

SUMGAIT, KIROVABAD, AND BAKU  
MASSACRES

**HON. BRAD SHERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I stand in solidarity with the Armenian American community in commemorating the pogroms against Armenians in the cities of Sumgait (February 27–29, 1988), Kirovabad (November 21–27, 1988) and Baku (January 13–19, 1990).

Thirty-three years ago, in the Azerbaijani town of Sumgait, peaceful Armenian residents were brutally targeted on the basis of their ethnicity and subjected to unspeakable crimes. The New York Times reported Armenians being “hunted” down and an account of a pregnant Armenian woman, who had been disemboweled. The U.S. Senate passed an amendment in July of 1989, noting that even the Soviet government had termed the murder of Armenians in Sumgait a “pogrom.”

The Sumgait Pogroms were the beginning of an escalation of violence against the Armenian minority, with a wave of anti-Armenian violence spreading to Kirovabad in November 1988 and to Baku in January 1990, which culminated in the forcible expulsion of 390,000 Armenians from Azerbaijan and the 1991–94 war over Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh).

In response to the Sumgait and Kirovabad pogroms, over 100 leading academics and human rights advocates, including the Executive Director of the NAACP and Elie Wiesel, placed an advertisement in The New York Times titled: “An Open Letter to International Public Opinion on Anti-Armenian Pogroms in the Soviet Union.” The letter appealed to the international community to condemn the atrocities and prevent further violence by stating: “The international community of states . . . must prove the authenticity of its commitment to human rights in order to ensure that, due to indifference and silence bordering on complicity, another genocide does not occur.” (July 27, 1990, The New York Times)

Unfortunately, Azeri attacks against Armenian civilians have only continued. In its latest bout of aggression against Armenia and Artsakh in the fall of 2020, Azerbaijan carried out indiscriminate attacks against civilians. A report by Human Rights Watch found that Azeri forces used inherently indiscriminate cluster munitions and artillery rockets or other weapons that did not distinguish between military targets and civilian objects. Multiple strikes hit residential homes in less than a minute, suggesting bombardment of civilian areas.

Today, Armenians are still held captive in Azerbaijan, with no planned date to be returned to Armenia. Armenian prisoners of war have been subjected to physical beatings and other inhumane treatment at the hand of Azerbaijan. The government of Azerbaijan must be held accountable by the international community, and I will continue to work in Congress to shed light on and learn the lessons of such past and present atrocities.

REMEMBERING BOB SMITTCAMP

**HON. DEVIN NUNES**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a San Joaquin Valley legend, Robert Smittcamp, who passed away on March 4, 2021, at the age of 79. I am deeply saddened by Bob’s passing.

Bob was a one-man Valley institution. A businessman, philanthropist, and community activist, he headed both Lyons Magnus food company and Wawona Packing. He had a particular passion for expanding healthcare access and improving education, donating millions of dollars to enhance both sectors throughout the Valley.

I’m lucky to have had Bob as a close friend and mentor. I was among countless Valley residents who frequently turned to him for advice on Valley issues. His assistance was invaluable on critical issues such as the Valley water crisis and the 2008 recession.

Bob and I also spent many hours discussing how to bring high-quality, affordable healthcare to every Valley family. I valued his insights on that question because he developed innovative ways to provide healthcare for his employees, who he always viewed as part of his own family. I’m convinced Bob’s approach provides a model for drastically improving healthcare for the entire country.

Bob epitomized all the virtues of the San Joaquin Valley. He was always available to help those of us who sought his guidance. But if you were looking for someone to sugarcoat a tough situation, then Bob was not your best option. He was an honest straight-shooter who’d give you candid answers whether you wanted them or not. That’s why I always consulted him when I had especially tough problems that needed realistic solutions.

Bob’s love for the Valley ran deep, and the region is richer in countless ways thanks to his contributions. He created jobs, ran companies that fed millions of people, shared his wisdom and experience with anyone who asked, generously funded deserving community institutions, and raised an exceptional family.

Bob was simply irreplaceable. He’ll be deeply missed, but he leaves behind an incredible legacy of hard work, success, and unconcealed passion for the Valley and its people. I offer my deepest condolences to his wife Annette, his children Brent, Lisa, and Brandon, and the rest of his family.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

SPEECH OF

**HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 2, 2021*

Mrs. SPARTZ. Madam Speaker, today I rise in opposition to H.R. 1 on account of several major issues with the bill. First, this bill did not go through committees and proper deliberations. Second, this bill takes drastic steps to federalize our elections and infringe on States’ rights. Third, this bill increases opportunities for fraud without proper guardrails or internal controls. To mitigate some fraud risks, I pro-

posed an amendment dealing with election audits, which was rejected by Democrats on the House Rules Committee.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA MEMBERSHIP ON CAPITOL POLICE BOARD ACT

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Membership on Capitol Police Board Act, which would make the chief of the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) an ex officio, non-voting member of the Capitol Police Board (Board). The Board oversees the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) and security for the U.S. Capitol complex and is comprised of three voting members (the House Sergeant at Arms, the Senate Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper and the Architect of the Capitol) and one ex officio, non-voting member (the USCP chief). My bill would give the MPD chief the same status on the Board as the USCP chief.

The events and aftermath of the attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021, demonstrate the need for D.C. membership on the Board. Not only would the MPD chief’s membership on the Board help improve coordination between USCP and MPD, which helped save the Capitol and its occupants after USCP was overrun during the attack, it would force the Board to consider the interests of D.C. residents in its decision-making. The Board’s decisions affect D.C. residents more than any other Americans, but no member of the Board has any obligation to consider the perspective and needs of D.C. residents. D.C. residents continue to bear the brunt of the security decisions the Board has made since the attack. For example, the fencing around the Capitol complex has forced D.C. emergency vehicles and residents to take detours and has prevented access to the Capitol grounds, which are used by neighborhood residents for recreation and relaxation.

I support the calls to evaluate whether the Board is the right mechanism to oversee security at the Capitol, but as long as the Board is in existence, D.C. should have membership on it.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BOB  
EGOLF

**HON. JIM BANKS**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 8, 2021*

Mr. BANKS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Bob Egoal of Churubusco, Indiana.

For 65 years, Egoal worked in the grocery business. He started his career at John Shelton’s IGA, located on North Main Street in Churubusco in 1956 when he was 14 years old. Seven years later, he purchased the grocery from Shelton in 1967, and in 1982 built a new store south of Churubusco on US 33.

Egoal’s IGA is known throughout the area for its freshly cut meats and daily baked bakery