

Prevention & Control, the Director of Environmental Health, Safety, and Emergency Management for the State University of New York at Potsdam, and as the Fire Chief to the Town of Massena.

Mr. O'Brien started his work with the Massena Fire Department in 2007 and has been an incredible asset to the department ever since. With over 20 years of emergency planning and response experience, Mr. O'Brien is exceptionally driven and provides incredible service to Massena. His election as Fire Chief in 2023 reflects his relentless drive for quality, risk management, and teamwork which has improved countless lives in the North Country.

On behalf of New York's 21st district, it is my privilege and honor to recognize the great accomplishments of Patrick O'Brien. I congratulate him on his incredible achievements and thank him for his contributions to our North Country community.

TRIBUTE TO LOUISVILLE METRO COUNCILWOMAN MADONNA FLOOD

HON. MORGAN MCGARVEY

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2025

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Louisville Metro Councilwoman Madonna Flood and to acknowledge her exemplary leadership, unwavering dedication, and significant contributions to the people and communities of Louisville.

First elected in 2002, Councilwoman Flood has served as a founding member of the Louisville Metro Council, representing District 24, which includes the communities of Okolona, Highview, and Fern Creek, among others. Through her leadership and commitment to service, she has improved quality of life for countless residents, advocating for policies and investments that have shaped the growth of her district and Louisville Metro as a whole.

As Democratic Caucus Chair and Chair of key committees such as Planning & Zoning, Budget, and Public Safety, she has been instrumental in guiding policy decisions that have made a lasting impact on the city. Councilwoman Flood's role in advancing initiatives like the Fairness Ordinance, Smoking Ban Ordinance, and Adult Entertainment Ordinance exemplifies her commitment to fairness, public health, and safety for all citizens.

Councilwoman Flood's leadership was vital in the construction of the South Central Regional Library, providing a valuable resource for the community, and she worked tirelessly to resolve drainage issues in Okolona, improving infrastructure and addressing the needs of her constituents.

Mr. Speaker, Councilwoman Flood's legacy of public service is built upon a foundation of dedication, advocacy, and an enduring commitment to improving the lives of those she served. Her contributions to Louisville's land use, public safety, and quality of life will continue to resonate for generations. I express my profound gratitude for her leadership, vision, and service, and I wish her well in her future endeavors.

REINTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO AWARD THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO HUMANITARIAN AND SPORTING LEGEND MUHAMMAD ALI

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2025

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, as we kick off the first session of the new Congress, I am proud to reintroduce legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Muhammad Ali in recognition of his numerous contributions to our great Nation. I believe it is long past time to recognize an American civil rights activist, humanitarian and sporting legend with Congress' highest honor. Unfortunately, Congress failed to act before The Champ's death in 2016, at the age 74, so I ask my colleagues to join me now in honoring an American hero, on the eve of what would have been his 83rd birthday. Over the course of his illustrious career, Muhammad Ali produced some of our Nation's most lasting sports memories. From winning a Gold Medal at the 1960 Summer Olympics, to lighting the Olympic torch at the 1996 Summer Olympics, his influence as an athlete and a humanitarian spanned over fifty years.

Despite having been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in the 1980s, Ali devoted his life to charitable organizations. Ali, and his wife Lonnie, were founding directors of the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center and Movement Disorders Clinic in Phoenix, Arizona and helped raise over \$50 million for Parkinson's research. In addition to helping families cope with illness, Ali led efforts to provide meals for the hungry and helped countless organizations such as the Make-A-Wish-Foundation and the Special Olympics.

Muhammad Ali's humanitarian efforts went beyond his charitable activities in the United States. In 1990 Muhammad Ali travelled to the Middle East to seek the release of American and British hostages that were being held as human shields in the first Gulf War. After his intervention, 15 hostages were freed. Thanks to his devotion to diplomatic causes and racial harmony, Ali was the recipient of many accolades, including being chosen as a "U.N. Messenger of Peace" in 1998 and receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005 from President Bush.

Through his unyielding dedication to his sport and to struggling populations around the world, Muhammad Ali still serves an example of service and self-sacrifice for generations of Americans. The Congressional Gold Medal is a fitting commemoration of his life and work, for which he is deservedly known as "the Greatest."

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing one of our Nation's most lasting and influential figures by signing on to this important legislation. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to include in the RECORD a recent op-ed published in the American Bar Association Human Rights Magazine.

[From the American Bar Association Human Rights Magazine, Nov. 25, 2024]

THE FIGHT FOR MUHAMMAD ALI IN CONGRESS = THE FIGHT AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA

(By Rep. ANDRÉ CARSON)

The fight for fairness is not a one-time battle; it is an ongoing struggle that can be ex-

hausting and frustrating. While sometimes there is a knockout punch that leads to a sudden victory, more often, it is a marathon requiring patience, dedication, and endurance.

This is especially true of legislative victories throughout American history. From the long marches of Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to the hundreds of bus boycotts and sit-ins that finally helped push the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act across the finish line, progress can be painstakingly slow.

Even the fight to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a national holiday took 15 years from the first bill introduced by Rep. John Conyers and Sen. Edward Brooke to passage and enactment of a revised bill authored by Rep. Katie Hall, the first Black woman elected to represent Indiana in Congress. Yet even after President Ronald Reagan signed the bill into law in 1983, the holiday was not recognized in all 50 states until 2000.

Similarly, Rep. Julia Carson, the second Black woman from Indiana elected to serve in Congress, introduced a bill in 2006 to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Muhammad Ali. Despite her efforts, that bill never received a committee hearing, let alone a floor vote. Since her death and my election to Congress, I have taken up this mantle, reintroducing the bill eight times—from the 111th Congress in 2009 to the current 118th Congress. Despite widespread support from groups across the country, the bill has still not made it to a vote.

Muhammad Ali, "The Greatest," was a true American hero. After winning a gold medal for the United States at the 1960 Summer Olympics, Ali converted to Islam in 1961 and soon became the world heavyweight champion at the age of 22. In 1964, he rejected his birth name, Cassius Clay, which he called his "slave name," and formally adopted the name Muhammad Ali.

In 1967, as a conscientious objector, Ali refused to be drafted into the military because of his religious and moral opposition to the Vietnam War. Convicted of draft evasion, he appealed his case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which overturned the conviction in 1971. After reclaiming his world heavyweight title, Ali dedicated his post-boxing career to serving as a global ambassador for peace, civil rights, human rights, and fairness for everyone.

Ali has long held a special place in the hearts of Indiana Hoosiers, especially mine. He first visited the Indiana Black Expo's Summer Celebration in 1987 as an activist and returned in 1996 to support my grandmother, Julia Carson, in her first run for Congress, which she won. In 2003, Ali returned to Indianapolis when he served as grand marshal of the Indy 500 before a crowd of 300,000 cheering fans.

My grandmother and Muhammad Ali inspired me early in life to become civically active and stand up for my beliefs. Both were born in Louisville, Kentucky, from humble beginnings and used the prejudice they faced as motivation to succeed. They fought tirelessly to accomplish their goals and became champions in their respective fields—Ali in the boxing ring and my grandmother in the halls of Congress. They shared a passion for defending their beliefs and were never afraid to fight for what was right.

Muhammad Ali deserves a Congressional Gold Medal, yet despite all his contributions, we have not been able to secure the 290 co-sponsors needed to get a vote on my current bill, H.R. 709. So far, we have just 91.

Why is it that someone as universally beloved as Ali, a man whose life and legacy have inspired so many around the globe, has yet to receive the recognition he deserves

from Congress? Is it because this recognition is going to a Muslim man? Or because a Muslim man is offering it?

As the longest-serving Muslim member of Congress and the dean of our small but mighty Muslim caucus, I have asked these questions many times. Some point to Ali's draft evasion, labeling him as controversial. But the Supreme Court overturned that conviction. Others suggest race might be a factor. Yet, there are many other Black recipients of the Congressional Gold Medal, including Nelson Mandela, General Colin Powell, Roy Wilkins, and Rosa Parks.

Since 1776, only 184 Congressional Gold Medals have been awarded. It is an interesting list, including individuals like George Washington, Charles Lindbergh, Howard Hughes, Robert Frost, Bob Hope, Walt Disney, Winston Churchill, Frank Sinatra, and Billy Graham, plus iconic athletes like Jesse Owens, Jackie Robinson, and Larry Doby. Given this roster of distinguished Americans, why not add Muhammad Ali, a man who represents the very best of our country?

Could it be that my colleagues are reluctant to honor a principled Muslim man who lived his faith with deep conviction and practiced Islam every day despite the attacks he endured? Even after his passing, Muhammad Ali continues to inspire generations around the world more than 60 years after winning an Olympic gold medal for the United States.

Islamophobia, like racism, antisemitism, and homophobia, is a pernicious poison that can infect people without their realizing it. It can manifest itself with discomfort or outright resistance to honoring someone like Ali based on fear, ignorance, or flawed and unfair procedures.

For example, the current procedures established by the Republican majority make it extremely difficult to pass a Gold Medal bill. Before the committee of jurisdiction can hold a hearing or a markup, 290 cosponsors are required. In practice, most bills passed by either chamber do not need hundreds of cosponsors for consideration. Additionally, only five Gold Medal bills can be considered per session under these restrictions. The "quiet part" is that while few would want to vote against Ali on the floor, most have not cosponsored the bill, blocking it.

How could it have been easier for Muhammad Ali to win an Olympic gold medal at age 18 than be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his lifetime of service to civil rights and humanitarian causes? Is it Islamophobia?

Few will admit to Islamophobia, but actions speak volumes. In this session alone, two of the three members of our Muslim caucus were sanctioned by votes on the House floor. Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), the only Palestinian-American to ever serve in Congress, was censured by a vote of 234 to 188 for speaking up for Palestinian rights. She was wrongfully accused of promoting a false narrative about the suffering in Gaza, even though over 40,000 innocent Palestinians, mostly women and children, have already been killed. Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN), the first Somali-American elected to Congress, was stripped of her seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee by a vote of 218 to 211 for similarly speaking up for Palestinian rights. These votes did not grab the headlines they should have, but they revealed a disturbing reality: two-thirds of Muslim members of Congress were sanctioned for standing up for their communities. This is a dangerous trend.

Unlike systemic disenfranchisement and discrimination against racial minorities and immigrants, Islamophobia is particularly painful because it persecutes an individual's religion. Our faith is so personal and, for many of us, very private. So, being subjected

to this irrational hatred because of our religion is hard, especially in a country founded on religious freedom.

Globally, we are witnessing hijab bans, oppression of Muslims, and fear-based politics that fuel violence, with incidents increasing at an alarming rate. This hits close to home when tragic events, like the stabbing of a six-year-old Muslim boy in Illinois last year, remind us of the consequences of ignorance, hatred, and violence. My heart broke when this child was killed by his neighbor, who was angry at Palestinians over the Israel-Gaza war.

We must call out Islamophobia—whether it is blatant, like the Muslim Ban under the Trump administration, or subtle, like the opposition to legislative recognition of Muhammad Ali. We must not be silent. We must be vigilant in stopping this irrational fear from blocking progress and fairness. Only then can we build political consensus and experience the dream our Founders envisioned, where life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are available to every American, not just some.

There are some encouraging legislative developments: This past summer, we opened the first-ever Interfaith Staff Prayer Room in the Capitol Complex under the auspices of the House Chaplain's Office. The addition of the prayer room was the result of legislation I authored and was enacted as an amendment to the FY2022 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill. It provides dedicated physical space for congressional staff and interns of all faiths to pray and meditate at work.

While there has always been a small interfaith place for members of Congress to use, there was nothing available for staff working in crowded cubicles with no privacy. This legislative change has made a positive difference, especially for Muslim staffers, who now have a private place for daily prayers. This small victory shows that progress is possible—we just have to keep running the race together and never give up.

Please note: The views expressed herein have not been approved by the House of Delegates, the Board of Governors, the Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice or the Human Rights Editorial Board of the American Bar Association and, accordingly, should not be construed as representing the policy of the American Bar Association. They are the views of the individual authors themselves in their personal capacities.

REP. ANDRÉ CARSON—MEMBER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM INDIANA'S 7TH DISTRICT

Rep. André Carson (D-IN) was first elected in 2008. He is the first Muslim appointed to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, where he serves as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Central Intelligence Agency. He also serves on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Select Committee on Strategic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party.

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE
DEMETRIUS ANTHONY YOUNG

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2025

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a loving father, dedicated brother, committed community servant and dear friend of longstanding, Commissioner Demetrius Anthony Young. Sadly, Commissioner Young

passed from labor to reward on December 29, 2024. A homegoing service to celebrate his remarkable life was held on January 3, 2025, at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia.

The genesis of the life of Demetrius Young began with his birth on January 7, 1971, in Albany, Georgia to the union of the late Representative Mary Young Cummings and Mr. Henry "Hank" Young, Sr. He was a proud product of the Dougherty County School System, graduating from Monroe Comprehensive High School in 1990. While at Monroe, he was a member of the marching band, playing trumpets and was a drummer. He went on to further his education, earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Albany State University and Master of Public Administration with a concentration in public policy in 2020.

Commissioner Young had a distinguished 25-year career in Information Technology. He was a Member Services Engineer for the Community Development Institute in Denver, Colorado where he worked for almost nine years.

He returned to Albany, Georgia after his tenure with the Institute ended. Like his beloved mother before him who served as a City Commissioner for the City of Albany and as a Georgia State Representative, Demetrius had a burning desire to be a public servant. And in 2019, armed with that fire and background, he ran for his mother's old seat on the City Commission and was successful. He ran to be an advocate for those that he represented. He was that and so much more. He was a voice to the voiceless and gave hope to the hopeless. Truly, he was an advocate for East and South Albany. He fought against discriminatory practices in the City Code, expanded access to procurement opportunities for minority owned businesses, and fought fervently against voter suppression in all its forms.

A committed man of faith, Commissioner Young leaned on his faith that was molded from his days as a child at the Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church. His faith was his moral compass that guided his life's work.

Commissioner Young loved his family, and nowhere was that exhibited more than with his support of his daughters, JaMiya, Nubia, Kenya and Erika. He was their biggest cheerleader and always reveled in their success.

On a personal note, Commissioner Young and his extended family have been dear friends to me for many years. I served with his mother in the General Assembly for several years. She was a dedicated community servant and passed that love of community on to Demetrius, and I am sure she beamed with pride as she watched his activism and public service. George Washington Carver once said that "How far you go in life depends on your being tender with young, compassionate with aged; sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong because someday in your life you will have been all of these." Commissioner Young went far in life because he advocated and worked on behalf of people from all walks of life.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my Wife, Vivian, and me along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District in honoring the life and legacy of Commissioner Demetrius Anthony Young and in extending our deepest sympathy to his family, friends, colleagues and all who mourn his loss. We pray that all will be consoled by