

George faced heavy racial discrimination and was not allowed to join the American Bar Association or the Chicago Bar Association. Despite this atmosphere, he became one of the most prominent and respected criminal defense lawyers in Illinois. George often worked as the court-appointed defense counsel for crimes of violence and with the NAACP and ACLU on cases of racial segregation. During this time he worked closely with Thurgood Marshall, among others, and was asked to represent Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. George fought tirelessly for equal voting rights, desegregation in schools, open housing, the right to sit on juries, abolishing the death penalty; and fairness in the criminal justice system.

In 1964, George was elected to the Circuit Court of Cook County, where he gained recognition as one of the finest criminal court judges. Later, in 1969, he was appointed to the First District Appellate Court of Illinois. After gaining a reputation as one of the most thoughtful and fair jurists, President Gerald Ford appointed George to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in 1976. After retiring in 1987 at the age of 75, George returned to the private practice of law to work on civil and criminal litigation, and to continue to teach at John Marshall Law School.

A member of the bar for over 70 years, George exemplifies service to his community. He led his life fighting for a fair criminal justice system and, in 2011, George played a key role in successfully abolishing the death penalty in Illinois. In addition to the many honors George has received throughout his years fighting for equality, the U.S. Postal Service in New Bedford was also renamed after him, as the "Honorable Judge George N. Leighton Post Office Building."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the Honorable George N. Leighton on this joyous occasion of his 105th birthday. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing him many more years of health and happiness.

RECOGNIZING THE CATHOLICS FOR HOUSING, INCORPORATED 2017 FATHER GERARD CREEDON HOUSING AWARD RECIPIENTS

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2017*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the anniversary of Catholics for Housing, Incorporated and to congratulate the Father Gerard Creedon Housing Award recipients.

Catholics for Housing, Incorporated was established in 1979 by Father Gerard Creedon and a dedicated group of community members. Together they began working to expand affordable housing options and prevent homelessness in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter entitled, "The Right to a Decent Home." Now in its 38th year, Catholics for Housing has grown substantially in both breadth of mission and clientele. Since its inception, the organization has expanded to provide assistance in 21 counties within the vicinity of the Arlington Catholic Diocese.

The organization has adapted over the years with new goals and a renewed vision while remaining true to its core mission of collaborating with others to support the development, construction, and rehabilitation of affordable housing, as well as to provide senior citizen rental assistance, security deposit assistance, and collaborative education and advocacy efforts. Catholics for Housing provides a continuum of housing through life skills training, senior rental assistance in Fairfax County, down payment assistance in Prince William, Fairfax, Arlington and Loudoun Counties, security deposit assistance, rental homes in Vienna, Arlington, Fairfax and Fredericksburg and homeownership opportunities.

Catholics for Housing is sustained through the dedication and generosity of its board, staff, volunteers, and many community partners. It is my honor to include in the RECORD the following Catholics for Housing partners for sustaining the vision established by Father Creedon and our dedicated community members. The 2017 Father Gerard Creedon Housing Award honorees are St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church and Ms. Alice G. Haase.

St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church and its parishioners are a Catholic community committed to nourishing through education and to proclaiming and promoting social justice. Through the St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church Tithing Fund Allocation, the church has generously provided grants to Catholics for Housing. For the last twelve years, St. Mary of Sorrows has provided funding to ensure the sustainment of the Virginia Ely Senior Rental Assistance Program and the Edie Street Security Deposit Assistance Program. Due to their continued support, the annual funding provided by St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church covers the expenses so that two seniors may live independently for a year and covers the security deposit for 10 rental homes.

Alice G. Haase, Esquire is the co-founder of CastroHaase PLLC, a commercial real estate law firm located in Washington, D.C. She dedicates much of her spare time to the betterment of the community. Alice has extended her services to Catholics for Housing to increase access to affordable housing throughout Northern Virginia and further the reach of programs in the community.

In recognition of the efficacy of the unique programs offered, Catholics for Housing has received numerous awards and honors. Catholics for Housing has been recognized by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development for "Best Practices" and received the Best New Project in Northern Virginia Award and an Arlington Community Award. In addition, the organization was named "One of the Best" by the Catalogue of Philanthropy in 2005–06 and again in 2011–12.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the 2017 Father Gerard Creedon Housing Award recipients and in commending the efforts of Catholics for Housing, Incorporated, its board, staff, and dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to provide needed support and assistance to many in our community.

HONORING THE KERN WATER BANK AUTHORITY FOR TWENTY YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

**HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 19, 2017*

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and am joined by my colleagues from California, Congressman DAVID VALADAO and Congressman JIM COSTA, to recognize an essential resource in our community—the Kern Water Bank—and the incredibly positive impact that it has made upon California's Central Valley over the past twenty years.

This year, the Kern Water Bank celebrates twenty years since the signing of the 75 year Habitat Conservation Plan, which allowed the Water Bank to begin operating at its full capacity in the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley. Prior to this monumental agreement, the roughly 32-square mile stretch of land on which the Kern Water Bank operates today was used largely for farming while California experienced wide fluctuations in water supply. The creation of the Kern Water Bank Authority and eventually the Kern Water Bank exemplifies the innovative and determined spirit of the Kern community and the effectiveness with which this community has been able to assist in meeting California's water needs.

Prior to the creation of the Kern Water Bank Authority, the California Department of Water Resources sought to create a system that would serve as a response to the water shortages that often plagued California's agricultural community. The Department of Water Resources struggled for years to achieve anything tangible—facing various legal, institutional, and environmental setbacks that made the project seem nearly impossible. It was at this point that the Kern Water Bank Authority came to fruition, and through the hard work and cooperation of both public and private contributors, the Kern Water Bank was finally feasible. Now, after twenty years of successful operation, we recognize the degree to which the Kern Water Bank has impacted California's water situation, the greater San Joaquin environment and the Central Valley community that Congressman VALADAO, Congressman COSTA and I share.

The daily operations and functions of the Kern Water Bank greatly assisted in combating the drought that has plagued California, especially throughout the past five years. As Delta pumping was slowly reduced, the Kern Water Bank served a particularly important purpose as the prominent storage facility for the water that local farmers and agricultural communities needed even more desperately in light of the drought. Additionally, the Kern Water Bank has become a notable wildlife resource of regional significance. The environment created by the Kern Water Bank supports many special-status species in alignment with the Habitat Conservation Plan and EPA standards, and creates a unique wetlands area that serves as a refuge for local wildlife. Very rarely do projects of this nature serve so many purposes all at once, and we believe that the Kern Water Bank serves as the ideal model for other similar projects.

The Kern Water Bank is the largest operation of its kind in California, and has even