

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING MELINDA WALKER ON
HER RETIREMENT AS CHIEF RE-
PORTER OF DEBATES

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 22, 2019

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Melinda Walker, the Chief Reporter of Debates, on her retirement in August after more than 20 years of outstanding service to the House of Representatives.

Ms. Walker has brought great effectiveness and integrity to this critical position, which has long been vital to the transparency and accessibility of Article I, the Legislative Branch, to the American people. She carries on the long, storied tradition of shorthand reporters of debates, upon whom the House has relied for nearly two centuries to ensure that the People's House can be open and accountable to the American people.

A proud native of Texas, Ms. Walker came to the House in 1999 after serving as a court reporter for the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania. Her career began after graduating from the Stenograph Institute of Texas in 1989, and her skills took her around the country and the world, with positions in England, the Caribbean, and South Africa.

Ms. Walker has led a career of great distinction in the House. She has reported both House committee hearings and Floor proceedings, and has taken down committee testimony from two Chief Justices of the United States and three Secretaries of State, among many others. On the Floor, Ms. Walker has reported the State of the Union messages for three Presidents as well as the speeches of numerous foreign dignitaries during Joint Meetings of Congress.

Upon her promotion to Chief Reporter in 2015, she led the team of court reporters and staff in charge of the production of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. She has distinguished herself by the excellence with which she has mastered intricate parliamentary nuances of House proceedings and by her passion for and commitment to this institution. Among her many contributions to the House is the legacy she leaves through the 200-page style and format manual that she fully revised and updated for the Office of Official Reporters, which will serve as a resource for years to come.

Ms. Walker is recognized by the National Court Reporters Association as a Registered Professional Reporter, a Certified Manager of Reporting Services, and is a Certified Shorthand Reporter in Texas. She plans to return to her hometown of San Saba, Texas, and spend more time with her family and faithful hound dog, Bleu.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Walker has joined a long and distinguished tradition of dedicated, nonpartisan service to the House, and I join her staff and many others in wishing her the very best in retirement.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE "APOLLO 11"
MOON LANDING

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 22, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, on July 20 our nation commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Moon Landing.

I remember July 20, 1969, when astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin became the first humans ever to land on the moon.

With the words "the Eagle has Landed," their place in history was secured.

I hold the men and women who made that day possible in great regard for their tireless work to make it possible in my lifetime to see people depart our tiny blue planet and visit another world.

To young people listening today this may sound like science fiction, but for those of us fortunate enough to have witnessed the event it is science fact.

Since the beginning of mankind, we have been driven by curiosity and a wonder of what is next for humanity.

In 1865, Jules Verne's "From the Earth to the Moon" was published.

"From the Earth to the Moon," was a humorous science fantasy story about three members of a post-American Civil War gun club efforts to build a spaceship to the moon.

A little over a century later, the men and women of NASA made that science fiction story science fact.

People have wondered about our place in the cosmos for as long as we have been able to look up into the night sky and see the stars.

And of course, after witnessing the moon landing, we have been dared by our own sense of imagination and possibility to slip the surly bonds of earth, ascend to the heavens.

The visionary who made this possible was the nation's youngest elected president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 36th President of the United States of America.

His election as president fired the imagination of a nation that was redefining its role on the world stage following World War II.

He said in his inaugural speech "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

President Kennedy understood that for freedom to prosper in the world America must lead the way and that we did not have a person to waste—that we needed everyone's talents.

Most of all, John Kennedy was a man who never stopped thinking about tomorrow or working to realize the full promise of America.

And he understood that we all had a place in that future and a role to play in bringing it about.

John Kennedy believed there was nothing America could not achieve once it set its mind to it.

In September 1962, President Kennedy delivered his famous Moon Speech at Rice University in the city of Houston, Texas, and committed America to send a man to the moon and to bring him safely home before the end of the decade.

Asked why we should go to the moon, President Kennedy said:

"We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

To anyone who might doubt America's ability to make good on this commitment, President Kennedy said, "this country of the United States was not built by those who waited and rested and wished to look behind them."

"This country was conquered by those who moved forward—and so will space."

It is with an awe of that sense of exploration that I commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the *Apollo 11* moon landing.

In one fell swoop, President Kennedy harnessed our competitive drive and merged it with mankind's relentless pursuit of discovery and information and knowledge.

"It was a bold proposition, not because of this challenge, but also because of our standing in the Space Race."

Just four years before Kennedy's Moon Speech, the Soviets had released Sputnik into orbit, as the first unmanned satellite, and in the process taken the lead in the global space race.

Our confidence shaken, we set out to work on the mission before us.

The 1960s were a tumultuous time in our pursuit of the moon's surface—Vietnam, Civil Rights, and the Cold War vied for our attention.

A few years ago, the book "Hidden Figures," about three African American women who made significant contributions to the space program was made into a motion picture.

Their contributions and those of hundreds of women was revealed for the first time.

There are thousands of hidden figures who contributed to the pinnacle of human achievement—human space flight and men walking on the moon.

More important, it revealed the capacity of an America absent discrimination to outperform the world on the most difficult of human endeavors—landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth.

Our path to the moon was not linear and not without setbacks.

Before we could celebrate the triumph of the *Apollo 11* crew and the valor of Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, we mourned the crew of *Apollo 1*, Gus Grissom, Edward White, and Roger Chaffee who died tragically during a launch test.

Before we could walk on the moon, it was necessary first to orbit the Earth.

Indeed, the journey to Mare Tranquillitatis was long, and a collective, national endeavor.

The challenge would be the pursuit of three presidents until, on July 20, 1969, the crew of *Apollo 11* touched down on the Moon's surface.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.