

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUMMERCREST ASSISTED LIVING

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere congratulations to Summercrest Assisted Living in Newport, New Hampshire on its 20th anniversary.

Summercrest provides vital programs to seniors across the Lake Sunapee Region who need care services but are limited by income. I am so thankful to the healthcare professionals, caregivers, leadership and staff at Summercrest for their essential role in improving the lives of Granite Staters every day. I remain committed to doing all that I can to guarantee retirement security, healthy aging and long-term services for our elder population.

On behalf of my constituents across New Hampshire's Second Congressional District, I thank Summercrest Assisted Living for the great service it provides to the Granite State and congratulate the facility again on 20 years of operation. I look forward to our continued work together in making New Hampshire an even better place to live, work, and raise a family.

HONORING KENNETH WOODSON

HON. DWIGHT EVANS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a hard-working and influential member of the Philadelphia business community, Mr. Kenneth Woodson. Kenneth has served as Vice President of Community and Government Relations of the Philadelphia Zoo for 25 years.

In his role, Kenneth works with the President and CEO of the Philadelphia Zoo to develop and maintain relationships with civic and community organizations and government officials. He is also responsible for managing the implementation of strategic projects, such as the Zoo Balloon and the recently completed Centennial District Intermodal Transportation Center (IMTC).

For the past 35 years, Kenneth has held several senior management positions in government, banking, and the not-for-profit housing sector. Prior to joining the Philadelphia Zoo, he served as Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of the Philadelphia Department of License and Inspections and has also served as a senior manager of Philadelphia Housing Development Corporations' Home Improvement Program.

In addition to his position at the Philadelphia Zoo, Kenneth is an ordained Baptist preacher and serves as an Associate Minister and Ex-

ecutive Minister to the Pastor at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Philadelphia, PA.

As evidenced through Kenneth Woodson's experience, he has dedicated his life and career towards serving the citizens of the City of Philadelphia. The 2nd Congressional District of Pennsylvania extends gratitude to Kenneth Woodson for his dedicated support to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

CELEBRATING SUNY CANTON'S 50 YEARS ON THE HILL

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize SUNY Canton for celebrating 50 years at its campus on the hill.

SUNY Canton was originally chartered in 1906 as a school of agriculture at St. Lawrence University. As the school grew, it developed its own identity as the Canton Agricultural and Technical College and sought to move onto its own campus. Location ideas varied from Ogdensburg to Watertown, but due to a gracious land donation by Edson Martin, the college was able to stay in Canton. In 1968, SUNY Canton opened its current campus and took over "the hill," where its students and faculty have prospered ever since.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I would like to congratulate SUNY Canton for 50 years on the hill and commend the College on its commitment to education in the North Country.

HESPERIA MAYOR RUSSELL E. BLEWETT PASSES AWAY AT 74

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Hesperia Mayor Russell E. Blewett, an incredible pillar of the community. Russ passed away on May 23, 2018 at the age of 74.

Russ was born on April 9, 1944 in Covina, CA and was a lifelong resident of the great state of California. He graduated from Baldwin Park High School and attended the University of California, Riverside with a bachelor's degree. Later in life, he attended the University of Redlands where he received his master's degree in business.

Russ always showed a love of politics and public service. He served as California's youngest mayor from 1972–1973, and again from 1977–1978, in the City of Baldwin Park. Although his business and family eventually took him away from Baldwin Park, he continued to have a passion for his community and public service wherever he went. When he

moved to Hesperia in 2003, he quickly became ingrained in the community. In 2010, he was elected overwhelmingly to the Hesperia City Council, and was reelected in 2014. He served as Hesperia's mayor in 2012 and in 2018.

With Russ's passing, Hesperia has lost a titan who helped build the city into what it is today. Russ was known for his faith, integrity, and incredible work ethic, and will be missed by all who knew him. On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I would like to pass along my deepest condolences to all of Russ's friends and family during this difficult time.

THE PHILADELPHIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC EUROPE AND ISRAEL TOUR

HON. DWIGHT EVANS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise with great honor to salute the Philadelphia Orchestra on its upcoming historic tour through Europe and Israel. I have had the privilege of working to support them over the years during my time in the Pennsylvania Legislature, and now here in Congress. I can't think of a better cultural ambassador for our country, the Commonwealth, and our great city, than the finely-tuned Philadelphia Orchestra.

With support from Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf's Department of Community and Economic Development and State Department diplomats, and more than 150 Pennsylvania musicians, non-profits, and business leaders, this historic journey starts in Brussels, Belgium, and will wind its way through Luxembourg, France, Germany, and Austria. These historic countries are iconic in their musical backgrounds, having given birth to artists such as Beethoven, Brahms, Poulenc, Wagner, and Mozart.

I take special pride in the Philadelphia Orchestra's visit to Israel, in partnership with the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. This visit not only confirms and solidifies the distinct and unique cultural, political, and humanitarian bond amongst the City of Philadelphia, the Jewish community, and the State of Israel. Israel and its people have been continually under siege for ages from the time of Judea to Samaria, and by recognizing their dignity, honor, and courage, the Orchestra's visit serves to underscore how important Israel is to the Middle East writ large, and to America. And let me add that the Philadelphia Orchestra should be noted for the diversity of its musicians and staff orchestra's diversity complements.

I would like to give special recognition to the Philadelphia Orchestra's director, Yannick Nezet-Seguín, the chairman, Richard Worley, and the leadership at the top who have helped forge ties both near and far, Philadelphia Orchestra Interim Co-Presidents Ryan Fleur and

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Matthew Loden. And I also wish to salute Naomi Adler, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and Director of Government Affairs, Robin Schatz for their leadership, and special role in informing us on the unwavering dignity and humanity of Israel.

I am proud to represent a city that boasts some of the most iconic music heard around the world. I salute our well-traveled Philadelphia Orchestra and look forward to my next symphony.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I was present on the floor during votes on May 23, 2018; however, I missed two votes in the series. I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 224 and NAY on Roll Call No. 225.

IN CELEBRATION OF MR. BOB HENDERSON

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the lifelong service and success of Bob Henderson, a leader and resident of Whittier, California in my Congressional District. Mr. Henderson is leaving the Whittier City Council after 36 years of service and it is my pleasure to recognize his many accomplishments.

Bob is an outstanding public servant and has dedicated his life to improve and protect the city of Whittier. Mr. Henderson has demonstrated his passion through his various leadership roles over his many years of service which include: serving as an active city council member, mayor pro tempore, and serving as city mayor.

In addition, Mr. Henderson's commitment to environmental conservation inspired him to become a leading advocate for wildlife. He made it a priority to protect the environment and used his love for the beautiful City of Whittier to motivate others to join him. Mr. Henderson also served as Chairman of the Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Preservation Authority and Chairman of the Wildlife Conservation Authority where he had a tremendous impact. While he had countless accomplishments in these roles, I'd like to highlight a couple. He spearheaded the effort to pass the Hillside Preservation Ordinance which led to the preservation of over 1,000 acres of land. Bob was instrumental in the founding the Hillside Open Space Education Committee which has been largely responsible for protecting local wildlife from harm.

Mr. Henderson was also instrumental in numerous community projects that have enhanced the lives of so many, such as the new YMCA, Pico State Park renovation, and the Shannon Center for Performing Arts at Whittier College. It is in that spirit that, on behalf of all the families' and communities who have benefitted from his service, I wish to honor and thank Bob Henderson.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. HUGH ZIMMER

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to recognize one of my constituents from the Fifth District of Missouri, Hugh Zimmer. Early in Hugh's adolescence he was introduced to real estate and all its glory by his father and grandfather, both of whom worked at the North Kansas City development company. In 1948, Hugh's father made the decision to resign from his position at the North Kansas City development company and begin his own business, which is now known as Zimmer Real Estate Services. Five years later, in 1953, Hugh returned from his service with the United States Air Force and went to work for his father; who, in 1957, passed away. Despite the death of Hugh's father, the Zimmer family kept the business afloat and nurtured it into the prosperous business that it is known as today. The legacy Hugh has built within the last 65 years is but a reflection of his noble character.

Zimmer Real Estate Services has played an important role in many of the area's economic development organizations, spearheaded by Hugh Zimmer. As an individual who strives to uphold the highest level of integrity and moral values, Hugh follows through with projects that promote and ensure positive community infrastructure and development. Through this he confirms his personal beliefs, while bolstering prosperity and growth of the community. Aside from his real estate contributions, Hugh takes an active role in numerous social and civic organizations.

Hugh has served on the boards of directors and executive committees in numerous communities, as well as civic and professional organizations. In 1998, the governing body of Lenexa, Kansas made him an honorary citizen in recognition of his contributions to the area's growth and development. He is a past Chairman of the University of Missouri-Kansas City Trustees and is currently Chairman of the University of Missouri-Kansas City Chancellor's Institute for Urban Education National Advisory Board. Hugh also served as an Advisory Director of Commerce Bank of Kansas City, and a Trustee of Midwest Research Institute. In addition to the many roles he plays in the community and as a business owner, he also maintains a healthy and growing family.

The Zimmer Real Estate Services is a family owned business that is run by and employs Hugh, his brother Bill, his son David, and his daughter Ellen. Soon they will have two other Zimmers working for the company as interns, thus, the likelihood of a fifth generation of Zimmers in real estate is very promising. Hugh has stated that, "running a family-owned business, like the market, has its ups and downs." However, being the optimistic man that he is, Hugh focuses on the benefits and good that result from owning a family run company. Two of their most noteworthy accomplishments, as a family, include serving as presidents in different terms in the local real estate board and the Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS (SIOR). Hugh, Bill and David all served as President of the local real estate board at one point or another; and Hugh and David

served as President for the SIOR, a rare feat for a father and son. Hugh has been an authentic and constant leader in his company, the community, and his family. Mr. Speaker, please join me and all of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District as we wish Hugh Zimmer well in all his future endeavors while continuing to recognize all that he has accomplished.

IN MEMORY OF THE LIFE OF
REVEREND JOE C. JOHNSON

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, 2 Timothy 4:7-8 says, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." Reverend Joe C. Johnson, senior pastor of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in Hallandale Beach, Florida, finished the race with his passing on May 25, 2018. He will certainly be missed by his loved ones and those of us honored enough to call him a friend.

I had the pleasure of witnessing the profound impact that Reverend Johnson had throughout his four decades as pastor to one of the oldest churches in Broward County. His ministry was a cornerstone of a rich and vibrant faith community. Reverend Johnson bridged the gap between Hallandale Beach and Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church by hosting community events at the church. These events were so meaningful for his flock, and the larger community, that they were recognized for special commemoration on the occasion of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church's 101st Anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Johnson was a pillar of the community he loved, and his ultimate goal was helping people in all areas of their lives. He not only served as a leader to the members of his church, but as a counselor to local politicians, judges, and anyone who had the honor of knowing him. He also served as a chaplain for the Hallandale Beach Fire Department. Along with his extensive community engagement, Reverend Johnson sat on the board for the Hallandale Ministerial Association; the Florida East Coast Baptist Association; and Vision to Victory Human Services Corporation.

Though no words can ease our sorrow, I offer my deepest sympathy to Reverend Johnson's wife, Emma Inez, his three children, four grandchildren, and countless friends who were impacted by the magnitude of his ministry. The legacy of Reverend Johnson will continue to live on throughout the countless individuals who were impacted by his calling to serve.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Joe C. Johnson is deserving of honor for his service to Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church, and his dedication to the mentoring, and personal development of leaders within the greater Hallandale Beach area and Broward County. His service and commitment exemplify the positive contribution an individual can make to their profession and community. Reverend Johnson was a very

dear friend. Words cannot express how much he will be missed.

CONGRATULATING SOUTH JEFFERSON VFW POST 5344 ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize South Jefferson VFW Post 5344 on its 50th Anniversary.

For the past 50 years, members of South Jefferson VFW Post 5344 have successfully advocated on behalf of fellow veterans and their families. The imperative work this post carries out in support of our military families is incredible. VFW Post 5344 has hosted barbecues and fundraisers to benefit community members, and has hosted wreath laying events and ceremonies in honor of Memorial Day and Veterans Day. For its 50 years of dedication to veterans and to the community, Post 5344 will proudly receive its Golden Anniversary Award Citation.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I would like to thank all of the members of South Jefferson VFW Post 5344 for their selfless service to our Nation and to the local community, and wish this Post all the best in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF CALDWELL COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT STEVE STONE

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Steve Stone, Superintendent of Schools in Caldwell County, North Carolina. I would like to congratulate Dr. Stone on his retirement after 38 years of service to the students and families of Caldwell County and North Carolina Public School Systems.

Dr. Stone's passion for education was sparked by his classroom experiences growing up with skilled teachers in Person County, North Carolina. Their unwavering commitment to their students propelled him forward to receive his Bachelor's Degree from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, his Master's Degree from University of North Carolina Charlotte, and lastly his Doctorate from North Carolina State University. Over the course of his career, Dr. Stone served as a classroom teacher, assistant principal, school level principal, and central office director. Shaped by our state's esteemed public school and university system, Superintendent Stone is a strong advocate for public education.

As Superintendent of Caldwell County Schools, Dr. Stone focused on sustainability and success. He is active and involved with numerous educational organizations that promote, invest, and protect our children's future. Dr. Stone started and supported initiatives

which have led to 9 consecutive years of increasing high school graduation rates, 7 years of increasing college scholarship awards, and expanded access to Technology, Engineering, Science, and Mathematics for the students of Caldwell County.

Dr. Stone is highly regarded among his colleagues throughout the state and in Caldwell County and is the 2nd longest tenured superintendent in North Carolina. His service and conviction to provide a productive, forward-moving environment for all students to learn will leave a legacy for decades to come. Dr. Stone has impacted the lives of the people he serves and it is my distinct honor to recognize his outstanding work and express the best wishes of the people of Western North Carolina on the occasion of his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO MR. EDUARDO BUENAFLO

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a few moments today to honor one of my constituents, Mr. Eduardo Buenaflor, a proven executive with records of generating exceptional results.

Mr. Buenaflor has been an important figure in advancing the U.S. Navy aircraft. He helped develop the fast paced HH-60H Seahawk aircraft that is currently being used by a squadron. As Director of Operations at the Navy, his responsibilities included day-to-day flight operations, strategic planning, aircraft acquisition integration, foreign and domestic key partner relations, business systems, and leadership.

Leading by example, as Director of Human Resources, he managed staffing for 3 departments, 15 production work centers involving 400 personnel and 23 division managers, assured that qualified individuals are placed in the correct position. He is highly organized in the management of 255 career development boards, employee evaluations, and 29 employee disciplinary review boards and as Chairman of employee awards board.

Recently, Mr. Buenaflor was awarded Armed Forces Joint Meritorious Service Medal for a combat tour in Iraq and four separate Navy Commendation Medals that were awarded for exceptional leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Mr. Buenaflor and the positive impact he has made in the Armed Forces.

HONORING GEORGE MACLEOD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor George MacLeod and remember his rich and full life. Mr. MacLeod leaves behind a legacy of successful winemaking and a passion for the industry and our community.

In his early career, Mr. MacLeod was a geophysical engineer, working in the electronics industry at Fisher Research Laboratories and Knapic Electronics in Silicon Valley. He then worked on the development of Light-Emitting Diode (LED) technologies at Monsanto.

In 1974, Mr. MacLeod and his wife, Greta Fisher MacLeod, bought their ranch, 50 rugged acres above Kenwood, California, which was called Indian Springs Ranch. Mr. MacLeod dove headfirst in grape growing and winemaking and did so with fervor. He took courses at Santa Rosa Junior College and the University of California, Davis and contacted grape growers in the Sonoma Valley to learn as much as possible about the industry and the process.

Mr. MacLeod liked to joke about his inexperience with farming and grape growing. He compensated for his newness to the profession with talent, drive and perseverance. The vineyard's first Sauvignon Blanc harvest won a gold medal and Mr. MacLeod loved to tell that story.

Mr. MacLeod cherished the winemakers of the Sonoma Valley. He helped write the constitution for the Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Alliance and was its first president. In 2015, Mr. MacLeod was inducted into their Hall of Fame, the first person to receive this honor. Mr. MacLeod stayed involved with our community as the author of the Journey to Harvest column in the Kenwood Press. He also published a memoir, family history books and wrote a book on terroir and how it affects the flavor of wine.

Mr. Speaker, George MacLeod was always willing to lend a hand and help our community flourish. He was a devoted husband and dedicated father and an example of how to live life with integrity and generosity. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

CONGRATULATING FARNEY'S HOME AND BUILDING CENTER ON ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Farney's Home and Building Center on its 60th anniversary.

Gladys and Vincent Farney established Farney's Home and Building Center in 1958, and the business has played an essential role in providing home tools and appliances to the community since. The Farneys built their business from the ground up and includes a lumber yard, building supplies, a hardware store and kitchen, and a bathroom and countertop design showroom. Now in its second generation, the family company is run by the couple's son, Reg Farney, but Gladys and Vincent remain quite active in the business. In recognition of their many years in the hardware business, Gladys and Vincent were awarded the Estwing's Golden Hammer Award in 2015.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I would like to congratulate Farney's Home and Building Center on its 60th anniversary. The Farney family sets a wonderful example for developing a prosperous small business in the North Country.

IN CELEBRATION OF NANCY
MENDEZ

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the service and success of Nancy Mendez. A dedicated resident of Whittier, California whose hard work and model leadership has made a significant impact in my Congressional District. Ms. Mendez is retiring from her position as Assistant City Manager this year, and it is with great pleasure that I recognize her accomplishments.

Ms. Mendez began her 38 year long career with the City of Whittier in 1980 as a community supervisor. She established herself as an active member of the community spearheading several programs and activities responsible for maintaining high levels engagement across all age groups. Following the Whittier earthquake in 1987, Ms. Mendez demonstrated her ability to perform under pressure when she organized and opened a mass shelter for displaced residents after having been on the job as the Assistant for Human Services for only one day.

Ms. Mendez also assisted the city in winning a number of grants to fund important city projects over the years. She has also served as the Director of Human Services and Assistant City manager. Ms. Mendez has always used her skills to provide tangible benefits to our community. As Assistant City Manager, she was integral to the design and funding for the Greenway Trail, improved cell phone service in Whittier, and other important economic development projects. While there are too many projects to list, I would be remiss if I did

not also mention her work on the Walnut Senior Center, Palm Park Activity and Aquatics Center, and the city's police headquarters.

I cannot thank Ms. Mendez enough for all that she has contributed to the City of Whittier. Her passion for public service has made her an influential and effective leader whose accomplishments both from the past and present continue to benefit the people of Whittier today.

I wish Nancy Mendez a happy retirement and thank her again for her service.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2018

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan, then known as the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. As the first Muslim-majority nation to embrace secular, elected government, Azerbaijan will always be a model for states who aim for progress, ongoing reform, and a step towards bettering the lives of their people. On behalf of the people of North Carolina, I also recognize the contributions of the Azerbaijani community in my home state.

After the landmark 1918 independence declaration, a Bolshevik invasion cut short Azerbaijani independence. Yet, this dream was never extinguished, and in 1991 Azerbaijanis again created their own independence movement, successfully declaring their own state. Each time Azerbaijan reasserted its independ-

ence, the United States has been quick to recognize Azerbaijan. We should be proud of the lasting and valuable relationship we have enjoyed ever since.

Azerbaijan is a crucial and irreplaceable ally in the global fight against terror and an exemplary partner with the United States. I look forward to deepened bilateral cooperation, including towards the fullest realization of our commitments to good, democratic governance, trade, and progress in the Caspian region and beyond. As a country bordering both Russia and Iran, Azerbaijan's membership in NATO's Partnership for Peace program is particularly important. Azerbaijan has emerged as a crucially important transportation route for supplying U.S. operations, and I want to recognize Azerbaijan for providing troops to the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan and for allowing NATO planes to use Azerbaijani airspace.

Throughout my time in Congress, my colleagues and I on either side of the aisle have united in our staunch support of Israel. As a modern, secular Muslim country, Azerbaijan shares these values and stands out among its neighbors in the region for the strength and durability of this bond with Israel. As a nation with a Jewish community dating back many hundreds of years, and as a major provider of oil to Israel, the Azerbaijani-Israeli relationship, and indeed the Azerbaijani-American relationship, are on a path to greater cooperation and shared prosperity.

It is important that Congress recognizes the historic milestones of our allies, especially those in a region where close cooperation with America is valuable and scarce. This is why I would like to recognize and congratulate Azerbaijan for the 100th anniversary of independence.