

HONORING THE LIFE OF MORTON
(MORT) ROSENBERG**HON. TED LIEU**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer sincere condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Morton (Mort) Rosenberg, who passed away last month.

Mort stands out as one of our strongest and most astute advocates for congressional prerogatives under the Constitution. It is no understatement that every Member of this body—on both sides of the aisle—owes a debt of gratitude to Mort for his tireless and non-partisan work over his many decades of service, both for the Congressional Research Service (CRS) and after his retirement. I am personally indebted to Mort for his seminal scholarship on Congress's power of inherent contempt, which informed my legislative work on the subject, as reflected in H. Res. 136, which I introduced in the 118th Congress to amend House Rules with respect to the enforcement of committee subpoenas to executive branch officials.

Mort was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1935, graduated from New York University and Harvard Law School, and completed his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University. From 1972 to 2008, Mort worked at CRS as a Specialist in American Public Law in the American Law Division. During his career at CRS, he was detailed as legal counsel to a special investigative committee and served as a legal advisor to the House General Counsel. Following retirement, Mort worked with the Constitution Project, Good Government Now, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, and the law firm of Barnett Sivon & Natter. Mort's areas of expertise included constitutional law, administrative law, congressional practice and procedure, and labor law. Some of his most important work focused on the scope of congressional oversight and investigative prerogatives, and the validity of claims of executive and common-law privileges.

During and following his career at CRS, Mort authored and contributed to dozens of significant memoranda, reports, academic articles, testimony, papers, and advocacy pieces. In addition, Mort contributed to federal court litigation, assisting with Supreme Court oral argument preparation in *Free Enterprise Fund v. PCAOB* (2010), and authoring an amicus brief in *NLRB v. SW General* (2017), which was cited five times in the majority opinion. He also submitted amicus briefs in congressional oversight cases, including *McGahn v. House Judiciary Committee* (2020). In 2005, Mort received the 2004–2005 Mary C. Lawton Award for Outstanding Public Service from the American Bar Association's Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice.

In my view, Mort's most important legacy stems from his groundbreaking work on Congress's inherent contempt authority and his proposals for revitalizing its enforcement power as follows:

Congress's Contempt Power: Law, History, Practice, and Procedure (CRS Report RL34097, co-authored with Todd B. Tatelman, 2007)

Testimony before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on the

Department of Justice's obligation to respond to congressional subpoenas (2011)

Testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee on the challenges Congress faces when the executive branch refuses to recognize contempt citations (2016)

Reasserting Congress's Investigative Authority (R Street Policy Study No. 103, R Street Institute, July 2017)

Summary of Proposed Inherent Contempt Rule (Good Government Now, co-authored with William J. Murphy, July 2018)

Why Congress Can Impose Fines for Contempt (Good Government Now, co-authored with William J. Murphy, August 5, 2018)

Understanding and Confronting the Current Executive Challenges to Effective Congressional Investigative Oversight (Good Government Now, July 4, 2018)

Can a Revised Inherent Contempt Procedure Strengthen Enforcement of House Subpoenas to the Executive Branch? (Good Government Now, Statement for Panel Discussion, October 19, 2018)

The Road to Effective Enforcement of House Committee Subpoenas ("Point of Order," April 27, 2019)

Proposed Inherent Contempt Procedure Rule for the House (Good Government Now, 2019)

Above and beyond his impressive body of legal scholarship, Mort was a generous mentor, teacher, and advisor to CRS and congressional staff. In the words of his former CRS colleague (and current Deputy General Counsel of the House Office of General Counsel), Todd Tatelman: Mort was everything you could want in a mentor and teacher. He was a master storyteller, with a steel-trap memory. He would regale anyone who would listen with endless tales of congressional history, recalling meetings, hearings, briefings, and memoranda he wrote on incredibly esoteric subjects with such detail that you had to listen to.

Mort leaves behind an unmatched legacy of family, friends, and colleagues. While Members of Congress may no longer be able to call upon him to testify, write a report, or file an amicus brief on our behalf, we will continue to benefit from his scholarship and wisdom for generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF VERNIS JACKSON**HON. CHRIS PAPPAS**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Vernis Marie Miller Jackson of Portsmouth, New Hampshire—a pioneering educator, visionary community leader, and lifelong champion for civil rights, culture, and historical preservation.

Born in Waycross, Georgia, Vernis' father, Bishop Clinton Miller, and mother, Lottie Butler Miller Randall, immediately moved their baby daughter to Savannah, Georgia, where she would grow up, attending Florence Street Elementary School and Savannah State College before receiving her degree from the University of New Hampshire.

In 1963, Vernis and her husband, Emerald, a sergeant in the United States Air Force, relocated with their two young daughters from Savannah to Pease Air Force Base in Newington, New Hampshire, later moving to Portsmouth, where she would remain for the

rest of her life. For 35 of those years, Mrs. Jackson served as a beloved teacher in the Portsmouth School Department, where her dedication to young people left an indelible mark on generations of students. Yet her contributions to our community extended far beyond the classroom.

Vernis served on a task force for the Equity in Mathematics Education Leadership Institute, sharing the program citywide with students and parents. She helped charter an African American women's organization, named Kwanza, which provided scholarships for local students. She was also a charter member of The Greater Springfield, Massachusetts Chapter of The Links, Inc., a national women's organization, where she achieved Platinum status. Mrs. Jackson was a member of the Jonquil Garden Club, a lifetime member of the NAACP, the National Education Association, the New Hampshire Retired Teachers Association, the Crossroads Bridge Club, Friends of Portsmouth Library, and the Portsmouth College Women's Club. Vernis was a member of the Portsmouth Athenaeum and served a three-year term at the Currier Museum of Art and Seacoast Leadership Group. Vernis and her beloved husband, Emerald, also served together for 21 years on the board of the Salvation Army.

In 2000, she co-founded the Seacoast African American Cultural Center (SAACC), an institution dedicated to celebrating and preserving the contributions of African Americans in the Seacoast region and beyond. Under her leadership as president and later president emerita, the SAACC blossomed into a vital cultural hub, curating exhibitions, hosting performances and lectures, offering scholarships, and bringing generations together through history and art.

Perhaps one of her most enduring legacies is her work at the Portsmouth African Burying Ground Memorial Park. After the discovery of the burial site in 2003, Mrs. Jackson became chair of the African Burying Ground Committee, guiding a multi-year effort to honor those interred in what is now recognized as New England's only known African burying ground dating back to the 1700s. Thanks to her leadership, the memorial park was completed and formally dedicated in 2015—a sacred space that invites reflection, remembrance, and justice.

Mrs. Jackson continued her decades-long fight for equity, education, and civil rights, and her tireless work earned her recognition across the state, including as a "Local Hero" by New Hampshire Magazine, where she was praised for bridging generations and inspiring others through action and service. She has been recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow, a Granite-Stater of the month, and has been presented with both the Martin Luther King, Jr., "Living the Dream Award," and the "Spirit of the Prince Hall" award. She was also a recipient of the City of Portsmouth Mayor's Award for her 11 years of service on the African Burying Grounds Committee.

Vernis Marie Miller Jackson passed away in February 2025 at the age of 92. Though she is no longer with us, her legacy lives on through the institutions she built, the lives she shaped, and the history she preserved for future generations.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Vernis Jackson for her extraordinary life of service and leadership. May we carry forward