

paper the Southeast Missourian. For my whole life—literally—Mark has been a stoic reporter of news both local and national, and our community has been made better off by his work.

I was fortunate to work with Mark as he reported on politics in Missouri and Washington, DC. He accompanied me to many farm visits and trips to local businesses, and I knew to expect his call when issues affecting our country arose. At every meeting, his sharp thinking and dogged determination to find the best story for his readers was apparent, and he challenged me to work harder, ask more questions, and match his incredible tenacity and enthusiasm for the people around us.

Before he ever shook my hand or typed my name in one of his columns, however, I, and many in our community, knew him intimately. He tempered his no-nonsense reporting of the news with a tender, emotional, humorous weekly column titled “Mark My Word,” which touched on topics including politics, business, family, and food—in one word: life. He introduced himself to readers at the same time as he informed them about the goings-on of their town, state, and world.

Mark’s reporting is a perfect example of why a healthy, local press is essential to the flourishing of any community. Because of Mark’s natural inquisitiveness and wealth of historical knowledge, his columns put events in context and made them matter to his community. He not only reported on current events but understood them, and he was able to report the news in a way that helped his readers understand them as well. At a time when it felt as if a different local paper was closing every other month, Mark reminded us of what local news could and should be—and why it is so important to support these vital organizations. For this reason and many others, I am sad to see him retire, but I am thankful for the long record of service he leaves behind.

#### HONORING THE PARNAGIAN FAMILY

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 26, 2019*

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Parnagian family as they are honored at the 2019 Fresno State Ag One Foundation Community Salute for their contributions to the Central Valley and California agriculture. The Parnagians are champions in our Valley and have played an integral role in transforming California agriculture for the 21st century.

The legacy of the Parnagian family began in 1943, when Gladys Girazian, a lieutenant in the United States Navy Nursing Corps, met a young Marine, Sam Parnagian, at the San Diego Naval Hospital. Sam, a World War II veteran, had just returned from Pearl Harbor. Just two weeks later, the couple knew they were meant for each other and were married on December 2, 1943. The couple were blessed with four sons, Dennis, Kenneth, Randy, and Philip.

In 1950, Sam established Fowler Packing Company in Fowler, California. With Sam at the helm, the help of his four sons, younger brother Pete and nephew Jim, Fowler Packing quickly found success. Today, the family fruit

farms and state-of-the-art packing facilities have grown into one of the largest packers and shippers of tree fruit, citrus and table grapes in the industry. Sam was involved in the day-to-day operations of the business until his passing in 1980. Thereafter, Sam’s four sons held executive roles in the company and managed day-to-day operations. After 40 years of success, the Parnagian brothers passed along leadership responsibilities to Justin and Leland Parnagian in 2017, making the way for the third-generation.

The family places an emphasis on social responsibility and creating a welcoming work environment. They have an on-site cafeteria, with free meals provided daily to their employees. Additionally, they have added a health clinic at their headquarters and offer free healthcare and medications for employees and their families. They have also established the Fowler Packing Scholars Program to help bring the dream of a college education for their employees’ children closer to reality. The Parnagians stay true to their commitment to excellence as they put the best interests of customers, growers and employees first.

The Parnagian family holds core values of family, honor and strong work ethic. They have always been generous with the community. In 2015, the Parnagian family made a \$1.5 million-dollar gift to Valley Children’s Healthcare, establishing the Sam and Gladys Parnagian Child Life Endowment. Additionally, Fowler Packing has been a longtime supporter of the Community Food Banks.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Parnagian family for their contributions and exemplified leadership in the Central Valley. I wish the Parnagian family continued health, happiness and prosperity.

#### NATIONAL DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 26, 2019*

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I am proud to join the American Diabetes Association and millions of doctors, nurses, health professionals, and concerned Americans to recognize American Diabetes Month.

Diabetes remains the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. It affects more than 30 million Americans—seven million of whom are undiagnosed. By the end of this year, more than 40,000 people will be diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes—which is identified as the body’s inability to produce insulin. Type 2 diabetes—which indicates a deficiency in the way the body uses insulin—remains the most common form of diabetes, and makes up more than 90 percent of all diabetes cases. In addition, 10 percent of all women develop gestational diabetes during pregnancy, which blocks a mother’s ability to use insulin and can complicate the health of both the mother and the baby. Without proper treatment, diabetes can lead to serious and sometimes deadly complications, including heart disease, nerve damage, blindness, lower limb amputations, kidney failure, high blood pressure, and even stroke.

In my home state of California, more than 4 million people—approximately 13 percent of

the adult population in our state—have diabetes. What’s worse, more than 1 million Californians have diabetes, but have not been tested and are unaware that they are living with the disease. An astounding 10 million Californians have prediabetes, which is a health condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but are not high enough to be diagnosed as Type 2 diabetes. By the end of this year, 263,000 residents of our state will be newly diagnosed with diabetes.

The troubling increase in the number of Americans living with diagnosed diabetes has also increased the overall economic costs of treating the disease. According to a 2018 American Diabetes Association report, in 2017 the cost for treating diabetes was an astounding \$327 billion. Americans diagnosed with diabetes had medical expenses that were 2.3 times higher than Americans without diabetes, and spent, on average, \$9,600 on healthcare expenditures. That same report found that in the state of California, the overall cost of medical expenses and treatment of diabetes was \$27 billion.

For minority communities around the country, the risk of developing diabetes or suffering from complications of the disease is devastatingly heightened. Diabetes affects 15 percent of American Indians and Alaska natives, 13 percent of African Americans, 12 percent of Hispanics, and 8 percent of Asian Americans. Though they are most impacted and at risk of developing diabetes, it’s no secret that minorities often lack access to quality health care, are more likely to have prediabetes, are more likely to suffer from complications of diabetes, and in some cases, are nearly twice as likely to die from diabetes.

To this end, for many years, I have proudly authored and fought for support of H.R. 4550, the Minority Diabetes Initiative Act, which is supported by the American Diabetes Association and 60 of my House colleagues and fellow members of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus. My bill will provide grants to physicians and community-based organizations for diabetes prevention, care, and treatment programs in minority communities. It will also provide grants for a variety of diabetes-related health services, including public education on diabetes prevention and control, routine health care for diabetic patients, eye care, foot care, and treatment for kidney disease and other complications of diabetes.

I am also a strong supporter of increased federal funding for diabetes programs at the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and have supported many legislative measures that ensure that Americans living with diabetes have the quality and affordable healthcare they deserve.

During American Diabetes Month, and every month, we must continue to raise awareness of this disease and show our strong support for research, innovations, and healthcare services that improve the lives of the millions of Americans who are living with or at-risk of being diagnosed with this disease. Diabetes will continue to ravage our communities and lead to the premature death of Americans if we fail to act. While both genetic and environmental factors can contribute to the development of diabetes, it is imperative that every American regardless of their age, race, or geographic location get tested for diabetes, and speak with their doctors about actions they