

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YEMEN AMERICAN BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Yemen American Benevolent Association. Its meaningful work in Michigan is worthy of commendation.

Established in 1969, the Yemen American Benevolent Association (YABA) was created to support targeted communities. YABA endeavored to strengthen families, grow a sustainable regional economy, promote environmental protections, cultivate leadership, and encourage mutual respect for all. Since its inception, YABA has been dedicated to its mission and offers services like immigration assistance, Arabic language classes, fax services, and tutoring, to name a few, to achieve its goals. The association's efforts truly make a difference and positively impact the communities it serves.

The Yemen American Benevolent Association has been a valued part of our Michigan community for half a century. Although YABA's dedicated work continues to uplift targeted communities across Michigan, the association especially supports Dearborn and addresses the community's changing needs. Through its efforts to create links between people and the services they require, YABA has helped the Yemeni-Arab-American community in Dearborn thrive. YABA's wide range services prove to be an indispensable resource for many, and I deeply appreciate the association's tremendous work in our community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 50th anniversary of the Yemen American Benevolent Association. For half a century, YABA has been an essential part of our Yemeni-American community. We are grateful for its impact and wish it continued success ahead.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLORADO SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE RUBEN VALDEZ

**HON. JOE NEGUSE**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I stand with the State of Colorado in mourning the loss of an historic and iconic public servant—Colorado Speaker of the House Ruben Valdez.

Born in Trinidad, Colorado, Speaker Valdez left school at the age of 15 to find work and support his mother and family. He later received his high school diploma through a GED program and used this experience to motivate his passion for expanding education opportunities to all Coloradans.

Early in his career, Speaker Valdez joined the United Steelworkers of America and rose through the union ranks. He eventually became the President of Steelworkers Local

5099 in Denver where he fought alongside his fellow union members for countless protections for workers throughout Colorado and the United States.

Speaker Valdez was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 1970, representing west and southwest Denver. In 1975, he became House speaker, Colorado's first Latino Speaker. Throughout his time in the State Legislature, Speaker Valdez was a strong advocate for workers, consumer protections and equity in education.

Speaker Valdez's involvement in politics remained constant throughout his life, even following his historic Speakership. Amongst many accomplishments, he served as a Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation under President Jimmy Carter and worked as Executive Director of Colorado's Department of Social Services and Department of Labor and Employment. In his later years, he worked alongside his granddaughter as a lobbyist in the State Capitol, continuously pushing the legislative body toward justice and equity.

Throughout his many years of service, Speaker Valdez created a legacy of which his family, friends, and supporters should be so proud. It is a legacy that will no doubt continue to influence lawmakers and Coloradans alike, for generations to come.

For me, Speaker Valdez was a personal hero whose commitment to our state and to justice in our legislative process we can only hope to emulate. I join my Colorado community in mourning the loss of this thoughtful and empathetic leader, and send my deepest condolences to his entire family.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF DR. ROSA SLADE GRAGG

**HON. RASHIDA TLAIB**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of Dr. Rosa Slade Gragg, a woman who represented and championed the civil rights of Black women of the City of Detroit.

Dr. Rosa Slade Gragg worked as an English teacher before she became involved with civil rights advocacy. She quickly became an outstanding advocate for the advancement of Black women's rights. She was eventually appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to serve on the Board of the National Volunteer's Participation Committee of Civil Defense. Dr. Gragg also worked alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as an active and vocal champion of the civil rights movement. In addition to her advocacy, Dr. Gragg founded the Slade-Gragg Academy of Practical Arts in 1947, the first Black vocational school in Detroit. More than two thousand women and returning veterans were trained at the academy, the first Black owned and operated business on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. Over the years, Dr. Gragg accumulated a number of honors and recognition for her work to advance civil rights and served as an advisor to three United States Presidents.

We owe a debt of gratitude for the hard work and dedication of Dr. Rosa Slade Gragg. It is with great honor that I ask my colleagues

to join with me in honor of her memory and upon the dedication of a street named to acknowledge her civil rights activism.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT MORIAH BAPTIST CHURCH

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I join the community of Mount Moriah Baptist Church in the Cliffwood section of Aberdeen, New Jersey in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the church. Through its long history, Mount Moriah Baptist Church has provided a spiritual center for prayer and fellowship to the community.

The church property was purchased from Gelhaus White and Charles H. White in 1914 and deeded in 1919. While the church members worked on raising money to erect the building, they held services in each other's homes. The church, originally named Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, was led at the time by Reverend J.W. Coakly and five additional trustees, T.M. Lester, Joseph Boles, Bearl Smith, Fred Coakly and Edward D. Causy.

Today, Mount Moriah Baptist Church remains a close-knit congregation. Its 60 members are led by Pastor Eddie Aikens and board members Deacon Marvin Fisher, Trustee Deputy Maor Robert Swindle, Financial Secretary Van Lane and Treasurer Betty Duncan. Throughout its long history, the church's spiritual leaders, Board of Trustees, staff and members have endeavored to carry on its mission of faith and service.

Madam Speaker, once again, it is my great honor to pay tribute to Mount Moriah Baptist Church as it celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. This incredible milestone is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL OF VERO BEACH

**HON. BILL POSEY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, October 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of Vero Beach, an iconic and vibrant seaside town full of rich history and culture in my district that I am proud to celebrate. Known locally as the "Hidden Jewel of the Treasure Coast", Vero Beach continues to showcase the unique wildlife, scenic coasts, thriving local businesses and the hardworking people of Florida.

First settled in the 1800's, Vero Beach's original pioneers paved the way for the prosperity the city enjoys today. One of the most notable early settlers, Henry T. Gifford, owned and operated a citrus grove business in addition to establishing the area's first mercantile store that doubled as a post office, express office and railroad ticket office. The story of how the town got its name "Vero" is often attributed to his wife Sarah who suggested the settlement be named the Latin word for "to speak the truth."