

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

MARKING THE PASSING OF THOMAS DUNCAN

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor the life of a dedicated former House employee, Thomas G. Duncan, who passed away on January 16, 2019 in Fairfax, Virginia.

Tom was born June 10, 1952, in Long Beach, California, to Thomas Owen Duncan and Keith Anne Gamble Duncan and grew up in Dallas, Texas and Birmingham, Michigan. He graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1974 and the University of Virginia School of Law in 1978. Following his graduation from law school, Tom began a distinguished thirty-year career in public service in the House of Representatives. He began his work in the House in 1979 as an Assistant Parliamentarian and rose to serve as a Deputy Parliamentarian for ten years. He went on to serve with distinction as a staff member on the House Committee on Financial Services, serving as general counsel to chairman from both parties, where he consistently demonstrated his deep commitment to upholding the integrity of our institution, and advancing progress for the American people.

In his more than three decades of non-partisan service to the House, Tom always brought the highest level of professionalism and dedication to the table. He earned the respect of Members and staff alike for his encyclopedic memory of facts and dates, and his great intellect and critical willingness to hear arguments from all sides. His unflappable demeanor delivered calm to many hard-fought battles waged by the House's most energetic and colorful Members.

Tom's many friends will always remember his great love of sports, especially his fondness for the Tigers, the Wahoos and the Washington Nationals. One never wanted to be on the opposite side of a sports trivia contest with Tom, but all will remember him as a gentleman who allowed his opponents to lose with grace. Tom could reveal a mischievous streak when it was needed most by his colleagues, best and most memorably displayed in his creation of the Hershberger Award during his days at the College of William and Mary.

Tom is survived by his beloved wife of 37 years, Alison, his two daughters, Katharine Duncan (Brent DePuy) and Taylor Duncan, and his granddaughter, Elizabeth DePuy.

The House is grateful for Tom's contributions over his thirty-year career in our institution. May it be a comfort to Tom's loved ones that so many grieve with and pray for them at this sad time.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DIONNE BAGSBY

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I would like to honor the life of a dear friend and true role model, Dionne Bagsby. Her advocacy and public service to Fort Worth pioneered the growth and development that we see in the community today.

Dionne was a trailblazer for minorities and women in the city of Fort Worth. With her dynamic personality and straight talk, she was able to break unprecedented racial and gender barriers throughout her life and career.

Dionne was the first woman and African-American to be elected to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court. During her tenure on the court, she hired the first Tarrant County African-American precinct administrator and greatly enhanced minority employment and participation at the county level. When she retired from the commissioner's court in 2005, the Texas Legislature honored her community service in a resolution stating, "a distinguished 16-year tenure that has been characterized by integrity and excellence."

Even after her retirement, she refused to stand on the sidelines. She always encouraged young women to speak with confidence and helped them aspire to careers that challenged the norm. Dionne served with a purpose, making it her mission to leave Fort Worth a better place than she found it.

Dionne Bagsby leaves behind a legacy that will impact and empower not only the Fort Worth community but the state of Texas for generations to come. I am lucky to have known someone as inspirational and dynamic as Dionne.

My thoughts are with her family during this difficult time.

COMMEMORATING "BLACK JANUARY"

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 29th anniversary of the "Black January" killings which is one of the most tragic events in Azerbaijan's history.

On the night of January 20, 1990, approximately 26,000 Soviet troops stormed Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku in tanks and armored vehicles. That night, the Soviet military bulldozed innocent Azerbaijanis and opened indiscriminate fire on peaceful demonstrators, including women and children. As a result of these merciless acts 147 people were killed, around 800 were injured, 841 were arrested, and 5 went missing.

The Human Rights Watch report "Black January in Azerbaijan" states that "among the most heinous violations of human rights during the Baku incursion were the numerous attacks on medical personnel, ambulances, and even hospitals." The report concludes that the violence used by the Soviet Army constituted an exercise in collective punishment and that the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in other Republics of the Soviet Union. I offer my thoughts and prayers to the families of those who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan.

The United States and Azerbaijan are strategic allies and share common interests in the region and globally. I commend Azerbaijan's contributions to the security of the United States.

As the co-chairman of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, I urge my colleagues to recognize the sacrifices of the Azerbaijani people in their steps toward a free market economy and encourage a recommitment to the democratic values for which many Azerbaijanis sacrificed their lives.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MERAMEC REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th Anniversary of the Meramec Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), officially established on January 23, 1969, by Governor Warren E. Hearnes. The first Board of Directors elected by MRPC were Salem Mayor Jack Masters as chairman; Leon Camillo, representative from Potosi, as vice chairman; Cuba Mayor John Brummet as secretary; and Vienna Mayor Travis John as treasurer. The scope of work has changed over the years, but the overall mission remains the same: To enhance the quality of life for the Meramec Region.

The MRPC, currently serving the counties of Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps and Pulaski, built a strong reputation throughout the area for its work in grant writing, economic development, community and emergency planning, small business loan assistance, housing rental assistance, and legislative advocacy on behalf of the region. These services are especially vital to small communities that often do not have the resources to compete with larger cities for grant funding.

I congratulate MRPC on this milestone anniversary and appreciate the vital role they play in the quality of life in the Meramec Region. Today, it is my great privilege to recognize the Meramec Regional Planning Commission before the United States House of Representatives.

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