may their commitment grow even stronger as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

## NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

### HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 22, 2016*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture this Saturday, September 24, 2016.

As the nineteenth museum to join the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of African American History and Culture joins the world's largest museum, education, and research complex. It is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, history, and culture.

When the Smithsonian was founded in 1846, the United States was a far less perfect union than the one we live in today, and the idea of a museum that would tell the story of African Americans could hardly have been imagined. Yet there can be no denying that the story of America and its vitality, resilience, and optimism are rooted and reflected in the African American experience.

In the words of Lonnie G. Bunch III, founding director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, ''there are few things as powerful and as important as a people, as a nation that is steeped in its history.''

As Members of Congress, we have the privilege of representing the entirety of the American people and working in the ''People's House'' and under the glorious dome of our U.S. Capitol and its crowning feature, the Statue of Freedom. In the pages of history, you will find extensive information about the architect of the Capitol, the artist who designed the Statue of Freedom, and the foundry owner who was commissioned for the casting of the statue. What is less known is the story of Philip Reid, the enslaved laborer of the foundry owner who was the only known slave working on Freedom and instrumental to its successful casting in bronze.

Philip Reid worked on the casting of Freedom from 1860 through 1862, despite the beginning of the Civil War and its toll on construction of the Capitol. When the statue was finally completed and placed atop the Capitol Dome in 1863, Reid had become a free man thanks to the Compensated Emancipation Act signed by President Lincoln.

The story of Philip Reid is the story of America, and only one of the many histories and cultural contributions that will be shared with the American public at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Like the building of the U.S. Capitol, the creation of this museum has taken almost a century, but its time has finally come.

Today, we celebrate its opening and its tribute to generations of Americans past, present and future and the defining way in which our country has been shaped by our African American brothers and sisters.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I recall the words of the Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes who wrote that ''America is a dream . . . not my dream alone, but our dream. Not my world alone, but your world and my world.'' Let us all share in this great dream made real together.

## INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE OPENING OF THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

### HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 22, 2016*

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer a bipartisan resolution which recognizes the opening of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) on Saturday, September 24, 2016. I am so proud that over 110 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle have joined me as original cosponsors.

This weekend will mark a historic moment in our Nation's history. Hundreds of thousands of people will convene in Washington, D.C. on the National Mall to celebrate and welcome this historic institution which is dedicated to documenting African American life, history, art, and culture. Many people in this body, across the nation, and around the world shall celebrate this great day.

Tonight, I applaud Dr. Lonnie Bunch, III, the Founding Director, Kinshasha Holman Conwill, the Deputy Director, Cheryl Smith, Chief of Staff, and the hundreds and thousands of people who worked so hard to make this dream a reality. For over 10 years, they have toiled day in and day out to prepare for the opening and operation of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

I know that the leadership and staff of the Museum have labored tirelessly for years and years—designing the building, raising funds, envisioning the exhibits, collecting artifacts, conducting research, and meeting with the many people across this country and around the world who are so excited about this historic moment. Mr. Speaker, I thank each and every one of them for their hard work, dedication, and determination to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Mr. Speaker, the National Museum of African American History and Culture took over 100 years to evolve from a dream to a reality in the Nation's Capital on the National Mall. The most recent congressional effort began with the late former Congressman Thomas ''Mickey'' Leland from Texas who revitalized the legislation in 1985. I was proud to continue his work and fought for 15 years for the bill to pass the House and Senate before finally being signed into law by President George W. Bush.

It was a long, hard, labor of love, and there were so many wonderful Members on both sides of the aisle and the dome, who helped accomplish this mission which spanned generations, decades, and movements. In 1993, the late Senator Paul Martin Simon from Illinois introduced a companion to the House legislation. Beginning in 2001, former Senator Sam Brownback from Kansas, former Senator Max Cleland from Georgia, and former Senator Chris Dodd from Connecticut joined the House coalition which included Representatives William ''Bill'' Clay from Missouri, J.C. Watts, Jr. from Oklahoma, and Jack Kingston from Georgia who helped take this bipartisan, bicameral effort across the finish line.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not also thank some of the former congressional staff who worked for so many years to pass the legislation which authorized the Museum—Tammy Boyd in my office; Kern Watson with former Rep. J.C. Watts; LaRochelle Young with former Sen. Sam Brownback: and Donni Turner with former Sen. Max Cleland. They refused to give up; they refused to give in, and we thank them for their hard work and service.

On the eve of this long-awaited day, I join with more than 110 of my colleagues in congratulating Smithsonian Institution's family, the countless staff, and many volunteers of the National Museum of African American History and Culture on their persistence, their determination, and—very, very soon—on their success.

Tonight, we should all be proud, and each and every one of us must take the necessary hours, days, weeks, and months to visit, learn, explore, and reflect on the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture and all that it signifies and entails.

## TRIBUTE TO THE CLARINDA LIONS CLUB

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 22, 2016*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 70th anniversary of the Clarinda Lions Club of Clarinda, Iowa. The members of this service club exemplify the Lions motto: ''We Serve.'' The Clarinda Lions Club members demonstrate this philosophy of selfless volunteer service each and every day.

The Clarinda Lions Club was chartered by Lions International in June 1946. Lions International began in 1917, when a Chicago businessman encouraged his local business club to go beyond business and focus on improving their communities and the world. After contacting other service groups to join this new effort, Lions International was born. Lions Clubs offer a number of services to the communities they serve. The Clarinda Lions Club puts on an annual pancake meal to raise funds to benefit the community, sponsors the Santa House during the holiday season, and participates in the SightFirst international program to help restore sight and prevent blindness. They also assist local residents with repurposing unwanted prescription glasses and send glasses overseas to people who have limited vision care.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate the Clarinda Lions Club for the difference they continue to make in their community. Over the past 70 years, their members have been dedicated to helping and serving others, and it is a great honor to recognize them today. I urge my colleagues in the United States House of