

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN A. YARMUTH

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, I unfortunately was unable to be present for votes taken on the House Floor on February 26, 2020. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Roll Call Vote No. 71: YEA; Roll Call Vote No. 72: YEA; and Roll Call Vote No. 73: YEA.

IN HONOR OF SHIRLEY GREGORY

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, it is an honor and privilege to recognize a dedicated public servant who continues to make our community proud as a Ward Leader. As public officials, entrusted by their peers to oversee elections and party activity, Philadelphia Ward Leaders represent a corps of unsung heroes that help facilitate the progress that molds our city. I am honored to be joined by one of our most distinguished, esteemed Ward Leaders today, and in commemoration of Black History Month, ensure that their contributions to our city remain enshrined in our historical record for generations to recognize.

Black History Month is more than a mere byline on the month of February, it is an opportunity to celebrate and recognize the extraordinary contributions that the African American community has made, and continues to make, on our nation's history and culture. And I can think of no honoree more deserving of this recognition, who embodies the selfless commitment to their neighbors and peers, than Shirley Gregory.

Shirley Gregory of Ward 49 is no stranger to Congress after serving as Congressman Bob Brady's District Director. She embodies the qualities that make for a successful Ward Leader by facilitating candidate meet and greets, hosting ballot machine demonstrations, and helping our officials disseminate information to the public. She keeps her finger on the pulse of local, state, and federal politics, helping those of the 49th ward learn how they can get involved and make a difference in their community. With Shirley as the Ward Leader, I know every resident in her community has a friendly face and helpful resource. She is a staple in the city, and I am grateful of our overlap as we look to serve the people of Philadelphia. I thank Shirley.

Taking after the long lineage of Philadelphians who have helped sculpt our democracy into an increasingly inclusive system that encourages public participation, Shirley Gregory has left her own mark on our city. I look forward to years of collaboration so we can create a more inclusive, representative democracy throughout our community.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEWMAN FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Newman First Christian Church on its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

Newman First Christian Church was born in the hearts of a small band of believers in 1870. An early focus of Newman First Christian was to make disciples of Jesus, and so for the first sixteen years the church did not have a regular minister and services were led by lay leaders, evangelists and circuit riders. As the congregation grew in spirit as well as in numbers, it soon outgrew its facilities. A new building was built to the glory of God on the corner of Green and King streets in Newman in 1904 and is used to this day for worship.

Throughout its history, pastors have generally served for short periods of time, the longest being only four years. Then in 1950, the church called Reverend Wolfe and for thirty-seven years he served as its minister. After his death, the congregation took a step of faith in a new direction and in 1987 Newman First Christian became a "teaching congregation." It was led by faithful men and women, preachers, and ministers until, under the leadership of Perry Albin and Laverne Fraser, the church recruited its current pastor, Justin Smith, in November of 2017.

The church is serious about loving Jesus, as well as creating opportunities for community involvement, spiritual growth, and outreach. Newman First Christian, for example, continues to provide meals to various local school sports teams and prayer for local school events, sponsor community events, and offer biblical counseling to the congregation and community. This focus on service and outreach has improved the spiritual and physical well-being of countless people in the community.

Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure I stand to recognize Newman First Christian Church on its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary. I wish Pastor Smith, the congregation, as well as the community of Newman, all the best for a bright and joyous future.

RECOGNIZING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAKU POGROMS

HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 30th anniversary of the anti-Armenian pogroms in then-Soviet Azerbaijan's capital of Baku.

In January 1990, a violent seven-day long riot in Baku broke out against the city's ethnic Armenian civilian population. Approximately 90 Armenians were killed, and hundreds more were brutally beaten and forced to abandon their homes. The Baku Pogrom was just one of several anti-Armenian attacks that took place across Azerbaijan from 1988 to 1990

that were enabled by the Azerbaijani government. From Sumgait to Kirovabad and Baku, Armenian Christians living in the country were murdered, raped, and robbed. These vicious attacks led to the displacement of thousands of Armenian families fleeing the targeted violence as refugees.

These were crimes against humanity that have still gone unrecognized by Azerbaijan. I call upon their government to acknowledge and condemn these acts of violence, actively prosecute the perpetrators of these crimes, and take all appropriate action so that these atrocities never happen again.

Throughout history, the Armenian people have been targets of violence, murder and genocide. We must emphatically condemn these actions and any efforts to erase these atrocities from our collective memory. Failure to do so will only serve to embolden purveyors of violence against religious and ethnic minorities around the globe. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Armenian Caucus to continue pushing policies promoting peace and human rights for Armenians and for all.

If we do not stand up to hate, we cannot end the cycle of intolerance.

IN HONOR OF PETER LYDE

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

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Peter Lyde, the Ward Leader for the 61st ward, helped shape our city's justice department and is a long-tenured labor organizer. In this modern age where technology has allowed more and more people to access information with ease, Peter has ensured the residents of Ward 61 can find helpful guidance on their political questions, and information on upcoming events, by following their active social media accounts. As we look to bring in new participants to the political sphere, Peter models the innovation that will expand the electorate and allow new voices to take part in our political process. With ward cookouts, community gatherings, and seasonal events, he brings politics to his constituents, encouraging