

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: SUPERVISOR MONICA
BROWN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Solano County Supervisor Monica Brown as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Monica is a lifelong public servant with unwavering dedication to bettering her community. For 39 years, Monica worked as a public-school teacher at Green Valley Middle School, Armijo High School, and Benicia Middle School. She has demonstrated a tireless commitment to public education through her work, involvement with the California Teachers Association, and her tenure on the Solano Community College Governing Board. Since 2017, Monica has served on the Solano County Board of Supervisors. Currently serving as Vice Chair, she has fought for improved workforce development, increased support for community colleges, flood prevention, bolstered mental health services, increased affordable housing, and other measures to effectively address homelessness in Solano County. In her more than six years of service on the Board of Supervisors, Monica has devoted her unrivaled energy and commitment to solving the county's most pressing issues. The positive impact of her more than 45 years of service to her community cannot be overstated. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Monica Brown for her positive contributions to our community.

LORI HERNDON

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my personal congratulations to an exceptional healthcare executive, Ms. Lori Herndon, on her recent retirement as President and CEO of AtlantiCare. Throughout her exceptional forty-year career, which began as a critical care nurse on the healthcare frontlines, Ms. Herndon, has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to strategic growth, operations, and development. Since 2016, Ms. Herndon, has led a team of over 6,000 AtlantiCare staff, providers, and volunteers serving the community in more than 100 locations in Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, and Ocean counties of southern New Jersey. Ms. Herndon's focus on listening to patients, a critical aspect of her role as a bedside nurse, has become a hallmark of her leadership. Under Ms. Her-

ndon's visionary leadership, ARMC received Magnet designation for the fifth time, one of only thirty-five Magnet-designated organizations to do so out of 608. In 2022, US News & World Report recognized ARMC as the sixth best hospital in New Jersey. Her work at AtlantiCare has garnered state-wide and national recognition, with Ms. Herndon, recently named one of Modern Healthcare's 100 most influential leaders. The year prior, Herndon, was named one of NJBIZ's Best fifty Women in Business. In January 2022, Ms. Herndon was appointed as chair of the New Jersey Hospital Association, where she has worked to protect healthcare workers, redesign care delivery and develop the workforce. I extend my heartfelt gratitude and best wishes to Ms. Lori Herndon, on her retirement after an outstanding career spanning more than four decades. God Bless Lori Herndon, and God Bless our United States of America.

HONORING ERALDI'S MEN'S WEAR
& SHOES

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to honor Eraldi's Men's Wear & Shoes as they celebrate 100 years of business. The longevity of this great establishment is a remarkable accomplishment and a testament to the Eraldi family's creativity, tenacity, and dedication to great customer service.

In October of 1923, David Eraldi opened Eraldi's Men's Wear & Shoes on East Napa Street. Originally called 'The Toggery' and located in the Castex Building, David meant for it to be a temporary spot. A few years and a name change later, it moved to 492 First Street East in the Duhring Building. After David's death in 1936, his wife Annie took over the store and ran the business with their two sons Dave and Don.

Annie Eraldi built the current store at 475 First Street West on a vacant lot that once housed a blacksmith shop, opening it on January 2, 1960. The store passed on to her sons after her death in 1969.

In the late 1960's, Dan Eraldi, Don's son, started working at his family's store when he was in middle school. At the time, self-proclaimed "old-timers" would head into the back stock room with cups of coffee and tell him stories about old Sonoma. Dan cherished these opportunities to learn about the history of his beloved community.

Dan Eraldi officially took over the store in the mid-1980s after graduating from Sacramento State University. Dan continued to work with his father, Don, who ran the store alongside Dave for decades, until he retired in 2013 at the age of 86. Don recently died at the age of 96—just 10 years after he stepped back from the store. The pair worked together

for decades and helped the store change to meet the shifting demands of its clientele. Dan remembers Don fighting him on some of the ideas or brands he wanted to introduce, but overall, they worked well together. Since then, Dan has been chief haberdasher, continuing the family legacy of keeping generations of Sonomans in Levis and Red Wing Boots.

Dan has seen countless trends come and go—Hawaiian shirts have had their moment—but the store has always kept its local touch. Eraldi's have third and fourth-generation families shopping at the store. People like the service; it is a personal touch you do not get unless you are in a small store like this one.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, Eraldi's Men's Wear & Shoes is an independent, family run business that is a staple of our community. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor its 100th year of service here today.

HONORING DR. LAWRENCE AND
GILLIAN GERATY

HON. MARK TAKANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize Dr. Lawrence "Larry" T. Geraty and his esteemed wife, Gillian, for their unwavering commitment to Seventh-Day Adventist higher education. Their dedication has fostered growth and allowed the communities they have touched not only in California's 39th Congressional District, but across the globe, to flourish.

Larry and Gillian epitomize the essence of servant-leadership, serving as beacons of inspiration for all of us who aspire to elevate the quality, impact, reach, and visibility of our educational institutions. Their unwavering efforts have left an indelible mark on our schools, by raising the bar for education and cultivating an environment where students can genuinely flourish.

Larry and Gillian met while abroad in Beirut, Lebanon, where their families served in missionaries, and have been inseparable ever since. After returning to the States and marrying, Gillian advocated for and established the first Kindergarten program at Andrews University in Boston, Massachusetts, while Larry joined the faculty and founded the university's Institute of Archaeology.

In 1993, Larry and Gillian relocated to Riverside, California, when Larry assumed the presidency of La Sierra University. Under his leadership, La Sierra University remained true to its commitment to authenticity, embracing diversity among its student body, faculty, and staff, and resulting in its recognition as the most diverse campus in the United States. Larry tirelessly worked to enhance the university's visibility in the community, ensuring support for its developmental endeavors. These initiatives transformed the campus and its surroundings, establishing a substantial funding

• 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.

source for La Sierra. Larry served as president until 2007 when he transitioned into retirement—and a fundraising role for the university's Office of Advancement.

I'd like to honor this remarkable couple on receiving the Tom and Vi Zapara School of Business Lifetime Achievement Award, a recognition they truly deserve. Larry and Gillian's efforts have not only touched the lives of countless students, but have also shaped the trajectory of our educational institutions. May their journey inspire generations to come, and may their legacy continue to shape the future of education for all.

NATHAN AMEY

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this Month, I had the honor of attending Nathan Amey's Eagle Scout Court of Honor. Nathan first joined the Scouts as a Tiger Cub in the first grade and immediately embraced the true tenets of scouting. He quickly emerged as a natural leader to all and embodied the characteristics of the Scout Law. Nathan is someone his troop can count on and is constantly thinking of ways to improve the scouting experience for his troop. Whenever the Senior Patrol Leader is unable to attend, Nathan is the first person the scouts turn to for guidance. His Eagle Scout Project was based on his reverence for the American flag as he built a flag retirement pit area for the American Legion Post 524. Outside of scouting, he participates in countless activities such as playing the cello and piano, participating on his school's tennis team, is an active member in Model United Nations and French club and so much more; all while maintaining his academic standing of Distinguished honors. Nathan is now a sophomore at Ocean City High School and continues to excel in all facets of his life. Nathan should be proud of his achievements in the Scouts, and I wish him all the best in his promising future. God Bless Nathan, and God Bless the United States of America.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND
LEGACY OF MAYOR KOKA BOOTH

HON. WILEY NICKEL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it's with great reverence that I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of Mayor Koka Booth, Jr., a cherished leader who dedicated his life to the town of Cary, North Carolina. Koka Booth's enduring impact on our community is immeasurable, and I'm honored to pay tribute to his memory.

Koka Booth was born on August 12, 1932, in Kenova, West Virginia. His journey through life was filled with remarkable achievements and selfless service to others. After graduating from Kenova High School in 1950, Koka's path led him to Rocky Mount where he met his beloved wife, Blanche W. Booth. The two were wed in 1954, embarking on a lifelong journey together.

Koka later made his home in Cary, North Carolina, and rejoined Aeroglide Corporation before he devoted his talents to the SAS Institute, until his retirement in 2007. Koka Booth held an unwavering love for the town of Cary, often saying that he may not have been from Cary, but he got there as swiftly as he could.

This love for his community led him to serve on the Cary town council from 1977 to 1987, followed by a distinguished tenure as the town's Mayor until 1999. Koka's visionary leadership played a pivotal role in shaping Cary from a town of 18,000 residents to a thriving, family-friendly community of 94,000 by the 1990's. His groundwork paved the way for Cary to become North Carolina's seventh largest city.

In addition to his political and business accomplishments, Koka Booth was a man of exceptional character and a dedicated mentor. He shared his wealth of experience with the youth of his community as a Scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts.

In 2001, Cary honored Koka Booth's dedication and passion by naming the iconic Koka Booth Amphitheater in his honor. This gesture encapsulates the town's profound gratitude for his unwavering commitment to its betterment and his profound love for music. Koka Booth saw his life's mission as one of community service, and he fulfilled that mission with an unwavering dedication to the town of Cary and its cherished residents.

As we mourn the loss of a true Cary luminary, we also celebrate a life well-lived and a legacy that will endure for generations to come. Koka Booth's impact on our community is undeniable, and we are fortunate to have been touched by his enthusiastic efforts and innovative leadership.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Mr. Koka Booth, Jr. and to extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and the entire community of Cary, North Carolina.

May his memory inspire us to continue his work in building and nurturing the wonderful town he loved so dearly.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: MARYANNE PERLMUTTER

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Maryanne Perlmutter as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Maryanne is a born activist and a natural community builder, who works tirelessly to bring people together to fight injustice. Throughout her career, Maryanne has served as a director of medical records at numerous hospitals, coordinator of a program to decrease childhood lead exposure, and healthcare administrator for the California Department of Corrections. Over the past six years, Maryanne has dedicated her energy and talents to strengthening democracy, increasing voter registration and education, combatting climate change, promoting humane treatment for migrants, advancing ra-

cial justice, fighting for dignified care for vulnerable community members, and providing meals to homeless individuals. Her volunteer affiliations have included the Solano County League of Women Voters, the Solano County Climate Action Team, the Bay Area Climate Reality Project, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis's Immigration Justice Committee. Along with her unwavering commitment to volunteer work, Maryanne is also the primary caregiver for her husband's parents, a duty she approaches with care and competence. Maryanne's dedication to public service, community service, and activism is an inspiration to all her peers. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Maryanne Perlmutter for her positive contributions to our community.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this May, I had the pleasure of attending the Knights of Columbus ceremony at St. Joseph's Church to honor dedicated members of our community. These individuals have made a profound impact on our South Jersey community through their passion, their resilience, and their unwavering commitment to making our community a better place. I honor Sister Thomas Marie as our Educator of the Year, Flora Morris as our Female Student of the Year, Nicholas Catanoso as our Male Student of the Year, Joseph LaRosa as the recipient of the Shield Award, Thomas Owings as our Senior Citizen of the Year, the Keefer Family as our Family of the Year, Abby Powell as our Citizen of the Year, and Father Perry Cherubini as our Knight of the Year. I express our deepest gratitude to these exceptional individuals for their selfless service and dedication. Let us not only honor them but also draw inspiration from their remarkable examples. Their efforts remind us that each one of us has the power to make a difference and that our collective actions can shape a brighter future for our community. God Bless these outstanding community members, and God Bless our United States of America.

CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF TONI COCKERAM

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable career and retirement of a truly exceptional leader, Toni Cockeram.

After 23 years of dedicated and loyal service to the Golden Isles Association of Realtors, Toni is leaving behind a remarkable legacy of achievement.

With prestigious designations such as Realtor Association Certified Executive, Home with Diversity and e-PRO certifications, Toni's career has been a true example of professional development and education.

Ms. Cockeram has held significant leadership positions throughout her career, including six years as the Georgia Association of Realtors Chairman and co-Chairman for the MLS Forum.

Her leadership experience and achievements are truly too numerous to list in just one speech, which speaks volumes about who Toni is as a person.

I congratulate Toni on her amazing career and on her upcoming retirement.

MIGUEL SANTOS

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, last month, it was an honor to celebrate Miguel Santos' achievement of his Eagle Scout ceremony. Miguel joined the Scouts as a Tiger Scout and, along with his brothers, has completed the journey to Eagle Scout. This journey was a transformative one for Miguel, teaching him lessons like the importance of leadership, the significance of comradery, and the value of service. For his Eagle Scout Project, he rehabilitated a structure at Saint Joesph's Cemetery in Woolwich in South Jersey and made it into a meditative prayer space for those to enjoy and find solitude. Along with his project, he dedicated a lot of his time to the Church, resulting in him completing all four Pillars of Faith and earning the four Catholic Scouting Awards. Miguel plans to take the lessons that he has learned with the Scouts and apply them to his future studies of filmmaking and design at Rutgers University in Camden. I am incredibly proud of Miguel for all his achievements in the Scouts and I know he has a bright future ahead of him. God Bless Miguel Santos and God Bless the United States of America.

WAR CRIMINAL PUTIN, NOW IRAN

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, the murderous invasion of Israel by Iran proxies is the latest step of the war we did not choose between Dictators with Rule of Gun opposing Democracies with Rule of Law. The dictators are murderously united, and it is encouraging to see democracies stand with Ukraine and now Israel, as I personally saw this weekend attending the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen.

Conflict began with war criminal Putin murderously invading Ukraine on February 24, 2022, and now Iran proxy Hamas is heinous in its October 7th mass murder of Israelis and other nationalities being American, Thai, German, and French, as the Chinese Communist Party awaits its time threatening the 24 million people of Taiwan.

Iran is actually attacking Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Iran's proxies are murdering today to stop Saudi Arabia from extending the Abraham Accords which have been so successful for prosperity with Bahrain, United Arab Emir-

ates, Sudan, and Morocco. The regime in Tehran is sabotaging the billion-dollar efforts by Qatar for a functioning civil society in the Gaza Strip. Tehran's aggression is a direct threat from the Middle East to India with disruption of supply lines causing chaos.

Last month I was grateful to visit with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan in Riyadh to see their world-class developments in tourism and golf which Iran seeks to destroy, putting all tourists at risk of kidnapping.

The mass murdering terrorists of Iran must be stopped, as should war criminal Putin who have declared their insidious goals of Death to Israel, Death to America, and the re-creation of the Evil Soviet Empire. Every effort by democracies must be made for the courageous Ukrainians and Israelis to win territorial integrity.

Peace through strength must be established as Putin threatens the existence of Moldova, Georgia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia today with more murderous invasions later. Iran must be stopped from death to Israel and America as the Chinese Communist Party is to be deterred from mass murder. The proven Reagan success is Peace Through Strength.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: NANCY NELSON

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Nancy Nelson as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Nancy is an accomplished architect, environmental advocate, and tireless community servant. She is known for her generosity and caring and the joy she finds in providing for her community and improving the lives of others inspires everyone who knows her. Since 2008, Nancy has been an architect for Solano-Napa Habitat for Humanity, designing affordable, energy efficient housing for low-income families and formerly homeless veterans. For each one of the 21 houses she has designed pro bono for Habitat for Humanity, Nancy has met every challenge with enthusiasm and optimism. She was also instrumental in the creation of the first of its kind Veterans' Residences built in Dixon and Rio Vista. Over the years, Nancy's community service has also included time on the board of the Green Valley Agricultural Conservancy, the Solano County Orderly Growth committee, and the Green Valley Landowners Association. Throughout her career, she has had a passion for energy efficient housing design and, in collaboration with the North State Building Industry Association and the California Energy Commission, helped author the Countdown to 2020 program that helped industry adopt and comply with new energy standards. Through her work, volunteerism, and advocacy, Nancy has always found ways to give back to her local community and beyond. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Nancy Nelson for her positive contributions to our community.

JOHN SICILIANO

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is with great pride that I congratulate John Siciliano for his retirement from the Greater Wildwoods Tourism Improvement and Development Authority after Twenty Seven and a half years of service. His career with GWTIDA began in 1995 as CFO and he quickly proved himself a force to be reckoned with in the travel and tourism industry. He soon after became Executive Director and CFO in 1997. During his tenure, he played a crucial role in developing the 260,000 square foot, Seventy million Dollar Wildwoods Convention Center, which has become a major economic catalyst, hosting over one hundred forty five events annually and generating more than fifty million dollars in revenue a year. Under John's guidance, GWTIDA nurtured a culture of excellence, leading to an average employee longevity of seventeen years. John's dedication and advocacy have been pivotal in the resurgence of the Wildwoods as a top family vacation destination. Some of his professional achievements include but are not limited to the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce Golden Whelk Tourism Award, the Tourism Excellence Award by the New Jersey Tourism Industry, and many more. John consistently pursues innovative strategies to keep the Wildwoods at the forefront of the travel and tourism industry. His positive impact to the community extends outside of his work with the GWTIDA as he shifts his focus to helping children in the area maintain good grades through the Kiwanis BUG program. His good work has culminated into an enriched community, and it reflects the type of man that John is. I thank John for his dedication to South Jersey and to GWTIDA, and I hope he enjoys his retirement. God Bless John Siciliano and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: DR. KIMBERLY ROGERS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Dr. Kimberly Rogers as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Kimberly is a passionate public servant who has demonstrated tireless dedication in higher education as an administrator and teacher over the past 20 years. Since June 2022, Kimberly has served as President of Contra Costa College in San Pablo, having previously served as Vice President of Instruction. Contra Costa College currently serves over 5,600 students in our community. As President, Kimberly has spearheaded efforts to greatly expand student services such as launching the Free Lunch program, increasing mental health services, extending housing assistance, expanding access to professional attire, and increasing

staffing. Under President Rogers' leadership, Contra Costa College has reversed yearslong enrollment declines and bolstered academic and career opportunities with the creation of the Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement program, the college's admission to the Achieving the Dream program and the Rising Scholars Network, and more. Kimberly is known for her unwavering commitment to improving higher education and dedication to bringing about positive change for Contra Costa College and its students. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Dr. Kimberly Rogers for her positive contributions to our community.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO PROHIBIT THE TRANSFER OF
PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT OF
THE D.C. NATIONAL GUARD TO
ANOTHER NATIONAL GUARD

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF THE COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today, I introduce a bill that would prohibit the Department of Defense (DOD) and the District of Columbia National Guard (DCNG) from transferring personnel and equipment of the DCNG to DOD or the National Guard of a state or territory. The DOD has indicated it will restructure the DCNG. The DOD is considering, among other things, transferring the aviation units of the DCNG to the Maryland and Virginia National Guards. Transferring the aviation units would make D.C. residents and the nation's capital less safe.

The DCNG is unique. The National Guards of the states and territories operate under dual federal and state/territorial jurisdiction, while the DCNG operates solely under federal jurisdiction. The governors of the states, as well as of the three territories with National Guards, control their National Guards, and the president has the authority to federalize the National Guards. The president controls the DCNG.

The proposed transfer of aviation units is especially troubling. If the DCNG had no aviation units, the DCNG would be reliant on the National Guards of the states and territories or active-duty forces for aviation matters, such as intercepting aircraft, patrolling the skies and rescuing or evacuating people in emergencies. While the D.C. mayor or DCNG could request assistance from a state or territory in the event air assets were needed in D.C., there is no guarantee the air assets would be provided in a timely manner—or at all. While the president could use active-duty troops or federalize a state or territorial National Guard for aviation matters to assist D.C., the circumstances under which the president may federalize a National Guard are very limited.

I note that I have introduced legislation, which the House passed twice last Congress, to give the D.C. mayor the same control over the DCNG that the governors have over their National Guards. I also note that I was outraged by the attacks on protestors by the DCNG after the killing of George Floyd.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING GARY KROESCHEN FOR
RETIRING AS CHAIR OF THE
MARSHALL COUNTY BOARD

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I would like to honor and congratulate Gary Kroeschen on his retirement as Marshall County Board Chairman.

Gary Kroeschen has devoted almost two decades to serving the people of Marshall County. From his early efforts as a Bennington Township Board trustee and Toluca Park District trustee, Gary established himself as a strong advocate for the people with a keen eye for the future. In 2007 he was appointed to the Marshall County Board, a position he would go on to be elected to five times. It was on the Marshall County Board that Gary would demonstrate his strong leadership skills and fiscal conservatism. His peers elected him as Chairman of the Board in 2012. Under his leadership, Marshall County was able to navigate the challenges of the COVID pandemic. Citizens and constituents lauded Gary's twenty-four hour a day availability. As a fiscal watchdog, Gary pushed for an expansion of the County's efforts to secure grants for modernization projects, including but not limited to the Marshall County Courthouse parking lot.

In addition to serving the people of Marshall County as an elected official, Gary thrived as a small business owner. Under his leadership, Kroeschen Plumbing and Heating Inc. in Toluca was lauded for its outstanding customer service and reliability. Much like he treats his constituents, employees were treated like members of his family.

I want to express the utmost gratitude to Gary for his two decades of public service. He is the epitome of a great public servant and his absence on the Marshall County Board will be felt for years to come. Gary has left a legacy which will live on for decades for those who follow him in service to Marshall County. I wish Gary the best as he begins his retirement.

HONORING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE STATE TROOPERS
FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION

HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I rise to recognize the 60th Anniversary of the State Troopers Fraternal Association (STFA). Established in 1963, the STFA represents brave New Jersey State Troopers. With a current membership of 1,700, the STFA has dedicated themselves to collectively bargain for improved working conditions and compensation for these courageous law enforcement officers.

STFA has made great strides to improve working conditions for New Jersey State Troopers. The STFA established an efficient and fair process to settle grievances for and against its members. They also provide financial resources for members and families of

members who have been tragically killed in the line of duty. These efforts have helped improve public safety across the State of New Jersey.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the STFA were asked to attend to the front lines of this massive medical crisis. They answered the call. New Jersey State Troopers helped protect the efficiency of our medical infrastructure so that patients across our state could receive the care they desperately needed.

The STFA is a trusted resource for the bipartisan Law Enforcement Caucus in the United States House of Representatives. As this organization's longtime Co-Chairman, I count on the STFA to inform my decisions in making federal policy affecting law enforcement.

President Wayne Blanchard exemplifies the leadership qualities paramount to the successes of the STFA. His vision for public safety has given countless New Jersey families peace of mind. I am pleased to call Wayne a friend.

I ask every Member to join me in recognizing the outstanding work of the STFA, supporting the mission of State Troopers who willingly put their lives on the line every day in the spirit of honor, duty, and fidelity. The STFA remains dedicated to providing leadership to its members and the public. Here's to the next 60 years of the STFA.

JACOB GILCHRIST

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this June, I had the pleasure of celebrating Jacob Gilchrist's achievements with the Scouts. Jacob joined the Scouts as a Tiger Cub and after years of hard work and dedication, has earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Through earning merit badges, participating in outdoor adventures, and developing his leadership skills, Jacob has gained valuable knowledge that he will carry with him for the rest of his life. For his Eagle Scout Service Project, Jacob renovated and repaired a local World War Two monument in his local community. Jacob's service does not go unnoticed, and I applaud him for his hard work and dedication for improving our South Jersey community. I congratulate Jacob and I wish him all the best. God Bless Jacob Gilchrist and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: KRIS COREY

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Kris Corey as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Kris first moved to the Fairfield Suisun City Unified School District from South Dakota as an elementary school

teacher and after 13 years of teaching became an administrator. Over the years, Kris worked her way up from assistant principal to District Superintendent. As Superintendent, Kris has done impressive and impactful work including maintaining and updating aging facilities by supporting two successful bond measures that authorized 500 million dollars in bond funding. She has also made a point of emphasizing the social and emotional wellbeing of her students by expanding emotional support programs for students and families and assembling an excellent team to deliver physical, intellectual, and emotional services to her students. Through her skill and perseverance at building collaborative relationships with people of the FSUSD community Kris has been able to achieve remarkable feats despite facing the same teacher and budget shortages that impact districts nationwide. The work Kris does is critical to the future successes of our communities and her dedication to preserving and improving public education is an inspiration to all. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Kris Corey for her positive contributions to our community.

REMEMBERING LEANDER WETTER

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Leander Wetter who passed away earlier this month.

Leander was born in the summer of 1940 and quickly fell in love with life on the farm. He was a leader in the agriculture community and was often the first in the area to try a new farming technique. All farmers are dedicated to their farms and animals, but Leander was special. Through decades of hard work, he grew his farm to one of the largest in the area.

Leander was a loving husband, father and grandfather. He was married to his beloved wife, Mary, for 48 years and the pair were blessed with three children and three grandchildren.

Leander was also an avid lover of history. He was a longstanding member of the Wright County Historical Society where he spent countless hours telling stories and educating the community about our local history.

His love of history was melded with his love of agriculture in his antique tractors and steam engines collection. Leander was a proud founding member of the Rogers Threshing Show and often would show his collection at these events. I had the pleasure of attending a threshing show with the Wetters and was impressed by Leander's collection and encyclopedia-like knowledge of these machines. As events grew, so did his involvement in the group, at one point Mary and Leander even donated a large shed to the show to ensure its future success.

Leander and his wife Mary were heavily involved in local politics as well. I have many fond memories of bumping into them while attending events in Wright County and throughout the Sixth District. Our team will miss seeing Leander by Mary's side at these events.

From his work on the family farm to his involvement in Wright County, Leander was a leader in his community. To his wife Mary and the rest of the Wetter family, we offer our sincerest condolences and pray that Leander's memory will comfort them all during this difficult time.

RECOGNIZING NICK ADAMS

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise to recognize Nick Adams and the incredible work of his organization, the Foundation for Liberty and American Greatness, or FLAG. Mr. Adams was born in Sydney, Australia, and immigrated to the United States in 2016 as the recipient of the Extraordinary Ability Green Card. He became a naturalized citizen on December 20, 2021, and I was proud to be there with him for that special moment.

After coming to the United States, Mr. Adams founded the Foundation for Liberty and American Greatness, also known as FLAG, dedicated to educating Americans about the values and principles that make our nation exceptional. To date, FLAG has provided educational resources to more than 1.6 million students around the country.

Mr. Adams is of the Greek-Orthodox faith, is a Stage IV cancer survivor, a patriot, and the embodiment of the American Dream. His life is a testament to the free spirit that has made America great. I am proud to call him friend.

COMMEMORATING THE HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS OF GABE SEGAL

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise to commemorate Gabe Segal for the humanitarian work he's done as an educator to end school meal debt for all grade school students. Gabe has been an active teacher in the Fairfax County Public School district and is committed to helping students by raising funds and tackling an issue of school meal debt that has been impacting the lives of many families.

Gabe was 9 months old and living in an orphanage in Moscow, Russia, when two Fairfax County Public School teachers, David Segal and Saranne Segal, adopted him and brought him to Virginia. Both of Gabe's parents were teachers at Herndon High School in 1993, and Gabe is now a fellow teacher at the same high school. As a child, his mother would bring Gabe into the high school. While literally growing up in the high school, he learned valuable lessons and had first-hand knowledge of the hardships students were facing in and out of the classroom at an early age.

Today as an educator, Gabe keeps his classroom door open every day after school to let his students have a safe place to meditate. His number one core value in the field of education is relationships. To many students he is a father figure, role model, and even more im-

portantly, a trusted and caring adult. There are many students who don't have a warm, welcoming home, so he does everything he can to create that environment in his classroom.

During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gabe paid-off the lunch debt at Sleepy Hollow Elementary in Fairfax County. During the course of the 2022-2023 school year and summer, Gabe organized fundraisers and pulled in donations to raise over \$32,000 to pay all outstanding school meal debt at his previous school, Herndon Middle School. In total, \$50,000 has been raised for school meal debt in Fairfax County. Gabe has been actively meeting with local leaders throughout the commonwealth in hopes of one day having free, universal school meals for all students. The cost for a student to have adequate nutrition during their school day with a meal provided by their educational institution is alarmingly over five dollars a day. Many families can't afford to pay that cost. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, the impact of school meal debt has a lasting impact on low-income families both in and out of the classroom.

As a teacher, Gabe sees firsthand how school meal debt impacts students' performance in school and he's continued to lead the awareness. Gabe's work has been published in the Washington Post, WJLA-TV as well as other news organizations. He remains devoted to helping struggling students and families deal with their debt as this issue continues to impact student achievement and burden families.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I ask that my colleagues join me in commemorating the tremendous humanitarian efforts of Gabe Segal for tackling the crisis of school meal debt impacting the lives of many.

RUBEM SANTOS

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this past June, it was my privilege to attend Rubem Santos' Eagle Scout Ceremony. As soon as Rubem joined the Scouts, it was his dream to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. Now, as this dream comes to fruition, it is my privilege to recognize the time and energy he has dedicated to the Scouts. Throughout his scouting journey, he has collected thirty one merit badges and three Catholic Scouting Awards. For his project to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, he built Barn Owl Boxes for Woodstown Borough, South Jersey, for the purpose of providing a safe nesting environment for Barn Owls and encouraging the growth of their population. Outside of his involvement with the Scouts, he was a committed member of the South Jersey Robotics Team, the Lunatecs, who helped to develop a custom mold for an adaptive swim fin for veteran amputees. He is constantly searching for solutions, and this drives his passion to study Civil Engineering in the future. Rubem should be proud of his accomplishments, and it is my honor to celebrate him. God Bless Rubem Santos and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: LA TOYA THOMAS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of La Toya Thomas as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. La Toya is a passionate community member who has shown exemplary dedication to service in her profession and volunteer work. For over a decade, La Toya has worked as a department manager at Kaiser Permanente, where she has earned a stellar reputation for her leadership and team building in the healthcare industry. For years, La Toya has also devoted her energy and talents towards activism as an SEIU Union Steward advocating for the rights of her fellow employees. She currently serves on the board of Motivated 2 Help Others, a nonprofit dedicated to helping victims of crime of all backgrounds find the resources and support they need as well as helping formerly incarcerated individuals transition back into society. La Toya also serves her community through extensive philanthropic work, including providing meals for those facing homelessness and distributing backpacks to underprivileged children. La Toya is a proud and caring mother of two who devotes herself to her career, volunteer work, and family, all while treating everyone with kindness and positivity. She is a role model for others with her strength and resiliency and is known to go above and beyond for her family, work, and community. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize La Toya Thomas for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE WILSON FAMILY'S FARM, COTTON HILLS FARM IN LOWRYS, SOUTH CAROLINA

HON. RALPH NORMAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the outstanding work of the Wilson Family in Lowrys, South Carolina and their dedication to providing locally grown produce for over 140 years.

Cotton Hills Farm was given to Joseph Wilson and Theodosia Abel as a wedding gift by the bride's father in 1880. It has been passed down multiple generations and is now run by JEB Wilson along with his brother, Pete, and his father, Jeff.

For 100 years, cotton had been the primary crop planted on Cotton Hills Farm. Starting in the 1940s, JEB's grandfather started planting peaches as well. Today, the family farm has expanded to pumpkins, peaches, watermelon, and cantaloupe. JEB Wilson has proudly said, "basically anything that can be grown in South Carolina, we grow it." The family also operates three retail locations in Chester County, South Carolina and sells wholesale produce.

Conservation and sustainability have been a key element to the long-term success of Cot-

ton Hills Farm. The Wilson family is constantly looking for ways to improve the farm and keep it sustainable for years to come.

I would like to recognize that the entire family is also very accomplished in their community. Jeff is a long-serving member of the Soil and Water Conservation District in Chester County and currently serving as the vice chairman. Additionally, JEB and Pete have been named Conservationist of the Year in Chester County. JEB credits the family's success to their adaptability to challenges and willingness to try new farming methods that will continue to decrease their environmental impact.

The Wilson family continues to be devoted to their farm and are looking forward to passing it down the family line. On behalf of the 5th District of South Carolina, it is my most sincere pleasure to recognize Cotton Hills Farm and the Wilson family for their great service to our state. Please join me in recognizing the farm on its advancements in agricultural innovation and conservation.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF
DANIELLE "DANI" DUGGAN

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today in honor of the life of Danielle "Dani" Duggan.

Born on May 7, 1966, Dani was raised in Middleborough, Massachusetts, where she found a passion for the arts at a young age. After graduating as an honors student from Middleborough High School in 1984, Dani went on to study at St. Michael's College, where she received an honors Bachelor of Arts degree in fine arts and theatre and was the recipient of the Delta Epsilon Sigma Society Departmental Award for outstanding achievement in fine arts.

Dani then moved to Dublin, Ireland to work for the famous Abbey Theatre. This is where she also met her husband, Gerry Clements. She lived in Ireland for eight years receiving an honors master's degree in modern drama from University College Dublin and would later form the Salem Willows Theatre Company.

Dani returned to the U.S. with her husband, Gerry, moving to Pembroke, Massachusetts, and over the next 24 years, she taught drama at Middleborough High School. During her time at MHS, she became chair of the fine arts department and played a pivotal role in the design and construction of the new Middleborough High School Performing Arts Center and Blackbox Theatre. At MHS, Dani directed numerous school productions and the speech & theater workshop, as well as several productions with the Plymouth Community Theatre.

Sadly, Dani left us too soon on October 15, 2022, after a two year battle with cancer. Whether during her time at Middleborough High School or her work with the Abbey Theatre, Dani's passion for sharing her love for the arts serves as an example to all. Throughout her years at Middleborough High School, Dani laid the groundwork for the school district to hold an annual event celebrating students' work in the fine arts. On May 20, 2023, Middleborough held its inaugural Dani Duggan Fine Arts Festival to honor Dani's legacy.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I am proud to honor the life of Dani Duggan. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing her life's commitment to serving her community through the arts.

HONORING SUZANNE SMITH

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today, along with my colleague, Rep. JARED HUFFMAN, to honor Suzanne Smith for her dedicated service to the Sonoma County Transportation Authority and Regional Climate Protection Authority where she worked to build both agencies from the ground up.

Ms. Smith received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of California, San Diego, where she also studied urban planning. Suzanne would later receive her Master of Arts degree in Public Administration from the University of San Francisco.

The Sonoma County Transit Authority (SCTA) and the Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) represent Sonoma County and the area's nine cities. They work together to balance the interests of each local government while spearheading transit projects, and climate protection initiatives. Ms. Smith was hired as the SCTA's first independent executive director in 1997 and later was assigned to lead RCPA as well. Since then, she has grown the team to sixteen curated employees, and worked tirelessly to implement crucial transportation and climate projects and programs in Sonoma County and the North Bay.

Ms. Smith led the organizational process that created the Measure M Traffic Relief Act (Measure M). She worked to include it on the 2004 ballot and to ensure it passed. This quarter cent sales tax has been successfully used to improve transportation, transit, safety, and the widening of Highway 101 for carpool lanes. In addition, she oversaw long range planning, and collaborated with partner agencies and the public on policy priorities. Additionally, she was instrumental in the founding legislation for Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART) and the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority.

In 1997, Ms. Smith had three goals: to get a sales tax measure passed to support transportation, widen Highway 101, and establish train service. She not only accomplished her goals, but she has also acted as an incredible leader for the community of Sonoma County. She has made and maintained effective partnerships with agencies and elected officials nationwide and has directed the Sonoma County Transit Authority and Regional Climate Protection Authority through economic downturns and the COVID-19 pandemic. She has served with integrity, foresight, thoughtfulness, and unquestionable dedication and commitment. Ms. Smith demonstrated exceptional interpersonal skills and an innate understanding of how politics work and how to move projects forward.

Throughout her professional career, Ms. Smith also served as the district director for State Assembly Member Valerie Brown. She worked on policy issues such as transportation, education, and local government.

Ms. Smith is revered by her colleagues not just for her work but also for her friendliness and collegiality. When she is not working, she also loves to spend time with her family including her husband, Tim, her mom, Barbara, her stepchildren, Katie Mason, Nick Smith, and Emily Angelopoulos, and her grandchildren, Cam, Nick, Sidney, Ben, Anthony, and Dominic.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is therefore fitting and proper that we recognize Suzanne Smith for her longtime service at the Sonoma County Transit Authority and Regional Climate Protection Authority.

RALPH CONTINI

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is my honor and privilege to commemorate the induction of Ralph Contini as the National President of UNICO National. Ralph, an exceptional leader with forty years of dedicated service to UNICO at all levels, currently serves as its Executive Vice President and Chairman of the UNICO National Columbus Day Committee. Throughout his tenure, he has been recognized for his unwavering commitment and received prestigious awards, including the Dr. Anthony P. Vastola Gold Medal Award and the Outstanding District Governor Award. Born and raised in Italy, Ralph's deep connection to Italian heritage has shaped his remarkable journey. Beyond UNICO, Ralph actively participates in several Italian American organizations, holding esteemed positions such as Treasurer/Executive Director at the Tri-State Italian American Congress and serving on the Board of Trustees for The Columbians. His dedication was further recognized with the honorable title of Cavaliere by the President of the Republic of Italy. As District Governor of New Jersey Districts Six and Seven, Ralph received the "Outstanding" and "Distinguished" UNICO National District Governor Awards, recognizing his outstanding leadership and dedicated efforts in managing the chapters within each district. Today, as the proud owner of Ralph A. Contini, CPA, LLC in Paramus, he provides top-tier accounting, tax, consulting, and financial planning services. Now residing Hackensack with his family, Ralph finds joy and fulfillment in his family life and values the support they provide as he continues to make a meaningful impact to their community. His legacy as an outstanding leader and advocate Italian heritage stands as a testament to his deep commitment and passion to the cause. Congratulations to Ralph for his induction as National President at UNICO and I thank him for his dedication to his community. God Bless Ralph Contini and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF THE YEAR: LISA TINBRINK HOWARD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Lisa Tinbrink Howard as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Lisa is a leader who serves her community through her work, advocacy, and volunteer efforts. Early in her career, Lisa worked as an engineer, where she broke down barriers and was a trailblazer for other female engineers. She later founded Tolenas Winery, which she operates with her husband in the Suisun Valley. There they provide wine education and help others understand the invaluable contributions of local agriculture to our community. Lisa has served on the Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee and is Secretary of the Suisun Valley Vinters and Growers Association where she works with elected officials to advocate for farmers and winemakers. Furthermore, Lisa serves her community through her volunteer work, which includes work with the local 4H, advocating for women in the wine and agricultural industries, and supporting military personnel. She is also a proud and caring mother of three children and inspires others with her dedication to her faith, family, business, advocacy, and community service. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Lisa Tinbrink Howard for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR JOSEPH THALLEMER'S SERVICE TO WARSAW, INDIANA

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I am proud to recognize and congratulate Mayor Joseph Thallemer, who is completing his tenure of dedicated service to Warsaw, Indiana at the end of this year.

Currently serving in his third term as Mayor, Joe Thallemer has long advocated solutions that make Warsaw a better place to live, work, and raise a family, and that maintain and build on Warsaw's status as the Medical Device and Orthopedic Capital of the World.

Prior to becoming Mayor, Joe Thallemer also served on the City Council and the Warsaw Plan Commission, meaning his record of faithfully serving Warsaw runs nearly three decades deep.

Beyond City Hall, many Hoosiers know Joe through his Optometry practice that he established in Warsaw in 1980.

Outside of his medical practice and elected office, Joe has also given back to the community he and his wife Jill call home by serving on the local YMCA board as well as in church and school activities with Jill and their four children.

As he prepares to step down as Mayor, spend more time with his family, and write the

next chapter of his life, I am proud to congratulate Joe Thallemer on a distinguished career and a job well done. The Warsaw community is unquestionably better off thanks to this good man with a servant's heart.

I join Hoosiers throughout Indiana's Second Congressional District in expressing our gratitude to Mayor Thallemer for his service and in wishing him and his wonderful family nothing but the very best going forward.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF THE YEAR: MARINDA ELAINE KEITH

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Marinda Elaine Keith as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Marinda has been a community leader and owner of Marinda's Family Daycare for decades. After operating her daycare center for 35 years, she has served roughly 400 children and families. She is passionate about educating every child in her care and works to ensure that every child receives food, education, and the support they need. Her love and commitment to the children she cares for is evident in the educational and career pursuits her students have accomplished. She is also an active member of the church, where she volunteers and gives back to those in need. Through her church she has organized the annual backpack drive for underprivileged children and numerous food giveaways. During the COVID-19 Pandemic she donated, prepared, and delivered baskets of food and supplies to seniors. In addition, she volunteers to cook and serve meals for the unhoused in the parks throughout Richmond. Marinda's compassion, selflessness, and dedication serve as an inspiration to all who meet her. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Marinda Elaine Keith for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING CHIEF GARY GACEK OF CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Chief Gary Gacek on his retirement from the Concord Police Department and to honor his many years of faithful service to the people of Concord, North Carolina.

Gacek began his career in law enforcement with the Milwaukee Police Department, where he served in a variety of roles over the course of 25 years. He began his role as Chief of Police of the Concord Police Department in July 2015. Under his leadership, Concord became one of the safest cities in the state, with crime

rates hitting their lowest levels in over twenty years.

Gacek implemented numerous reforms and initiatives that helped modernize the department, reduce crime and develop the community. Some of these reforms include the implementation of an evidence-based community policing strategy, updating the department's technology and information systems, expanding the department's analytical and intelligence capabilities, and developing several community engagement initiatives, among many others. Perhaps one of his greatest initiatives was the creation of the Concord Police Foundation, which supports Concord Police Department employees and their families and helps make Concord a safer community to live and work. Gacek established this program in 2021 in honor of Concord Officer Jason Shuping who was tragically killed in the line of duty on December 16, 2020.

I have known Chief Gacek for many years and witnessed firsthand the tremendous work he has done for the people of Concord. I am proud to call him my friend and know I speak for the whole community when I wish him well in this next chapter of his life.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, please join me today in congratulating Gary Gacek on his retirement and to thank him for his many years of dedicated service.

NOAH WERTZBERGER

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I celebrate the accomplishments of Noah Wertzberger and his recent achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout. Noah embarked on his scouting journey as a K-cub during his kindergarten years. Throughout his scouting experience, he remained actively involved and just recently completed his Eagle Project in October. His project involved the removal of two Osprey nests situated on the Great Egg Harbor Watershed. Once those were removed, he constructed and installed replacement Osprey Nests with the help of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association. Noah is extremely grateful for Troop Seventy-Nine and the Boy Scouts for imparting invaluable lessons and fostering friendships. After achieving the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout, he now serves as an assistant scoutmaster, providing ongoing assistance to the Troop. In the upcoming fall, he will be attending Seton Hall University. Noah should be incredibly proud of his accomplishments, and I know he has a bright future ahead of him. God Bless Noah Wertzberger and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: MARGARET KOLK

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Margaret Kolk as she is honored as

one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Maggie is a passionate public servant who demonstrates a tireless dedication to serving her community. For the past nine years, Maggie has served as Chair of the Benicia Human Services Board, directing funding to local nonprofits that serve low-income Benicia residents and improving funding for city agencies. She is also the Secretary of Sustainable Solano, an environmental organization championing renewable energy and sustainable food production services. Along with her public service, Maggie has demonstrated equal dedication to serving her community through her volunteer work and political activism. For the past three years, Maggie has served as manager of the Benicia Community Garden helping to maintain an important resource that brings local sustainable food to Benicia residents. In 2016, Maggie co-founded Progressive Democrats of Benicia, now the city's largest political organization, and is currently spearheading a local ballot initiative to raise revenues to fix Benicia roads. She is known to never back down from the toughest challenges and to always offer her complete commitment to any undertaking. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Margaret Kolk for her positive contributions to our community.

NATO SUPPORTS UKRAINE AND
ISRAEL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, this past weekend, I was grateful to participate with the U.S. Delegation for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen, Denmark, led by Delegation Chairman MIKE TURNER and Assembly former President GERRY CONNOLLY.

On Friday, the focus was on war criminal Putin's murderous invasion of Ukraine. NATO and the European Union have surpassed America with aid for Ukraine and incredibly Finland is now a NATO member with an 830-mile border with Russia, as Sweden gives up 200 years of neutrality to stop dictators. The West is united as never before in history to protect democracies.

On Saturday, with the sadistic invasion of Israel, there was extraordinary unanimity supporting Israel's territorial integrity. Clearly the axis of dictatorships of Putin, the regime in Tehran, and the Chinese Communist Party, had collaborated again with the invasion from Gaza. Sadly, the war we did not choose, Dictatorship with Rule of Gun against Democracies with Rule of Law, is proceeding and must be faced with Peace Through Strength.

On Sunday, Resolutions were presented from the five standing committees with amendments to be considered with debate. Parliamentarian Michal Szczerba of Poland presented Towards Reconstruction of Ukraine emphasizing payment by seized Russia assets, while Parliamentarian Njall Fridbertsson of Iceland explained Enhancement of Protection of allied critical maritime infrastructure.

Senator Rodrigue Demeuse of Belgium proposed the resolution on Protecting Allied De-

mocracies from Disinformation with provisions for addressing war crimes. Assemblyman Utku Cakirozer of Türkiye explained implementing NATO's new Deterrence and Defense Baseline. It is crucial we continue to stand with Türkiye as it is attacked by terrorists, just as we defeat the barbarian terrorists of Gaza. MP Alec Shelbrooke of Britain presented a Resolution Strengthening Stability and Security to the Black Sea Region following Russia's invasion, emphasizing grain deliveries for Egypt and African countries which are being destroyed by war criminal Putin.

On Monday, unanimously provided statements were issued supporting Israel as Iran's chants of Death to Israel, Death to America unfolded. Resolutions previously presented unanimously of 27 countries present were inspiring for the courageous citizens of Ukraine and Israel. There was unprecedented solidarity for freedom, democracy, and rule of law.

Stirring addresses were made of determined support for Ukraine and Israel for territorial integrity by NATO Parliamentary Assembly President Michal Szczerba, Danish Parliamentary Speaker Soren Gade compared the Hamas attack to 9/11 and Pearl Harbor, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen expressed concern that many are naive as to Russia and China, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised Israel's resolve and thanked all for help to Ukraine, Deputy Secretary General of NATO Mircea Geoana cited Europeans killed by Iran proxy Hamas in Israel, with NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation General Philippe Lavigne emphasizing importance of all countries to reach two percent for defense to achieve Peace Through Peace.

The sessions concluded with presenting the 2023 'Women for Peace and Security' award to Leader of Democratic Belarus Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya who courageously works for a democratic Belarus and political prisoner release including her husband.

NOAH BROWN

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I celebrate the accomplishments of Noah Quinton Brown and his recent achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout. Noah began scouting at the age of five, following in the footsteps of four generations of family before him. Now, having reached the highest rank in scouting, we celebrate his achievements. During his time in the Scouts, Noah has participated in countless fundraising and community service activities along with many different camping and hiking adventures. In July of 2022, Noah completed a 60-mile Trek at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico where he achieved the Boy Scout 50 miler award. For his Eagle Scout Project, he built benches, a water station, and rehabilitated a pavilion for use by spectators at cycling events put on by Camp Edge in Alloway, South Jersey. His remains active in the scouts with his current position of Junior Assistant Scoutmaster at Troop 60 in Daretown, South Jersey. Noah is now a junior at Woodstown High School, consistently earning his way on to the

Honor Roll. Outside of scouting, he is an athlete on his school's Varsity Track and Field team and a volunteer at his church, all while maintaining a job at a local farm. Along with his Eagle Scout award, Noah will be presented with the Bronze and Gold palms for his remarkable leadership and his willingness to accept responsibility. I am incredibly proud of Noah for all his accomplishments in the Scouts and I know he has a bright future ahead of him. God Bless Noah and God Bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: DR. MELVINIA KING

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Dr. Melvinia King as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. As the Executive Director of Fighting Back Partnership, Melvinia helps lead the organization's drive to alleviate and eliminate poverty and substance abuse amongst youth in Solano County. Since joining the organization in 2018, she has spearheaded an agenda rooted in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of "Creating the Beloved Community," addressing the complex issues of poverty and racism while simultaneously empowering families and nurturing the potential of our youth. Beyond this important work, Melvinia serves on several local committees, including the Solano County Workforce Development Board, Black Infant Healthcare Advisory Board, and Solano County Home Visiting Community Advisory Board. She is known by her colleagues as not only a strong advocate for change, but also an active contributor to it. Her work has created a lasting legacy that will touch the lives of countless individuals throughout our district. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Dr. Melvinia King for her positive contributions to our community.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I am pleased to speak on the importance of Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM).

American society today embraces a remarkable breadth of cultures, and Hispanics are an integral part of this diversity.

The Hispanic American community is a beautiful array of distinct groups, including people with roots in Central and South America, including our neighbors in Mexico and the Caribbean, and Spain.

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson designated a National Hispanic Heritage Week because of the growing impact of the Latin American culture in shaping the Nation and society.

The week was expanded in 1988 to a 31-day period by President Reagan to provide all Americans the opportunity to participate and commemorate the important contributions of the Hispanic culture to mainstream America.

Today in communities across the Nation millions of American families come together to celebrate in this facet of American culture and participate in traditional comidas and fiestas.

There are over 63.7 million Hispanics living in the U.S. and Hispanics continue to be the fastest growing ethnic group.

In Harris County, Texas there are 43.1 percent Hispanic, approximately 2.02 million people.

In 2022, 44.5 percent of the Houston population identified as Hispanic or Latino in the Census.

Not only is this a month to celebrate Hispanic culture and traditions, but it is also a time to reunite and celebrate the importance of keeping traditions alive through family gatherings and fiestas.

Yet, in the time we currently live in many families are separated from one another.

While we must acknowledge the challenges at our border, we should never forget that behind the statistics given to us are real families, real children, and real people in desperate need.

One of my own staffers, Amy Arceo, had her grandmother rejected USA entry and banned for 10 years due to crossing the border from Mexico, when all she wanted to do was to see her family and return home.

After those 10 long years and an additional 3 years to work her way through our immigration system, her grandmother Ma. Esperanza Bugarin was finally able to receive her papers to re-enter the USA.

Her family has been reunited after 13 long years of being separated from one another, the ban having forced her to miss many important family events.

During this month, let us reaffirm our commitment to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and most importantly unity.

It is essential that we continue working together to break down barriers and ensure that all Americans, regardless of their background, have equal access to opportunities and the chance to achieve their dreams.

On behalf of my constituents and in my duties as a U.S. Representative, I am committed to speaking up for the rights of Hispanics and confronting the issues that affect them.

From lowering the uninsured healthcare rates and fighting to make higher education more affordable, to championing an increase in the minimum wage and addressing the economic challenges facing working women and families, my colleagues and I will continue working for the Latino community's top priorities.

Devoted to family, faith, country, and hard work, Hispanic Americans bring unique and bountiful perspectives and experiences to our national community and character.

The vibrant Hispanic influence can be seen in all aspects of American life and culture, and especially in Houston, Harris County and Texas, and from distinctive cuisine to colorful festivals, and from the rhythms and melodies of traditional music to the contagious beat of today's most popular songs.

The Hispanic community has persevered in the face of discrimination and hardships.

While significant barriers still stand in our way, I will continue fighting with a strong commitment to achieve comprehensive immigration reform and to support an inclusive and unified country.