

local development of cultural heritage issues, historic preservation, and working lands conservation projects.

This Federal grant funding will be available for the next 15 years to support local governments, historical societies, and nonprofit organizations throughout the delta.

Our National Heritage Area Act proposal is endorsed by the Delta Stewardship Council and the Delta Counties Coalition, consisting of Sacramento, Solano, Contra Costa, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties, all of which represent the delta. It is also supported by the Delta Chambers of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, Restore the Delta, and the National Parks Conservation Association.

California's Delta Protection Commission is charged with developing the management plan for the new national heritage area.

Lastly, I want to address some of the persistent misconceptions about national heritage area designations, not only this new one but also those throughout the United States. Such designations do not affect individual property rights, water rights, land ownership, or local land use decisions, nor does the designation affect hunting and fishing. Rather, the national heritage area program simply makes Federal grant funds administered by the National Park Service available for local projects.

The national heritage area program and planning process is collaborative and voluntary, meaning that local groups, businesses, and landowners can choose to participate or not. I look forward to continuing to work with local governments, county governments, local businesses, communities, local action groups, and all others interested during the public management planning process.

After nearly a decade of work, the President is expected to sign the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act into law. We thank all who supported the legislation and the local entities that have done so.

This is truly a historic achievement for the entire delta, including the farming communities, the families, and the immigrant communities who have settled in the area over the last 150 years and generated the rich cultural and agricultural heritage.

RECOGNIZING ASHLEY AND CHRIS GASPERI

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a family from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who is dedicated to making our world a better and safer world.

Ashley and Chris Gasperi, ER nurses, were residents of Feasterville and worked at Temple University Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center. Despite

dedicating their careers to caring for others, they both craved more and later decided to move to Kenya to establish a nonprofit organization that seeks to break the vicious cycle of poverty in rural communities.

Together, they established Ekenywa. Ekenywa works to dig wells, sometimes hundreds of feet deep, to establish a reliable water source to communities and schools in rural Kenya. The creation of these wells allows for solar-powered irrigation systems, enabling communities to farm year-round, even in the presence of a drought.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work of the Gasperi family and Ekenywa. They are truly making a difference in the lives of countless people across the world.

I speak on behalf of our entire Bucks County community when we tell them how much we appreciate their service and their sacrifice.

RECOGNIZING WALKER ANDERSON FOR HIS NATIONAL SCIENCE COMPETITION ACHIEVEMENTS

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a young citizen in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who recently was recognized in a national science competition.

Walker Anderson, a Doylestown resident and a senior at Central Bucks West High School, recently won \$2,000 as a semifinalist for the Regeneron Science Talent Search competition. This recognition was received by only 300 students nationwide and only four in the State of Pennsylvania.

As impressive as this may be on its own, this is only one academic achievement of Walker's. Walker previously placed first in the under-18 category at the World Puzzle Championship in Prague, competing on the U.S. team, and was recently accepted into the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure we will hear of Walker well into the future, as his STEM research and grasp of complex mathematical and scientific concepts is truly remarkable.

I wish Walker and his parents, Susan and Ken Anderson, all of the best. I also thank Mark Hayden, Walker's STEM Research Club adviser, for his guidance and his vision.

HONORING CIVIL RIGHTS ICON CLARA LUPER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Ms. KENDRA S. HORN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the visionary and unwavering leadership of civil rights icon and notable Oklahoman Ms. Clara Luper.

Six months ago, I got to witness history as Oklahoma City commemorated the 60th anniversary of the sit-ins she organized. I rise today because, even as a fifth-generation Oklahoman, I realized how little I knew.

Clara Luper and her students sparked a movement, the sit-ins that led into

our Nation's civil rights movement. They deserve to be a household name.

Clara Luper made her mark in a time when people of color couldn't even walk into the front door of Oklahoma City businesses. They were relegated to hidden back rooms.

But she had a vision for equality, a heart for service, and a commitment to justice. She, in her words, "believed in a sun when it didn't shine and the rain when it didn't fall." She knew that Oklahoma and this country could be a place where everyone is treated with respect, dignity, and humanity.

Even as a history teacher at Dunjee High School in Spencer, Oklahoma, Ms. Luper instilled those principles in her students. Her steadfast commitment to ending racism and systemic discrimination inspired her to organize America's first sit-in.

In August 1958, she and 14 of her NAACP Youth Council students walked up to a lunch counter they knew would refuse them, and they ordered a hamburger and a Coke. They were denied, but they did not waver. They knew what was on the line because, in Ms. Luper's words, "within that hamburger was the whole essence of democracy."

At their own personal peril, they returned each day with more people until they broke the barrier. It was never easy. The protesters were verbally and physically assaulted, and Ms. Luper received death threats.

Because of Ms. Luper and her students' fearlessness and determination, the Katz Drug Stores integrated their lunch counters, not just in Oklahoma City but also in Missouri, Kansas, and Iowa.

When the 1958 sit-in happened in Oklahoma City, a group of college students in North Carolina were inspired by what had taken place in Oklahoma City, and they took note. In 1961, those students launched the Greensboro, North Carolina, sit-in at the Woolworth lunch counter, which fueled momentum within the civil rights movement.

It didn't end there. For years, Ms. Luper and others continued their fight. The sacrifices continued, too.

Authorities arrested Ms. Luper 26 times during her fight for freedom. Clara Luper empowered young people to imagine a future brighter than their present and taught them how to make that a reality.

She changed lives and planted seeds of ethical leadership into those who were lucky enough to be mentored by her. Each of her former students talks about the pivotal role Ms. Luper played in instilling confidence, character, and dignity in them.

Generations reap the benefit of her sacrifice and efforts to integrate not only businesses in Oklahoma City but educational spaces.

Ms. Luper integrated the history department at the University of Oklahoma, becoming the first Black graduate of that master's program. Her contributions are reflected across our