

Judge Patricia Gifford, who recently passed away, unexpectedly, just shy of her 80th birthday.

She was a pillar in the Marion County, Indianapolis, Indiana, community; a role model for so many lawyers and judges; and a dear friend. She will be forever remembered for inspiring women and redefining the role of women in the courtroom.

She was one of only two females in her law school class. She was part of a team of the first women in the country appointed to prosecute only sex crimes cases, primarily rape cases, and she was the sixth female to assume the bench in Indiana.

In 1992, Judge Gifford gained international recognition for presiding over the famous rape trial of former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson. The extensive international media coverage could have easily turned that trial into a circus, but not under her watch. Judge Gifford was widely praised throughout the country for keeping order throughout the trial and presiding over a fair trial. Those of us who practiced in her court expected nothing less.

She retired after a 30-year distinguished career on the bench. The people of Indiana's Fifth Congressional District, and especially those in Marion County, are forever grateful for Judge Gifford's many contributions to our Hoosier community.

We join her family—her husband, Bob Butsch; her daughter, Jennifer Butsch Petit; and her family—in mourning our loss.

#### NATIONAL MENINGITIS AWARENESS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to support a resolution that I am introducing to raise awareness of the danger of meningitis B.

Nearly 1,000 Americans contract the meningitis disease each year, and for more than 15 percent of the victims, it is, tragically, fatal. I want to share the stories of two of those victims here today.

Emily Stillman was born on September 11, 1993. She used to joke that she had the unluckiest birthday, but her mom, Alicia, was always quick to reply: No; it was one of the luckiest days of our lives.

Emily was a 19-year-old sophomore at Kalamazoo College in Michigan when she contracted meningitis B, and on January 31, 2013, Emily called home complaining of a headache. She was hospitalized for just 36 hours, and then she passed away.

Emily had a rare strain of meningitis for which there was no approved vaccine yet in the United States. It was a shock, of course, to the Stillman family that their young daughter, who was so vibrant and full of life, was taken away at such a young age.

Then, in 2014, just a little later, the vaccine for meningitis B was finally approved by the FDA and made available here in the United States after I and several other of my colleagues had been advocating for its approval. Yet, even today, fewer than 10 percent of young people receive the meningitis B vaccine.

Emily's mother, Alicia, who is in the gallery with us today, founded The Emily Stillman Foundation to help preserve her daughter's memory and also advocate both for vaccination and organ donation.

Mr. Speaker, Patti Wukovits also lost her 17-year-old daughter Kimberly in 2012. Patti is also joining us here in the House gallery today.

Her daughter Kimberly Coffey was a high school senior on Long Island and was just 17 years old when she contracted meningitis B back in 2012. Her parents, of course, were blindsided, thinking she had been vaccinated. Within hours of being hospitalized, she went into cardiac arrest and her organs began to fail. Her mother had to make that agonizing decision to actually remove her from life support.

To honor Kimberly's memory, Patti founded The Kimberly Coffey Foundation, with the mission of also educating others about the importance of vaccination against meningitis B.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution that I am introducing today will designate April 24 as National Meningitis Awareness Day to help educate other parents and other young people about the dangers of meningitis and the important need for vaccination.

Alicia Stillman and Patti Wukovits already know that alerting families about a simple vaccine can prevent a tragedy. It is also time for us, Mr. Speaker, to broaden the awareness so that they are not just doing this on their own.

□ 1230

#### BREAKING THE SILENCE: ADDRESSING SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. "Have courage and be kind." These were the words Megan Rondini left behind on a whiteboard in her school apartment.

Yesterday, at a Sexual Assault on Campus Forum at Rice University in Houston, Texas, sponsored by the Victims' Rights Caucus, Megan's father, Mike Rondini, spoke these words. He is from Austin. He tries to live by these words every day.

Megan Rondini was sexually assaulted while a student at the University of Alabama in 2015. Doing everything a sexual assault victim should do, Megan immediately called the police and went to the hospital, but the hospital did not have a sexual assault forensic examiner or a SANE on staff, meaning no one there was trained to properly deal with a sexual assault vic-

tim or properly collect DNA evidence for a rape kit.

As a former prosecutor and a judge, I have seen, firsthand, the trauma and pain that rape causes victims. Sometimes that pain never goes away. The hospital's failure to provide adequate care left Megan feeling hopeless and alone.

After the hospital, she went to the police station, and there she was treated with disdain. The police didn't believe her and instead read her, the victim—get this—the Miranda warnings. Are you kidding me? Rape is never the fault of the victim.

When Megan sought counseling at the university, the counselor abruptly interrupted her and told her she was close to the family of the rapist and promptly turned Megan away, providing no other counselor.

Megan was completely failed by the system—by the university, the hospital, and the police. Mr. Speaker, not long after, she took her life.

Megan's story is heartbreaking, but her memory reminds us that we must be tenacious in fighting sexual assault on campus and everywhere else. The unfortunate reality, Mr. Speaker, is that stories like Megan's are common.

Congressmen OLSON, CULBERSON, and I joined together at the forum yesterday, and we all heard stories about this, firsthand, from victims. It is always personal. When victims are ignored and rejected, they feel like they have been abandoned, and in many cases, they have been. They are forced to relive their attack over and over again.

Last year, I introduced, along with my friend, CAROLYN MALONEY, the bipartisan Megan Rondini Act, a bill that would require hospitals to provide access to a SAFE (Sexual Assault Forensics Examiner) or a SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) or have a plan in place to get a victim to a nearby hospital that can provide forensic medical services. Professor and sexual assault nurse examiner Nancy Downing from Texas A&M testified yesterday that by providing SANEs to rape victims, a hospital can dramatically improve a victim's chance to recover emotionally and medically from the attack.

In addition, I am a cosponsor to CAROLYN MALONEY'S (NY) bipartisan legislation to require colleges to have a sexual assault victim advocate on staff to assist and advise sexual assault victims. There should be no more school counselors that turn victims away.

The director of public policy for Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, Chris Kaiser, also testified, and he talked about how the Association and other associations are working on many levels to provide a culture of change within law enforcement and the attitude of peace officers regarding this type of crime, and also, more reporting require.