

RECOGNIZING ELAINE ANDERSEN

Mr. KILEY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize retiring Folsom City Manager Elaine Andersen for her years of dedication to serving the Folsom community.

Elaine's career to public service to the people of Folsom, the Sacramento area, and the State of California spans over three decades, while serving as Folsom city manager for the last 6 years.

Prior to her service to the city of Folsom, Elaine Andersen enjoyed an eminent career in numerous roles working for the city of Sacramento and the State of California, as well as in public affairs, specializing in legislative projects for the private sector.

She began her nearly 20 years of service in the city of Folsom as a special projects manager and would go on to dutifully serve in a wide array of roles as acting director for various departments, deputy city manager, and assistant city manager, all of which contributed to the prosperity of the Folsom community.

Elaine's commitment to public service was fostered in her studies as she received her bachelor of arts degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley.

Elaine's experience and knowledge combined with her love for the city of Folsom enabled her to excel in her tenure as Folsom city manager. She demonstrated exceptional leadership managing a staff of over 400 workers across multiple departments and an annual budget exceeding \$250 million.

She successfully helped facilitate the development and construction of Fire Station 34, improving the public safety of the region, as well as the beautiful Prospector Park to promote public recreation and well-being.

Elaine's ability to collaborate with multiple facets of the community, including local businesses, city council, and the hundreds of staff she leads ensured that Folsom remains a great place to live, raise a family, and conduct business.

Elaine has also been successful in securing Folsom City Council's adoption of the first strategic plan in many years. This plan established guidelines for the city to ensure a continued commitment to financial stability and sustainability, public safety and infrastructure, economic and community development, and organizational effectiveness to best prepare for the future while seizing current opportunities.

Elaine Andersen has truly embodied what it means to be a public servant. I am certain her life's work of service to her community will leave a long-standing legacy as her impact will benefit the region for years to come.

Therefore, on behalf of the United States House of Representatives, it is an honor and a privilege to acknowledge Folsom City Manager Elaine Andersen for her career of exemplary leadership and public service. I join the Folsom community in wishing her the very best in her retirement.

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

DELIVERING A SPECIAL MESSAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise, and I am always proud to have this preeminent privilege of standing here and addressing those who are within the Chamber as well as people who may be without.

I rise today still a liberated, unbought, unbossed, unafraid Democrat. I rise today to deliver a special message as it relates to slavery and the Holocaust.

Before I get to the message, I have a bit of housekeeping. I have had persons tell me that it appears that I am looking down and that my eyes are closed when I am speaking. I have no control over the camera angle. I am looking straight ahead now, and I will be looking straight ahead most of the time. So if there is some adjustment that the persons who operate the camera can make, I would greatly appreciate it, and I thank them very much.

I am very proud of some things that have happened. Just this week on Wednesday, this House passed S. 91—that would be a Senate bill—and I am proud to know that the House passed this bill because this bill was a special piece of legislation. This bill, S. 91, passed by voice vote at about 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, and this bill, S. 91, was to award a Congressional Gold Medal collectively to 60 diplomats in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

I am proud that this piece of legislation passed the House. There are many reasons to be proud. The people who were there to rescue persons and assist persons during the Holocaust, the victims, they ought to be recognized. The Holocaust occurred, and it was one of the worst crimes ever committed against humanity.

I am proud to also tell you that I supported the legislation. I have my signature on that legislation, and that means something to me. I want people to know that when it comes to stepping up and standing out and standing for the people who have suffered in this country and around the globe, I would like to let people know that I am among those who are always going to be there as best as I can. I can't take on every challenge, but I want to take on as many as I can, and this is one that I am proud to say that I am a cosponsor of.

In fact, I became a cosponsor on March 17 of 2023. The legislation itself was filed on January 26, 2023. A few months later I became a cosponsor of this legislation.

This legislation when it was filed had 13 original persons on it, an original sponsor and then original cosponsors,

and it proceeded through the House. In the House it was H.R. 537. On June 11, 205 Members were on this legislation. I was one of them. I am proud to say it again. As one of them on June 11, this piece of legislation was passed in the House. It passed the House and then went to the Senate with 295 Members having signed on to it.

On December 4 it passed in the House by voice vote, and I was a Member that signed on to that bill. I was one of the persons that signed on to it.

Now, I mention this bill, and I am proud to be associated with it, but I am also proud to be associated with another piece of legislation, H.R. 1244. This piece of legislation would posthumously award a historic Congressional Gold Medal collectively to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20 of 1619 to December 6 of 1865. I am proud to be the original sponsor of this legislation.

This legislation has 125 Members on it. Just as the legislation to recognize the heroes of the Holocaust had 290-plus Members, this legislation has to have 290 Members or more for it to pass the House. We have 125.

This legislation was filed on February 28 of 2023 about a month after the legislation was filed to honor the heroes associated with the Holocaust. I am proud to be on both pieces of legislation. The legislation that we have filed to honor the persons who were enslaved, whose lives were sacrificed has been in the House now for about the same length of time as the legislation to honor the heroes of the Holocaust.

So let's just take a moment and read some of what this legislation says that would honor those persons who were enslaved posthumously with a Congressional Gold Medal. I might add that the heroes of the Holocaust received this posthumous honor as we are trying to acquire the same for the persons who were enslaved.

I will read from a Dear Colleague that we sent out to our colleagues here in Congress:

Support the historic Congressional Gold Medal for America's economic foundational fathers, mothers and children, the enslaved.

It reads:

On July 18, 1956, Congress, the House and Senate, awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to Confederate soldiers.

I might also add to soldiers who associated themselves with the Union.

However, to this day, Congress has never awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to the over 10 million enslaved men, women, and children who toiled for over 240 years to build the economic and infrastructural foundation of the wealthiest nation ever to exist on our planet.

These foundational mothers and fathers of our country labored arduously constructing our cities, roads, bridges, and wells. They laboriously planted as well as harvested the food that fed our Nation. They were the de facto producers of the cash crops that fueled our Nation's foundational wealth.

These enslaved human beings of African ancestry toiled as slaves without remuneration or recompense. Their humble hands

were relied upon for the construction of some of our Nation's most renowned edifices and monuments including the White House, the Capitol building, and the Washington Monument.

In truth, their sacrificed lives provided the genesis of our Nation's economic preeminence. These sacrificed human beings, men, women, and children, were the greatest contributors to the American foundational economy . . .

Why would I say they were the greatest contributors?

Because for more than 240 years—it has been estimated to be about 246—but for more than 240 years they sacrificed their lives. Their lives were sacrificed. They didn't do it willingly. They were forced into slavery. They were enslaved, and it was intended that this would go on ad infinitum. It was never intended at the genesis of slavery that it would be for just a few months or a few years, maybe a few decades, one century—no, it was to be forever. Their lives were sacrificed to make America great.

So if you are in this country today, regardless as to why you are here or how you arrived, know that you are standing on the sacrificed lives of more than 10 million people who were enslaved. And their enslavement is what has made this country what you see and what you experience today.

Let me continue:

Yet their contributions are almost universally forgotten, under-recognized, ignored, overlooked, and/or undervalued.

For these and countless other justifications—this is what I said to my colleagues in the letter I sent to them asking for their support.

For these and countless other justifications, I am beseeching Congress as a matter of conscience to award a Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the human beings who are the foundational mothers, fathers, and children that toiled as slaves without recompense or recognition for their unparalleled contribution to the infrastructural and economic development of the nation we enjoy today.

We have awarded similar Congressional Gold Medals to others. My prayer is that we can do it for them. But we haven't.

That doesn't mean that what we did on Wednesday should not have occurred. I supported it. I believe that people of good will should have the courage to support the victims of the Holocaust and the heroes of the Holocaust.

Just as I believe it strongly, I believe equally as strongly that people of good will, the same people that signed on to the legislation so that we could have the vote on Wednesday, I believe people of good will such as these people can sign on to a bill to accord a Congressional Gold Medal to the enslaved persons, the economic foundational mothers and fathers of the country whose lives were sacrificed for more than 240 years to make America great.

Yes, I thank all who have signed on.

I have to be candid. I regret that we didn't get 290 signatures so that we could pass this legislation in this Congress. I regret it.

It is a painful thing to say we didn't get those 290 signatures. We made the appeals. It is a painful thing to say we didn't get 290 people to honor them just as we honored the victims of the Holocaust, just as we honored the persons who were heroes of the Holocaust. Some 60 of them have been honored as of Wednesday. I believe that we can do a similar thing for the persons of African ancestry who suffered here in this country.

□ 1300

Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that notwithstanding the fact that it didn't pass, hasn't passed in this Congress, and I don't think it will, I would love to think that we could push it through now. I don't think we will. However, I plan to file it in the next Congress. If it is God's will, I plan to do it and ask my colleagues to sign on to it again, and maybe we will get the 290.

Nevertheless, it is a painful thing to know that we could not get the 290 in this country in this Congress, which means we have to start all over again with the bill to honor the persons who are the economic foundation, the mothers and fathers, of the country. We have to start again in a new Congress next year, a new House, a new Senate, and a new President and push forward.

I just hope and pray that the 290 persons plus who signed on to the legislation to accord the Congressional Gold Medal to the heroes of the Holocaust posthumously, I just hope and pray that they will sign on to this legislation to honor persons who were the foundational mothers and fathers.

They never received any recompense, they never received any remuneration, and they never received any kind of thank you for your sacrifice.

The country has not been fair to them. The Congress has not been fair to them, but I still have hope. I will still come back and present the bill again. As long as I am breathing and I am in this Congress, I will be pushing for this legislation to pass.

I just want to know that people treat all crimes against humanity similarly, maybe not exactly same, but similarly. I just hope that we will treat this crime against humanity the same way we have treated the crime against humanity that we respect as the Holocaust.

Two crimes have been committed against humanity. One has been treated fairly in terms of what we are doing here in the House, the other has not. However, I believe in second chances and third chances.

So I close with these words, Mr. Speaker: I think it is difficult for people in this country to embrace what happened to the enslaved because it happened here. It is easy to look through the window of life and take a principled, conscience, and laudable position. It is difficult to look into the mirror of life and be equally as principled and conscience and laudable.

It is difficult because when you look through the window of life, you are looking at someone else and what they have done and you can see the horrors and you can speak with fervor about those horrors. However, when you look into the mirror of life, you are looking at yourself, and I believe that it is difficult for a good many people in this country and in this House, the House of Representatives, and in the Senate to look into the mirror of life and speak truth to yourselves about what happened and what we ought to do to show respect for some 246 years of suffering and sacrifice that made America great.

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

THE WAR ON THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, obviously, we are about to begin a new session, and one more time I would like to review what I think are some of the major mistakes that this body has committed over the last 50 or 60 years that we should be revisiting now, now that it is apparent the American public wants some change.

It is a goal of this body, and really even a constitutional mandate, that we treat everybody equally and that we don't prefer one group of people or ethnic group of people over another group of people, people of one lifestyle over another lifestyle.

Nevertheless, one more time I think I have to bring up that it is very apparent that we are treating people differently and that is particularly with regard to people who elect to raise children in marriage and people who, for whatever reason, sometimes their fault sometimes not their fault, elect to raise children out of marriage.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at almost every single government program, they are conditioned or based upon percent of poverty. If you are below a certain income level, then you are eligible for that program, and if you are above a certain level, then you are not eligible for benefits under that plan.

Since in a household with a man and woman both there and both parents of a child, it is overwhelmingly likely that one of them is working full-time, they will be making \$40,000 or \$50,000 or \$60,000 or more, that couple will almost never be considered to be in poverty.

Mr. Speaker, if you have another situation in which the mother and father are in different households, if one of these people is not working or working minimally, making maybe \$15,000 or \$16,000 a year or less and the other person is working full-time, then that is considered to be not in poverty.

As a result, financially, there is an incentive to make a household in which the mother and father are not both there the norm.