

Purple Hearts and a Navy/Marine Commendation Medal with Combat V. He medically retired to Texas with his wife Christina and their three children.

In 2005, Felix joined MOPH Chapter 493 in Vista, California where he quickly rose through the ranks to become Senior Vice Commander. He went on to found MOPH Chapter 808 in Palm Coast, Florida, where he led its members in installing the Purple Heart Monument in Hero's Park.

Felix moved to Texas in 2012, where he joined his current MOPH chapter, Chapter 723, and served as its commander for three terms of office. He grew the chapter by recruiting younger award recipients who served in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Felix was recently elected to become the new National Commander of the MOPH. I had the honor of working with him on my Veterans' Advisory Board, where he played an integral role.

I am proud to see Felix ascend into his new position and I am confident the MOPH is in great hands. Congratulations to Felix and God bless all of our Purple Heart veterans.

IN RECOGNITION OF PAQUETTA PALMER FOR A DISTINGUISHED CAREER IN ACTIVISM, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Paquetta Palmer on her retirement from Community Public Health and recognize her years of distinguished service. Her contributions to the community are worthy of commendation.

Paquetta Palmer's work at Washtenaw County's Community Mental Health has been paramount in addressing our community's mental health needs. As a Customer Resource Specialist, Palmer provided mental health services to people with mental illnesses, emotional disturbances, and developmental disabilities, giving them the tools necessary to work through their struggles. Palmer is known among her colleagues for her high degree of professionalism, kind demeanor, and passion for helping others.

Paquetta Palmer's commitment to serving Washtenaw County extends far beyond her professional work. Palmer has used the bulk of her free time working tirelessly with a variety of organizations to advance racial, economic, and social justice for all within the community. Palmer is a volunteer cook at Food Gatherers and participates in Neutral Zone, an organization dedicated to promoting the personal growth of our community's youth. Furthermore, Palmer has been an informal Health and Human Services advocate, a longtime community advocate for affordable housing in Washtenaw County, and even was a pioneer in comprehensive healthcare reform for low-income residents, fighting for the adoption of the Washtenaw County Health Plan long before the Affordable Care Act was even implemented. Palmer's steadfast dedication to supporting the entire community is truly remarkable.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Paquetta Palmer's retirement. Over her decades of service, Palmer has become a pillar of the Washtenaw County community, and it is my honor and privilege to recognize her dedication today. We are grateful for her outstanding work and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURE AND REHABILITATION ACT

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Water Supply Infrastructure and Rehabilitation Act. This legislation will help address the need for the new storage, conveyance, and recycling projects necessary to increase our drought resilience and provide the water security required to meet the needs of our agricultural economy and our local communities.

As a farmer, former state Director of Agriculture, and now a Congressman representing one of the most flourishing agricultural regions in America, I fully understand how important it is that we reinvest in the water infrastructure our farms and communities were built upon—much of which is over a century old at this point. I have made it a priority to address these important issues for Central Washington, and for rural communities across the West, that have Bureau of Reclamation projects in their regions.

That is why I am introducing this legislation—to help local water managers access the funds they need to repair and rebuild aging facilities and ensure our existing surface storage facilities are operating as efficiently as possible.

The Water Supply Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Utilization Act addresses the Bureau of Reclamation's (BOR) maintenance backlog at water supply infrastructure projects. Since 1902, BOR has constructed dams, hydropower plants, canals, and irrigation conveyances to provide for our water needs. Far too much of this infrastructure is in serious need of maintenance and repair. My legislation creates a streamlined process, so local water operators can initiate maintenance projects with extended repayment through a much more clearly-defined application and review process. Local users need this flexibility to access these resources—this bill will help them do just that.

Earlier this year, Central Washington crossed one of the most significant hurdles for water needs in our region when President Trump signed my legislation into law authorizing the next phase of the Yakima Project. It was a momentous occasion and a testament to the many collaborative efforts and stakeholders in the Yakima Valley. But as many of us know, authorization is only the key first step.

Next comes—what some would say is—the even more difficult part: securing the resources and the funding to actually implement those projects authorized. I have been working on the Yakima Project for much of my career, and this bill will create an easier, more-

streamlined process to access the funds for this desperately needed infrastructure in Central Washington.

This legislation also strengthens the "Safety of Dams" program to improve structural integrity of dams across the U.S. In Central Washington, we are no stranger to the benefits dams provide for irrigation districts and the agricultural industry. Like much of our nation's infrastructure, dams are aging and require regular maintenance and upkeep. The "Safety of Dams" program is important for ensuring all BOR dams across the country continue to operate safely and efficiently—from the Grand Coulee Dam down to the Sunnyside, Prosser, and Roza Diversion dams. The Yakima Project alone has five storage dam and reservoirs, including Bumping Lake, Clear Creek, Tieton, Cle Elum, Kachess, and Keechelus. Washington's 4th District truly is at the epicenter of need for ensuring the stability of BOR dam infrastructure, and this program is responsible for funding any updates or maintenance to these dams. However, BOR expects to reach their current statutory cap on the program in the next two years. My bill will increase the authorization of this program to meet BOR's projected funding needs for the future workload to ensure water users in regions like Central Washington can continue to enjoy the benefits of dams, large and small, that all make our way of life possible.

Finally, the legislation creates a pilot program to give more flexibility to reservoir operators. Communities across the West know the impacts of droughts all too well. This bill allows local operators to temporarily store water in dedicated flood control space during certain low-risk times of the year. By addressing the maintenance backlog at our water supply projects, strengthening the structural integrity of our water infrastructure, and providing flexibility for water storage to best equip our communities in times of drought, we can secure the resources required to address the current and future water needs for the Yakima Valley and for water needs across the West. I encourage all of my colleagues to support the Water Supply Infrastructure and Rehabilitation Act. I look forward to pushing for its passage here in the House and for its companion legislation, led by Senator MARTHA MCSALLY, in the United States Senate.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES E. INGRAM

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Charles E. Ingram, who is retiring after 28 years of public service as a Member of the Mathews County Board of Supervisors. Charles said his philosophy of public service is to always be fair, reasonable and impartial in dealings with everyone, focus on the community and the wonderful people of Mathews County.

Charles and his wife, Jean Flippin Ingram, have been married for 61 years and have raised their family in Mathews, Virginia. They have two daughters, Jeannie Elliott and Robin Jenkins, as well as two grandsons and one great-granddaughter.

Charles spent four years in the U.S. Army, serving 15 months in Korea. He is a member of Macedonia Baptist Church, Mathews American Legion Post 83, and Oriental Lodge No. 20. He also serves on the board of directors of the Mathews Farm Bureau. Charles has been a businessman in Mathews County for over six decades, concurrently operating a barber shop for 63 years and a daffodil farm for 55 years. He has previously served on the Mathews Memorial Library Board of Trustees and the Middle Peninsula Community Criminal Justice Board.

Charles' tremendous contributions to his community include: building one new school and renovating two others, building a new auditorium at Mathews High School, closing the landfill and constructing a new transfer station, renovating and adding onto Mathews Memorial Library, building a new court house, supporting a new senior center and installing a new 911 system.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing the accomplishments, tenacity, and dedication of Charles Ingram. Words alone cannot express our gratitude. May God bless Charles Ingram and his family.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MESIK
ABAJIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Mr. Mesik Abajian, who passed away on Thursday, September 27, 2019 at the age of 97. Mesik will be remembered for his service to our country and contributions to the community.

Mesik was born to Salve and Nishon Abajian in Selma, California on May 31, 1922. He was raised in Selma and graduated high school in 1941. Mesik joined the United States Army Air Corps and served courageously in World War II. Upon his return from service, he married the love of his life Peggy Emerzian in 1946.

Peggy and Mesik began farming in Selma on their Bethel Avenue ranch and together raised two daughters, Wendy and Shelly. Mesik was passionate about farming and lived on the family's farm until his passing. Mesik was married to Peggy for 61 years until her passing in 2007.

Mesik is preceded in death by his parents Nishon and Salve Abajian, brother Seth Abajian and his wife Ruby Abajian, sister Anna Abajian, brother-in-law Manuel Kay Emerzian, and wife Peggy Abajian. He is survived by his daughters, Wendy and Shelly, and his many nieces and nephews.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and service of my friend Mesik Abajian. He was a respected man of the Central Valley and his community.

CELEBRATING THE DEDICATION
OF THE VIRGINIA WOMEN'S
MONUMENT

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the unveiling of the Virginia Women's Monument in Richmond, Virginia.

I would like to recognize the Virginia Council on Women for hosting the unveiling of this groundbreaking monument, the first-of-its-kind in the country to be erected on State Capitol grounds. The Virginia Women's Monument acknowledges the profound achievements and lasting legacies of extraordinary women who have lived and worked in Virginia.

The monument honors over four hundred years of women's history through twelve historic Virginia women: Anne Burras Laydon, Cockacoeske, Mary Draper Ingles, Martha Washington, Clementina Rind, Elizabeth Keckley, Sally L. Tompkins, Maggie L. Walker, Sarah G. Jones, Laura S. Copenhaver, Virginia E. Randolph, and Adèle Clark.

These women made significant strides for the betterment of our Commonwealth and our country. Their distinct accomplishments range across various fields, such as business, banking, arts, politics, medicine, and social justice. These women deserve a prominent platform and our nation's attention, and I am honored to recognize them.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these distinguished women and honoring their memories through the dedication of the Virginia Women's Monument.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL
COMMISSION TO COMBAT WORK-
PLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT
ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the National Commission to Combat Workplace Sexual Harassment Act to establish a national commission to examine and combat sexual harassment in the U.S. workplace.

I have modeled this bill on legislation Congress has passed to address other national problems considered to be serious, such as gambling. The almost daily exposure of allegations of sexual harassment, many not denied, more than qualifies sexual harassment for national attention and priority. This bill would create a national commission to focus on sexual harassment in major industries and workplaces throughout the United States.

Congress recently adopted a bill that addresses harassment in the congressional workplace. It requires Members of the House and Senate to be personally liable for settlements and awards resulting from harassment and retaliation claims, removes the mandatory counseling, mediation and "cooling off" periods for accusers that is currently required, mandates publicly reporting awards and settle-

ments and covers unpaid staff as well. This is a step in the right direction beginning where Congress should—right here in the Congress itself. However, nothing equivalent has been done for sexual harassment that affects the American people. We have largely neglected our own constituents, despite the increasing number of troubling reports in the news of sexual harassment claims.

A national commission would assure the American people that Congress takes sexual harassment affecting them—the typical worker—seriously, beyond the high-profile examples, such as allegations against Harvey Weinstein, Jeffrey Epstein and the Congress itself, that have garnered the headlines. Most importantly, the commission would hear from a cross section of the public—from office and factory workers to retail and food service employees—whose experiences with sexual harassment have received almost no national attention. The commission could travel or invite witnesses to Washington from throughout the country to recommend changes in laws or regulations and best practices on preventing, training, investigating, responding to and penalizing sexual harassment in the private and public sectors.

Our constituents expect Congress, which represents every sector, to take on the problem of sexual harassment throughout our national economy, including private and public (federal, state and local) workplaces. A national commission could help reach and reduce sexual harassment, a form of gender discrimination, where the average American works.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE MINORITY
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CEN-
TER AND DENISE MOORE FOR
BEING NAMED SMALL BUSINESS
ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR
THROUGH THE TURNER CEN-
TER'S SMALL BUSINESS
AWARDS

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Denise Moore and the Minority Business Development Center for winning the Small Business Advocate of the Year Award for the Bradley University Turner Center's Small Business Awards.

The Minority Business Development Center is a 501(c3) organization that was created by Denise Moore and the Black Business Alliance to aid aspiring business owners get their ideas off the ground. The Minority Business Development Center addresses concerns like lack of resource accessibility and a need for training on topics addressing business expansion. The organization serves the Peoria community by providing local aspiring business owners with education and training in the fundamentals of business planning and development. I am deeply grateful to Denise Moore and the Minority Business Development Center for their service to the Peoria community.

It is because of community leaders such as Denise Moore that I am especially proud to