

Jon always knew he could make a difference when he put his mind to something. He established a deep interest in natural health and spirituality in the 1980s. After 32 years of highly skilled work for Pratt & Whitney, Jon retired in 1993. He took this opportunity to embrace new opportunities, publishing a magazine and helping holistic practitioners move into the mainstream.

Jon built on his interest in holistic health, working with the Vernon Youth Services Bureau to bring awareness to the benefits of holistic medicine to the wider Vernon community in the early 2000s. In 2004, Jon was instrumental in the creation of the Greater Vernon Holistic Healthfest, which hosted their 12th annual festival this March.

Jon has been a dedicated member of Vernon, always longing to learn more about the place he has called home for so many years. After meeting people passionate about protecting the Tankerhoosen Valley, Jon took it upon himself to learn all he could about the area and its people. The Tankerhoosen Valley is located in Vernon and Tolland, Connecticut and is one of the state's Officially Designated Greenways. The area has a rich environmental history that Jon knew he needed to share with others living in and visiting the Valley. He created a website and newsletter to help share what he learned with those around him. Working with volunteer nonprofits, Jon was also instrumental in creating the Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative (VVC) in 2014, a group that serves to preserve the community of Vernon for residents.

Finding his niche in research and sharing information, Jon has dedicated the past 15 years to writing and giving talks about the Tankerhoosen Valley and the early families that lived there. His extensive research and down to earth speaking style, infused with a warm sense of humor, made him a favorite at all his speaking engagements. He recently published a book on Vernon's first 90 years and has several other books planned to continue telling the rich story of northeastern Connecticut history.

Mr. Speaker, Jon Roe has been an exceptional leader in eastern Connecticut throughout his life. I count myself lucky to know leaders like Jon, working so hard to preserve our history for future generations. Jon's commitment to the corner of eastern Connecticut he and his children and grandchildren have called home for decades is evident in his relentless service to the community. His contributions and tireless work will continue to be felt in Vernon and the northeast region.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to please join me in congratulating Jon on his award and honoring his works.

THE KURDS DESERVE BETTER

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in my service on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I have had the opportunity to meet talented citizens of the Kurdish Region of Iraq including visiting it's vibrant capital of Erbil, the oldest continually inhabited city in the world, of 8,000 years.

With historic changes for democracy being achieved, new President Ahmed al-Sharaa of Syria, the new government of Lebanon, and President Donald Trump's extraordinary success confirming our alliance with dynamic Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, there is opportunity to appreciate the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as it resists Tehran's subversion of Baghdad.

I include in the RECORD an excellent analysis of opportunity which was presented by the great American patriot, former Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, on May 20, 2025. "The Kurds Deserve Better" op-ed in the New York Post:

THE KURDS DESERVE BETTER

They've proven themselves to be one of America's most reliable partners in the Middle East—but the Kurdish people still have no real homeland of their own. As Masrour Barzani, the prime minister of Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government, visits Washington this week, these friends deserve better. Other regional actors offer rhetorical friendship, but the Kurds demonstrate theirs through action and sacrifice.

What's more, they provide a critical bulwark against Iranian influence in a region that has been thoroughly penetrated by the Islamic Republic—including in Iraq, which has become an Iranian cat's-paw. Kurdish ambitions for greater autonomy are not only righteous, they align with America's own critical interests. As Secretary of State and CIA director in President Trump's first term, I witnessed their unwavering commitment to our shared objectives firsthand.

Kurdish fighters have consistently battled America's worst enemies—jihadist groups like ISIS, al Qaeda and others—sparing American blood and treasure. Unlike many other partners in the region, the Kurds never engaged in anti-American terrorism, never cost American lives and never wavered in their friendship. Their loyalty has delivered exceptional returns on a modest investment, compared to the trillions spent in other Middle Eastern conflicts.

The Kurdish regions possess substantial natural resources, positioning them for economic self-sufficiency. The KRG alone contains an estimated 45 billion barrels of oil—roughly a third of Iraq's total reserves—plus significant natural gas fields.

Kurdish territories also contain valuable mineral deposits, largely untapped due to political constraints. The KRG has demonstrated effective governance despite Baghdad's restrictions, building a functioning economy and attracting international investment. Given economic freedom, Kurdistan would rapidly develop into a self-sufficient partner that strengthens America's strategic position without draining our resources.

In my diplomatic engagement throughout the Middle East, I've seen what makes the Kurds exceptional: In a region dominated by authoritarianism and extremism, Kurdish-governed areas stand out as islands of relative tolerance and pluralism. Kurdish communities have rejected the anti-American and antisemitic ideologies that poison much of the region. And like Americans, they yearn for self-determination and representative government; they have no wish to become a vassal state of an American adversary.

For too long, the United States has neglected the strategic potential that would be unlocked by supporting Kurdistan—out of fear of regional repercussions and, in some cases, sheer inertia. At this critical juncture in America's engagement in the Middle East,

we should incorporate the Kurds into our regional strategy.

First, America must forcefully counter regional efforts to undermine Kurdish self-governance. When Iran's Revolutionary Guards launch missiles at Kurdish sites, as they did last year, Washington should respond with consequences. No regional power should be able to operate with impunity against our partners. To successfully project American power, the US must establish and enforce red lines that protect our allies from systematic abuse.

We must also keep Kurdish regions from being economically strangled as punishment for their autonomy. Baghdad has repeatedly withheld funds and blocked oil exports—tactics encouraged by Tehran to force Kurdish submission.

Washington should leverage its substantial influence with the Iraqi government to lift export blocks. This will both allow the Kurds to thrive and increase the global oil supply, strengthening energy security.

America should respect the legitimacy of the 2017 Kurdish independence referendum, in which 93% of Iraqi Kurds chose independence. Instead of honoring this democratic process, Baghdad (with Iran's backing) sent tanks and militias to punish the Kurds and impose a blockade. At that time, the United States chose to place Iraq's artificial stability over Kurdish aspirations—a mistake we should now rectify.

Recognizing the referendum's validity by supporting Kurdish autonomy means respecting the democratic will of a people who have earned the right to determine their future.

Finally, the United States should work with the Kurds toward a peaceful, negotiated pathway to greater autonomy and independence. This long-term objective must be pursued through diplomatic channels to avoid triggering new conflicts, but it's a goal worth pursuing to advance American interests in the region. America should encourage Baghdad and Erbil to establish a legal framework for greater Kurdish sovereignty that addresses both Kurdish aspirations and Iraqi concerns.

Similarly, we should engage Turkey—which contains its own large Kurdish population—by emphasizing the strategic benefits of a more independent Kurdistan and an end to their perpetual insurgency.

In my years of service, I've learned that America is strongest when we stand firmly with those who share our values and consistently advance our interests. Prime Minister Barzani should receive a strong welcome in the United States as we explore ways to jointly advance peace and prosperity.

Mike Pompeo served as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, 2017–18, and Secretary of State, 2018–21.

<https://nypost.com/2025/05/20/opinion/kurds-deserve-better-how-us-can-support-an-allys-freedom/>.

RECOGNIZING SANG H. YI

HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sang H. Yi for his distinguished service to the House Committee on Homeland Security and the United States Congress.

Sang is a proud alumnus of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, the United States Naval War College, and the George

Washington University Law School. With an exceptional commitment to public service, Sang embarked on his professional career in the Intelligence Community. He then served as Professional Staff Member and Senior Policy Advisor on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee under the leadership of Chairman DARRELL ISSA and Chairman Jason Chaffetz. Subsequently, he joined the House Committee on Natural Resources, where he served as Senior Counsel, Subcommittee Staff Director, and Chief Investigative Counsel under the leadership of Chairman Rob Bishop and Chairman BRUCE WESTERMAN. In 2023, Sang joined the House Committee on Homeland Security as Director of Investigations and Subcommittee Staff Director. Sang also served as an elected member of the City Council for Fairfax, Virginia for two terms, and as an officer in the United States Navy Reserve for more than 22 years.

Having worked with Sang since the beginning of the 118th Congress, I have seen firsthand how he exemplifies what it means to be a dedicated public servant. He possesses a wealth of knowledge in congressional oversight and investigations and the challenges facing our Nation every day. He has earned a reputation as a tenacious and thorough investigator and has mentored many staff throughout his years in Congress. He has served 3 committees faithfully under the leadership of 5 different chairmen or ranking members across 9 Congresses. As Director of Investigations, Sang led my Committee's oversight efforts related to the crisis at our Southwest border, the increasing threat of cyberattacks and government censorship, transportation and maritime security, counterterrorism efforts, and federal emergency management responses. Thanks to his leadership, our Nation is safer.

Sang's wise counsel to the Committee helped ensure that the Department of Homeland Security was held accountable to the American people. I am deeply grateful for Sang's invaluable service to the Committee and our Nation. Sang is a true patriot, and I am confident he will continue to distinguish himself as he serves in his next role as the Acting Administrator and Deputy Administrator of the United States Maritime Administration.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the House Committee on Homeland Security, I commend Sang for his diligent service and wish him well in all his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING BRAIN CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH

HON. MARIA ELVIRA SALAZAR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Ms. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, May is Brain Cancer Awareness month, and there are over 450,000 Americans living with primary malignant and non-malignant brain tumors in the United States. These range from primary brain tumors called Gliomas, including Glioblastomas, to secondary brain tumors that occur from metastases from other parts of the body.

Today, I want to recognize the work and efforts of a wonderful patient advocacy organization—Voices Against Brain Cancer (VABC).

The organization is based in South Florida but assists families all over our Nation. Founded by Mr. Mario Lichtenstein, VABC was started in memory of his son, Gary Lichtenstein. Gary lost his fight with brain cancer on October 1, 2003 at the age of 24, just as he was starting his career in Chicago. After three months of radiation, Gary slipped into a coma from which he did not recover. Soon after his passing, Gary's family started Voices Against Brain Cancer Foundation to raise money and awareness for the fight against the illness. As its founder so bravely states, "I couldn't save the life of my son, but perhaps I can save the life of others".

The mission of Voices Against Brain Cancer is to find a cure for brain cancer by financing scientific research and increasing awareness within the medical community, as well as supporting patients, their families, and caregivers afflicted with this devastating disease. Through the years, VABC has funded scientific research at over 50 institutions in the United States and across the globe including Johns Hopkins, Cornell, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and the University of Miami.

Voices Against Brain Cancer also advocates for increased federal funding for brain tumor research at the National Institutes of Health and increased public awareness. The cure rate for most brain tumors is significantly lower than it is for many other types of cancers, a statistic VABC is driven to change. The organization champions specific patient-centered programs such as Survivor Reboot Groups, which supports brain cancer survivors, and the Caregiver Meet-Up, which brings caregivers together, meeting virtually or in person to share experiences. It also created the After the Storm Group, which is for those who have lost a loved one; the C3 program—Connect, Create, Collaborate which includes art, music, and yoga workshops, allowing people to collaborate with others going through similar situations; and finally Brain Cancer 101, an educational program.

Voices Against Brain Cancer has turned tragedy into purpose. As we close out Brain Cancer Awareness Month, let us remember Gary Lichtenstein and salute his family that has worked so hard to find more effective treatments and a cure for this terrible disease.

CELEBRATING JERRY SHEARD

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Mr. KEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of Jerry Sheard, a man who has devoted his life to serving his country, family, and community. Jerry enlisted in the Navy Reserve in 1952, serving on the USS *Cabot*, USS *Saratoga*, and with the Commander Amphibious Forces Atlantic. Following his release from active duty, Jerry spent 12 years with the Naval Reserve and later transferred to the Coast Guard Reserve as a Chief Firefighter.

In 1962, Jerry was named Coast Guard Reservist of the Year and received a direct commission to Lieutenant Junior Grade in 1973. Jerry's commitment to his community cannot be overstated. He has been a member of the American Legion for close to 50 years—first

serving with Post 91 in Wharton and currently with Post 278 in Sussex County.

Jerry is a life member and past Chief of the Budd Lake, New Jersey Volunteer Fire Department and has served on the Mt. Olive Township Council, the Planning Board, and as President of the Mt. Olive Free Library.

I am proud and honored to wish Chief Jerry Sheard a happy 90th birthday. He is the embodiment of the values that New Jersey's 7th District represents.

HONORING JAYDEN DUNBAR

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant Jayden Dunbar.

Born and raised in Woodville, Mississippi, he was blessed to grow up with a supportive mother and a loving family who instilled in me the values of hard work, resilience, and compassion.

He has proudly achieved several notable accolades, including Salutatorian of 5th Grade Class (Class of 2018), Gifted 4th through 6th Grade, Academic-ACT Work Keys (Bronze Award), Beta Club (2015–2025, Honor Roll Awards, Principal Scholar Awards, Superintendent Scholar Awards, Advance & Proficiency for high scoring on State Test, National Career Readiness Certificate.

He has numerous Football and Basketball achievements which have served as milestones in his pursuit of knowledge and have further fueled his desire to excel. With a remarkable academic record, 24 on the ACT and a 3.36 GPA.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jayden Dunbar for his actions and achievements in the Woodville, Mississippi community.

RECOGNIZING MAY 2025 AS
GBS|CIDP AWARENESS MONTH

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the month of May as GBS|CIDP Awareness Month.

Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) is an inflammatory disorder of the peripheral nerves outside the brain and spinal cord. GBS is characterized by the rapid onset of numbness, weakness, and often paralysis of the legs, arms, breathing muscles, and face. Paralysis is ascending, meaning that it travels up the limbs from fingers and toes towards the torso. Loss of reflexes, such as the knee jerk, are usually found. Usually, a new case of GBS is admitted to ICU (Intensive Care) to monitor breathing and other body functions until the disease is stabilized. Plasma exchange (a blood "cleansing" procedure) and high dose intravenous immune globulins are often helpful to shorten the course of GBS. The acute phase of GBS typically varies in length from a few days to months. Patient care involves the coordinated