

HONORING THE LIFE AND WORK
OF MARGARITA GONZALEZ**HON. KATHY CASTOR**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and contributions of Margarita Gonzalez, a Tampa trailblazer and outspoken advocate for our diverse Hispanic community. Margarita served the City of Tampa for nearly 30 years as the City's first Hispanic community liaison and in other important roles Margarita was a beloved champion for Tampa's Hispanic families and small business owners, and she leaves behind a vibrant legacy that will support Tampeños for decades to come.

Margarita and her family fled Cuba and arrived in Florida on July 4, 1966. At age 12, she was one of the first Cuban refugee students in the Hillsborough County Schools. She always knew the importance of education, and despite not knowing any English, she was motivated to work hard, learn English and get involved in school activities.

After graduating from Leto High School, Margarita began working on her bachelor's degree at Hillsborough Community College. For the next 13 years, Margarita attended college classes while juggling full-time jobs. She never gave up on her studies because she personally understood the irreplaceable value of an education. "After losing everything, I realized that a person's biggest asset is their education," said Gonzalez. "Knowledge and skills cannot be taken away from you."

She worked for the Tampa Port Authority and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and continued her education by completing a bachelor's degree in public relations and communications from the University of South Florida. In 1987, Margarita began working for the City of Tampa and Mayor Sandy Freedman, doing community relations and interpretation work. Margarita saw a need for Hispanic members of the community to learn about the opportunities and services the city provided. It was then that Margarita began producing and hosting two Hispanic television shows, *Nuestra Tampa* and *Community Affairs Report*.

Throughout her nearly 30 years of service to the City of Tampa, Margarita's responsibilities included community relations, communications, coordinating the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council, establishing the city's International Affairs Office, and as a human rights investigator, which is important to support a diverse, respectful and inclusive community for our neighbors, families and businesses. While serving our City, Margarita established the Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Committee, which is committed to preserving and celebrating Tampa's vibrant Hispanic culture. Margarita also ensured that part of Hispanic Heritage Committee's work is to provide mentoring and scholarship programs to local students.

Margarita won many awards for her service work, including Hispanic Woman of the Year by Tampa Hispanic Heritage, the 2019 Latina Lideres Award by the *Latin Times*, the 2023 Hillsborough County Women's Hall of Fame inductee, and the 2021 Tampa Bay Lightning Hero award, among many others. She was the first Hispanic woman to serve as a member of

the Superbowl Task Force in 1991 and chairperson of the Tampa Hillsborough County Youth Council.

Margarita made it her life's work to ensure that students in need were supported. She was a founding member of the Hispanic Professional Women's Association (HPWA) and Foundation (HPWF) and served on the boards of many other community service organizations. Through the HPWF and the donation of \$50,000 she received as a Tampa Bay Lightning Community Hero Award recipient, Margarita established The Margarita Gonzalez HPWF Latino Endowed Scholarship, her own endowment at USF for local high-achieving, Spanish-speaking students with demonstrated need. Margarita was able to attend college herself because of scholarships, and she said it was "a dream come true" to be able to give back in this way Margarita hoped that supporting future generations would inspire them to support others as well.

Margarita was a truly selfless and charitable leader. She also was a devoted daughter and loving caretaker to her mother, Angela Elba Gonzalez. Margarita's legacy will continue to live through her mother, her sister Elba Cruz and husband Hiram and her nephew and godson Michael Cruz, his wife Rebecca and their two daughters.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my neighbors across the Tampa Bay area and the citizens of Florida, I am proud to honor Margarita Gonzalez for her lifelong dedication to education and service. It is selfless community servants like Margarita that make Tampa the welcoming and generous place it is today. Our community is eternally grateful for her immense contributions. I trust that Margarita Gonzalez's legacy will inspire others to serve their neighbors and live the American Dream.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF SAM
MARTINEZ**HON. ADAM SMITH**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Sam Martinez and to commemorate how his legacy has inspired change in Congress.

This week, the House of Representatives will consider the Stop Campus Hazing Act. This bill was brought to my attention by the advocacy of Mr. Martinez's family, and I co-sponsored this bill shortly after meeting his parents. Today, I address the House as a proud cosponsor of this legislation, and I urge its passage.

Mr. Martinez was a Bellevue resident and Washington State University student whose life was tragically cut short on November 12, 2019, at the age of 19. He was a beloved son, brother, and friend, and my heart is with the community he leaves behind.

Mr. Martinez was born in 2000 to parents Hector Martinez and Jolayne Houtz. He grew up as a brother to Ariana Martinez in Bellevue, Washington, and throughout his life he was surrounded by friends and loved ones. Those who loved him remember his fierce athleticism on the soccer pitch, his dry sense of humor, his intelligence, his commitment to volunteer work locally and abroad, and his loyalty to his

friends and family. He was in the Bellevue School District's Spanish immersion program and graduated from Newport High School in June 2019. In the fall of 2019, Mr. Martinez matriculated at Washington State University, where he planned to study business and entrepreneurship.

Mr. Speaker, as the House considers the Stop Campus Hazing Act this week, let us remember Mr. Martinez and call attention to this critical issue that impacts students like Mr. Martinez nationwide. My thoughts are with his family and loved ones as we honor his legacy today.

HONORING BASIL FERNIMOS

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Arizona's 8th Congressional District, it is my honor to recognize someone who has been a force in the North Phoenix area, Basil Fernimos. Basil is a founding member of the North Valley Constitutional Republican Club.

As a passionate constitutionalist, Basil has been responsible for organizing and leading conservative efforts in the northern parts of our congressional district.

I am thankful for Basil's efforts and dedication to bring awareness and educate the public. I sincerely appreciate his service to the 8th Congressional District and to the state of Arizona.

RECOGNIZING THE MISSION QUILTERS
FOR THEIR HUMANITARIAN
EFFORTS**HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to my colleagues' attention, the outstanding work of Mission Quilters which recently completed their 10,000th quilt that will be donated to global communities in need of basic supplies.

Mission Quilters is a group of about 20 volunteers at the Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Schaumburg, who gather every Thursday morning to stitch quilts. This tradition dates to 1985, when Carol Langseth, the wife of the church's then-pastor, had the goal of creating handmade quilts to provide comfort to those in need around the world. I am very pleased to report that just last week, the group reached a milestone with their 10,000th quilt. These quilts are distributed both locally and to communities in nine countries, through the Lutheran World Relief organization.

Mission Quilters relies on the donations of materials from individual quilters and other organizations. These materials are then cut and used to create a variety of quilts. Volunteers participate in the process by sewing and layering the quilt squares. Working together, they produce at least four quilts per week. In fact, the quilts produced by Mission Quilters could cover 185 football fields and stretch 22,222 yards. The finished quilts are first used

to adorn the pews of the Lord of Life Lutheran Church and, after being blessed, are sent to various parts of the world.

For nearly 40 years, Mission Quilters have donated their quilts to countries such as Georgia, Tanzania, Ukraine, Angola, Mali, Guatemala, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mission Quilters' quilts have also comforted Syrian refugees in Lebanon, as well as in other parts of the world that are affected by war. Locally, they have kept our communities warm, by distributing their quilts through organizations such as North Side Housing and Supportive Services in Chicago, WINGS, and Lutheran Social Services of Illinois for those in need.

The men and women of Mission Quilters embody public service at its best. As their representative in Congress, I am deeply honored to recognize the significant contributions of Mission Quilters. They have helped to bring families together and provided support to those affected by war and natural disasters through their quilting. It is for this impact that I wish to extend my gratitude and appreciation to the Mission Quilters.

CELEBRATING THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALTAMED HEALTH SERVICES CORPORATION

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate AltaMed Health Services Corporation on its 55th anniversary. As the nation's largest system of independent Federally Qualified Health Centers, AltaMed has been delivering quality health care and empowering communities for over half a century.

AltaMed was founded in 1969 as the East LA Barrio Free Clinic, a small volunteer-run clinic funded solely by grants and donations. Today, AltaMed is California's premier community health network, encompassing more than 60 service delivery sites throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties, and staffed by a culturally and linguistically competent workforce of more than 5,000 employees. It provides care to more than 500,000 individuals and their families through two million encounters annually, delivering the full continuum of services including pediatrics, comprehensive primary care, obstetrics and gynecology, dental care, behavioral health, youth services, HIV/AIDS services, and senior services through its operations as the largest Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) in California. To this day, AltaMed is committed to providing quality care without exception and working to address health disparities in our communities.

In 1982, AltaMed began offering senior services by opening its first Adult Day Health Care Center in East Los Angeles, providing medical and rehabilitative care to older adults. In 1996, AltaMed made the transition to PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly), a world-class managed-care program that uses a unique team-based approach to provide frail older adults with medical, social, nutritional, and rehabilitation services. This program makes it possible for those who meet nursing home eligibility requirements to remain

at home, enjoying the comfort and reassurance of familiar surroundings while receiving the care they need. AltaMed currently serves over 3,000 older adults at 12 PACE locations in Los Angeles and Orange County.

With the passing of the Affordable Care Act in 2010, more Americans are insured today than ever before—including the 20 million uninsured Americans who gained access to comprehensive health coverage. AltaMed led widespread efforts through its service delivery sites to enroll and provide resources to newly eligible individuals, becoming Covered California's top certified enrollment entity for several years in a row, and earning a grant through the state's Navigator Program.

AltaMed's commitment to addressing the social determinants of health that contribute to eighty percent of patient health outcomes and dedication to advancing social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion is exemplified through its programming and service delivery approach. In 2017, it launched the AltaMed Institute for Health Equity which works to inform and support the elimination of health disparities that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities through innovation, education, research, and community engagement.

The following year, AltaMed launched a first-of-its-kind effort to make service sites serve as civic engagement hubs for patients and community. Through this civic engagement campaign, AltaMed supports local voter information, education, and mobilization efforts, provides community workshops on the citizenship process, and facilitates dialogue around public policy and advocacy.

AltaMed was also on the frontlines when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, and sprang into action. Early on, it established mobile testing and evaluation sites throughout its communities to ensure patients could continue to access care. In 2021, leveraging the experience and success of its My Vote. My Health campaign, AltaMed launched a public health vaccination campaign called ¡Andale! ¿Qué Esperas? reaching more than 4.45 million Latinos in the state. By the end of that ten-month campaign effort, it had helped vaccinate over 130,000 people against COVID-19 leading a coalition of Community Health Centers throughout the state.

This is all to show how AltaMed has led the way to ensure their patients have access to culturally and linguistically concordant care while also addressing health care workforce challenges. In 2020, it welcomed the first cohort of AltaMed Family Medicine Residents to a new residency program. Two years later, it launched a licensed vocational nurse to registered nurse pathway program and other training programs, supporting over 160 nurses to advance their careers. And this year, AltaMed became the first clinic in Southern California to participate in the state's Licensed Physicians from Mexico Pilot Program (LPMPP), welcoming seven physicians who provide culturally and linguistically aligned care to Spanish speaking patients.

On November 8, 2024, AltaMed will commemorate its 55th anniversary. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating AltaMed on this historic milestone as an exceptional health care leader, advancing quality care for Latino, multi-ethnic, and underserved communities in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, and helping other Community Health Centers throughout the state scale up their ef-

forts to address health disparities through transformational change.

HONORING ANTHONY KERN

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Arizona's 8th Congressional District, it is my honor to recognize Arizona State Senator Anthony Kern from Legislative District 27, covering the northwest valley in the Phoenix-metro area.

Senator Kern is the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and a Member of the chamber's Appropriations and Transportation, Technology and Missing Children Committees. He has won awards for his strong conservative principles in the Arizona Legislature, including the Hero of the Taxpayer and the Friend of the Family. Senator Kern also enjoys a 100 rating from the Arizona Free Enterprise Club.

He has worked hard in the State Legislature to help secure the border, protect life and family values, defend the Second Amendment, safeguard school choice, increase economic prosperity for individuals, families, and business owners, and stand with law enforcement.

Arizona's 8th Congressional District is thankful for Senator Kern's endeavors on behalf of his district and our state.

APPRECIATING PHILLIP TRULUCK

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 23, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the anniversary of the passing of the Florence-born Phillip Truluck on October 6, 2022, I am grateful for his contributions to Congress while at the House Republican Study Committee and during his long tenure as the valued leader of the Heritage Foundation. He is missed.

The following obituary was published upon his death:

A son of South Carolina, Phil was born in Florence, South Carolina, on June 18, 1947 and passed away October 6, 2022. He spent his childhood and teenage years in Lake City, where he attended public schools. His beloved mother, Ethel Mason Truluck, taught him American History and famously refused to grant him the well-deserved annual history award for fear of appearing partial. He later went on to earn a B.S. in Finance at the University of South Carolina. His leadership skills were recognized early and he was elected President of Chi Psi fraternity.

Perhaps to make up for the history award, his mother arranged for Phil to go to Washington and work for then Senator Strom Thurmond—as a driver and envelope stuffer. Cream rose to the top and he went on to work in several congressional offices, as Deputy Director of the House Republican Study Committee and, for over 38 years, as a leader of the Heritage Foundation.

Along the way, he met, courted and married Ann Wroblewski on January 6, 1979. Mason Martha was born ten years later, followed by twins, Walker Edward and Sutton