

In 1904, Thayer United Methodist Church was officially opened as a place of worship for the residents of the town. Since then, the church has grown immensely; it now provides the area with far more than a place to pray. This is where the residents of Thayer come to make strides towards improving their local community.

The Thayer United Methodist Church is known throughout the area for the services that it has provided for the community over the last 115 years. Today, we celebrate the church for their dedication to serving Thayer. I extend my sincere congratulations to the Thayer United Methodist Church for a successful 115 years, and I wish them even more success going forward.

---

HONORING LAUREN BROWN

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, a biology teacher in the Second Congressional District has been selected as the 2019 Outstanding Biology Teacher of the Year of South Carolina by the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT).

According to the New Irmo News, “the award is given annually to a teacher who shows a passion for teaching biology. Each state, province, and territory recognizes an Outstanding Biology Teacher.”

Ms. Lauren Brown has been teaching biology for 9 years, the last five years have been at Spring Hill High School. She was also honored as the American Legion Teacher of the Year from Chapin Post 193. She has also served for three years as a coaching teacher with the University of South Carolina’s Education program.

Our communities in the Second Congressional District are grateful for leadership like Ms. Lauren Brown’s. Congratulations to Lauren for earning this distinct honor.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

---

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Madam Speaker, on June 3, 2019, I missed Roll Call Number 234, On Approving the Journal, due to a longstanding prior commitment. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

---

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION  
MONTH

**HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remind everyone that we have a

responsibility to do everything we can to address the epidemic of senseless gun violence that is plaguing our nation.

June is Gun Violence Prevention Month and we must use this opportunity to come together to not only raise awareness of gun violence but also take action.

We’re reminded again after the recent Virginia Beach Shooting that too many of our loved ones are lost to senseless gun violence that could be prevented by keeping firearms out of dangerous hands.

That is why I was proud to vote for H.R. 8 and urge my Senate colleagues to do the same.

This common-sense bill will prevent private firearm sales to prohibited purchasers, and close online and gun show loopholes. Thus, we will move towards ensuring firearms are obtained responsibly.

While this bill does not cover everything, it is a step in the right direction that will make the United States safer for our families and communities.

---

CONGRATULATING KENN AND  
BETH ZELTEN FOR BEING  
NAMED 2019 CITIZEN DRIVERS

**HON. JACK BERGMAN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it’s my honor to recognize Kenn and Beth Zelten for being named 2019 Citizen Drivers. Through their dedicated service, exceptional leadership, and steadfast devotion to their community, Kenn and Beth have become an indispensable part of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

The Citizen Driver program honors the hard-working professional truck drivers that demonstrate good citizenship, safety, community involvement, and leadership. None are more deserving of this honor than Kenn and Beth. During their more than 30-year career as a team, they have driven nearly 5 million miles, receiving multiple awards for their customer service, safety, efficiency, and overall excellence. When they’re not driving, Kenn and Beth are active in their community—supporting charities like the St. Christopher Fund, The Salvation Army, Mission of Hope, and Landstar BCO Benevolence Fund, and working with several groups to help the less fortunate like Abundant Life Mission and Project Give.

There are more than 3.5 million professional truck drivers in the United States. While their work often goes unnoticed and underappreciated, it is vital to keeping our economy moving and daily life on track. Programs like Citizen Driver are a tremendous opportunity for us to recognize the hard work and dedication of professional drivers like Kenn and Beth that go above and beyond and serve as role models for every American.

Madam Speaker, it’s my honor to congratulate Kenn and Beth Zelten for their decades of service and for being named 2019 Citizen Drivers. Michiganders can take great pride in knowing the First District is home to such selfless and devoted individuals. On behalf of my constituents, I wish Kenn and Beth all the best in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MARK POCAN**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained from the floor on Monday, June 3rd. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 232, YEA on Roll Call No. 233, and YEA on Roll Call No. 234.

---

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLONEL  
RICHARD BELAND

**HON. ELAINE G. LURIA**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor life of Colonel Richard Beland of Poquoson, Virginia—a dedicated patriot and public servant who passed away surrounded by family on Friday, May 10, 2019.

His 30 years of service in the United States Air Force included training students for a decade, flying 290 combat missions in Vietnam, serving as an Advance Agent for Support and Security for Air Force One for two different administrations, and serving as a member of the NATO Flight Safety Group. Following his retirement in 1989, Colonel Beland served his local Poquoson Community’s Board of Zoning Appeals for 18 years, with eight of those years as Chairman. He also faithfully served as a lector and usher at Langley Air Force Base Chapel.

Colonel Beland’s dedication to his country and local community brings great honor to our district. I am proud to recognize Colonel Beland’s leadership and the role he played in making America a better place.

---

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, as an original co-sponsor of H.R. 6—American Dream and Promise Act, I would have voted YES on roll call No. 240, had I been present.

---

TORNADOES AND HEROISM

**HON. WARREN DAVIDSON**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Mr. DAVIDSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of heroes, in support of unity, and in support of the compassion that I witnessed in the Eighth District of Ohio after 19 tornadoes devastated Southwestern Ohio last week.

On May 27th, communities in Mercer, Miami, Darke, and Preble Counties, and counties adjacent to the Eighth District, were devastated by tornadoes with winds upwards of 140 miles per hour.

My wife Lisa and I took shelter in our basement as the storms passed. The totality of the destruction emerged with Tuesday's sunrise.

The caved roofs, toppled power lines, and staircases without surrounding structures gave powerful testimony to the violence of the storms.

Despite the terrible destruction in our district, we also saw signs of hope. Our communities always come together to help one another in times of need. It is why southwest Ohio is such a special place to call home.

Our first responders do an amazing job. There were no Democrats, no Republicans; there were just neighbors helping neighbors. It's too bad that it often takes a tragedy to highlight this special quality in us, but it is there—and it is a great thing to see.

I want to thank our first responders, Ohio Senators PORTMAN and BROWN for their leadership during this time of crisis, the Ohio delegation, Governor DeWine, and leaders across the country who are standing with the people of Ohio.

Madam Speaker, as relief and recovery efforts continue in Southwest Ohio, I use my time on the floor today to honor the heroes and survivors. We will rebuild and be stronger than before.

RECOGNIZING THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF NON-STOP TRANS-ATLANTIC FLIGHTS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

**HON. NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Madam Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Croatian Caucus, I rise today to bring attention to a very special milestone scheduled to take flight this coming Friday. On June 7, 2019, for the first time in twenty-eight years, non-stop transatlantic air travel will occur between the United States and the Republic of Croatia. American Airlines will have the honor of transporting passengers directly from Philadelphia International Airport to Dubrovnik International Airport in Croatia.

This event is especially momentous to me because my congressional district is home to the largest concentration of Croatians living in the United States. In fact, several of my constituents from San Pedro, California, will be on hand in Philadelphia to witness the inaugural flight and celebrate this exciting partnership with fellow Croatians, Croatian government officials, diplomats, and prominent civic leaders from Philadelphia.

The return to direct non-stop air service is yet another example of the United States' strong economic and political relationship with Croatia, a very important NATO ally. For me and my constituents, this new chapter will not only enhance these relationships but create opportunities to connect our communities and cultures. With this in mind, I am including in the RECORD a letter from Steven Rukavina, President of the National Federation of Croatian Americans, to Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney underscoring the significance of this first flight from Philadelphia and the strengthened relationship that will result between our two countries.

I wish this new endeavor between the United States and Croatia every success and look forward to one day soon being a passenger on this flight.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CROATIAN AMERICANS CULTURAL FOUNDATION, Washington, DC, May 10, 2019.

Hon. JIM KENNEY, Mayor, Philadelphia, PA.

DEAR MAYOR KENNEY: On behalf of the National Federation of Croatian Americans Cultural Foundation (NFCA), and as a proud resident of Philadelphia, please allow me to share with you a quickly approaching milestone for our City.

The Croatian American community is so pleased that we will see the Croatian flag raised at City Hall on Friday, June 7th. Of course, we are thrilled that you and so many of Philadelphia's civic and business leaders will attend the Croatian gala celebration at the National Constitutional Center on June 6th, too.

These events will salute the first commercial non-stop flight in twenty-eight years from the United States to Croatia, which will depart Philadelphia International Airport on the evening of June 7. This historic American Airlines flight will touch down on Croatia's Adriatic coast in the City of Dubrovnik the next morning. I must say that I am very honored to be able to fly on this inaugural flight that night.

The non-stop flights that will follow will directly connect our World Heritage City of Philadelphia to the City of Dubrovnik—which is known as the “Pearl of the Adriatic” and which has also been included as a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1979. This important Croatian city holds historic relevance as a significant Mediterranean port and sea power since the 13th century. Dubrovnik flourished really well throughout the 15th and 17th centuries and was lauded internationally for its skilled diplomacy and wealth! It is also historic and coincidental that the Republic of Ragusa—an aristocratic maritime republic that once included Dubrovnik—was one of the first political entities to recognize the independence of the United States of America in the 1770s.

In the coming years tourism between our two countries will only grow, and Americans will be able to further engage in the rich culture and history of Croatia. These newly inaugurated American Airlines non-stop flights will specifically allow Philadelphians the ease and comfort of non-stop travel to the Adriatic Coast. This will prompt many in our City to take a unique trip that they may not have before considered. This kind of unprecedented access will also draw many tourists to visit Philadelphia, too, as the departure city for their travels to and from Croatia.

The Croatian American community has also held a significant place in the history of the State of Pennsylvania. Croatian American immigration helped to significantly propel the steel industry in the western part of our Pennsylvania during the Second Industrial Revolution. Significantly, the Croatian Fraternal Union of America (CFU), which is now headquartered in Monroeville PA, will celebrate its 125th anniversary from September 21–25 in Pittsburgh.

The special bond between the U.S. and Croatia has been further strengthened during the past ten years with Croatia's 2009 ascension into full membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This multilateral Euro-Atlantic security alliance membership and treaty, now has only further cemented the strong bilateral relationship between our two nations over the last ten years.

Looking to the future—with Croatia assuming the Presidency of the European

Union in January, 2020—we hope to build on the success of these important air flight activities beginning in June via additional global-oriented events within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during 2020, especially in our City of Philadelphia.

We applaud all your efforts to promote Philadelphia as a global destination for tourism, for international business growth, and now as a bridge to the City of Dubrovnik, another World Heritage site with a special bond to our historic American city!

Sincerely,  
STEVE RUKAVINA,  
President, National Federation of  
Croatian Americans Cultural Foundation.

HONORING THE WORK OF KOJO NNAMDI

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 5, 2019*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Kojo Nnamdi and The Kojo Nnamdi Show for two decades on air with WAMU 88.5, Washington's National Public Radio news station.

No other local radio program brings the depth, sensitivity and familiarity with the important issues of the Washington, D.C. region better than The Kojo Nnamdi Show. Hosted by the universally beloved Kojo Nnamdi, the show has been at the center of critical conversations about society, community, race, housing, education, politics, the arts and more for 20 years.

While divisiveness has become the talk show norm, Nnamdi takes the time to create thoughtful dialogue—engendering trust among guests and listeners alike. Whether talking to citizens or politicians, he generates honest, productive discussions with guests, incorporating engagement with listeners.

Nnamdi makes it a priority to meet people where their lives happen—in the community. Nnamdi's conversations in communities around the region amplify the voices of those who would not be.

A native of Guyana, Nnamdi moved to D.C. in 1969 to engage with the civil rights movement. Now a longtime D.C. resident, Nnamdi brings both a global perspective and vast knowledge of the region to front page headlines and explores emerging stories before they are news.

From 1973 to 1985, Nnamdi worked at WHUR-FM, where he served as news editor and then news director, producing the award-winning local news program The Daily Drum. From 1985 to 2011, he hosted Evening Exchange, a public affairs television program broadcast by WHUT-TV at Howard University. Nnamdi became host of a WAMU program called Public Interest in August 1998, and the name was changed to The Kojo Nnamdi Show in September 2002.

In 2001, Nnamdi was honored as a civil rights hero by the National Council for Community Justice. In 2003, the Library of Congress selected Nnamdi as the keynote speaker for African American History Month. In addition to his hosting duties, Nnamdi has chaired the board of the Public Access Corporation of Washington, D.C. for the past 25 years. In 2014, Nnamdi was inducted into the Hall of