of pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai. The case prosecuting Mr. Lai for what is essentially a "thought crime" lays bare the CCP's authoritarian takeover of the once-free Hong Kong. I was proud to adopt Jimmy Lai as a prisoner of conscience through the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission's Defending Freedoms Project and will continue to passionately advocate for his release.

Jimmy Lai is not the only prisoner of conscience detained by an autocratic regime. In July, I wrote a letter to President Biden and Secretary Blinken urging the administration to demand the release of those wrongfully imprisoned in Saudi Arabia for exercising their basic human rights. Thousands of courageous activists, journalists, religious clerics, and human rights defenders have been silenced for simply speaking out about their dreams for democracy—such as their desire to move freely, speak openly and wear whatever they choose. In response to their impassioned advocacy, the repressive Saudi Arabian regime has unjustly imprisoned critical voices, issued violent threats, and imposed severe travel bans. This draconian reign of terror must end immediately.

The governments of Bahrain, Turkey, Belarus and numerous other nations are also holding prisoners of conscience hostage to suppress the voices of their fellow citizens. Our foreign policy must not overlook these human rights violations, be it governments' subversion of electoral processes, obstruction of justice, or the crushing of dissent. I invite my colleagues to use their various platforms to support prisoners of conscience everywhere to tell their stories in the pursuit of justice. Joining the Defending Freedoms Project is one excellent avenue to do so.

In 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that democracy and voting rights could shrink and shrivel away or grow and expand. Today, our world is embroiled in a period of democratic backsliding. In reverence to the International Day of Democracy, I'm asking each of my colleagues to join me in boldly advocating for democracy and freedom across the world.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES PRIORE

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 16, 2024

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life and legacy of a fallen hero and pillar of the Western New York community—Charles "Chuck" Priore.

Born in Buffalo, New York on December 15, 1975, Chuck was the youngest of three boys born to Charley and Laurie Priore. After graduating from Bishop Timon High School in 1994, Chuck entered the workforce and ultimately landed a job as a hazardous materials specialist with EarthTech.

While working for EarthTech, Chuck traveled throughout the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. In the weeks leading up to the September 11th terror attacks, Chuck and his co-workers were assigned to a job in Queens. When the attacks occurred, his team was redirected from their job site to the World Trade Center where they worked in 24-hour continuous shifts cleaning up debris from the fallen towers. His life and the lives of his future wife and children were forever changed by the time he spent doing his job, serving his country, and answering the call in the days following the attacks.

In the months following, Chuck returned home to Buffalo and joined Laborers' Union Local 210. In 2008, two years after the birth of his son, Kevin, he became a Corrections Officer with the Erie County Sheriff's Office and served in that role until 2021.

In the fall of 2009, Chuck met his now-wife, Cate Flanagan, at the Buffalo Irish Center. They later moved into the same neighborhood that Chuck grew up in to start their lives together and raise a family. On June 25, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Chuck was diagnosed with bladder cancer linked to his time at the World Trade Center after the 9/11 attacks. He underwent treatment and surgery but passed away on August 17, 2024, after being admitted to hospice care.

Chuck's passing leaves behind his beloved wife Cate, and two children, Kevin and Ciara who now face life without him. His sacrifice is a solemn reminder of the lasting impact of dedicated service in the face of tragedy. As we remember Charles "Chuck" Priore we grieve the loss of a beloved friend and dedicated public servant and find solace in knowing that his legacy lives on.

HONORING THE LIFE OF THOMAS CARE REED

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 16, 2024

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise with Congressman MIKE THOMPSON to honor Thomas Care Reed, who passed away at the age of 89 on February 11, 2024, and his extensive public service to the United States and local Sonoma County community. Mr. Reed served as the 11th Secretary of the United States Air Force and was a dedicated public servant to three former Presidents.

Mr. Reed was born in New York City, NY in 1934. His military career began as a member of Cornell's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering as Cadet Colonel, the highest-ranking officer in his class. Shortly thereafter, he was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the Air Force. Mr. Reed served until 1959, ending his active-duty career as Technical Project Manager for the Minuteman Re-Entry Vehicle System with the Air Force's Ballistic Missile Division.

While enlisted in the Air Force, Mr. Reed simultaneously attended the University of Southern California where he completed his Master's Degree in electrical engineering. He later moved to the Bay Area where he was stationed at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory as a chief strategist working to develop new thermonuclear weapons systems. This work contributed to the end of the Cold War and launched his political career.

As one of the key scientific minds behind the invention of thermonuclear devices being tested in the Pacific Ocean during the early 1960s, Mr. Reed earned the respect of his peers including Manhattan Project member Edward Teller. In 1973, he was appointed as Assistant to the Secretary of Defense. Just a few years later, under President Gerald Ford's administration, Mr. Reed was named Secretary of the Air Force, a post he held until the beginning of President Carter's term in 1977.

Throughout his life, Mr. Reed held many passions including writing and winemaking. What started as a small hobby growing wine grapes in Sonoma County's Alexander Valley would eventually transform into the renowned Clos du Bois Winery, which by the late 1980s, would sell more than 200,000 cases of wine per year.

Mr. Reed is survived by his wife, Kay, his daughter, Carolyn Reed Ellis, his sons, Gordon Reed and Andrew Reed, and six grandchildren. While his patriotism and military service were instrumental in deterring the Soviet Union from deploying nuclear devices during the Cold War, Mr. Reed will also be remembered as a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that Thomas Reed was a dedicated public servant who will be missed and whose many contributions to the Sonoma County region and Nation are worthy of commendation. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor his many contributions and express our deep condolences to his family and friends.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily

Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, 2024 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 18

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine aviation cybersecurity threats.

SR-253

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine America's regional commissions, focusing on sharing best practices in regional and economic development.

SD-406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to continue to consider S. 4667, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, S. 4373, to provide for congressional approval of national emergency declarations, S. 4495, to enable safe, responsible, and agile procurement, development, and use of artificial intelligence by the Federal Government, S. 4675, to require the United States Postal Service to submit a comprehensive proposal to the Postal Regulatory Commission before implementing any network changes, S. 4630, to establish an interagency committee to harmonize regulatory regimes in the United States relating to cybersecurity, S. 4654, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow Indian tribal governments to directly request fire management assistance declarations and grants, S. 4698, to authorize the Joint Task Forces of the Department of Homeland Security, S. 4711, to limit the consideration of marijuana use when making an employment suitability or security clearance determination, S. 4681, to ensure a timely, fair, meaningful, and transparent process for individuals to seek redress because they were wrongly identified as a threat under the screening and inspection regimes used by the Department of Homeland Security, to require a report on the effectiveness of enhanced screening programs of the Department of Homeland Security, S. 4043, to amend title 5, United States Code, to make executive agency telework policies transparent, to track executive agency use of telework, S. 4679, to amend title XLI of the FAST Act to improve the Federal permitting process, S. 4716, to amend section 7504 of title 31, United States Code, to improve the single audit requirements, S. 4294, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to negotiate with the Government of Canada regarding an agreement for integrated cross border aerial law enforcement operations, S. 59, to implement merit-based reforms to the civil service hiring system that replace degree-based hiring with skills-and competency-based hiring, S. 4676, to enhance the effectiveness of the Shadow Wolves Program, S. 4672, to require the Commissioner for U.S. Customs and

Border Protection to assess current efforts to respond to hazardous weather and water events at or near United States borders and, to the extent such efforts may be improved, to develop a hazardous weather and water events preparedness and response strategy, S. 4697, to enhance the cybersecurity of the Healthcare and Public Health Sector, S. 4715, to require the National Cyber Director to submit to Congress a plan to establish an institute within the Federal Government to serve as a centralized resource and training center for Federal cyber workforce development, S. 4631, to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit minimum education requirements for proposed contractor personnel in certain contract solicitations, S. 4700, to modify the governmentwide financial management plan, S. 4656, to amend title 5, United States Code, concerning restrictions on the participation of certain Federal employees in partisan political activity, S. 4651, to require agencies to use information and communications technology products obtained from original equipment manufacturers or authorized resellers, S. 4419, to require the Science and Technology Directorate in the Department of Homeland Security to develop greater capacity to detect, identify, and disrupt illicit substances in very low concentrations, S. 4321, to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit the payment of annuities and retired pay to individuals convicted of certain sex crimes, S. 2546, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 North Taylor Lane in Patagonia, Arizona, as the "Jim Kolbe Memorial Post Office", S. 3946, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1106 Main Street in Bastrop, Texas, as the "Sergeant Major Billy D. Waugh Post Office", S. 4077, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 180 Steuart Street in San Francisco, California, as the "Dianne Feinstein Post Office", H.R. 5527, to amend section 1078 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 to increase the effectiveness of the Technology Modernization Fund, H.R. 7219, to ensure that Federal agencies rely on the best reasonably available scientific, technical, demographic, economic, and statistical information and evidence to develop, issue or inform the public of the nature and bases of Federal agency rules and guidance, H.R. 7524, to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the submission of reports on certain information technology services funds to Congress before expenditures may be made, H.R. 3254, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, H.R. 6174, to improve the biodefense functions of the Department of Homeland Security, H.R. 272, to amend title 31, United States Code, to authorize transportation for Government astronauts returning from space between their residence and various locations, H.R. 4403, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make improvements to the Securing the Cities program, H.R. 5887, to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to improve Government service delivery,