

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ART IBLETO, RECIPIENT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AWARD

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 6, 2017*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Art Ibleto, whom I have selected to receive the American Dream Award for California's 5th Congressional District. This award recognizes the achievements of immigrants in my district who have made remarkable contributions to our communities in the areas of Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, or Community Service. Mr. Ibleto is very deserving of this award and recognition.

Mr. Ibleto was born in Argentina and raised in Sesta Godono, Italy. He immigrated to the United States in 1949. He is a successful businessman and a well-known Italian chef.

During World War II, Mr. Ibleto was imprisoned for refusing to fight for Mussolini's army against the Americans because he was opposed to fascism. He escaped and joined an underground network known as the "Partisans" to oppose Nazi Germany and the Axis Powers. Following the war, Art immigrated to the United States and settled in Sonoma County, California, where he worked as a vegetable picker, a mechanic, truck driver, and factory worker. He and his wife Vicki joined the Sons of Italy in 1958 to help other Italian Americans in the United States, and he served as both the Vice President and President of the California State Chapter. He continues his public service as a member of the Sonoma County Farm Bureau and Chamber of Commerce.

His business career began in 1961, when he bought a small farm to raise hogs and cows and grow potatoes, before moving on to sell Christmas trees and building duplexes. In 1974 he began Spaghetti Palace at the Sonoma County Fair and it became an instant success, leading him to begin a career supplying pasta and Italian cuisine to Californians. His reputation and the success of Spaghetti Palace has led him to become affectionately referred to as "The Pasta King." He now owns a restaurant and catering business by the same name in addition to 75 acres of grapes used by local wineries. He cooks pasta for many charity organizations in our community. His successes and volunteer work have led him to be the recipient of both the City of Santa Rosa and City of Rohnert Park Honorary Citizen of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize Mr. Art Ibleto for his achievements and for enriching our community. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today with the American Dream Award.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROGER THOMAS

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 6, 2017*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise along with my colleagues, Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI, Congressman JARED HUFFMAN and Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, to recognize Roger Thomas, Captain of the *Salty Lady*, member of the California Outdoor Hall of Fame, and lifelong advocate to keep west coast salmon fisheries alive and sustainable. Many in this chamber, the California Legislature and multiple agencies have worked with Roger for decades and are proud to call this honorable and remarkable man a friend, mentor and colleague. He is one of the most decent and hard-working human beings one can know.

Roger's passion for fishing started as a child. Born in Gilroy, California, he started fishing at an early age for striped bass from the beaches along Monterey Bay and later for salmon from a small boat launched at the Monterey Pier. He was hooked on salmon fishing and became a regular customer on charter boats out of San Francisco. Before too long, one of the captains offered Roger a job as a deck hand and, as they say, the rest is history. Roger received his captain's license in 1968.

While working full-time for the County of Santa Clara on housing issues, he ran charter boats on weekends. At one point he had acquired a fleet of five boats that were run by several captains. In 1981, he retired from his government job and dedicated all of his time and energy to fisheries and ocean conservation. There hasn't been a salmon related association or council that Roger hasn't served on.

Since 1973, he has been the President of the Golden Gate Fishermen's Association which represents charter boats from Fort Bragg to Monterey and carries some 200,000 anglers each year. He is also the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Salmon Association which represents commercial and recreational fishermen and works on protecting salmon habitat. For 14 years, he has served on the Pacific Fisheries Management Council which, among other duties, sets the ocean salmon seasons. Roger is a member of the Bay Delta Advisory board, the Winter Run-Captive Broodstock Committee, the Central Valley Fisheries Coalition, the Marine Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Commerce, the Coastal Resources Foundation, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, the National Sea Grant Review Panel and the Marine Resources Committee.

Roger runs his charters on the *Salty Lady* out of Sausalito and Half Moon Bay. He proudly calls himself a salmon charter operation, but additionally runs whale watching and nature trips and has introduced thousands of children and adults to the magic of marine life.

He has spent more than 10,000 days on the ocean and you will be hard-pressed to find someone with deeper knowledge and appreciation for that ecosystem. He also has the gift of storytelling and a mind that remembers every detail, including one of his most vivid ones from his childhood. He saw the last of the San Joaquin Spring run chinook salmon before they went extinct. His uncle took him to Friant Dam right after it was constructed. The salmon were stuck at the end of the line imposed to divert water to fields in the San Joaquin valley. They were "big fish," Roger says stretching out his arms, "just big fish."

Roger is a familiar face in Congress where he has represented the interests of the charter boat fleet and the health of west coast salmon stocks for decades. In the 1980s, he was appointed by then Vice President George Bush to the National Sea Grant Review Panel. In this role he traveled to ports around the country and helped decide which projects were worthy and would be funded.

Roger was instrumental in former Representative George Miller's 1992 Central Valley Improvement Act and its eventual passage. The CVP is a key law to stop environmental harm to salmon and the Bay Delta. When salmon populations collapsed in 2008 and 2009, Roger worked closely with Representative MIKE THOMPSON to provide disaster relief to salmon fishermen.

Roger Thomas' tireless work has earned him the respect and adoration of countless people. With his recent tragic diagnosis of late stage cancer, it is our intention through these extended remarks in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to express our appreciation for his outstanding work and lasting contributions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members of the House of Representatives to join us in celebrating the life of Roger Thomas who loves fish, loves the ocean, and above all loves people. He has touched many hearts, protected many livelihoods and has earned the admiration of coastal communities up and down the western seaboard.

HONORING SUZANNE SMITH, RECIPIENT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AWARD

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 6, 2017*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Suzanne Smith, whom I have selected to receive the American Dream Award for California's 5th Congressional District. This award recognizes the achievements of immigrants in my district who have made remarkable contributions to our communities in the areas of Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, or Community Service. Ms. Smith is very deserving of this award and recognition.

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