

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF RODNEY  
MAURICE GILBERT

**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Rodney Maurice Gilbert, a giant in New Jersey arts and social justice activism. For the past fifteen years, Mr. Gilbert led Yendor Productions, a Newark-based firm he founded in order to develop and produce arts education programming that elevates oppressed voices. He was a dedicated artist, educator, and community leader.

Mr. Gilbert devoted his life to helping underserved communities find their artistic voices. After graduating from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mr. Gilbert spent three decades serving the arts community in New Jersey. He was an accomplished actor with credits on stages from Broadway to Little Rock. He was a gifted director known for shining artistic light on social issues such as mental illness. And he was an educator who inspired young artists to bring to life the untold stories of underserved communities.

Mr. Gilbert left a lasting impact on New Jersey. He helped heal Newark by paving the way for people to use arts and culture as vehicles for advancing social justice. Mr. Gilbert brought people together. He inspired young people. And he created a platform for people to creatively tell their own stories. In July, Mr. Gilbert directed *Down Neck*, a play written by Pia Wilson that explores the 1967 Newark Rebellion's impacts on the Ironbound neighborhood. His inspirational use of arts as a means to speak truth, preserve history, and pursue justice has left a permanent mark on the New Jersey arts scene.

Mr. Gilbert passed away on November 8, 2017, but his legacy will live on. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the life of Rodney Gilbert—artist, teacher, advocate, and friend.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF REVEREND MARY EDITH  
MOODY

**HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND**

OF LOUISIANA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Reverend Mary Edith Moody, a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who passed away on October 28, 2017 at the age of 91.

Rev. Moody was born on July 29, 1926, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She was one of nine siblings in a family of modest means. Her father, Mr. James Nathaniel Moody Sr., was a supervisor of Negro Schools in West Baton Rouge and her mother was a teacher. After graduating from high school at Southern University Lab School in 1943, she earned two degrees from Southern University: one in business education and the other in secondary education. She later earned a master's degree in education from Louisiana State University and a certificate of theology from the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

Rev. Moody taught English and business education to visually impaired children for more than 30 years at the Louisiana State School for the Blind at Southern University—and was one of five teachers named Outstanding Secondary Educator of America from a field of 5,000 candidates—before retiring from her teaching career to become one of the first female ministers for the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. Moody was ordained in 1976 and assigned to Black Creek AME Church in Darlington that same day. During her pastoral career, she served as pastor at Mount Everett AME Church in St. Helena Parish and Heard AME Church in Baton Rouge and eventually became an associate pastor at Bethel AME Church on South Street.

Rev. Moody received numerous awards for service, commitment and leadership, including the Powell-Reznikoff Award from the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations in 2001 along with the first Mid City Community Lifetime Achievement Medal in 2004 at the age of 77. Also, she was a proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., for more than 70 years.

Rev. Moody devoted herself to numerous Baton Rouge community organizations, advocating for children, African Americans, women, the poor, and anyone facing hardship. We cannot match the sacrifices made by Rev. Moody, but surely we can try to match her sense of service. We cannot match her courage, but we can strive to match her devotion.

Rev. Mary Edith Moody survivors include her sister, Ms. Martha E. Moody Boone; Brother, Mr. Charles David Moody, Sr.; and Sister-in-Law, Ms. Dorothy Johnson Moody; twenty-four Nieces and Nephew; a host of Grand-, Great-Grand-, and Great-Great-Great-Nieces and Nephew; and a host of surrogate sons and daughters.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate the life and legacy of Reverend Mary Edith Moody a beloved daughter, sister, and grandmother as well as a true example of Baton Rouge culture personified.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JARED HUFFMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, November 13, 2017, I was unavoidably detained. As a result, I was absent for Roll Call votes 623 through 625.

Had I been present for Roll Call vote 623, on agreeing to H. Res. 599, I would have voted yes; on Roll Call vote 624, on suspension of the rules and passage of H.R. 3071, I would have voted yes; and on Roll Call vote 625, on approving the journal, I would have voted yes.

H.R. 3705, THE VETERANS FAIR  
DEBT NOTICE ACT OF 2017

**HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.**

OF GEORGIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 3705, the Veterans Fair

Debt Notice Act of 2017. H.R. 3705 modifies the ways that veterans are notified of any outstanding debts from a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) program.

This bill is essential because current VA debt notification letters can be confusing, highly technical, and fail to convey important dates and amounts. This legislation would direct the VA to clarify language in debt notification emails, coordinate email and postal mail notifications, and study the process of debt notification to ensure that messages are communicated effectively. The cost of sending postal mail notifications would also be evaluated in this study.

Congress should take measures to reduce veterans' debt by effectively communicating outstanding payments and due dates. Reducing debt is one of many ways we can ensure a smoother transition into civilian society for our veterans, which is why I support this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. KEITH ELLISON**

OF MINNESOTA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, due to other commitments, I missed the following Roll Call votes. Had I been present, on Roll Call no. 613, I would have voted yes; and on Roll Call no. 614, I would have voted no.

RECOGNIZING THE SMILEY  
FAMILY

**HON. JOHN J. FASO**

OF NEW YORK  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Smiley Family of Mohonk Mountain House for being named the recipients of the 2017 Legendary Family Historic Hoteliers of the Year by Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide. This prestigious award acknowledges multigenerational, family-owned historic hotels that are exemplary in both their operation and preservation efforts. It is true testament to the Smiley Family's continued legacy of historical, environmental, and cultural stewardship.

Founded in 1869 by Albert Smiley, the Mohonk Mountain House—a picturesque Victorian castle resort surrounded by vast forests and wildlife—is still owned and operated by the Smiley Family. What makes the Mohonk Mountain House such a prized treasure in the 19th District, and an attraction for travelers worldwide, is the Smiley Family's dedication to conserving the historical integrity of their resort and the land surrounding it.

Using their timeless resort as a catalyst for historical, environmental, and cultural preservation, the Smiley Family has redefined the role of hoteliers and has established a higher standard of excellence. For example, in 1963, the Smiley Family founded the Mohonk Preserve, a nature preserve that safeguards more than 8,000 acres. In 1980, the Smiley Family also founded Mohonk Consultations, a non-profit think tank focused on environmental issues throughout the Hudson Valley.

On behalf of New York's 19th District, I want to congratulate and celebrate the Smiley Family on their much-deserved award. We are grateful for the Smiley Family's dedication to the values we in the 19th District hold dear: environmental conservancy and a profound appreciation for history and culture.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on November 13, 2017 I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on Nos. 623 and 624. I would have voted "NAY" on No. 625.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO RICHARD PETERS

### HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Richard Peters on his successful career in the U.S. Navy.

Richard Peters selfless service to the U.S. Navy has led to him being awarded a number of awards, such as the China Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal and the National Defense Medal, among other awards. Due to his distinguished career, Richard Peters has also been authorized the Republic of Korea War Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal.

I am honored to have a man like Richard Peters in my district. I can't thank him enough for his service and sacrifice for our country.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Missouri's 7th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to congratulate Richard Peters on his distinguished Naval career. I wish him all of the best in his future endeavors.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for Roll Call votes 623, 624, and 625 on Monday, November 13, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call votes 623 and 624, and Nay on Roll Call vote 625.

#### CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF MS. ELAINE ROBERTS

### HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Ohio's 15th Congress-

sional District to celebrate the career of Ms. Elaine Roberts, as she retires from service as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Columbus Regional Airport Authority.

For over a decade, Ms. Roberts has served as the first-ever CEO of a combined aviation authority. She was named to the newly-created position in January of 2003, and has utilized her experience as an Accredited Airport Executive (A.A.E.), and the past Chair of the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE).

Ms. Roberts' leadership has guided the Authority during a period of expansive growth, including the merger of two airport authorities, more than one billion dollars in airport infrastructure development, and historic improvements at the John Glenn Columbus and the Rickenbacker International Airport facilities.

Ms. Roberts is a true coalition-builder. She successfully brought stakeholders across the federal, state, and local levels, along with the private sector, to develop the Rickenbacker Intermodal Facility. Her efforts to transform Rickenbacker into a leading center for trade led to her nomination and selection as a 2015 White House Champion of Change in Transportation.

Her contributions to the Central Ohio community and local economy are immeasurable. International and domestic freight operations—served by rail, highways, and international activation—helped to provide a livelihood for over 20,000 residents in the region.

Ms. Roberts will be missed by her colleagues and fellow aviation executives, but I join the Ohio delegation in wishing her all the best as she begins a new chapter in her life and pursues future endeavors. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Elaine Roberts on her invaluable service to the residents of Ohio, and the aviation industry at large.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF MIKE COOK

### HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Mike Cook of Caldwell County, North Carolina. On behalf of the people of Western North Carolina, I would like to thank Mr. Cook for over 40 years of service to our communities and congratulate him on his recent retirement.

Mike Cook began his career in the fire service as a volunteer in 1977 and eventually became a paid firefighter with the City of Lenoir in 1980. He began working with the Caldwell County Fire Marshal's Emergency Management Office in 1985, as a hazmat planner with North Carolina Emergency Management in 1988, and as Area Coordinator and eventually Branch Manager in 2006. All told, Mr. Cook has aided in thirty-two FEMA disaster declarations, including deploying to Mississippi during Hurricane Katrina and to Lumberton, North Carolina during Hurricane Matthew. Mr. Cook was instrumental in the development of the North Carolina All Hazards Incident Management Teams, and maintains credentials as an Incident Commander with the Western Branch All Hazards Incident Management Team. He is an Eagle Scout and longtime volunteer in his

community, serving on the Board of Directors of Patterson Fire Department since 1977 and currently serving as President of the Board.

Over the course of his career, Mike has been honored with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety Gold Circle Award and the Colonel William A. Thompson Award and Employee of the Year by the North Carolina Emergency Management Association. He received special recognition for work throughout the Democratic National Convention in 2012 from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and for response during Hurricane Floyd in 1999 from the North Carolina National Guard 139th Rear Tactical Operation Center.

Mike Cook has earned the respect and friendship of the people of Caldwell County through his hard work and wide-ranging involvement in his community. For his service to Western North Carolina, I am honored to express to Mr. Cook the gratitude and best wishes of the people of North Carolina on his retirement.

#### RECOGNIZING ALFRED RAYMOND COE

### HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Alfred "Ray" Coe of Chester County, Pennsylvania, for his life dedicated to serving his community and our country. Mr. Coe honorably served the United States Army during Vietnam in three Calvary units in addition to serving his community of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania as a volunteer Scoutmaster with the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Coe has also worked with his local government in various positions.

Mr. Coe received three promotions during his tour in Vietnam. He was injured when his vehicle was blown up by a mine, but courageously returned and rescued his Sergeant from the vehicle. For these and other efforts he earned numerous awards for his honorable service. Among the honors were the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and Army Commendation for Valor, of which he is most proud. Upon returning home, Mr. Coe began volunteering with the Boy Scouts of America, eventually becoming Scoutmaster. Mr. Coe continued his service to his community through the Scouts working as his district's Unit, Training, and Roundtable Commissioner. Mr. Coe's years of service to his country and neighbors are invaluable. There is no doubt he has saved and improved the lives of many through that service.

I commend Mr. Alfred Coe for his passionate dedication to community and country. He has earned the respect of his friends, family, and colleagues, as well as the public he has served. I thank him for all he has done and continues to do.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. JOHN K. DELANEY

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 14, 2017*

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my vote on Roll Call No. 623, No. 624,