

pogroms committed in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Maraga, should never be forgotten. During this horrific period, the Armenian population of the former Soviet Azerbaijan were the victims of state-sponsored violence. These acts of violence paved the way for outright war against Nagorno-Karabakh and decades of conflict. The legacy of this conflict persists today.

The Soviet-sanctioned violence against the Armenian population in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh earned strong condemnation from the United States Congress, which we are proud to uphold today. The systematic looting, maiming, and murder of Armenians permitted and encouraged by the Soviet Government remain a terrible stain on our world history. On this anniversary, it is vital that we recommit ourselves and United States policy to healing the pain caused by anti-Armenian aggression.

I urge the Trump Administration to support life-saving programs like demining assistance in Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as officially recognize the Republic of Artsakh. It is past time to implement carefully crafted, bipartisan proposals to cement peace in the region. Only by doing so can we honor the memory of the countless victims of the anti-Armenian pogroms and their descendants. I am proud to stand with Armenians and Armenian-Americans on this solemn day.

CITY OF SAN JOAQUIN
CENTENNIAL

HON. TJ COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Mr. COX of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the City of San Joaquin which celebrates its 100th anniversary this month.

The City of San Joaquin is a vibrant community located in rural Fresno County on what was previously part of a large ranch settled by Jefferson James, a miner and cattle rancher. After James' passing, his heirs sold their property to settlers, led by a gentleman by the name of Benjamin F. Graham, who created a formal plan for the community to be named Gramtown.

Graham sold the land to a company that, under the direction of their representative Dr. Herman Janz, established the community of San Joaquin. When the Southern Pacific Railroad established a line passing through San Joaquin in 1912, the flow of commerce expanded the area's economy. On February 14, 1920 the community elected to incorporate and became formally established as the City of San Joaquin.

Over the years, San Joaquin has become a hub of the agricultural industry with farms that produce food that feeds the world. Today, San Joaquin is known as the "everything is possible city" and continues to be a beacon of progress, aptly demonstrating a wholesome, rural way of life.

It is communities like San Joaquin that have shaped California's Central Valley, and indeed our country, into what it is today. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the City of San Joaquin and its residents on their first 100 years and in wishing them well in the many years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on Tuesday, February 11, 2020. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 58 and YEA on Roll Call No. 59.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOE
BONAMASSA

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, Joe Bonamassa is one of the most gifted, talented and accomplished singer, songwriter and guitarists in modern day blues. Blues is a quintessential American musical art form and Joe, throughout his life, has embraced and excelled in his pursuit of mastering this music. Joe, in exhibiting his extraordinary talents at the very early age of 4, was blessed to have his parents, Len and Debra Bonamassa, do everything possible to nurture and develop Joe's undeniable talent. Joe met the blues legend BB King after his mother received a call asking him to be the opening act for a concert headlined by King. Joe's incredible talent so impressed BB King that he was asked to continue as the opener and did over 20 shows with King by 1989. Len and Debra made significant sacrifices to help Joe realize his potential, including engaging Danny Gatton to mentor and train him. Len, who owned a guitar shop with his wife and a musician himself, cultivated not only Joe's interest in music but also his love of guitars. It is that connection with the guitar that is evident in all that Joe pursues in the world of music. He is an avid collector of guitars and amplifiers and is a subject matter expert on both the history and the mechanics of these instruments. He graciously shares his extensive collection of guitars and amplifiers with the public at one of the greatest guitar collections in the world—Nerdville, California. The "Bonaseum" as it is sometimes called displays some of the most historic and iconic guitars and amplifiers in the history of modern music.

Joe has released 13 studio albums and a fantastic series of live albums and DVDs that capture the essence of what makes him extraordinary, which is his ability to connect with folks before a live audience. His incredible talent and the phenomenal musicians he selects to play with him make for an unparalleled experience for his fans. Joe has pioneered a different way of doing business in the music industry. Not satisfied that he couldn't perform his music the way he wanted but the way the music industry dictated in a ones size fits all mentality, Joe broke the mold and did things his way. He took a big risk in developing a new business plan for his musical enterprise and was not sure at the time if he would survive in the music industry. He has persevered and now prospers in performing his craft the way he believes is best. He saw that there is a connection between recording and live per-

formances and has revolutionized the industry by developing and implementing a business that connects studio recording, live performances and booking his own shows. He has focused on playing smaller venues where the experience matches his style and magnitude of his performance. He has performed for over 30 years and continues to practice relentlessly and work incredibly hard at his craft. Every day he wakes up he is excited about the guitar and is equally thrilled to play it. Joe is one of the most thoughtful, caring and passionate artists in the music business. He has done a tremendous service to the world of blues music by creating the Keeping the Blues Alive Foundation. This foundation each year brings together some of the best blues artists on the planet to share their talents with folks in a close, intimate setting. This connection with music fans is a great opportunity for both emerging and established artists to enjoy playing in a small venue and to raise money for a great cause. The Foundation awards grant money to extend the reach and value of the musical experience, especially in schools. Joe is extremely accessible, humble, and infinitely committed to encouraging others to pursue their musical interest just as his mom and dad from childhood. Our nation truly values the efforts and contributions of Joe Bonamassa to the world of music and his efforts to preserve guitar history and to inspire others in their musical pursuits.

RECOGNIZING JUDGE JAMES L.
ROBERTS, JR.

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Circuit Judge James L. Roberts, Jr., who retired from the Pontotoc County Courthouse after a 48-year judiciary career.

Judge Roberts was born on June 8, 1945, in Pontotoc County, Mississippi. He attended public school in Pontotoc County and later pursued higher education at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. He then earned his M.B.A. at Mississippi State University in Starkville and later received his J.D. from the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

As a life-long public servant, Judge Roberts served as Pontotoc County Prosecuting Attorney, municipal judge, chancery judge, circuit judge, Mississippi Supreme Court Justice, and was the Mississippi Commissioner of Public Safety for four years.

Throughout his life and to this day, Judge Roberts has set an example for others to follow. He and his wife, Mrs. Rose D. Roberts, are active members of Pontotoc First United Methodist Church. He has served the church as administrative council member and chair, trustee member and chair, finance member and chair, lay leader, head usher, and Sunday School Teacher.

I thank Judge Roberts for his lifelong dedication to the law and for making Mississippi a better place. I wish him many years of good health.