

IN HONOR OF DR. DIETER MARTIN
GRUEN

HON. SEAN CASTEN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2019

Mr. CASTEN of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today on Dr. Dieter Martin Gruen's 97th birthday, in support of his nomination for the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

On November 4th, my colleagues, Representative BILL FOSTER and Representative CHUCK FLEISCHMANN, joined me in supporting Dr. Gruen's nomination for the highest civilian award in this country. Dr. Gruen has dedicated his life to science and made monumental contributions to shaping the United States as a leader and world power in technology, innovation, and national defense.

For nearly eight decades, Dr. Gruen has worked to enhance American technology development as a former Manhattan Project Scientist and Argonne National Laboratory Distinguished Fellow. Born in 1922, Dr. Gruen is an internationally esteemed German-American chemist, inventor, and innovator who immigrated to the U.S. from Nazi Germany in 1936. Throughout his career, Dr. Gruen has been driven by his curiosity and commitment to science—allowing him to make critical contributions to nuclear fission and fusion, solar energy, energy storage, and conservation. Specifically, Dr. Gruen has made several key technological advancements such as the nuclear submarine reactor cooling design and purification of uranium used to end World War II in the Pacific theater.

Through this work and countless other selfless endeavors, Dr. Gruen has been recognized by the international scientific community with numerous awards—including from Argonne National Laboratory, Northwestern University, and the Patent Law Association of Chicago—for his pioneering research in chemistry, physics, along with the emerging fields of materials and nanoscience.

I had the great pleasure of sitting down with Dr. Gruen earlier this year at his home in Downers Grove. What was intended to be a thirty-minute meeting became a two-hour conversation where I heard countless stories about Dr. Gruen's work on the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the nuts and bolts of nuclear fission technology, and his unique journey to the United States. At 97, Dr. Gruen still sees the world as a place of vast opportunities for technological innovation. His optimism has been a source of inspiration and encouragement in my work as a Member of Congress as we tackle critical issues facing our society.

Dr. Gruen has continued his lifelong commitment to science by actively funding the building and demonstration of his novel solar cell technology in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Chicago. For the reasons mentioned here and many more, I sincerely believe that Dr. Dieter Gruen should be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his lifelong contributions to science and technology that continue today. Dr. Gruen's tireless efforts to solve future energy challenges have seldom been exhibited by an individual. Humble and unpretentious, Dr. Gruen has been and remains the embodiment of a dedicated American and pure scientist.

I congratulate Dr. Gruen for his decades of accomplishments and exceptional contributions to science and the national security interests of the United States. I cannot think of a more deserving citizen for this award, and today I wish him the happiest of birthdays.

**RECOGNIZING MARGIE WAKEHAM
FOR THIRTY YEARS OF PUBLIC
SERVICE TO ORANGE COUNTY**

HON. KATIE PORTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2019

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize Ms. Margie Wakeham for her 30 years of public service to the Orange County community. As the CEO of Families Forward for 26 years, Ms. Wakeham has led the fight for families in need to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through wraparound services that include career counseling, housing, and an onsite food pantry, among other vital programs.

As a young woman, Ms. Wakeham served as a group counselor to incarcerated youth, and later, an investigator for the juvenile court systems in San Diego and Orange Counties. Ever the trailblazer, Ms. Wakeham was an active mother who continued to be involved with local service organizations while raising her children. It was as a mother that she realized the profound need for school improvements, which inspired her candidacy and nearly two decades of service as an Irvine Unified School Board Member. As a champion for Irvine schools, Ms. Wakeham was moved to action when she learned of the serious struggles by families in her community due to food and housing insecurities. Through first-hand insight into the heartbreaking stories of children growing up alongside her own children, Ms. Wakeham knew action was needed.

In the early 1990s, Wakeham served as a board member of the previously titled organization, Irvine Temporary Housing, which had been helping shelter families since 1984. In 1993, Ms. Wakeham joined a team of distinguished leaders throughout the City of Irvine to save the nonprofit from closing its doors. Ms. Wakeham transformed the newly minted Families Forward into a major success, housing thousands of families in our community and scoring top ratings from nonprofit watchdogs for fiscal management. In many ways, the renaming of Families Forward resembles a tectonic shift in service delivery for Orange County. Over the last three years, an astounding 95 percent of the families served by Families Forward did not reappear in the homeless services provider system. This stands as a testament to its steady leadership under Ms. Wakeham.

When we end homelessness in Orange County, it will be because of the hard work and foundation-laying of community advocates like Ms. Wakeham. Today, we celebrate not only her success as a leader, but also the bright future Families Forward to the community. I am proud to recognize Ms. Margie Wakeham for her commitment to serving the 45th Congressional District of California.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2019

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Madam Speaker, on Friday, November 15, 2019 I am not recorded on final passage of H.R. 4863, the United States Export Finance Agency Act of 2019. I was engaged in a conversation with a constituent from the state of Washington discussing the issue of homelessness and mistimed the vote for final passage although I was present.

The U.S. Export-Import Bank is critical to the Washington state economy and its workers, and I support its reauthorization. If I had been present on final passage, I would have voted: yes, on Roll Call 624.

**HONORING KANSAS CITY BOARD
OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

HON. SHARICE DAVIDS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2019

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of clean water and the dedication of the members of the Kansas City Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to their role in serving our communities. Access to clean water has become a major national concern. With the increased awareness of how environmental changes affect our water supply, as seen in towns like Flint, Michigan, it becomes increasingly important that we value our water and ensure it's safe for the public. In that spirit, today we celebrate a department that has demonstrated commitment to serving their community.

The Kansas City BPU has received the "10-Year Directors Award" from the Partnership for Safe Water; a program developed by EPA, AWWA, and associated Partner organizations to guide water suppliers towards improving water quality by optimizing system operations. The Partnership is a voluntary self-assessment and optimization program for water treatment plants and distribution system operations. More than 300 utility subscribers, collectively serving more than 100 million people, are committed to the Partnership's goals of providing safe, high quality drinking water through achieving operational excellence in water treatment. Partnership members participate in a rigorous four-phase self-assessment and peer review process, developed by water utility optimization experts, and are recognized for their commitment to deliver safe water to their communities.

The BPU plant was one of a select group of utilities honored by the Partnership at the annual conference of the American Water Works Association, the largest and oldest worldwide organization dedicated to safe water. I am honored to recognize William Johnson, BPU General Manager, as well as staff as they celebrate this outstanding award.