

right that imbalance, restoring justice not only to the economically disenfranchised, but to every Alabamian and American.

Founded on February 1, 2004, Legal Services Alabama began as three separate Legal Services programs, Legal Services Corporation of Alabama (founded 1977), Legal Services of Metro Birmingham (founded 1977) and Legal Services of North-Central Alabama (founded 1969). The three regional offices merged resources to become the statewide entity Legal Services Alabama which provides free legal services to low-income Alabamians across all of the state's 67 counties. The merger reflected a nationwide imperative, initiated by the Legal Services Corporation, which encouraged consolidation in order to provide improved and more efficient services to those in need.

Alabama has long been a bastion of grassroots activism in pursuit of civil rights and economic justice. Alabama is the birthplace of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and played a prominent role in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign. Economic inequalities are inextricably tied to racial inequalities and Alabama has, since our nation's birth, been ground zero for some of the worst racial and economic injustices and the greatest moments of uprising and activism. Along these lines, it is impossible to consider the work of the Legal Services Alabama on behalf of low-income Alabamians without pointing out the systems of racial hierarchy that our current justice system tacitly endorses through its passivity.

The reality is that the vast majority of those unable to afford adequate legal representation in Alabama are African American. It is essential that organizations like the Legal Services Alabama do the important work of uplifting those who have been historically marginalized and disenfranchised, despite the fact that our current system is not set up to do so. Just as we, as a nation, must reflect openly and honestly on the ills of a criminal justice system that disproportionately jails people of color, we must commend those organizations like LSA that have stepped in and addressed an urgent need.

Legal Services Alabama has eight offices across the state as well as a centralized call center in order to provide the best possible service and access to Alabamians in need. LSA's offices are located in Anniston/Gadsden, Birmingham, Dothan, Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery, Selma and Tuscaloosa. Each of those offices is staffed and equipped to serve low income people with legal matters and to promote collaboration in support of providing solutions to the myriad issues associated with living in poverty. Currently, Legal Services Alabama is the only non-profit law firm in the state of Alabama that provides free civil legal assistance to economically disenfranchised Alabamians.

In addition to providing free, quality legal representation to those in need, Legal Services Alabama also provides mediation services to clients, in the hope that they might avoid the court system entirely. Mediation can often be prohibitively expensive and many people may not even know that it is an option available to them prior to engaging the courts. By offering mediation, LSA encourages Alabamians, when possible, to seek an alternative that may ultimately be more beneficial.

Further, Legal Services Alabama practices "preventative law," working within the commu-

nity to educate members on their rights and responsibilities in the hope of avoiding potentially devastating legal issues. Legal Services Alabama develops and distributes informative literature, legal self-help materials and forms throughout the community to help educate and engage those in need. This holistic approach to providing legal services shows an intrinsic understanding of the ways in which not only the criminal justice system but also community and social situations contribute to cycles of crime and prosecution and thoughtfully applies that understanding to a better and more comprehensive solution.

I am pleased to be granted this opportunity to recognize Legal Services Alabama for the important work they do for those Alabamians most in need. We as legislators must continue to work toward correcting our criminal justice system, but as that work is done, I am grateful to LSA for doing the important and necessary work of filling in the missing gaps.

RECOGNIZING DAN MUSSER III,
HIS FAMILY, AND THE GRAND
HOTEL

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2019

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Dan Musser III and his family for their work as owners and stewards of the Grand Hotel. Through their unwavering commitment to excellence, the Musser family and the Grand Hotel have become indispensable parts of Michigan's First District.

First opened in 1887, the Grand Hotel was created to serve as a retreat for vacationers looking to enjoy summer on the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Huron. Since 1933, the hotel has been owned and operated by the Musser family. Under the Mussers' stewardship, the Grand Hotel would grow to become not only a beloved part of Michigan, but a prominent feature in popular culture and premier destination for visitors from around the world. Its unique design has been widely acclaimed, and its world's-largest 660-foot porch has been enjoyed by the likes of John F. Kennedy, Gerald Ford, George H.W. Bush, and Thomas Edison.

In 1989, the National Park Service designated the hotel as a National Historic Landmark, citing its historic architecture and representation of the American dream of a "summer place." Today, its role as a summer place remains stronger than ever for the thousands of guests to Mackinac Island every year.

Dan Musser III started working at the Grand Hotel while in high school, raking sand traps on the hotel's golf course, The Jewel. He would go on to work as a bellhop, bartender, front desk clerk, front desk manager, reservations manager, and Vice President, before finally being named President in 1989. Just like his family predecessors, Dan has served as a hands-on President—present to greet guests and happy to handle the day-to-day details. Outside of his own hotel, Dan has served as the Chairman of the Michigan Hotel, Motel, and Resort Association, Chairman of the Resort Committee of the American Hotel and Lodging Association, and was twice appointed to the Michigan Travel Commission by the

Governor. The impact of his leadership on Mackinac Island and the state of Michigan cannot be overstated. While the Musser family may be passing along the ownership of the Grand Hotel, the impact of their work will be felt by Michiganders for generations to come.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing the Musser family and honoring the unique history and cultural significance of the Grand Hotel. Michiganders can take immense pride in knowing that the First District is home to such an important landmark and such a devoted group of leaders. On behalf of my constituents, I wish Dan and the Grand Hotel all the best in their future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF OAK RIDGE BAPTIST
CHURCH 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 12, 2019

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, today I rise in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Oak Ridge Baptist Church in the Eighth Congressional District of Texas.

Five families came to Oak Ridge, Texas from First Baptist Church in Conroe with the mission of building a sister church. The Suggs, Greer, Atherton, Pringle, and Allbrights families founded their church in the Tamina Community Hall on Robinson Road on October 22, 1967, with only 50 members in attendance.

In just two years, Oak Ridge Baptist Church grew to 253 members, and in 1969 a building off I-45 was dedicated to being their new home. After many wonderful years in that building, they finally settled into a more-permanent church facility on May 6, 2007. The congregation celebrated this move by marching from their temporary residence at Vogel Intermediate School to their new home on Hanna Road.

Fifty years have passed since the opening of their first building, but Senior Pastor Dr. Galen Cooper continues to keep the mission of the original five families alive, by connecting individuals throughout Oak Ridge, Spring, and The Woodlands through faith and community. He works to not only bond families, but to also create a truly supportive fellowship within the church.

For the congregation of Oak Ridge Baptist Church, worship extends well beyond the walls of their church building. Members are taught to bring their faith into every aspect of their lives. Through programs including Fellowship of Christian Athletes, The Gideon's International, Operation Christmas Card, and more, the congregation strives to better serve and improve their community based through their strong faith and welcoming values.

These churchgoers not only support their brothers and sisters in Christ in Texas, but around the world. In fact, Oak Ridge Baptist Church has partnered with the Eastern Baptist Convention in Cuba to establish churches and a School of Music. Missionaries are also laying down Christian roots in Lithuania and Mexico.

This year, Oak Ridge Baptist Church celebrates half a century of worship and fellowship, and I am proud to join their congregation in celebration of their Anniversary. Congratulations on 50 years, and I hope the next 50 will be just as fruitful.