

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: ANJALI RIMI

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Anjali Rimi as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Anjali is a dedicated leader, activist, and community member.

As a transgender immigrant from South Asia, Anjali has overcome many challenges while continuing to give back to her communities.

As one of the co-founders of Parivar Bay Area, Anjali has transformed the services available for transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex immigrants from the Global South. Parivar Bay Area emerged from earlier grassroots organizing, including a project that redistributed almost \$1 million worth of food, housing funds, and livelihood grants for transgender South Asians to open their own businesses.

In addition to her work globally, Anjali is deeply involved in LGBTQ+ activism in the Bay Area, through fundraisers, arts and cultural showcases, and social support group meetings. She was the first South Asian transgender person to be recognized for her LGBTQ+ activism in the California Legislature and has also received recognition from former Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Anjali has accomplished all of this while remaining a kind and patient person and serving as an inspiration to others for her dedication to serving her community and improving the status of marginalized groups.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Anjali Rimi for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING TARRANT COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR G.K. MAENIUS

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize G.K. Maenius, long-time Tarrant County Administrator, embodies what it means to selflessly serve your community. Over his 35-year tenure as County Administrator, G.K. Maenius guided Tarrant County through numerous challenges, four county judges, and a doubling in population from 1.1 million in 1988 to 2.2 million today.

With a staff over 4,600 and operating budget of \$900 million, he masterfully managed personnel and taxpayer dollars, creating a county with a reputation marked by efficiency

and fiscal responsibility. The years he spent supporting businesses, spearheading bond programs, and modernizing county technology have not gone unnoticed

I thank G.K. for consistent commitment to the welfare of our community. I wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: AMY FABI

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Amy Fabi as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Amy has served her community of Solano County in a profound and meaningful way.

Early in her career, she worked tirelessly to provide advocacy and academic support to Asian American Pacific Islander, Latinx, and African American families in the East Bay. Working with diverse communities led her to her current role as Commissioner with First 5 Solano where she works to ensure a solid foundation for all children.

Amy graduated from UC Berkeley and received her master of social work from San Francisco State University. As a licensed social worker, she has seen the impact of trauma on childhood development and the importance of support services for vulnerable youth. Inspired by those she meets through her work, she advocates tirelessly for all children to have access to opportunities that will allow them to achieve their fullest potential.

Beyond her professional work, Amy is a member of the board for the Vacaville Police Activities League, scholarship chair for the Chinese American Association of Solano County, and internship chair for the Solano County Asian American Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association. She has earned numerous awards for her volunteerism throughout the community and her commitment to serving others inspires all who know her.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Amy Fabi for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING COLONEL WALTER
L. MODDISON

HON. HALEY M. STEVENS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize Colonel Walter L. Moddison, call sign "Gromit," upon his retire-

ment from the Air National Guard after 39 years of distinguished service.

Colonel Moddison is from Great Falls, MT. He joined the Air National Guard in October of 1984 and completed Basic Training in June of 1985. After serving fourteen years as an enlisted member, he received his commission in 1998. He began his career as a Drill Status Guardsman and was then hired as a full time Technician/Deputy Base Civil Engineer in 2001 following a career as a practicing architect.

After serving at the Wing level for several years, including deployment to Ground Zero on 9/12, he accepted a headquarters position at the National Guard Bureau where he served the field units and filled many key Civil Engineering and leadership roles. He assumed his current position in January of 2021 as the Deputy Director, Engineering, for the Air National Guard Director of Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection, and The Air National Guard Civil Engineer. In this capacity, Colonel Moddison oversees the policy development and programs that support over \$19B in world-class infrastructure and the 18,800 personnel who build, manage and protect those assets.

In addition to his numerous awards and decorations, Colonel Moddison is particularly proud to have once shot 79 on the Old Course at St. Andrews and my understanding is that he plans to devote a material portion of his retirement to his passion for golf, along with spending more time with his wife, Georgia and their dog, Maximus.

I thank Colonel Moddison for his service to this Nation. He is a Great American and will be missed in the Guard.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: AUDREY CORMIER

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Audrey Cormier as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Audrey is a community volunteer who is dedicated to advocating for youth and women of color. She is passionate about STEM education, diversity, climate advocacy, and golf, and has organized many events for underrepresented groups based on those interests.

As a member of Easter Hill United Methodist Church, she organized a trip for church youth to attend STEM days at Lawrence Livermore Labs, a Federal research facility. She also coordinated the attendance of five African-American sixth grade girls at a STEM conference at St. Mary's College.

Audrey's love of golf has led her to serve on several boards and organizations, including those that expose youth and African-American

• 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.

women to the sport. She founded a weekly Zoom session for women to discuss their golf journeys and provide support for each other, showing the impact of her love of golf on her community.

Audrey is also passionate about the positive impact diversity has on an organization and the importance of creating inclusive spaces. During her 30-year career at Chevron, Audrey served as the Manager of Diversity and Inclusion, where she was responsible for developing workplace inclusion strategies and mentorship programs. As an active alumna of Auburn University, she is also a member of the college's Advisory Board for the Office of Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity.

Audrey's dedication to her community and work to advocate for youth and women of color cannot be overstated. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Audrey Cormier for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING CHIEF OF STAFF
ELLIOTT GUFFIN

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to honor the public service of a long-time member of my team, George Elliott Guffin IV, and wish him success as he enters the next stage of his career.

A native of Jackson, Mississippi, Elliott is a proud graduate of the University of Mississippi—a fact he will share with you within five minutes of meeting him. Elliott began his congressional service in the United States Senate in the office of Senator ROGER WICKER prior to joining my staff in May 2016 and beginning a long tenure of service to the people of North Carolina's 8th, and later 9th, Congressional District.

As a young staff assistant, Elliott excelled at many things. His sunny disposition, eagerness to learn, and dedication to public service are the main reasons why I didn't fire him that time he forgot and stranded a scheduled tour group at the White House. However, my faith in Elliott was rewarded as he grew to be a trusted advisor, mentor to others, an exceptional leader, and a valued part of the team.

Advancing as a legislative correspondent, legislative aide, legislative assistant, senior legislative assistant, legislative director, deputy chief of staff, and chief of staff, Elliott never wavered in his commitment to serving our constituents. Over the years, he helped me secure legislation to push for the paving of roads for the Green Gap community in the Uwharrie National Forest—a process that will soon come to fruition. In addition, Elliott helped me secure multiple pieces of legislation to address the needs of our farmers, expand rural broadband access for North Carolinians, and increase support for our region's troops, military families, and veterans.

I am especially proud of the work Elliott accomplished in defense of the Second Amendment, drafting legislation with me to harden and secure schools and pushing for concealed carry reciprocity.

Over the years, Elliott has established himself as a trusted leader and friend to his col-

leagues. He was the backbone of our office—always willing to do whatever was needed to help the team. I have been impressed by the attention Elliott gave to his managerial role by setting aside time to work with each member of our staff in order to help them develop into great congressional staffers. Through his dedicated leadership, Elliott has taken what has always been a great team and built an exceptional one by understanding the values and motivations of his peers.

Of all his tremendous achievements for North Carolina and the country, I am most proud of the man I've had the privilege to watch him grow into. I always tell my staff that over all things, family is first. Elliott has taken this to heart since day one, even ensuring I made it to my son's soccer game as we drove from the opposite end of North Carolina. I've been able to see the same values watching him get married and start his own family, starting with his lovely wife, Ariel, and their beloved dog, Moose.

Elliott Guffin made a difference. He made a difference to me and to his colleagues. He made a difference in the lives of my constituents. He made a difference to this institution. And he made a difference to the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, please join me today in congratulating Elliott Guffin for more than seven years of incredible service to the House of Representatives and to the people of North Carolina, and wishing he, Ariel, and Moose the best in their future endeavors.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: BARBARA BREWER

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Barbara Brewer as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Barbara retired from the United States Air Force after 20 years but continued her service as a civilian employee and is now a Unit Program Coordinator in the 21st Airlift Squadron at Travis Air Force Base. In addition to her official duties in this role, Barbara selflessly volunteers for more responsibilities, including Security Program Manager, Paying Agent, and Resource Advisor. She has been essential to the squadron's success and is fondly referred to as "Squadron Mom."

Barbara is the liaison between the aircrew, government travel agencies and foreign embassies, ensuring rapid travel in support of USTRANSCOM operations. Her actions have directly contributed to the success of over 5,000 flight hours, 1,300 sorties, and 7 million pounds of cargo successfully delivered to meet our Nation's priorities. Every member of her squadron knows they can rely on Barbara regardless of time or day or the reason for the call, because she shows unflinching care for every servicemember.

Barbara was chosen as an Assistant Mission Commander for the Capstone Military Leadership Program where she manages the development of over 50 Generals and Flag Officers. On one mission she was asked to

speak about her experiences as a woman in the military with the women of the Zambian Air Force, a country where women were historically excluded from service.

Barbara's 35 years of service to our country have led to a profound impact on her squadron. Travis AFB, and beyond.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Barbara Brewer for her positive contributions to our community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICAID
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2023

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO
SABLAN**

OF NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to introduce the Medicaid Accountability Act of 2023. My legislation would remove barriers to operating Medicaid Fraud Control Units in the territories, advancing our ability to recover taxpayer money through the investigation of Medicaid provider fraud, abuse, and neglect.

The U.S. territories are subject to a hard, statutory cap on federal Medicaid support, unlike the 50 states and the District of Columbia. As such, any spending for the operation of an MFCU is counted against the cap and subtracts from the amount of federal funding available for the coverage of healthcare services.

Congress has acknowledged this challenge. We acted to exempt MFCU spending from Puerto Rico's cap through P.L. 115–31, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. This exemption was extended to the U.S. Virgin Islands through P.L. 115–123, Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. We did not, however, extend this exemption to the other territories although all territories are statutorily required to operate an MFCU.

Congress has previously agreed that spending towards systems improvement measures should be exempt from the cap. In addition to MFCUs, Congress has exempted spending related to Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System, Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive Program, and the design and operation of the claims and eligibility systems.

Without such exemptions, territories must choose between covering healthcare services or making systems improvements. And faced with various emergencies—from natural disasters to a pandemic—in recent years, territories have prioritized the coverage of healthcare services. Furthermore, certain territories have repeatedly exhausted their limited block grant, leaving no federal funding to support systems improvement measures.

My bill, the Medicaid Accountability Act of 2023, plugs a gap in our nation's ability to protect taxpayer money. By extending the exemption on MFCU spending to all territories, Congress can promote the success of the territories in meeting statutory obligations to combat healthcare fraud and safeguard our Medicaid population from abuse, neglect, and misappropriation of funds.

I thank my colleagues who joined me in introducing this legislation—Mr. MOYLAN, Ms. PLASKETT, and Ms. RADEWAGEN.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: BETTY REID SOSKIN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Betty Reid Soskin as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Betty is widely known for being the National Park Service's oldest park ranger who retired at the age of 100. She has lived in the East Bay since 1927, when her family moved from New Orleans.

As a young woman during World War II, Betty worked as a shipyard clerk for an all-Black auxiliary lodge of the segregated Boilermaker's union. In 1945 she and her husband founded one of the first Black-owned music stores, which remained open until 2019. Over the years she has worked as staff to a Berkeley city council member, a state Assemblywoman, and a California State Senator.

In the early 2000s, Betty became involved in the plans to open the Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park. This led to her career as a ranger which began in 2007, at the age of 85.

Betty led talks explaining the importance of the park in memorializing the contributions of women and African Americans working in war industries supporting the U.S. World War II efforts on the home front. She has used her own experiences and observations as a Black woman to bring light to untold stories of African Americans during WWII and underscore the racism and misogyny experienced by her and countless other women of color throughout her lifetime. Through hard work and storytelling, she has touched the lives of the thousands of park visitors and millions of Americans who can not only empathize with her story but celebrate and learn from it.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Betty Reid Soskin for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF
RICK LEE

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise to recognize Richard "Rick" Lee, owner and Chairman of the Board of Lee's Flower and Card Shop, founded in the District of Columbia in 1945.

Mr. Lee's long-standing business ties and community outreach have made a lasting impact on the District of Columbia and its residents in numerous ways.

As a business owner, Mr. Lee has served District of Columbia residents for more than 45 years. He has been named the Small Business Person of the Year by the DC Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Lee served as Vice President of the U Street Business Association, under Marion

Barry, who served as President, and later served four years as an appointed Statehood Commissioner under the late Harry Thomas Sr. He also held a mayoral appointment to the Board of Accountancy, also under Marion Barry.

Mr. Lee served on the Board of Directors of the D.C. Children's Trust Fund. He also served as Small Business Vice Chairman of a local chapter of the United Way, Chairman of the Banneker Boy Scouts of America, Vice President of the Kiwanis Club of NE Washington D.C., Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Theatre, Member of the Board of Directors of MANNA, Vice President of the Shaw Neighborhood Association and Member of the Washington Gas Consumer Advisory Board for six years.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I ask the House of Representatives to wish Richard "Rick" Lee a happy 80th birthday this month and recognize his leadership of Lee's Flower and Card Shop and his distinguished service to District of Columbia residents.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: BRENDA PLECHATY

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Brenda Plechaty as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Brenda's life was changed when her partner had a serious accident resulting in a traumatic brain injury. During his recovery, Brenda experienced the lack of support there is for the family members of those who have traumatic brain injuries. This led Brenda to create, run, and fully fund a free support group for family members who are caregivers to TBI survivors.

Brenda is dedicated to this group and helping the caregivers of TBI survivors, making herself available to caregivers every day, not just during the group's monthly meetings. Brenda's work for this group has led her to become fully immersed in the TBI community, willing to share information and provide support whenever possible to those who have been impacted by TBI.

In addition to her work supporting caregivers, Brenda serves on several commissions and committees in the city of Vallejo and is actively working with the city to improve the Vallejo Municipal Marina. A passionate rower, Brenda is involved in her rowing club's volunteering division and helped to create a summer youth rowing project that included instruction on the importance of the marina.

All facets of Brenda's work show her compassion and dedication to serving others.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Brenda Plechaty for her positive contributions to our community.

STONY DWIGHT RUSHING

HON. DAN BISHOP

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I rise to honor the legacy of the Union County Board of Commissioners Chair, Stony Dwight Rushing.

Stony loved his family and he loved Union County. He was fiercely devoted to his wife, Anne-Marie, and his two children, Reagan and RyLee. Stony also served Union County for four terms on the Board of Commissioners from 2002 to 2006, and then again from 2014 to 2023. Over the course of these four terms, Stony's fellow Board Members chose him to serve as Chairman for two of them. Stony was a congenial presence and a highly effective servant to his community. He stood for our God-given rights and took every opportunity to make people's lives better. His larger-than-life presence that still echoes throughout Union County will truly be missed.

Outside of his involvement with the Union County Board of Commissioners, Stony mentored young North Carolinians on the importance of firearm proficiency and safety. Stony served as a certified firearms instructor and owner of Take Aim Training Range. In fact, he was the NRA South Carolina Youth Hunter Education Challenge State Coordinator, and was honored as the 2013 NC Governor's Conservation Achievement Award winner for "Hunter Education Instructor of the Year." Stony also served as the Union District Chairman for the Boy Scouts of America between 2006 and 2009.

On behalf of the entire 8th Congressional District of North Carolina, I rise to honor and celebrate Chairman Stony Rushing's fruitful life and dedicated service to others. I thank Stony and may he rest in peace.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: ALICE WILSON-FRIED

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Alice Wilson-Fried as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Alice is dedicated to teaching the youth of Solano County about the importance of democracy and civic engagement. Seeing the need to educate young people about voting rights and civic duty, Alice implemented the Democracy Matters program at Golden Hills Community School. This curriculum gives students the opportunity to learn about the importance of democracy and its impact, allowing students to see themselves as leaders with a voice in the policy process.

The importance and impact of this program has been recognized by the California Secretary of State, who is in discussions to use it in their statewide youth outreach efforts. Through the framework of Democracy Matters, Alice has given students hands-on experiences with civic engagement, including coordinating a mock City Council meeting in the

Suisun City council chambers and training students on how to conduct a forum with Solano Youth Council. She also worked with the Solano County Registrar of Voters and League of Women Voters to train students who volunteered as poll workers. These hands-on opportunities have allowed students to learn about the importance of citizenship and the power of their voices in our democracy.

Alice's work to educate the next generation about democracy will have an impact for years to come. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Alice Wilson-Fried for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING PENELOPE GROSS
ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise to congratulate Penelope "Penny" Gross on her retirement after 27 years of serving as the Fairfax County Mason District Supervisor and 21 years of chairing the Potomac Watershed Roundtable.

Elected in 1995 to represent the Mason District, Penny has been an advocate for affordable housing, expanded public transportation, and violence prevention. Penny represents Fairfax County on the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, the INOVA Health System Board of Trustees, and the Potomac Watershed Roundtable (PWR).

Shortly after becoming the chair of PWR, she encouraged the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to help in developing strategies that will bring the state of Virginia up to the standard that Maryland had already set, regarding efforts that support the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Program. With that, in July 2003, the Potomac River Tributary Strategy was developed by DCR.

In January 2004, Penny led the PWR in discussions for a 2004 vision, whose focal points influenced many water-related issues, such as Stormwater Management, Wastewater Treatment Plants, and Total Maximum Daily Load. In April later that year Penny was appointed by then Governor Mark Warner to the Chesapeake Bay Blue Ribbon Funding Panel. A panel tasked with finding alternative sources for funding the Chesapeake Bay Cleanup. By October 2004, Chairman Gross announced some recommendations on behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Blue Bay Ribbon Finance Panel.

On the state and national level, Penny is a past president of the Virginia Association of Counties, vice-chair of the National Association of Counties' Energy, Environment, and Land Use Committee, and past president of the National Association of Regional Councils. She was first appointed by Governor Mark Warner to the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) to the Chesapeake Executive Council, which she chaired from March 2006 until August 2008, and continues to serve.

I had the great pleasure of serving with Penny during my 14 years on the Board, first representing the Providence District and then as Chairman. The work that she has done for Fairfax County is outstanding and we will continue to honor her legacy as a public servant. Penny Gross's commitment to our community and the mission of local government is unparalleled. She leaves behind a legacy that will enrich our community for generations to come. Her career in public service is truly commendable and deserving of our heartfelt gratitude. All through her tenure as Chair of the PWR, she proved to be an exemplary leader, and continues to attract very influential and dedicated environmentally minded individuals to the roundtable.

Mr. Speaker, Pro Tempore Penny Gross's commitment to public service is through her work in Fairfax County. Though she may be retiring, I suspect that she will continue to remain active in the causes that are important to her. I commend her for her service and ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on her retirement.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: AMBER DUNCAN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Amber Duncan as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Amber is a Community Readiness Specialist for the Military and Family Readiness Center at Travis Air Force Base. Her duties focus on assessing personnel and family needs while providing work and life services related to the demands of the military mission.

In her role, Amber has initiated countless programs and events to assist servicemembers and their families. She pioneered a database to track personnel preparing to leave the military workforce, allowing Travis Air Force Base to achieve 100 percent accountability in notifying personnel about the process and options for their transition out of the military.

Amber is also passionate about strengthening military families and connecting them with the local community. She developed a needs assessment to identify limitations and their corrections, worked with the Base Chaplain Agency in hosting courses promoting the strengthening of family interactions, and has worked to foster resiliency for 46 newly appointed military members.

Amber's work has benefited military personnel and their families, and her dedication to aiding members of the Travis community does not go unnoticed.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Amber Duncan for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING CELEBRA GRAPEVINE
2023

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the 2nd Annual Celebra Grapevine festival which will take place on October 7th in Grapevine, Texas and is dedicated to celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan established Hispanic Heritage Month to celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions made by Americans of Hispanic descent. Consistent with this fine tradition, Celebra Grapevine provides North Texans with an opportunity to embrace diversity and honor the Hispanic heritage that has influenced traditions, art, and cuisine throughout our community. Celebra means to celebrate in Spanish, which is a fitting name for this festival. Grapevine's Latino population, which makes up more than 30 percent of the city's population, plays an important role in growing the city's economy and making the city a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

I commend the City of Grapevine and Celebra Grapevine for their commitment to fostering unity and building bridges in our community. I hope their festival is a great success.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: ALISSA STOLZ

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Alissa Stolz as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Alissa is the Head of School at East Bay Montessori where she has demonstrated outstanding school leadership throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

The pandemic impacted schools in previously unimaginable ways, and school leaders were called upon to hold their communities together. Alissa was instrumental in keeping East Bay Montessori intact throughout the pandemic, avoiding any COVID-19 outbreaks and never having to lay off any staff or faculty.

Alissa was committed to in-person learning, and East Bay Montessori quickly reopened with an outdoor classroom set-up that let students and teachers come together and learn in innovative ways. This decision allowed children to continue to learn through peer collaboration and face-to-face interactions.

Alissa provided a strong vision for East Bay Montessori during times of uncertainty and change. Her work led her to be featured in the American Montessori Society's magazine, and she was selected to present at the International Montessori Congress in Bangkok. The impact of Alissa's work goes beyond East Bay Montessori—she is the model of a capable leader who acts in the interest of her community, inspiring educators across the globe.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Alissa Stolz for her positive contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING KENNY WAYNE
SHEPHERD

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the musical achievements of Kenny Wayne Shepherd.

Kenny received his first guitar from his grandmother at the age of four and began to play the guitar in earnest at age seven. It is here when he began his love of the American genre of blues. With a Stratocaster electric guitar replica, he taught himself to play one note at a time. Growing up in Shreveport, Louisiana, he was exposed to music that influenced his relentless pursuit of his guitar skills and love of this art form. From Elvis to Ledbelly, the combination of country, blues, and rock which flowed through his hometown created the musician we hear today. His parents brought all varieties of music into his home, which deepened his appreciation for the talents and stylings of other artists. From Hank Williams, James Brown, and Crosby Stills Nash and Young to Stevie Ray Vaughan and Albert King, these artists were the foundation of the musical talents we all enjoy today from Kenny Wayne.

At a very young age, Kenny's father brought John Lee Hooker and Muddy Waters to Shreveport to play. This was the moment that turned on the light of blues music in Kenny Wayne's life. Kenny's father, Ken, remembers his son playing his electric guitar with headphones on listening to CDs of John Lee Hooker, B.B. King and Howling Wolf. Kenny was able to pick up by ear the unique aspects of American blues music. Stevie Ray Vaughan asked a young Kenny Wayne if he would like to watch from the side of the stage during his concert and on that night the impact of this incredible guitar virtuoso was ingrained in a 7-year-old aspiring musician.

Chris Layton, who played drums in Stevie Ray's band, Double Trouble, later became the drummer for the Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band. He remembers the exceptional talents of Kenny when he heard some of his earliest recordings. Chris was deeply impressed by Kenny's determination, focus and dedication to his craft.

Kenny had the opportunity to travel with his father to many different music venues, where he played to a variety of audiences. Many folks began to point out the remarkable talent that he displayed. Bill Pfordresher, a record

producer, told Kenny's father that they should cut a record. Ken Shepherd had three rules for Kenny. First, that he must finish high school before he would allow him to pursue music full time. Ken's second rule was once music was no longer fun for Kenny he could stop at any time. The final rule was Kenny had to be involved in every business decision that was made about his career. They, then called in some favors from friends and recorded a record in New Orleans which quickly took off. Kenny now found himself as the opening act for the Eagles.

Kenny's circumstances in his career success were unique. He and his dad were a father-son team and Kenny was not the lead singer in the early days of his band. Kenny was able to overcome these challenges and continue on an upward path of success, while maintaining a strong relationship with his father. Kenny Wayne became a remarkable songwriter who has honed his guitar skills around amazing songs. His songwriting chops and collaborations are as good as it gets.

Kenny Wayne's talents were a magnet to very accomplished songwriting collaborators. Record Executive Jeff Aldrich surrounded Kenny Wayne with a crack team of collaborators including Mark Selby, Tia Sillers and Danny Tate. They were welcomed like family as the songs on the albums *Ledbetter Heights* and *Trouble is . . .* were written and recorded, and helped him reach his true potential as a musician. The emotional power of Kenny's songwriting is probably no stronger than in the song "I Found Love."

Kenny has been a leader in involving women in his path to success, from Tia Sillers as a leading songwriter to Kristin Forbes in leading Team Kenny Wayne Shepherd. His co-manager for over 20 years, Kristin Forbes has played an incredibly vital role in Kenny Wayne's career. She has known Kenny since she worked at his record company early in his career. Kristin and Kenny's father have directed the team that has laid down the path of success. She is a highly skilled leader and a thoughtful voice of balance for Kenny, Ken and the band.

Kenny is a trailblazer, who, along with a cadre of incredible accompanying musicians, amazing songwriters, and the perfect mix of vocals, is an icon in American music. Kenny continues to expand his musical horizons and skills, including his own vocals.

As important as Kenny's musical talents is his complete dedication to his wife, Hannah, and his six beloved children. He is a remarkable father and role model for his family. He and his wife have made it their life's work to ensure limitless possibilities for their children by nurturing their interests, talents, and abilities in every imaginable way. Kenny is selflessly humble and appreciative of all those around him who have been a part of his path to success. He is ceaseless with giving credit

to his parents, his hometown, his upbringing, and friends and family in helping him along the way.

Our nation is grateful for Kenny's passion, commitment to his musical skills and his love of family and his fellow musicians in his continued journey to share his talents with folks here and around the world. American blues is a unique genre of music that captures the soul of our country, and Kenny is a rare, and irreplaceable part of that emotion. He is the quintessential artist and creator. I thank Kenny Wayne Shepherd, for music that has and will continue to inspire generations to come, for his devotion to family, fellow artists, associates and friends, and for his goodness and kindness. May God continue to continue to bless him and his family, team and bandmates.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: ADJOA McDONALD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 6, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Adjoa McDonald as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Adjoa has dedicated her career to advocating for women and youth in the city of Vallejo.

Adjoa founded the Vallejo Project, an organization dedicated to developing the leadership skills of youth and young adults so they can improve the systems that impact them. Adjoa's work has created a platform that empowers and uplifts women and youth in Vallejo, providing them with a network to connect, learn, and support each other.

Beyond advocating for women individually, Adjoa also fights to improve the status of women throughout society. She fights to address issues that impact all women, such as gender inequality, domestic violence, and economic disempowerment.

Adjoa cares deeply about working collaboratively to make broad change. She knows the importance of her work because she has faced the obstacles that many women in Vallejo, and the United States, experience today. She is an example of the strength and resilience that women possess and use those qualities to make a difference for the women in her community.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Adjoa McDonald for her positive contributions to our community.