

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF COUNCILWOMAN ELSIE
FRANKLIN

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sadness and great respect that I take this time to remember one of Northwest Indiana's most passionate and dedicated citizens, Lake County Councilwoman Elsie Franklin. Councilwoman Franklin passed away on Monday, May 6, 2019, at the age of 81. Her unwavering commitment to her constituents and her community is worthy of the highest praise, and she will be greatly missed by her family, friends, co-workers, and the many grateful residents whose lives she touched.

Elsie was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and moved to Gary, Indiana, at a young age. She attended Gary Roosevelt High School and built her life in the city of Gary. Ms. Franklin was a member of Clark Road Missionary Baptist Church and was very active in her faith throughout her lifetime. For Elsie, being able to improve her community and assist those in need was her life's purpose. She is remembered by family and friends as a role model who stood up for those who did not have a voice.

Throughout her lifetime of public service, Elsie Franklin served the people of Gary and Lake County in numerous capacities. She was the director of Gary's General Services under Mayor Thomas Barnes while also holding positions on various boards, charities, and organizations throughout the years. In 2002, she was elected to serve on the Lake County Council, representing the 2nd district. This victory marked the first time an African-American woman would serve on the Lake County Council. She was passionate about the people of her district and the issues they faced. Many remember her actively working to secure funding for services within the Lake County Juvenile Court system. The challenges facing the youth in the city of Gary and throughout Northwest Indiana were a priority for her, and Councilwoman Franklin was a true hero for her hard work and dedication to the children of our communities. Elsie served on the Lake County Council for the past seventeen years, and she was an outstanding activist for the people of her district and the city of Gary.

Councilwoman Franklin was also a strong leader for the Democratic Party in Northwest Indiana for many years. Throughout her remarkable career, spanning over 50 years, she served her party in numerous capacities. Elsie served as vice chairwoman of the Lake County Democratic Central Committee, and she was the first African-American woman to chair the Gary Democratic Precinct Organization.

Elsie Franklin is survived by her beloved children: Cherylynn, Michael, Kimberly, Kenya, Keesha, Theodore, and Dara. She also leaves to cherish her memory many dear friends and

family members, as well as a saddened but grateful community.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to a true public servant, Ms. Elsie Franklin. For her outstanding contributions to the city of Gary and to the community of Northwest Indiana, she is to be commended. Elsie Franklin's legacy will be forever remembered and will continue to inspire generations to come.

REMEMBERING LAURENCE M.
BLOCH

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday May 14, 2019

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember an important mentor, advisor and my quasi-brother/father, Laurence M. Bloch, whom the world knew as "Larry." Larry, a Memphis native and longtime real estate investor and contributor to humanitarian causes, passed away on February 23 in Santa Monica, California, at the age of 87.

A font of sage advice, Larry was constantly there for me and for many others who loved him for the caring individual he was. After graduating from Christian Brothers High School in 1949, Larry went to the University of Michigan, and led a group of Wolverines fans traveling by train with the team to the 1951 Rose Bowl where Michigan beat the California Golden Bears 14 to 6. Larry graduated with a degree in economics in 1953 then served two years in the U.S. Army before returning to Memphis where he was involved in the millinery business before settling into the real estate investment business.

He remained an avid Michigan fan his whole life and used to tape every game. Known for his disheveled salt-and-pepper hair and socks-less and tie-less style, and for riding his bicycle like Albert Einstein, he also drove around town in a Lincoln Continental with coach doors. He celebrated healthy eating habits as a prophet of whole grains and fiber. An investor with a keen eye for good deals in Memphis' downtown, he had the good sense and good fortune to own the property kitty-corner from The Peabody on Union Avenue that was torn down to create AutoZone Park.

A patron of the arts, he also supported the Memphis Crisis Center, Meals on Wheels and the Church Health Center among his charitable causes. As a cat lover, another of his charitable causes was The House of Mews, where he was for a while the top cat. A charming story teller, he provided useful advice and helped many people solve their problems. Larry liked: long walks, telling stories, giving advice, peanuts, cashmere sweaters, everything else cashmere, trains, maize and blue signs, a studied careless appearance, salads and, more than anything, Cheryl and his grandsons. Larry didn't like: being photo-

graphed, zoos, recognition, Ohio State or work hours extending two hours either side of lunch.

I was fortunate to have had him as a good friend and will miss him greatly. Much of what I am and have been is because of Larry Bloch. I thank Larry. I want to extend my condolences to his daughter Cheryl, to his grandsons Nick and Alex, to his sister Joyce whom he loved, and her family, and to his multitude of adoring friends. Larry Bloch led an exemplary life.

HONORING BEATRICE "BEBE"
COKER

HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today, on behalf of my colleagues Senator TOM CARPER and Senator CHRIS COONS of Delaware, to honor and congratulate Beatrice "Bebe" Coker, a mother, sister, artist, advocate, mentor, leader, and recipient of the 2019 John H. Taylor Jr. Education Leadership Award.

Bebe, as she is affectionately called, is a lifelong advocate for quality public education, the arts, and diversity and inclusion. She was honored by the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce affiliate, The Partnership, Inc., at Superstars in Education Reception and Awards Ceremony on May 13, 2019, for her unrelenting dedication and leadership in advancing education for all children and making our community a better place to live and work.

Ms. Coker is a revered community mobilizer and literacy advocate, as well as a champion of social justice in Delaware. Among her many contributions to our state, Ms. Bebe was appointed by former Gov. Pierre S. du Pont to join the Citizens Alliance for Public Education to ensure the peaceful desegregation of Delaware schools. She has volunteered for countless organizations, including The Christiana Cultural Art Center, the NAACP Young Adults Group and the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League. She chaired the State Civil Rights Commission and has aided numerous organizations focused on literacy.

Bebe holds a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University and a Doctor of Humanities from Delaware State University. She is a playwright, poet, and lyricist. She is, quite simply, a renaissance woman.

Never one to shy away from fighting for what she believed in, her work throughout Delaware has had a tremendous impact on us all. As a writer, or through her work in the community, she has always been an honest story teller—the stories of our past, our present, and those that inform the work we do to create a better future.

A mentor to many young people, Ms. Coker's greatest source of pride and support is embodied in her three "daughter/best

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