

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE REAL ID GENDER REQUIREMENT REFORM ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the REAL ID Gender Requirement Reform Act, which would repeal the requirement in the REAL ID Act that REAL ID-compliant licenses include gender. Instead, states would decide whether to include gender on their respective REAL ID-compliant licenses. I am pleased Representative MAXWELL FROST is co-leading this bill.

Under this bill, if a state includes gender on its REAL ID-compliant licenses, the state must allow individuals to change the gender designation on their license through self-attestation. It would also require states that include gender on their REAL ID-compliant licenses to have a neutral or other designation gender field, in addition to male or female.

Under the REAL ID Act, gender must be included on a license. This can be problematic for transgender and nonbinary individuals. I recognize that some LGBTQ+ individuals do not want gender designations on licenses at all, while others do want gender designation so as to express their identity. I believe this bill strikes the middle ground, while showing Congress' support for LGBTQ+ individuals.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF ELISSA DEVITO

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate a devoted public servant, Elissa DeVito of Preston, Connecticut. Elissa is retiring from teaching at Waterford Public Schools after over 30 years of dedicated service. Her decades of outstanding expertise and dedication to her community will be sorely missed.

Elissa spent her early life in Rockville, Maryland before attending Syracuse University where she met the love of her life, Michael. Elissa moved to Connecticut in May of 1991. She and Michael lived in Groton and Mystic before settling in Preston in 1994, where they have been ever since.

Elissa chose a path of public service and has dedicated her life to education and teaching. For decades, she has worked as a teacher, helping to shape the minds of generations of children. She began her career with Waterford Public Schools on November 30, 1992, at Oswegatchie Elementary School. She stayed at Oswegatchie until the fall of 2009 when she transferred to Quaker Hill Elementary School.

While Elissa has spent most of her career working with kindergarteners, she has also spent a few years working with first and second graders.

Always going above and beyond to create a caring and supportive environment for the students that entered her classroom, it has been Elissa's mission to provide the next generation with the tools they need to succeed. Elissa is a natural educator and has been known as an expert at teaching young students to read. Students go from learning the letters of the alphabet to reading books by the end of their time in her classroom.

As she enters retirement, Elissa is looking forward to spending more time reading, one of her favorite pastimes, visiting her daughters, Samantha, Emily, and Alexa and going on trips with her husband Michael.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent constituents as devoted and compassionate as Elissa. Elissa has impacted hundreds of students during her career. Elissa will leave behind an expert skill set and enthusiasm that will be hard to replace, but her 33 years of unwavering dedication to the Waterford community will leave a legacy for years to come through each and every one of her students. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Elissa DeVito's immeasurable contributions and congratulating her on her well-earned retirement.

HONORING DALE W. SISSON, JR.

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Dale W. Sisson, Jr., on his retirement from the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD), after a distinguished career dedicated to serving our nation.

Mr. Sisson's commitment to the Navy and to the advancement of our national defense is truly commendable. He has served NSWCDD with distinction for over two decades, culminating in his role as Technical Director, where he oversaw a \$1.8 billion portfolio of research, development, test, and evaluation. His leadership of the 4,930-member NSWCDD workforce has been instrumental in ensuring the technical excellence of complex naval combat, sensor, weapon, and strategic systems, making Dahlgren a vital asset to our national defense and a source of pride for Virginia's First Congressional District.

Prior to his role as Technical Director, Mr. Sisson served as the Executive Director of the Naval Ordnance Safety and Security Activity (NOSSA) and Deputy for Weapons Safety, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). In these critical roles, he was responsible for providing executive and technical direction for all ordnance surety programs assigned to NOSSA and ensuring the safety and effective-

ness of our Navy and Marine Corps munitions through his work with the Department of the Navy's Weapon System Explosives Safety Review Board.

Mr. Sisson's prior leadership roles at NSWCDD, including his tenure as Head of the Electromagnetic & Sensor Systems Department and his detail as Director of Systems Engineering within the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, Test, & Evaluation (DASN (RDT&E)), further demonstrate his dedication and expertise. His contributions to the Navy's development of laser weapons, recognized with the Department of the Navy's Superior Civilian Service medal in 2015, exemplify his innovative spirit and technical prowess.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Dale W. Sisson, Jr., for his years of dedicated service to our Nation and in wishing him all the best in his well-deserved retirement. He has made a significant and lasting impact on our national security, and we are deeply grateful for his contributions.

RECOGNIZING ANITA ALTMAN

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Anita Altman, a distinguished New Yorker and cherished member of our community, who will celebrate her 80th birthday on June 2, 2025.

Anita has devoted her life to building a more inclusive, compassionate, and just society. A proud daughter of the Bronx, Anita was raised in a working-class Greek Jewish household by her parents, Jack and Sarah, and her grandparents Anna and Zadick Coffino, who emigrated from the Ottoman Empire and made their home on the Lower East Side. From these deep roots, Anita cultivated a lifelong commitment to public service, Jewish communal life, and progressive social change.

After earning her B.A. from City College and a Master's in Health Services Administration from the New School, Anita began a career that would span urban planning, public health, and groundbreaking social advocacy. From her early work at the New York City Planning Department and Montefiore Medical Center to her service on Manhattan's Community Board 7, Anita has been a tireless force for equitable development, healthcare access, and community empowerment.

Anita's visionary leadership at UJA-Federation transformed the landscape of aging and disability services in New York. She was instrumental in launching the state's first programs for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, helping thousands of seniors age with dignity in the communities they helped build. She led one of the first Jewish communal responses to the AIDS epidemic and convened the Federation's Task Force on

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Family Violence, for which she was honored with the Governor's Courage Award and the Woman of Valor award from the New York Board of Rabbis.

Perhaps most widely known is Anita's creation of the Reel Abilities Film Festival, the nation's largest showcase of films by and about people with disabilities. Through ReelAbilities, Anita helped elevate underrepresented voices, challenge public perceptions, and promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities in American life.

As she celebrates 80 extraordinary years, I recognize Anita Altman for her vision, her integrity, and her unwavering belief that all people deserve to live with dignity, visibility, and respect.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ASHOK RAMSARAN, A DISTINGUISHED CIVIC AND COMMUNITY LEADER IN QUEENS, NEW YORK

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ashok Ramsaran, a distinguished civic and community leader in my Sixth Congressional District.

Mr. Ramsaran has been a resident of Queens, New York, since emigrating from Guyana (formerly British Guiana) in 1968. He is the third generation of Indian indentured laborers who worked on British sugar cane plantations after the emancipation of enslaved people in British colonies in 1834. His great-grandfather, Pooriye, arrived in Guyana in 1853 aboard the ship *Adelaide*, and his great-grandmother, Radhah, arrived in 1860 aboard the ship *Colgrain*. His family faced significant struggles and persevered under extremely harsh conditions on the plantations. Throughout the generations, they worked tirelessly to build a better life in Guyana rather than return to poverty in India.

Mr. Ramsaran was the first member of his family to attend school, an opportunity he valued greatly. He attended Auchlyne Church of Scotland Primary School and Corentyne High School through a Booker Sugar Estates Scholarship. He graduated high school with diplomas from the University of Cambridge and the University of London. He briefly worked as a primary school teacher at Yakusari Primary School, then at the Ministry of Health in Georgetown, and as a clerk at magistrate's courts in New Amsterdam and Whim Village in Guyana.

Before leaving for the U.S.A. to pursue higher education and a better life for his family, Mr. Ramsaran married Camille (formerly Camille Ramgadoo). He embodied the American dream with courage, determination, and a commitment to succeed. While attending college and supporting his family, which included his wife and two small children, he held several jobs. He earned advanced engineering degrees from Polytechnic-New York University and persevered through many hardships, including violent racial attacks against his family and their home. With remarkable resilience, he exceeded expectations, purchased a home, quickly advanced to prominent positions in major companies, funded his children's college

education, and established a successful engineering firm in Queens, New York. He has become a role model for his immediate and extended family, as well as for others in his community.

Together with Camille, Mr. Ramsaran is the parent of Arnold and the late Gerald, and they are the grandparents of Jaden and Gavin, all of whom reside in Queens.

Mr. Ramsaran holds numerous positions in civic and community organizations, including: Executive Vice-President of the Queens Civic Congress (QCC); Chair of the Community Advisory Council for NY Presbyterian Hospital/Queens (NYP/Q); President of the Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC); Past President of GOPIO International (2011 to 2016); Board Member of the Center for Caribbean & Latin American Studies at St. John's University (SJU/CLACS); Executive Board Member of India Empire, a Diaspora publication; Financial Co-Chair and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Flushing, New York (FPC); Board Member of the Fresh Meadows Civic Association, New York (FMCA); Chair of the Queens Civic Congress Conference 2022, addressing critical community issues such as civic engagement, transportation, land use, public safety, services for seniors and children, homelessness, education, real estate tax equity, redistricting, discrimination, and racial justice; Member of the District 24 AM Weprin South Asian Advisory Panel (SAAP); Member of the Queens Borough President's Census 2020 Committee; Member of the Queens Borough President's Civic Engagement Committee; and Delegate to the Queens Borough President's General Assembly (QGA).

Mr. Ramsaran takes initiatives and leads efforts to landmark and secure street naming in recognition of outstanding institutions, communities, and individuals. His landmarking efforts include the Brinckerhoff Colonial Dutch Cemetery (1713), and he has facilitated street namings such as Little Guyana Avenue, Don Capalbi Way (in honor of an exceptional civic leader), Old Towne of Flushing Burial Ground Lane (a historic cemetery for African Americans and Native Americans), Brinckerhoff Memorial Way, and others that honor civic and religious leaders.

Additionally, Mr. Ramsaran has established memorials to commemorate Indian indenture-ship in various British colonies from 1828 to 1917, including the Kolkata Memorial in India and Indian Arrival Monuments in Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Martinique, and other locations. He embraces his noble and selfless service to the global Indian Diaspora community in various ways, tracing his roots to a rich and enduring heritage.

Mr. Ramsaran expresses that he "feels blessed to be an American," where he lives and contributes to improving the lives of others by utilizing his skills, resources, and advocacy. He is dedicated to his moral obligation and duty to give back to society—specifically to Queens, New York, and the Nation—providing him with opportunities and the freedom to progress while helping those who are less fortunate.

Queens is the most diverse county in the United States, and Mr. Ramsaran actively collaborates with many groups and organizations to address common concerns. He deeply engages with community issues of interest and importance, making significant contributions that resonate throughout the community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF HOLLIS HAMILTON HOOKS, A PILLAR OF THE LAKE LAND COMMUNITY

HON. SCOTT FRANKLIN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Hollis Hamilton Hooks, a lifelong Lakelander whose quiet leadership and steady service left a lasting impact on the community he loved.

Hollis never sought the spotlight, but his influence was deeply felt throughout Polk County. From his early work in Washington to a successful career in financial services, he remained guided by a strong sense of duty to give back.

In 1992, Hollis was elected to the Polk County School Board, where he helped lead the district's first strategic planning effort. He championed policies to expand school choice and raise academic standards through the development of magnet programs. He also served on the board of the Polk Education Foundation, where he helped channel private-sector support into classroom resources, scholarships, teacher recognition programs and professional development.

Hollis made a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our region. As chairman of the board for the Lakeland Regional Medical Center, he played a key role in guiding improvements to local care. Through his work with the hospital's foundation, he helped drive critical investments in enhanced services and modernized facilities to meet the needs of a rapidly growing community.

His commitment to civic life extended to the arts and public discourse. He served on the board of the Polk Museum of Art, working to increase access to arts education and cultural programming. He also sat on the board of LkldNow's parent nonprofit, underscoring his belief in the value of informed and engaged local communities.

Hollis Hooks was more than a civic leader. He was my friend, a fellow elder at First Presbyterian Church of Lakeland, and a man of profound integrity. My prayers are with his wife Debbie, their children and all who had the privilege of knowing him. Hollis made Lakeland stronger, and his example of humble leadership will continue to guide and inspire.

May we honor his memory by living lives of purpose and service.

CONGRATULATING SOPHIA RIVERA, GIRLS' SHOT PUT AND DISCUS STATE CHAMPION

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2025

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate Sophia Rivera of Ephrata High School on winning gold medals in both girls' shot put and girls' discus at the 2025 PIAA Class 3A Track and Field Championship, held on May 23 and 24.

The 2025 PIAA Class 3A track and field championship took place on May 23 and 24,