

through the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, the very history that this day honors is now under attack by the current administration. While we mark Juneteenth with prayers and proclamations, we must also confront a harsh and unsettling truth: the significance of this day and African American history is being erased. Across our Nation, we are witnessing the systemic losses of our hard-fought gains—the stripping of diversity, equity, and inclusion from federal institutions, censoring school curriculums, and silencing conversations about the true history of America.

Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, and informed over 250,000 enslaved Black people that they were free—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth is a reminder that freedom and equality remain delayed for Black Americans. For generations, this history of intentional continuation of slavery was ignored, and, now that it is finally acknowledged as part of our Nation's past, we see the Trump Administration trying to strip away Black history. Banning books, censoring lessons, and eliminating honest conversations about race is not about education, it is about control. We must ensure that Juneteenth is not just a day off but a day of truth.

In 2005, I partnered with then-Senator Barack Obama to introduce legislation recognizing Juneteenth. And now that it has become law, we must defend it and the history it represents from being erased. The history of our people is not optional. Let me be clear: Black history is American history. As a Black man who was raised in the rural South during segregation, I know all too well what it feels like to be told that your history does not matter. As the Representative of the 7th Congressional District of Illinois, a district with a rich history of Black culture and resilience, I fight in Congress for equity, inclusion, and the honest American history.

Today, the Trump Administration threatens Chicago Public Schools with the loss of over one billion dollars in federal funding for its efforts to improve the success and reduce suspensions of Black students, teach Black history, and recruit teachers who reflect the students they teach. African Americans have faced enormous challenges in every corner of life—education, economic security, health care, employment, housing and the criminal justice system. We are routinely denied opportunity solely because of the color of our skin. And still, we continue to fight for justice and equity in the face of deep-rooted, systemic racism.

This Juneteenth, Chicago will celebrate Juneteenth as a testament to community, remembrance, and pride. There is the Pullman Porter Museum's Juneteenth parade, games, and concert. Or the Cook County celebration at Malcolm X College, the Juneteenth Annual barbeque at the DuSable Black History Museum, or 1865 Fest in West Garfield Park, to name just a few. Events like these are not just festivals: they are declarations that we will not be silent. We will celebrate. We will educate. We will resist.

I will continue to fight for equality and opportunity at every turn, while honoring the history my forefathers and foremothers endured. Let's not forget, the White House and this country were built by enslaved labor. As we commemorate Juneteenth this year, let it be a call

to action. The struggle for freedom will not end here. I am committed to protecting the truth of our past, fighting for justice in our present, and building a future where every African American can learn their history, see their worth, and know they belong.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LOCAL JUROR NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2025

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the District of Columbia Local Juror Non-Discrimination Act of 2025. This bill would clarify that D.C. residents may not be excluded or disqualified from jury service in the local D.C. trial court, the D.C. Superior Court, based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Specifically, this bill would clarify that the term "sex," which is a protected class under the non-discrimination law that applies to jurors in the D.C. Superior Court, includes sexual orientation and gender identity. The term "sex" would also include a sex stereotype; pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition; and sex characteristics, including intersex traits. In the 117th Congress, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform passed a version of this bill.

D.C. has one of the strongest non-discrimination laws in the country, including protecting individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity. However, under the D.C. Home Rule Act, the D.C. Council does not have the authority to amend title 11 of the D.C. Code, which contains the non-discrimination provisions that apply to jurors in the D.C. Superior Court. Therefore, until D.C. is given authority to amend title 11 of the D.C. Code, which one of my bills would do, an act of Congress is required to clarify that LGBTQ+ jurors in the D.C. Superior Court are protected from discrimination.

As the Supreme Court said in *Edmonson v. Leesville Concrete Company*, "discrimination within the courtroom raises serious questions as to the fairness of the proceedings conducted there. . . . [B]ias mars the integrity of the judicial system and prevents the idea of democratic government from becoming a reality." Similarly, the Court, in *Batson v. Kentucky*, which was a juror discrimination case based on race, said, "The harm from discriminatory jury selection extends beyond that inflicted on the defendant and the excluded juror to touch the entire community. Selection procedures that purposefully exclude black persons from juries undermine public confidence in the fairness of our system of justice."

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING MARIA LAWRENCE AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Maria Lawrence is a visionary leader, community advocate, and accomplished financial executive based in Florida's Ninth Congressional District. As co-founder and chief financial officer of Serving Children and Reaching Families, LLC (SCARF), she has been instrumental in expanding access to mental health and family support services throughout Central Florida. Based in Kissimmee, SCARF is a CARF-accredited organization dedicated to helping at-risk youth and families thrive.

With over 15 years of experience in financial leadership, Maria has built a reputation for driving operational excellence, securing government contracts, strengthening internal controls, and improving revenue cycle processes. Her work has helped SCARF achieve full compliance in numerous federal and state audits, positioning the organization for long-term sustainability and growth. Maria's professional background includes serving as an information technology supervisor at Devereux Florida and managing a major capital project for Jacobs Engineering. Earlier in her career, she worked in financial compliance on Wall Street, where she was selected by the NASD to assist with regulatory audits following a firm closure.

Outside of her professional life, Maria is deeply committed to community service. She has volunteered with Second Harvest Food Bank and the American Heart Association and participated in international mission work, including supporting church development efforts in Venezuela. Maria holds both a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Nova Southeastern University. She also maintains certifications in Microsoft Engineering and Lean Six Sigma. Through her financial expertise, servant leadership, and heart for service, Maria continues to shape stronger communities and create meaningful change for families across Florida's Ninth Congressional District.

HONORING THE JASPER HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' TENNIS TEAM

HON. MARK B. MESSMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. MESSMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my personal congratulations to the Jasper Indiana High School Girls' Tennis team for becoming the IHSA State finals champions.

In the stunning final four match, our Wildcats won 4-1, earning the girls' tennis team their first ever State title, and the first State title for any girls' sports team at Jasper High School.

Thanks to these great athletes for showing the world their formidable Hoosier/Jasper spirit.

Congratulations again to the Wildcats and to their head Coach Scott Yarbrough, who led this great group to their historic win.

They make us all proud.

HONORING DR. CHARNETTE
MUNROE AS A DISTINGUISHED
LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA
FOR CARIBBEAN HERITAGE
MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Charnette Munroe was born in Westmoreland, Jamaica, and immigrated to the United States in the 1980s. Proud of her Caribbean heritage, she honors the sacrifices of her Jamaican ancestors through her professional and academic achievements.

Dr. Munroe earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of South Florida, followed by a master's and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Nova Southeastern University. She completed her internship and geropsychology fellowship at the Dallas North Texas Health Care System.

Dedicated to serving her community, Dr. Munroe is a clinical geropsychologist with extensive experience in clinical and administrative roles. She began her federal career at Fort Bragg Army Medical Center, treating PTSD in active-duty service members. Her VA career started at the Tuskegee VA in Alabama, and in 2015, she joined the Orlando VA Health Care System (OVAHCS). At OVAHCS, Dr. Munroe has played a crucial role in geriatric mental health care, providing services for patients with dementia, hospice care, and spinal cord injuries and disorders. As the Mental Health Geriatrics and Extended Care (MH GEC) Program Manager, she oversees mental health services in the Community Living Center (CLC) and Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC). She supervises a team of psychologists and psychiatrists, ensuring clinical competence and patient access to care through program expansion, employee recruitment, and the implementation of best care practices.

Dr. Munroe aims to promote favorable health behavior outcomes for geriatric consumers. She established a monthly virtual forum for geropsychology VA supervisors nationwide, offering support, training, and practice reviews. As chair of the Orlando and VISN 8 Dementia Committees, she has led the implementation of the VHA Dementia System of Care Directive, developed dementia education and training plans, and continually addresses these needs. Dr. Munroe's contributions include formal presentations on brain health and dementia prevention, which have significantly impacted geriatric mental health and the broader healthcare community.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BELLEVUE-PAPILLION ROTARY CLUB

HON. DON BACON

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Bellevue-Papillion Rotary Club of Ne-

braska on the celebration of their 50th Anniversary.

Since its founding on January 15, 1975, the Bellevue-Papillion Rotary Club has exemplified the values of Rotary International by promoting peace, advancing education, and delivering vital services to the community. Over the past five decades this organization has remained a steadfast force for good in Eastern Sarpy County and beyond.

The club's service includes providing college scholarships to local students, honoring outstanding educators, and awarding community grants, their work has supported organizations such as the Bellevue food Pantry. Habitat for Humanity, and a local shelter for survivors of human trafficking. The club has also funded the installation of police dash cameras, contributed to holiday food programs, and invested in public amenities such as the gazebo at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home and benches at Papillion Landing.

In moments of crisis, the Bellevue-Papillion Rotary club has stepped up, including providing direct assistance to children affected by the 2019 floods. The club also supports global initiatives, including polio eradication and health assistance in Africa.

The rotary motto, "Service Above Self", is more than a guiding principle—it's a commitment the Bellevue-Papillion Rotary Club has lived every day for 50 years. Its members have made immeasurable contributions to the community and have set an example of civic responsibility and service.

I commend the Bellevue-Papillion Rotary Club for its remarkable legacy and congratulate its members on this milestone anniversary.

HONORING EDGAR "PETE" PETERS
AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN
CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIB-
BEAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Edgar "Pete" Peters has been a dedicated and hardworking operations agent with Southwest Airlines for the past 27 years. In 1998, the young Army veteran joined Southwest Airlines as a ramp agent in Baltimore, Maryland. He later accepted his current position and transferred to the Southwest Airlines operations in Orlando, Florida. Pete has worked in many capacities over the years, including as a member of the Safety and Emergency Care team, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion representative, and as a training coordinator. He has been awarded many honors, including Operations Agent of the Quarter on several occasions and Operations Agent of the Year.

His passion for helping others and giving back to the community has led him to create The Ann Hewan Foundation, which contributes to his native Jamaica from his Lake Nona community in Central Florida. Pete, as he is known throughout the area and community, is heavily involved in charity work that supports underprivileged children. Each year, Pete collects, solicits, purchases, and ships back-to-school items, such as notebooks, pencils, backpacks, restored computers, and clothing

items, to Jamaica, where he partners with a local school and charity in the community. Throughout the school year, he collects and donates some of his own money to help support the Goodwill Infant and Primary School Breakfast Program, which now operates three days a week, providing breakfast to underprivileged children at school who are unable to get it at home. Pete's current project is assisting a local community charity in building a proper playing field for the kids at the Goodwill Primary and Infant School, which is almost 50% complete. The playing field will be used for recreational purposes and extracurricular activities, bringing joy and a sense of pride to the children and the community upon completion. Pete also helps out and supports local charity events around Central Florida communities and around the Southwest Airlines system.

Pete's dedication and low-key approach are what keep him going. As the son of Pinkie Hewan, who migrated to the United States in search of a better life, Pete's passion and understanding create the high octane for helping others and treating them with respect.

HONORING LILLIE CONNET

HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Lillie Connet, for her work as an intern serving in my D.C. office. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her hard work and recognize the meaningful contributions she has made to the office this summer. Lillie is from Hendersonville, North Carolina, and attends the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Lillie is entering her third year at Chapel Hill where she is studying Political Science.

Interns work with staff to serve constituents in North Carolina's 11th congressional district. Lillie was chosen from a competitive pool of applicants and exceeded every expectation with her positive attitude and impressive work ethic. It was a pleasure to work with Lillie, and I am so proud to have had such an intelligent and ambitious intern representing my office.

Lillie exemplified the spirit of public service and represents the best that our Nation has to offer. I congratulate Lillie on the successful completion of her internship and thank her on behalf of the people of Western North Carolina.

HONORING MARIA ISABEL
SANQUÍRICO AS A DISTIN-
GUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL
FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN HER-
ITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, recognized as one of the Top Women in PR by PRNews, Maria Isabel Sanquírigo is a force in multicultural communications and a fearless advocate for representation, equity, and authentic storytelling. An award-winning communications