

IN HONOR OF SPRING GARDEN WINNING THE AHSAA CLASS 1A BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the Spring Garden girls basketball team for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 1A basketball championship.

The Panthers defeated St. Luke's 53 to 45 in the championship game on February 27th. Spring Garden has won three titles over the last five years.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Spring Garden High School, the coaches, the players and all the Panther fans on this exciting achievement. Go Panthers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. GOMEZ. Madam Speaker, I am not recorded on roll call vote No. 79. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

I am not recorded on roll call vote No. 80. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

I am not recorded on roll call vote No. 81. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

I am not recorded on roll call vote No. 82. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

RECOGNIZING BONNIE HESTER FOR HER WORK IN THE PEORIA COMMUNITY FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bonnie Hester for her work in the Peoria community and to honor her as a part of Black History Month. Bonnie spent 35 years in the public sector and was most recently a Program Assistant for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program.

Bonnie Hester earned a certificate in Labor History from the University of Illinois and a Clerical Certificate from the Vocational School of Southern Illinois. Bonnie worked for the Peoria City/County Health Department for 25 years. Bonnie served on the Health Care Committee for Peoria County employees and was President of local AFSCME Union Chapter No. 3665 for 14 years. She represented District 1 on the Peoria County Board for eight years and served as the board's precinct committee person.

Now retired, Bonnie serves on the Executive Board for the West Central Labor Council representing AFSCME retirees and volunteers for the American Red Cross Disaster Services, the Heart of Illinois United Way, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. She also serves on

the school board for Peoria Christ Lutheran School, and is a long-time member of Christ Lutheran Church, where she teaches Sunday School. Bonnie and her husband, Jerry, have been married for 39 years and have three children and six grandchildren. I commend Bonnie on her service to the Peoria community.

It is because of community leaders such as Bonnie Hester that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally recognize Bonnie Hester for her great work in the Peoria community and honor her as a part of Black History Month.

SUPPORT FOR THE SOCIAL SECURITY 2100 ACT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, let me commend my colleague and friend Congressman JOHN LARSON, the chair of the Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee, for his leadership and his legislation the Social Security 2100 Act. He is a tireless advocate for upholding our promise to our seniors, with respect to their retirement and their economic wellbeing.

Perhaps the ultimate legislative expression of our nation's shared values is our Social Security program. In 1935, our federal government made a promise to American workers that if they worked hard all of their lives, they would not fall into poverty when they retire. Social Security is foundational to tens of millions' Americans economic security as they retire. It provides a stable and secure source of income for our nation's seniors and their families. We continue to keep that promise today, as Social Security lifts out of poverty 22 million seniors nationwide and 130,000 in Connecticut.

In fact, according to the Economic Policy Institute, quote, "Social Security remains by far the most important source of income for most seniors. It constitutes most of the income of seniors in the bottom half of the income distribution."

Yet, a cliff is coming. Social Security no longer stretches as far as it once did. Even with their Social Security benefits, more than 5 percent of Connecticut's seniors are living in poverty. And, if we do nothing, in less than 15 years, Social Security benefits will be cut by nearly 25 percent.

When Social Security does not keep up with the cost of living, or modern economic challenges, seniors are robbed of their dignity and independence. They suffer when we do not uphold our promise. That is why we need to protect and enhance Social Security and to ensure it is able to help those who need it. That is why we need the Social Security 2100 Act.

It was introduced by my dear friend Congressman JOHN LARSON. I am an original cosponsor. The bill expands benefits, strengthens the Social Security trust fund, and cuts taxes for seniors. The bill and House Democrats' leadership is critical at a time when Americans are struggling with stagnant incomes and a lack of good-paying jobs.

In total, this bill would boost benefits for 62 million people. And, it will put the program on sound financial footing for the next 75 years.

It does so with several smart steps, including by having millionaires and billionaires pay the same tax rate as everyone else. For many Americans, this is commonsense. What is nonsensical, however, is that Republicans passed a \$1.5 trillion tax giveaway for the wealthy and well-connected. 83 percent of the benefits go to the top 1 percent.

Instead of a giveaway to the rich, it is time for an investment in working people and seniors. That is what we are trying to do with the Social Security 2100 Act.

Experts have pointed to its economic benefits, for both individuals and the nation. For example, former Council of Economic Advisors Chair Jason Furman and former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers, have said this legislation would positively impact economic growth.

As President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said of Social Security in 1934, quote, "This seeking for a greater measure of welfare and happiness does not indicate a change of values. It is rather a return to values lost in the course of our economic development and expansion."

Values lost, an apt description for our economy today. Costs skyrocketing. Wages stalling. Savings stagnating. And, seniors suffering. But, with this legislation, we can be returning to values lost, to upholding our promise, to ensuring economic security.

All Americans must keep up the fight to protect and expand social safety net programs like Social Security. The 60 million Americans receiving Social Security and countless more who will receive it are counting on us, and we will deliver.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DENVER RIGGLEMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. RIGGLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I was unable to attend votes on March 3, 2020. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 81, and YEA on Roll Call No. 82.

FEMA DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the "FEMA Disaster Preparedness Improvement Act," with support from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the California State Association of Counties. I want to thank my colleague Congressman MIKE THOMPSON (D-CA) for his support as the original cosponsor.

This legislation would increase FEMA support for disaster preparedness and emergency response to reflect the needs of communities across the country. As states like California face increasingly severe and frequent natural disasters due to man-made climate change and global public health emergencies, Congress and the federal government must step up.

The people most impacted by disasters and emergencies are often the most vulnerable members of our society: the elderly, the economically disadvantaged, and those with disabilities. All Americans deserve nothing less than the full-throated support of their federal government as they prepare for natural disasters and deal with public health emergencies, and that is exactly what my legislation would ensure.

As a member of California's Congressional delegation, I have seen firsthand the devastation that disasters can have on communities. In 2017 and 2018, our state experienced the most destructive fires recorded in California history. The federal government must be a real partner for states as they prepare for these disasters and seek to make our communities more resilient. My district is also one of the most flood-prone in the entire nation, and Travis Air Force Base housed the first American evacuees from the coronavirus outbreak in East Asia.

That is why the "FEMA Disaster Preparedness Improvement Act" would increase the federal cost share under the Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management Performance Grant Programs to 85 percent, from 75 percent and 50 percent respectively. FEMA's Emergency Performance Grant Program helps state and local officials manage public emergencies including health crises, such as the recent coronavirus outbreak.

My bill would also exempt environmental reviews under federal or state law from the 36-month deadline to complete hazard mitigation projects and make designated "special flood hazard areas" under the National Flood Insurance Program automatically eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grants. Lastly, the bill would direct the Government Accountability Office to report to Congress on the challenges faced by states in utilizing FEMA's Public Assistance Program Alternative Procedures.

Damaged caused by natural disasters in the United States has risen in recent years, with an average of 15 disasters with a cost of over a billion dollars between 2016 and 2018, more than double the average of the previous three decades. Congress must respond to this troubling trend and better support vulnerable communities across the country as they prepare and increase resilience to natural disasters and other public emergencies.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to co-sponsor the "FEMA Disaster Preparedness Improvement Act." As a senior member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I plan to make this critical legislation a major priority.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN
NIEDERMAN

HON. JIM BANKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. BANKS. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and career of John Niederman. Since 1985, John has poured his heart and soul into the outstanding work conducted by Pathfinder Services.

Though born in New York, Indiana is proud to claim John as one of our own. A graduate of Fort Wayne's own University of Saint

Francis, he has spent over three decades working in Huntington with Pathfinder Services to help those who need it most.

John embodies the purest form of Hoosier hospitality in his work, helping countless others on their way to realizing greater economic, physical and developmental independence. He has been active in creating an environment that values inclusion and fairness, giving those whom he encounters the best chance possible to succeed and Jive out the American Dream.

As John prepares to step down from a position he has loved and excelled at, I have no doubt that he will continue to be a leader in his community and a shining example to those who seek him out. Huntington County, and all of Indiana, are blessed to continue to count John and his family as their own.

JUDGE PERRY LITTLE—BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a jurist who has served our Tampa neighbors for decades—and continues his dedication to this day. Through his work spanning more than 40 years and as the second African American appointed to the bench in Hillsborough County, which is the longest tenure for an African American judge in the county's history, Judge Perry A. Little has helped shape our community forever. Judge Little is husband to Sonjia Latson Little and father of three: Matthew (Nandie), Marissa and Josie. He is also the proud grandfather of four girls, Reigan, Ivy, Gabrielle and Eden, and a member of Beulah Baptist Church.

Judge Little was born and educated in Georgia. He received his undergraduate degree from Morehouse College and his law degree from Emory University. After completing law school, he took a position at a legal clinic where he could have a larger community impact over a federal position he was offered in Washington, D.C.

At a time when windows and doors were just beginning to open for African Americans in the legal profession, Judge Little was appointed to the bench in Hillsborough County in 1977 by Governor Rubin Askew, where he presided for more than 12 years. He was the second African American in the county's history to be appointed, standing on the shoulders of Judge George Edgecomb, who only served three years as a county judge due to illness, but set the highest of standards for his colleagues to follow. The 1970s were a transformative time for communities as desegregation orders blanketed the nation while raising the profile of diversity at all levels of government. With the vital role our courts play in our democracy, economy and daily lives, a more diverse judiciary brings greater confidence in our justice system and is an important step toward a more just and equal America. In 1993, Governor Lawton Chiles appointed Judge Little to the Circuit Court where he served in the Juvenile and Circuit Civil Divisions until his retirement in 2007.

Much of Judge Little's Circuit experience was dedicated to positively impacting the lives of juveniles and young adults through his legal

decisions, who he continues to serve as an inspiration. Judge Little retired to care for his aging father in Georgia but continues to lend his judicial expertise as a Senior Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, and assists other judges to ensure each case is given the time and care it deserves. He has been recognized for his extensive commitment to service through various awards, including the 2018 Distinguished Leadership Award from the Black Law Students Association at WMU-Cooley Law School's Tampa Bay campus.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Tampa Bay community, it gives me immense pride to honor a great public servant this Black History Month. Judge Little is a man faithful to his family and community, and is unparalleled in service to his neighbors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Madam Speaker, due to travel complications, I was unable to be present for votes on Monday, March 2.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 79, H.R. 5003 and YEA on Roll Call No. 80, H.R. 5932.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. HURD of Texas. Madam Speaker, due to travel delays, I was unable to participate in the following votes: Roll Call No. 79, 80, 81, and 82. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 79; YEA on Roll Call No. 80; YEA on Roll Call No. 81; and YEA on Roll Call No. 82.

HONORING SENIOR MASTER
SERGEANT DIANA M. CAREY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable community servant, Senior Master Sergeant Diana M. Carey.

Sergeant Carey attended Jackson State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary and special education. She also earned a Masters in English to teach secondary level education.

Sergeant Carey retired from the United States Air Force with twenty years of service. She actively served in Texas, Japan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. In addition, she has held administrative, contracting and intelligence positions within the United States Air Force. Sergeant Carey also supported the Military Airlift Command in deployments.

Since July of 1997, she has served as the Air Force Junior Reserve Officers' Training