

stock, such as railcars, from State-owned enterprises and State-connected businesses, including those linked to the Chinese Communist Party.

Mr. Speaker, I will be honest with you. I thought Congress had fixed this problem back in 2019 with the passage of the Transportation Infrastructure Vehicle Security Act, or TIVSA. That measure, which was included in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, prohibited the purchase of rolling stock from State-owned enterprises by transit agencies receiving Federal funds.

Why are we back today? We are here today to make it crystal clear to the FTA that CCP-connected companies are never allowed to receive taxpayer dollars.

While TIVSA should have eliminated any future payments of American taxpayer dollars to CCP-connected companies, like the China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation, the FTA's execution of the law provided lifetime exemptions to four transit agencies from the prohibitions on contracting with CCP-connected companies.

I mentioned that the FTA granted lifetime exemptions to four transit agencies from the law's prohibitions, and I think it is important that we know who we are talking about. The four agencies receiving this exemption from the FTA were the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, or SEPTA; the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, MBTA; the Chicago Transit Authority; and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority.

I am pleased to report that one of those transit agencies, SEPTA, just announced in April that after significant production delays and cost overruns, it was exercising the right to terminate its contract with CRRC for cause. That is a positive step.

Alternatively, another agency that received the lifetime exemption, the MBTA, recently announced that it is re-upping the contract with CRRC and adding another \$148 million in rolling stock purchases.

The enactment of TIVSA should have eliminated any possibility that transit agencies that receive Federal funding could continue using those dollars to pay for contracts with companies connected to the CCP, but 5 years after TIVSA was made law, a major public transit agency is expanding just such a contract.

That is all the more reason we are taking action to pass H.R. 3317 today. This bill will end, once and for all, the practice of sending Federal dollars to CCP-controlled rolling stock companies by eliminating these lifetime exemptions.

Chinese companies that are controlled by the CCP have nearly limitless financial resources they can use to undercut domestic rolling stock manufacturers. It is an unfair, uncompetitive playing field, and I am proud to put an end to it today.

Let's be clear. The CCP isn't just investing in these State-owned enterprises to help them better compete in the market. The CCP is trying to take control of the market. The CCP wants to dominate this industry and drive American manufacturers out completely. We can't let that happen.

H.R. 3317 is supported by a broad range of organizations, including the Transport Workers Union, the Alliance for American Manufacturing, the Teamsters, the Railway Supply Institute, and the Rail Security Alliance. I thank them for their support of my legislation, and I hope that my colleagues will join me in approving the passage of this bill today.

My bill will prevent the CCP from using the rolling stock manufacturing market as another tool to undermine our national security and our economic interests.

This is simple legislation that will solve an important concern. H.R. 3317 is good for American workers and will ensure responsible stewardship of American taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting my legislation.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just want to say I support this legislation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3317, the Rolling Stock Protection Act, is a bipartisan bill that protects American workers, our domestic economic interests, and our national security. H.R. 3317 will stop Federal dollars from going to rolling stock manufacturers backed and controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

The bill is a responsive and responsible step that will prohibit further erosion of our domestic manufacturing sector by the CCP.

H.R. 3317 will enhance domestic manufacturing opportunities and ensure that United States tax dollars can no longer be paid to companies linked to foreign adversarial nations for procurement of rolling stock.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3317.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FELICITAS AND GONZALO MENDEZ UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5754) to designate the United

States courthouse located at 350 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, California, as the "Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5754

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 350 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, California, shall be known and designated as the "Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse".

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) and the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 5754.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5754, a bill to designate the United States courthouse located at 350 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, California, as the Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse.

Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez are remembered for their leadership in the 1946 Federal court case *Mendez v. Westminster* which desegregated public schools in California, which established the legal precedent for the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case. It is fitting that we acknowledge the late couple by naming this courthouse in Los Angeles after them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of H.R. 5754, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5754, which designates the Federal courthouse in Los Angeles, California, as the Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse.

The Mendezes were activists whose efforts culminated in the 1946 Federal court case *Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County*. This helped to end segregation in California schools and helped pave the way for desegregation efforts nationwide.

Mrs. Mendez was born in Puerto Rico and moved with her family to California at the age of 12. She and her

family encountered discrimination and racism in California because of their Puerto Rican heritage. She married Gonzalo Mendez, a Mexican immigrant who had become a naturalized U.S. citizen. They had several children and operated a successful agriculture business in southern California.

The Mendezes attempted to enroll their children in a local school but were rejected because of their Mexican names and appearance. In response, the Mendezes bravely organized and filed a lawsuit against the local school district to end the district's practice of segregating Mexican schoolchildren.

After they won the case in 1946 and won a subsequent appeal in 1947, the State of California took the further action of enacting a law officially desegregating California public schools, making it the first State in the country to do so.

The law was signed by then-Governor Earl Warren. Seven years later, Mr. Warren, then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, wrote the opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education* in which the Court ruled that segregation of any kind in public schools is unconstitutional.

If H.R. 5754 is enacted, the Los Angeles Federal courthouse would be the first courthouse in the Nation named after a Latina.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO), who we are going to miss terribly when she retires from her role in the leadership on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5754 to designate the United States courthouse located at 350 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, California, as the Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse.

I thank Representative JIMMY GOMEZ for introducing this important legislation. I am proud to support this courthouse renaming bill as it recognizes the critical role that Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez served in the fight for civil rights in the United States.

Their resolve to fight for equality in the landmark case *Mendez v. Westminster*, along with four other families from Orange County, California, would not only end segregation in California schools but also lay the groundwork for *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

In September of last year, I stood alongside Sylvia Mendez, daughter of Felicitas and Gonzalo, as Representative GOMEZ marked the introduction of his bill.

□ 1730

Sylvia, a dedicated civil rights activist, travels the country to ensure the legacies of her parents and the four other families are not forgotten.

I am proud to have worked with my L.A. area colleagues in 2011, especially

former Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard, in advocating for the construction of this much-needed courthouse in downtown Los Angeles.

The Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez U.S. Courthouse will serve as a reminder of the contributions of Latino Americans to this country, and I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 5754.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GOMEZ), who is the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative TITUS for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill to name the Los Angeles U.S. Courthouse in my district after two individuals whose courage bent the arc of history toward justice, Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez.

The Mendez family, alongside the Ramirez, Estrada, Guzman, and Palomino families, challenged segregationist policies that prevented their children from getting the same quality education as their White peers, and they won.

Their efforts resulted in the landmark 1946 case of *Mendez v. Westminster School District*, which led to the desegregation of California schools and set the stage for *Brown v. Board of Education*, the monumental Supreme Court decision that stated: separate but equal is inherently unequal.

I introduced this bill alongside Sylvia Mendez, the daughter of Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez, who, as a child, set in motion this desegregation case.

Sylvia was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011 by President Obama and is the subject of this children's book, "Separate is Never Equal," which I brought as a reminder of what this means for our children.

This courthouse will be a reminder that history and law are not just shaped by judges, they are molded by people who have the courage to challenge unjust laws and make our country better.

The NAACP, ACLU, and Japanese American Citizens League sent amicus briefs in this case, showing that our struggles are distinct, but our battle to form a more perfect union is one and the same.

In fact, Thurgood Marshall wrote the NAACP's brief, and just years later used similar reasoning before the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters from the NAACP, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, and 21 Latino civil rights organizations and advocacy groups in favor of this legislation.

NAACP,
November 3, 2023.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives.

Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Chairman, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

Hon. RICK LARSEN,
Ranking Member, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON, LEADER JEFFRIES, CHAIRMAN GRAVES, AND RANKING MEMBER LARSEN: I am writing to express strong support for H.R. 5754, introduced by Congressman JIMMY GOMEZ, which would name the Los Angeles U.S. Courthouse at 350 W. 1st Street in honor of Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez. Their activism, along with four other families, culminated in the landmark 1946 case *Mendez et al v. Westminster et al* that led to the end of segregation in California schools and paved the way for *Brown v. Board of Education*.

The NAACP's connection to this case and the Mendez, Guzman, Palomino, Estrada, and Ramirez families dates back to 1946. During the original case, the NAACP sent an amicus curiae brief in support of the families and argued that school segregation was inherently unjust and unconstitutional. As Thurgood Marshall, Robert L. Carter, and Loren Miller wrote in that brief:

"Our Democracy . . . can only function when all of its citizens, whether of a dominant or of a minority group, are allowed to enjoy the privileges and benefits inherent in our Constitution. Moreover, they must enjoy these benefits together as free people without regard to race or color. It is clear, therefore, that segregation in our public schools must be invalidated as violative of the Constitution and laws of the United States."

The NAACP takes pride in our contribution to this historic case, which directly influenced Governor Earl Warren to sign a 1947 law repealing public school segregation statutes in California. Just seven years later, Warren, now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, authored the unanimous opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education*. This landmark decision, influenced by Thurgood Marshall's compelling oral arguments as NAACP chief counsel, ended school segregation across the country.

Nearly 80 years later, we stand by our words and advocacy in the *Mendez v. Westminster* case and the advocacy of the families who fought for equal protection under the law for all children. Today, we honor their legacy in supporting this bill. We strongly believe the Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse will be an enduring testament to the movement for civil rights for all.

We urge you to pass this bill swiftly to ensure the lasting and historic impacts of the *Mendez v. Westminster* case—and the families who fought for equal rights—are permanently and publicly commemorated to inspire all Americans for generations to come.

Sincerely,

DERRICK JOHNSON,
President and CEO.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES,
December 14, 2023.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Chairman, House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RICK LARSEN,

Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON, LEADER JEFFRIES, CHAIRMAN GRAVES, AND RANKING MEMBER LARSEN: I write to express support for H.R. 5754, introduced by Representative Jimmy Gomez, which would name the Los Angeles U.S. Courthouse at 350 W. 1st Street in honor of Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez. Their activism, along with four other families, culminated in the landmark 1946 case *Mendez et al v. Westminster et al* that led to the end of segregation in California schools and paved the way for *Brown v. Board of Education*.

The powerful story of the Mendez, Guzman, Palomino, Estrada, and Ramirez families, which culminated in a successful suit against discriminatory school segregation practices in California, holds significance for the state of civil rights and freedom in our Los Angeles region today. This historic case directly influenced Governor Earl Warren to sign a 1947 law repealing public school segregation statutes in California. Just seven years later, Warren, by then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, authored the unanimous opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education*. This landmark decision was influenced by Thurgood Marshall's compelling oral arguments as NAACP chief counsel and ultimately ended school segregation across the country.

As a longtime public servant deeply committed to the progress of our city, our state, and our country, I understand just how important it is for every student to have equitable access to education and other public resources. Honoring the legacy of the Mendez family would be an enduring testament to the maxim "separate is never equal" and the movement for civil rights for all.

I urge you to pass this bill swiftly to ensure the lasting and historic impacts of the *Mendez v. Westminster* case—and the families who fought for equal rights—are permanently and publicly commemorated to inspire all Americans for generations to come. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

KAREN BASS,
Mayor.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2023.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Speaker, House of Representatives.

Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Chairman, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

Hon. RICK LARSEN,
Ranking Member, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

DEAR SPEAKER MCCARTHY, LEADER JEFFRIES, CHAIRMAN GRAVES, AND RANKING MEMBER LARSEN: We, the below signed Latino civil rights and advocacy organizations, write to express our strong support of Congressman Jimmy Gomez's legislation that would designate the Los Angeles U.S. Courthouse at 350 W. 1st Street in honor of Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez. The Mendez's advocacy led to the landmark 1946 case that ended segregation in California schools and paved the way for the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Fittingly, the courthouse sits just blocks from where the historic Mendez case was originally decided. The Mendez family, including Felicitas and Gonzalo's children, Sylvia, Gonzalo Jr., and Jerome, also strongly support the renaming of the courthouse to the Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse.

Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez advanced civil rights for all by mobilizing parents in

their community to push for an end to segregation in California schools after their daughter Sylvia and her brothers were rejected from attending a whites-only school because of their Mexican appearance and ancestry. In 1946, the Mendez family's efforts led to the landmark decision in *Mendez, et al vs. Westminster School District of Orange County, et al*, steering California to enact legislation that made it the first state to officially desegregate its public schools. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF), led by Thurgood Marshall at the time, had been developing a legal strategy to end school segregation and wrote an amicus brief in support of Mendez. Some of the arguments LDF made in Mendez were similar to those that were later made in the landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision seven years later ending school segregation nationwide.

Our public institutions should reflect the rich diversity that represents the history and strength of our nation. However, of the 200+ named United States courthouses across the country, only 20 are named for people of color and 6 are named in honor of a woman. The Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez United States Courthouse would be the first federal building to be named for a Latina and only the eighth commemorating Hispanic Americans. Given its location in the county with the largest Latino population in the United States, the commemoration of the advocacy of Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez—who were of Puerto Rican and Mexican heritage, respectively—by renaming the courthouse honors both the diversity of its population and the critical progress for civil rights.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we highlight and celebrate the centuries of Latino contributions to the United States. It is also an opportunity to acknowledge and lift up Latinos' stories to who we are as a people and nation. The history of the desegregation of schools in California and throughout the Southwest is a significant part of the mostly unsung history of our community in this nation and needs to be better known among our fellow Americans. In short, Latino stories are American stories, and they need to be told.

We urge you to pass this bill expeditiously so that the lasting and historic impacts of the Mendez family and the *Mendez v. Westminster* case are permanently and publicly commemorated to inspire Angelenos and all Americans for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS), Esperanza United (formerly Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network), GreenLatinos, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Hispanic Federation, Hispanic National Bar Association, IDRA, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, Latinos for Education.

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), MANA, A National Latina Organization, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), Migrant Legal Action Program, National Hispanic Media Coalition, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Latinx Psychological Association, National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association, SER National, The National HEP/CAMP Association, UnidosUS.

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, for all Americans to feel part of our American story, they need to see themselves reflected in the buildings and monuments that commemorate our history.

The Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez Courthouse will be the first courthouse named after a Latina out of over 200 named Federal courthouses.

I thank the over 60 cosponsors, including Members from both sides of the aisle, along with the overwhelming support of the California delegation and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to pass this legislation swiftly to send a clear sign about what we stand for as a Nation.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I am prepared to close.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this historic legislation, I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I join in supporting this bill recognizing the legacy of Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez by naming a United States courthouse in Los Angeles after them. This is an historic and appropriate recognition, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5754, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THINK DIFFERENTLY TRANSPORTATION ACT

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6248) to require Amtrak to report to Congress information on Amtrak compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 with respect to trains and stations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6248

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Think Differently Transportation Act".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON AMTRAK ADA COMPLIANCE.

Section 24315(b) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B) by striking "and" at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(D) shall include an action plan for bringing Amtrak rail cars and Amtrak-served stations that are not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) into compliance with such Act as required by the settlement agreement entered into in 2020 between Amtrak and the Department of Justice; and

"(E) shall include a status report on—

"(i) Amtrak-served stations for which Amtrak is solely responsible for compliance with such Act based on a station assessment carried out by Amtrak, including a timeline for any required compliance with such Act, as required by the settlement agreement;