

REMEMBERING HÉCTOR FIGUEROA

**HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember Héctor Figueroa, a champion for workers' rights, an advocate for immigrants, a New Yorker, a passionate Puerto Rican and my dear friend. Above all, Héctor was a fighter for the vulnerable, the down-trodden and those who were treated unfairly. Sadly, Héctor passed last week. He will be honored at a public service on Wednesday in New York City.

Héctor Figueroa was known most notably for his leadership of 32BJ SEIU. Under his leadership, 32BJ SEIU grew by over 50,000 members and passed dozens of local and state-level policies. Héctor previously worked as SEIU's Organizing Director for Puerto Rico, winning collective bargaining rights for teachers, as well as for SEIU's Justice for Janitors campaign and a researcher for Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (Workers United).

Most recently, Héctor was central to building support for relief in Puerto Rico after Hurricane María. Born in Ponce as the son of two educators, the Island was near and dear to his heart. In the dark months following Hurricane María, Héctor was critical to mobilizing support among New York's Puerto Rican community, 32BJ members and non-members alike, to send aid to the Island and build political momentum for Washington to do better in channeling assistance to our fellow citizens as they struggled through a humanitarian crisis.

Throughout his life, Héctor made waves as a progressive fighter for justice for all people. He was relentless in advocating for the rights of the doormen and doorwomen, custodial workers, airport security guards and others who constituted 32BJ's membership. However, he was also on the frontlines helping taxicab drivers, fast food workers and laborers in every sector achieve fairer wages and improved conditions. To him, anyone who was oppressed was an ally and he was ready to join arms with them and march in common cause.

His belief that all workers were deserving of respect and kindness extended beyond his work as a labor leader; it infused his very demeanor. Héctor treated everyone, from the youngest organizers, to the most junior political aides, to the most powerful elected officials with the same kindness and warmth.

Whether it was fighting to expand healthcare, protecting immigrant communities from ICE, strengthening voter rights or addressing the threats of climate change, Héctor was on the frontlines of every battle related to economic and social justice. Just last week, this House voted to raise the federal minimum wage, a milestone achievement, years in the making. I like to think wherever he is, that victory would bring a smile to Héctor's face.

New York City and working people everywhere have lost a champion. I, personally, have lost a dear friend. From my earliest days in politics, I could always count on Héctor for wise advice and kind counsel. I'll miss our days together and fighting alongside one another. While he was taken from us too young, we'll honor his memory by continuing to ad-

vance the causes that inspired him. As Héctor always said, "We'll keep organizing." Yes, my friend, we will.

**RECOGNIZING THE DC GRAYS  
BASEBALL TEAM****HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the DC Grays for their commitment and contribution to increasing interest and youth participation in baseball and softball in the District of Columbia. In particular, I want to recognize the DC Grays 2019 summer college baseball team and the annual Capitol Hill reception.

The DC Grays is a talented collegiate summer baseball team that, in addition to competing in the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League, strives to engage inner-city youth and their families with baseball. Their mission is to be "ambassadors for baseball" in the District by running summer baseball camps and clinics for D.C. youth.

Named for the champion Homestead Grays from the Negro Leagues, the DC Grays reaches out to African-American ballplayers who may have been overlooked by other teams.

The DC Grays partners with Major League Baseball (MLB) to further help its mission of providing disadvantaged youth an opportunity to learn and enjoy the game of baseball. The programs help motivate young players to stay in school and pursue secondary education. MLB's RBI program helps teach youth not only the importance of success on the field but also in the classroom and the community. This year, the DC Grays RBI is sponsoring two summer baseball leagues and two travel softball teams for kids from Wards 6, 7, and 8 in D.C.—in addition to fall ball programs and winter training. There are 250 kids participating in DC Grays RBI programs this year.

Last year, the DC Grays participated in MLB's unveiling of the new Josh Gibson mural on U Street across from Ben's Chili Bowl, and their players attended an event to honor Jackie Robinson as part of MLB's all-star festivities. They strive to honor the Negro Leagues and its role in Washington baseball history. Each year, the DC Grays hosts a salute to Negro League Baseball in collaboration with the Hubert Simons League Museum.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House to join me in commending the DC Grays for the important work it has done and continues to do in the community. We wish the DC Grays luck in continuing to inspire and engage disadvantaged youth.

**RECOGNIZING THE CHAMBERS  
COUNTY COURTHOUSE ON ITS  
DESIGNATION AS A TEXAS  
STATE HISTORICAL MARKER****HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Chambers County Courthouse

for its designation as an official Texas State Historical Marker.

Named after Texas pioneer Major General Thomas Jefferson Chambers, Chambers County was established in 1858. Until the early 20th century, Wallisville was the county seat and the location for the first three Chambers County courthouses built in 1858, 1880 and 1887 respectively. However, Anahuac's rice canal system and the presence of wild hogs in Wallisville prompted an election in 1907 that made Anahuac the county seat in 1908.

After the election and the move, the county constructed a new courthouse. Completed in 1912 at its current location, the new municipal building included a jail, indoor plumbing, telephones, and electric lights. Built in the Renaissance Revival style, its imposing figure boasted large columns and a stone exterior. The building, however, burned down on April 28, 1935.

Later in 1935, County Treasurer Grover C. Wilcox desired a modern courthouse "in line with the growth of the town." As a part of federal New Deal programs, the Public Works Administration contributed funds for the design and construction. Designed by Corneil G. Curtis and built by notable contractor Robert E. McKee, construction finished in May 1937 on the three-story, ashlar limestone building. A combination of art deco and modern architectural styles (1920s to 1940s), the courthouse's exterior showcases vertical lines, a symmetrical façade, geometric shapes, and simple ornamentation. Since its construction, little has changed about this unique building. Throughout its history, the Chambers County Courthouse has not only acted as a focal point of the community but has also reflected the county's economic, political and social history.

As a former member of the Texas Historic Commission, I know this is a great honor for the community. I wish all of my friends in Chambers County well as they celebrate the dedication on July 23rd.

**HONORING ARKANSAS'S KOREAN  
WAR VETERANS****HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Arkansas's Korean War veteran commemorations. This summer, the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs is honoring the men and women who served our country and defended South Korea during the Cold War.

In an oft-forgotten chapter of history, Korean War soldiers from the United States provided vital assistance to the South Korean army. During a volatile time, their service prevented North Korean forces from taking over the entire Korean peninsula.

Arkansas has a rich history of bravery and patriotism, and I'm honored to recognize our Korean War veterans at these commemoration events. I thank each one of them for their service, and hope their legacies continue for generations to come.