

IN HONOR OF MR. JAMES H.
GILLIAM, SR.

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize a great philanthropic Delawarean, James H. Gilliam, Sr., as he celebrates his 90th birthday. Jim Gilliam first came to Delaware in 1965 and was one of the only African Americans former Governor Russell Peterson allowed to break the curfew laws as a peacemaker during the Wilmington riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Jim went on to be a strong activist and is recognized as one of Delaware's finest community leaders.

Jim Gilliam was born in Baltimore, Maryland and received a B.A. in sociology from Morgan State University. He continued his education at Howard University School of Social Work where he earned his Masters in 1950. Jim Gilliam has had a long career of service not only to local communities, but to his country. He won medals of distinction, including the Bronze Star, serving as a captain in the United States Military, and at 40, he integrated the Maryland National Guard.

Jim's leadership skills and activism had an immediate impact when he came to the state of Delaware. He served as president and chairman of the board of Delaware's Community Housing Incorporated from 1974 to 1990, and served as a consultant on a variety of community issues. Jim was a two-term president of the National Association of Non-Profit Housing Organizations in the 1970's. Retiring in 1990, Jim's community activism did not end; a decade ago he founded the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League. In just three years the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League won the National Urban League's highest honor, the Whitney M. Young Award, for advancing racial equality. This is a testament to Jim Gilliam's hard work and dedication to the local community.

Jim Gilliam has had a tremendous impact on Delawareans. His selfless service, positive attitude and determined work ethic have impacted countless people throughout our great state. I am honored to represent a state where individuals like Jim Gilliam reside, and I wish him a very happy 90th birthday.

HONORING FANNIE MAE LAWSON

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of one of my constituents, Mrs. Fannie Mae Lawson of Pittsburg, California. Born to James and Onnie Manning in Arkansas on May 27, 1925, Fannie Mae attended the C.S. Woodland School. In 1946 she married George Van

"G.V." Lawson in her hometown of Magnolia, Arkansas. Together they had four children: George, Willie, Sharon, and Audrey. In 1946, Fannie Mae and her family moved to Pittsburg, CA where she began her outstanding service to the community. She began volunteering at her local church, first as a member of the choir, then serving in the Ministries of Convalescent, as well as a Deaconess, and as a Mother of the church. She served the church for 64 years! Fannie was also actively involved in the Pittsburg branch of the N.A.A.C.P. where she served as President for 28 years, and she was also a foster parent for over 30 years and served on the Advisory Board for the Pittsburg Unified School District. At the age of 85, surrounded by her loved ones on July 27, 2010, Fannie Mae Lawson passed away. Sadly, she was preceded in death by her husband, G.V., her son George Earl, and two grandchildren. She will be missed not only by her three children, six grandchildren and many friends, but also by the people of the Pittsburg community whom she helped so much in life.

PITTSBURG ACTIVIST LEFT A LEGACY,
LONGTIME RESIDENTS SAY

[From the Contra Costa Times, Aug. 4, 2010]

(By Rick Radin)

PITTSBURG—The city's residents lost a powerful voice for schools and for social justice with the death of longtime community activist Fannie Lawson last week. Lawson, 87, served as chairwoman of the Pittsburg NAACP for 15 years. She was a leader in promoting equal rights in hiring in Pittsburg businesses and advocating for after-school programs, said Darnell Turner, the chairman of the legal redress committee of the NAACP of East Contra Costa, the Pittsburg chapter's successor. Funeral services were held Saturday at First Baptist Church in Pittsburg, where Lawson was a member for more than 60 years. "She'll be missed," said Curly Jackson, a former NAACP branch chairwoman. "If you had a problem, she was the one you went to." Lawson and her husband, George Lawson, moved to Pittsburg from Magnolia, Ark., in 1946, and Fannie Lawson took a job in a cannery in Pittsburg, Turner said. The Lawsons were the first black residents of Pittsburg's Bayside Knolls neighborhood in 1951, and Fannie Lawson felt some bitterness about the experience of being a pioneer. "Can you imagine being looked at as too low to live in this place or that place? It was hard," Lawson said in a 2006 interview. "A lot of things were said that hurt my feelings, but you couldn't give up if you wanted a place to live." Lawson took the experience and momentum from fighting for housing rights into a series of other campaigns for low-income residents in Pittsburg and East County. When a release from the Pittsburg PG&E power plant coated homes and cars in Lawson's neighborhood with dust, she worked with the company to make sure the material was tested for toxics, Turner said. "The police blocked off the neighborhood, and a hazardous materials team came in," Turner said. The utility agreed to repaint cars and homes that had been damaged by the release, he said. "(Lawson) continued to work with PG&E after the incident," Turner said. "They created a scholarship program to help underprivileged students get an opportunity to pursue a two- or four-year education."

Lawson was the driving force in the campaign to change the name of Montezuma Street in Pittsburg to Herb White Way, after the city's first black mayor. She also kicked into gear when Pittsburg teachers threatened a strike a few days before the end of the school year in the late 1990s. "She wanted to make sure the students weren't used as bargaining tools, that the graduation wasn't (tainted by a work stoppage)," Turner said. She responded to a cross burning in Brentwood, working with the city to improve communications and promote tolerance, he said. Lawson pushed for tutorial programs for children who were having difficulty in school, said former Contra Costa supervisor, state senator and Pittsburg school board member Joe Canciamilla. "She wasn't shy," Canciamilla said. "She was tenacious when it came to advocating for people."

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Association of Civilian Technicians, which is headquartered in my district in Lake Ridge, Va.

In 1960, Vincent J. Paterno and twelve fellow New York technicians banded together to establish the Association of Civilian Technicians. Their stated mission was to represent the interests of our country's National Guard Technicians. Today, ACT represents the 48,000 employees of the Air and Army National Guard who are classified as Title 32 Civilian Technicians. A Title 32 Civilian Technician's duties and responsibilities are to maintain the working order of the aircraft, vehicles, tanks, helicopters and supporting equipment needed by the National Guard to carry out its mission. ACT members serve as mechanics, administrative personnel and technical support positions. They enable active duty personnel to keep our nation safe from attack and ensure that our military is always at the ready.

Through vigorous advocacy efforts, ACT has helped secure a number of rights and benefits for civilian technicians. In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law "The National Guard Technician Act." The legislation established the Technician Program and provided National Guard Technicians with fair and just compensation, employment benefits and access to a retirement system that is equitable to other federal employees. ACT honors the service of our nation's civilian technicians by fighting to deliver the care and consideration they deserve.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Association of Civilian Technicians. For half of a century, ACT has represented the best interests and welfare of America's National Guard Technicians and their families. I