

NEO, Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce, Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education (NOCHE) and Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio Inc. (NETO).

President Warren distinguished herself as a warm and friendly face amongst the students and staff of Kent State. Whether she's championing academics in the board room or cheering on the Golden Flashes on the field, her energy, presence, and compassion can be felt campus-wide.

I was proud to work with Dr. Warren to help secure funding to advance research efforts at Kent State. With Dr. Warren's leadership, the research being done at Kent State will go a long way to help solve real-world issues.

I thank President Warren for her service to the students and community and wish her the best of luck in her retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF IMAM OMAR
SULEIMAN

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2019

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank Imam Omar Suleiman for offering the opening prayer before the House of Representatives this afternoon.

Imam Suleiman is a world renowned scholar and theologically driven activist for human rights. He is the Founder and President of the Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research and a professor of Islamic Studies at Southern Methodist University. He's also the resident scholar of the Valley Ranch Islamic Center and Co-Chair Emeritus of Faith Forward Dallas at Thanks-Giving Square, a multi-faith coalition of clergy for peace and justice. He frequently writes for CNN, USA Today, The Guardian, HuffPo, and The Dallas Morning News.

His career started in his hometown of New Orleans where he served as the Imam of the Jefferson Muslim Association in New Orleans for 6 years and directed the "Muslims for Humanity" Hurricane Katrina Relief effort. It was during this time that he was recognized on a national level as being a strong advocate of community service, interfaith dialogue, and social justice. He co-founded the East Jefferson Interfaith Clergy Association and was awarded for his outstanding civic achievement by the Mayor and City Council of New Orleans in 2010. He's also the founder of MUHSEN, a non-profit umbrella organization serving the community to establish a more inclusive "Special Friendly" environment for our brothers & sisters of all disabilities.

In July 2016, he marched with demonstrators in Dallas against the killings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile. In the wake of the tragic shooting of officers after that protest, he was chosen to lead the invocation at the Presidential memorial alongside former Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush. The D-Magazine published a feature on him titled "The Religious Leader Dallas Needs." His work in bringing people together was the subject of a BBC documentary in 2016, and work with refugees in Syria featured in PBS in January 2017, and in 2016, he was a recipient of the United Nations Global Goals Award with Faith Forward Dallas. He led the airport pro-

tests in Dallas against President Trump's Muslim ban in 2017; led a group of clergy to the Mexico border that intercepted a bus of children taken from their parents under the family separation policy; and has worked closely with the families of the victims of police brutality to amplify their cause. Most recently, he was recognized by CNN as one of the 25 most influential Muslims in America and included amongst the Frederick Douglass 200 most influential Americans whose modern day work embodies the legacy of the great abolitionist.

COMMEMORATING THE FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTH-
ERN TIER CENTRAL REGIONAL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
BOARD

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2019

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board.

Southern Tier Central has been serving the communities of Chemung, Schuylers, and Steuben Counties since 1969. As a regional council, Southern Tier Central promotes coordination between the neighboring counties to provide a regional approach to improving the economy, the environment, and the quality of life for citizens of the Southern Tier. Their work to provide planning for economic development, transportation, human services, and flood assistance helps the communities of the Southern Tier grow and thrive.

The Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board provides a variety of services to the region. As the designated Local Development District of the Appalachian Regional Commission and an Economic Development District of the Economic Development Administration, Southern Tier Central is able to qualify for special grant funding and project assistance to promote important local economic and community development projects. Over the last half century, Southern Tier Central has helped to provide more than eighty-seven million dollars in grant funding and technical assistance to the region.

Fifty years of serving the community is certainly a cause for celebration. I congratulate the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board on this impressive milestone and look forward to their continued success in the years to come.

Given the above, I ask that this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations and join me to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS
MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mental Health Awareness

Month. Throughout May, my colleagues and I will bring attention to the impact of mental illnesses on American society, as well as Congress's role in addressing mental healthcare issues facing the country. It is an honor to collaborate with my colleagues in the Congressional Mental Health Caucus to raise awareness for mental illnesses, reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness, and create legislation that improves mental health outcomes for Americans.

Mental illnesses have a devastating effect on those struggling to live with them. This includes changes in mood, social interactions, sleep patterns, and eating habits. Sadly, the most extreme consequences of mental illness are when an individual inflicts self-injury or takes their life. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States and the second leading cause of death among Americans age 24 and younger. Approximately 1.4 million Americans attempt suicide each year and over 47,000 Americans lose their lives to suicide. The United States has 3,700 suicide attempts daily and 129 suicide deaths per day. This equates to one suicide every 12 minutes.

Not only does suicide have severe emotional costs on families and communities, but also on our economy. It is estimated suicide and self-injury reduce the economic output of the United States by \$69 billion per year.

The suicide epidemic is responsible for nearly the same amount of deaths in the United States as another prevalent health crisis: the opioid epidemic. It is estimated opioids were the cause for 47,600 deaths in America, only a few hundred more than suicide. While solving the opioid crisis has received ample funding and attention, and rightfully so, reducing suicide and improving mental health treatment deserves the same recognition. Congress has a responsibility to assist individuals experiencing mental health challenges through effective legislation and research subsidies.

Congress should advance policies that increase Americans' access to mental healthcare treatment as a mechanism for preventing self-harm incidents and suicide attempts. Just one third of Americans with mental illness receive treatment. Our country is in desperate need of additional trained therapists, psychologists, and counselors. This lack of access can be partly attributed to a shortage of mental healthcare professionals in certain communities. In order to establish a more reliable supply of mental healthcare professionals, Congresswoman GRACE NAPOLITANO and I recently introduced the Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act of 2019. Our bill delivers professionals to areas that require mental healthcare experts the most by forgiving their secondary education student loans. It invests in bolstering our mental health workforce, while expanding treatment for Americans with mental illness.

Americans across the country, regardless of age, social status, or background, are affected by mental illnesses. Mental Health Awareness Month serves as an opportunity for any of my Congressional colleagues, Republican or Democrat, to join the conversation. Together, we can improve mental health outcomes for Americans across the country by engaging in thoughtful discussion and crafting efficient policies.

Finally, it is an honor to once again co-chair the Congressional Mental Health Caucus with