

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR.
ALBERT DOTSON, SR.

HON. MARIA ELVIRA SALAZAR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Ms. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Albert Dotson, Sr., a beloved constituent in our community who served as a pioneer, activist, husband, and loving father throughout his lifetime. On May 29, 2021, Mr. Dotson passed away at the age of 83.

I would like to recognize Dr. Albert Dotson, Sr.'s steadfast leadership, his embrace of the communities he has lived and served in, and his many achievements.

Born in Memphis, Tennessee in 1938, Albert was raised by a single mother who worked as a housekeeper. His mother, Alberta, taught him the value of hard work and respect at an early age.

Later on in life, Albert met his wife, Earlene, while at church. The couple married in 1959 and continued to attend church together throughout the next six decades. Together, they had five children and 13 grandchildren.

Throughout his life, Albert never forgot the value of hard work that his mother instilled in him. After dropping out of college to take an entry-level job at Sears Roebuck and Company, he eventually worked his way up as the corporation's first African American store manager. In 1976, he relocated to Miami, where he eventually decided to launch several of his own businesses with his wife.

Education was always very important to Albert and Earlene. After watching all five of their children graduate from college, they decided to go back to school themselves and complete their undergraduate degrees. Albert eventually went on to complete his PhD in Philosophy in 2004.

Albert continuously remained active in the higher education community, serving on Florida International University's (FIU) Foundation Board of Directors for nearly two decades to secure research funding for architecture and medical students. He eventually went on to chair the FIU Board of Trustees from 2009 to 2011.

Albert cared deeply for the Miami community, being involved with community groups like the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce and the Miami-Dade School Board. In 1989, he joined the Orange Bowl Committee, created in 1935 to promote tourism to the Miami metropolitan area. Less than a decade later, Albert broke records when he became the first African American President of the Committee.

Albert's life is a great example of service-leadership and working hard towards the American Dream. Miami-Dade will always be grateful for his contributions to our community.

Dr. Dotson Sr. is survived by his wife Earlene; his sons Albert Jr. and Jonathan; his daughters Dr. Toya Greene, LeTessa Hall, Christa Dean; and his 13 grandchildren.

STEM EDUCATOR AWARDS EQUITY
ACT

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO
SABLAN**

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the STEM Educator Awards Equity Act to ensure educators from the Northern Mariana Islands, Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa are represented in the annual Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching.

Established by Congress in 1983, the Presidential Award is the highest recognition that an elementary or secondary school mathematics or science teacher may receive in the United States. Over 4,800 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession.

Unlike the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Department of Defense schools, each of which may recognize a STEM educator, no more than two awards in total can go to teachers from the four insular areas: the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. This limitation has resulted in many years in which no teacher from one of those four areas is selected. No teacher from the Marianas, for instance, was selected this year. And this lack of recognition defeats the purpose of the program, which is to inspire excellence within each area and provide a role model for other local STEM educators to emulate. These statutory limits, also, unfairly deny deserving educators in the insular areas the national recognition and professional development opportunities we provide to STEM educators elsewhere in our Nation.

My bill provides a more equitable process by requiring awards to at least one teacher from each of the four areas. By ensuring teachers from all parts of America are represented, more students and schools will benefit from the expert-led training programs and collaboration opportunities available to award-ees during their visit to our Nation's Capital.

The gentlewoman from American Samoa, Mrs. RADEWAGEN and the gentleman from Guam, Mr. SAN NICOLAS, are original cosponsors of the bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

HONORING ROBERT EIKLEBERRY
AS IOWAN OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert "Mongo" Eikleberry, as a longtime LGBTQ advocate, business owner, community leader during this Pride Month.

Robert served in the Vietnam War as a young man, where he was given the nickname "Mongo". When he returned home in 1972, he began working as a senior electrician as well as working at bars. Here, Robert saw that while gay bars were some of the only places LGBT individuals could openly be themselves, many establishments weren't uplifting the causes of the LGBT community. Robert realized he should open a business in Des Moines that would provide philanthropic support to multiple causes impacting his community.

Robert opened the Blazing Saddles in Des Moines in 1983, 38 years ago, which is now the oldest gay bar in the Midwest. Robert's work has allowed him to create charities, such as the All Iowa AIDs Benefits to support Iowans suffering from HIV/AIDS during the height of the epidemic, as well as helping fundraise to support the needs of LGBT Iowans. Robert founded the Imperial Court of Iowa which funds educational scholarships for high school students and adult education seekers. He's known to pitch in for causes like voter education and advocacy, equal rights, and much more. Robert has always made sure his employees at the Blazing Saddles were paid competitive wages and had job protection to be themselves, protection that would not be given to most LGBT workers until 2020.

In his over 40 years of activism, Robert has come face-to-face with hate and discrimination right here in Iowa. His bar had their windows smashed, flags burned, received threatening letters, and various other acts of vandalism over the years. "You can't make fear a part of your life", he said, reflecting on that fact that the fight for LGBT equality has historically been met with violence and intimidation. "But they can't scare us back into closet" he said with a chuckle. Although LGBT equality has made strides recently, Robert has said there is still more work to do. "Everyone needs a place to be themselves" he said.

His bar was named after the 1974 movie, Blazing Saddles, where a plucky group of immigrants, railroad workers, white townsfolk, and a black Sheriff who pull together to save their town for those who wish them harm and in turn, live safely together. A fitting name indeed. Please join me in honoring Robert "Mongo" Eikleberry as our Iowan of the Week as we celebrate Pride this month.

RECOGNIZING DR. CHARLES L.
COTRELL

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I rise in celebration of Dr. Charles L. Cotrell, President Emeritus and Professor of Political Science at St. Mary's University. Dr. Cotrell is set to retire after 55 years of service to St. Mary's University and the San Antonio

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