

HONORING THE LIFE OF TOM
UNTERMANN

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 30, 2020

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Tom Untermann who passed away on October 27, 2020, at the age of 73 after a lifetime of exemplary public service to his community.

Born in 1947 to Anne and Karl Untermann, Tom followed in his family's footsteps in developing deep roots in the community through the family business. His great uncle, Richard Lohrmann, emigrated from Germany in 1909 to San Rafael in pursuit of the American dream. Upon arrival, he purchased a small plot of land and opened a neighborhood nursery. In 1954, having inherited the family green thumb, Tom's father purchased the nursery. Today, West End Nursery celebrates 110 years as a valued business of San Rafael.

In his youth, Tom excelled as an athlete both at San Rafael High School and the University of California, Davis, where he won two conference championships as a power forward for the basketball team. It was at UC Davis that Tom met his wife, Merrie, and the two returned to San Rafael to raise their sons, Chris and Kurt. Once back in San Rafael, Tom inherited West End Nursery from his father, becoming a third generation family owner.

Working closely with his son Chris, Tom fostered a welcoming environment at the nursery, sharing his vast knowledge of plants with all customers, from experienced green thumbs to first time gardeners. Every December, with the support of Merrie and his daughter-in-law Barbara, Tom would construct a beautiful Christmas display within the nursery inviting community members to visit and marvel in the holiday spirit.

Tom's positive impact on the community extended beyond the nursery. He spent many years coaching San Rafael High School athletics and played a lead role in the construction of the high school's new baseball field, investing many years and his personal funds into the project. In honor of his tireless dedication to community athletics, Tom was awarded a special recognition by the Marin Athletic Foundation Hall of Fame in 2007.

Tom was a well-respected community leader who will be remembered for his generosity of spirit and enduring commitment to public service. He is survived by wife, Merrie; sons, Chris and Kurt; daughters-in-law, Barbara and Elizabeth; grandchildren, Walker, Wade, Waylen, Tanner, Hudson, and Emilia; and siblings, Richard, Dennis and Jeanne. Madam Speaker, while Tom Untermann will be greatly missed, his legacy will live on through the indelible positive impact he had on his many friends, family and the community at large. Please join me in extending our deepest condolences to his family and friends.

HONORING MAYOR JILL TECHEL

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 30, 2020

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mayor Jill

Techel for her leadership and accomplishments, and to mark her retirement after 16 years as Mayor of the City of Napa.

Jill Techel grew up in Grand Forks, North Dakota and earned a Bachelor's degree in social work from the University of North Dakota. She moved to Napa in 1971, where she began her public service career as a member of the Napa Parks and Recreation Commission and the Napa Valley Unified School District Board, eventually serving as the leader of both organizations, all while raising her two children. In 1996, she was appointed to the Napa City Council, where she was reelected twice before being elected Mayor in 2005.

One of Mayor Techel's most important achievements during her tenure was championing the Napa River and Napa Creek Flood Protection Project, which rerouted the Napa River to prevent devastating floods in downtown Napa, a consistent problem in the city before her efforts. Without Mayor Techel's persistence in advocating for funding in Washington on behalf of Napa, this project would not have been realized.

Mayor Techel's legacy extends far beyond her commitment to flood prevention. She has helped build up Napa's world-class reputation by cultivating a vibrant arts scene through the creation of the Rail Arts District, BottleRock Festival, and the Napa Art Walk. She has also supported arts education, collaborating with the school district to allow students to display their art at the Napa Lighted Art Festival, Napa's newest public art efforts. Through her calming presence, Mayor Techel has led the city through multiple crises, including the 2005 flood, the 2014 earthquake, the 2017 fires, and the coronavirus pandemic.

Throughout her time as mayor, Mayor Techel has been recognized countless times for leadership and dedication to her community. In 2004, she received the Preceptor Award for Outstanding Leadership Professionals from the National Community Leadership Association. Following the 2014 South Napa Earthquake, Mayor Techel was named the Napa Chamber Citizen of the Year for demonstrating immense leadership in her fight for resources to assist in Napa's recovery.

Madam Speaker, I join Napa in wishing Mayor Techel well as she goes from caring for her city to caring for her grandchildren in retirement. Mayor Jill Techel exemplifies a strong, commonsense leader with admirable dedication to serving her community. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor her today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 30, 2020

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, due to a family obligation, I was absent from the House on November 20, 2020. Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 225 on House Amendment 901, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 226 on House Amendment 902, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 227 on Final Passage of H.R. 8294, the National Apprenticeship Act of 2020, I would have voted "yea." I am pleased that this legis-

lation to modernize our nation's system of registered apprenticeships passed decisively in the House.

IN HONOR OF THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND SERVICE OF
STATE REPRESENTATIVE ALVIN
HOLMES

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 30, 2020

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of long-serving Alabama State Representative Alvin Holmes of Montgomery. Rep. Holmes dutifully served as a member of the Alabama House of Representatives for 44 years. Rep. Holmes passed away at home at the age of 81. Rep. Holmes was a dedicated public servant and community leader. Rep. Holmes led with dignity and a strong sense of justice throughout his career. He is remembered by colleagues and the community as an individual who knew and acted on what was right, no matter the challenge. He is survived by his daughter, Veronica Holmes.

Born in Montgomery on October 26, 1939 to John H. Holmes and Willie Ann Holmes, he was born and raised in Montgomery, AL. Rep. Holmes attended Rochester Business Institute, Alabama State University, Atlanta University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Alabama, and Jones School of Law. He held a Bachelor of Science degree, Master of Education degree, Master of Arts degree, and a Doctor of Law degree. Rep. Holmes marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a student and fought for the equal treatment of all Americans in every role he served.

Rep. Holmes was a proud member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, the NAACP, Montgomery Improvement Association, a member of the State Democratic Executive Committee, and was a member of the Hutchinson Missionary Baptist Church.

After graduating from Alabama State University, Rep. Holmes was an Alabama delegate to the historic 1968 Democratic National Convention. He was a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, where he helped lead civil rights demonstrations in between his studies. Rep. Holmes served once more as an Alabama delegate to the 1996 Democratic National Convention.

In 1974, Alvin Holmes was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives. During the four decades of his service, Rep. Holmes gave a voice to the voiceless—a champion for equal rights and justice for all citizens. He led multiple efforts to deconstruct the remnants of segregation and to remove racist language from the State Constitution. One of his proudest accomplishments was establishing Martin Luther King Day as a state holiday and encouraging the hiring of African Americans for professional position at the Alabama Legislature. Rep. Holmes spearheaded the annual parade that is held on the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

In 1993, Rep. Holmes successfully led the effort to remove the confederate flag from Alabama's State Capitol building. In addition, he sponsored a constitutional amendment to remove an interracial marriage ban from the Alabama Constitution and fought for years to