

HONORING THE LIFE OF LORAIN CITY COUNCILMAN EDDIE C. EDWARDS

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2017

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the life of a respected public official and very dear friend, Lorain City Councilman Eddie C. Edwards. He passed away peacefully on June 27, 2017, after courageously battling illness over the last several years. Please let me offer the deepest condolences of our entire citizenry to his son Gregory Edwards, daughter Darnisha Hunter and the countless friends and family whose lives he touched. A true public servant in the every sense, Eddie dedicated his life not only to making government work better for the people he served, but by striving to make the lives of all people, better.

Eddie began his career in politics in 1996, first elected to represent South Lorain's Fifth Ward. Throughout his eighteen years of service on City Council, Eddie fought hard for his community—making his neighborhood safer, parks cleaner, improving education in schools and working toward enhancing and growing small businesses.

While Councilman Edward's service to the City of Lorain will forever be remembered, Eddie's contributions to the Lorain community started decades earlier.

Born and raised in the small town of Dyersberg, Tennessee, Eddie moved to Lorain when he was 20 years old, with less than 13 dollars in his pocket, seeking a better life. He immediately enrolled in school studying business and construction management, which jumpstarted a new life of helping build Lorain forward.

Eddie, who was the owner-operator of Edwards Trucking & Excavating for more than two decades, understood the role small businesses play in driving healthy local economies. Moreover, Eddie knew the value of minority owned small businesses. As a founding member of the Lorain County Minority Contractors Association and Executive Board Member of the Minority Trucking and Transportation Association—Eddie paved the way for countless entrepreneurs to use their skills, grow our local economy and improve our community. His friends, family and colleagues recall his passion and willingness to stand up and speak his mind, always working toward equal rights and fighting for those left behind.

During the rise of the civil rights movement, Eddie was a founding member of the Committee for Positive Change in the Black Community and was the past president of the Lorain NAACP. And as an ordained Baptist Deacon, Eddie was a true champion and relentless advocate for African Americans and all those in need throughout our community.

A man of strong faith, Eddie worked each day fighting for those less fortunate. I myself recall a time when Eddie and I joined the Full Gospel Ministries and Pathways Enrichment Center in Lorain, planting a community garden as part of a community driven effort to produce fresh fruits and vegetables for the local food pantry.

As an African American, there is no question Councilman and businessman Edwards

wrote a new chapter in the history of Lorain. As a man and leader in the community, the successes and struggles of Eddie's generous life represent a beacon for generations to follow.

Last year, The Smithsonian opened the only national museum solely dedicated to recording and underscoring African Americans' many contributions in art, history, culture and life. I would like to submit this Congressional Record to the National Museum of African American History and Culture on behalf Eddie's family to hallmark the life and lasting contributions of a true public servant.

Today, my thoughts and prayers are with the entire Edwards family. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring Eddie C. Edwards, a loyal friend, a defender of democracy, a true public servant, a dedicated father, a loving husband and a courageous man.

HONORING CARMELA SANDOVAL AND MARIA SANCHEZ, RECIPIENTS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AWARD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor sisters, Ms. Carmela Sandoval and Ms. Maria Sanchez, whom I have selected to receive the American Dream Award for California's 5th Congressional District. This award recognizes the achievements of immigrants in my district who have made remarkable contributions to our communities in the areas of Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, or Community Service. Ms. Sandoval and Ms. Sanchez are very deserving of this award and recognition.

Ms. Sandoval and Ms. Sanchez are daughters of Mexican immigrants to the United States. Together they own and manage Bere's Bridal and Christening Wear in Vallejo, California. They are both successful and inspiring community leaders.

Prior to moving to Vallejo, Ms. Sandoval and Ms. Sanchez grew up and attended school in Los Angeles. Though she loved school, Maria had to withdraw to begin working to support her family. Their diligence, perseverance and sacrifice for their family at such a young age embodies the ideals of the American dream and foreshadows their future roles as dedicated community leaders in Vallejo, California.

Carmela and Maria volunteer regularly for Vallejo Together, a nonprofit in our community that provides resources to homeless individuals. They also volunteer for Centro Latino, an organization that advocates for Latino youth in Vallejo. Every year, the sisters organize a holiday "posada" for underserved children, which includes a gift drive and a hot meal for all the youth in attendance. While Carmela and Maria are ambitious leaders, they remain humble and willing to lend a helping hand. Both sisters take pride in being loving parents, and, for Maria, being a grandparent as well.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize Ms. Carmela Sandoval and Ms. Maria Sanchez for their achievements and for enriching our community. It is fitting and proper that we honor them here today with the American Dream Award.

TRUMP'S VOTER FRAUD COMMISSION IS A FRAUD AND SHOULD BE DISBANDED NOW

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, unable to cope with the brutal fact that he lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton by 2.9 million votes, the largest vote deficit of any president in American history, Donald Trump tweeted that he would have won the popular vote but for "millions of people who voted illegally."

Instead of producing any credible evidence to support this claim, a hoax that has been repeatedly and decisively debunked by experts, the President doubled down and issued an Executive Order establishing the "Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity" (PACEI), appointing Kris Kobach, anti-immigration warrior and poster-child for voter fraud conspiratorialists everywhere, to lead the Commission.

It would be more accurate to characterize the PACEI as the "Presidential Advisory Commission on Voter Suppression." Voter suppression is real but the oft-repeated claim that American elections are rife with voter fraud is a myth.

According to a comprehensive 2014 study published in The Washington Post, out of more than a billion votes cast between 2000 and 2014, only 31 credible instances of impersonation fraud were found, and even this tiny number was likely inflated because the study's author counted not just voter fraud prosecutions or convictions but all credible claims. Numerous other reports have reached the same conclusion.

Any lingering doubt regarding the true purpose of the PACEI should be laid to rest by the request made by Commissioner Kobach on June 28, 2017 when he wrote each of the nation's state secretaries of state requesting that they provide the Commission with "the full first and last names of all registrants, middle names or initials if available, addresses, dates of birth, political party (if recorded in your state), last four digits of social security number if available, voter history (elections voted in) from 2006 onward, active/inactive status, cancelled status, information regarding any felony convictions, information regarding voter registration in another state, information regarding military status, and overseas citizen information."

The information requested by the Commission will not prevent voter fraud. It will violate rather than protect voter privacy.

And it will make it easier to craft legislation and devise campaign strategies intended to suppress the vote in urban clusters and among targeted demographic groups, particularly minority voters.

It is important that all voters, and the people of the 18th Congressional District of Texas whom I am privileged to represent, be fully protected.

While supplying only public voter information may seem secure, the sad fact is that it is not. There is no publicly accessible database of voter registration information in any of the 50 states or the District of Columbia.

That is because information of this kind is protected from public disclosure under the settled principle of "collective privacy" recognized

by the Supreme Court in the landmark decision of *NAACP v. Alabama*, 377 U.S. 288, 84 S. Ct. 1302, 12 L. Ed. 2d 325 (1964), which held that compelled disclosure of affiliation with groups engaged in advocacy may constitute an impermissible chilling effect on the freedom of association guaranteed by the First Amendment, a holding that has been affirmed repeatedly.

Accordingly, neither Texas nor any state can, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, supply the voter information requested by the PACEI.

Indeed, if the information sought was as public in nature as PACEI contends, there simply would be no need for it to request the information from state governments.

Trump's voter suppression commission is a solution in search of a problem.

Contrary to what Trump and Kobach would have the public believe, American elections are not rife with widespread voter fraud. Studies have shown that it is more likely an American "will be struck by lightning than that he will impersonate another voter at the polls."

No, the major ill affecting our election system is not that too many people vote due to voter fraud, but that too many people are prevented from voting due to vote suppression schemes such as discriminatory photo identification requirements, curtailment of early voting, too few polling stations leading to long lines and excessive wait times, purging of election rolls.

Even in the wholly unimaginable event that the commission created by Donald Trump and led by Kris Kobach could be trusted enough for states to cooperate by sharing their voter data, there is no reasonable basis for assuming that information would be kept secure and the privacy of voters protected.

Recent cyberattacks have made clear the vulnerability of large central databases to cyberattack. An information security breach at the Department of Veterans Affairs compromised sensitive personal data of 26.5 million persons and cost the VA between \$100 million to \$500 million to remediate; another occurring at the Office of Personnel Management impacted 22 million current and former federal employees, many of whom held sensitive security clearances; and the attack on Yahoo, the mother of all security breaches, resulted in 1.5 billion user accounts being compromised.

Because large centralized databases are targets of opportunities for criminals, terrorists, and foreign adversaries, it would be the height of recklessness for Texas or any state to provide the PACEI with personal information of millions of persons via unsecured email address to be stored in undersecured databases on undersecured servers.

One of the biggest strengths of the American election system is its decentralized nature.

Aggregating all voter data into one centralized database with questionable security protections makes that data highly vulnerable to a cyberattack that could lead to the personal information of hundreds of millions of Americans being stolen and misused.

Voter privacy and the integrity of the secret ballot are integral to American democracy. Voter privacy rights should and must be protected.

This is especially true since we are now certain that adversaries like Russia are actively

involved in cyberwarfare campaigns to undermine our democracy.

There is no denying that our election system is under assault, but not in the way Trump imagines.

Instead of wasting taxpayer money to fund an investigation into voter fraud, which is as mythical as a unicorn, American democracy would be better served by focusing on and correcting the real problem with our elections—voter suppression and external, illegal, and international interference in our national elections.

I am not opposed to employing reasonable, legitimate, and workable means to safeguard the integrity of our electoral system and to protect the precious right to vote. But Trump's Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity is incapable of doing either and thus should be disbanded and dissolved immediately.

HONORING THE HARRIET TUBMAN
FREEDOM MUSIC FESTIVAL

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the second annual Harriet Tubman Freedom Music Festival in Auburn, New York.

Auburn is a place that Harriet Tubman once called home, and our community is proud to preserve and highlight her extraordinary life's work. This concert pays tribute to Harriet Tubman's remarkable legacy through music.

The Harriet Tubman Freedom Music Festival's creator, Sean McLeod, is an Auburn native and descendant of a slave rescued by Harriet Tubman. McLeod is a member of the Thompson AME Zion Church and has devoted much of his life to the Harriet Tubman Home, now a National Historic Park. McLeod established the Harriet Tubman Freedom Music Festival to develop both a local and global impact through partnerships with a variety of businesses and nonprofits. McLeod also composed "A Soundtrack for Harriet Tubman," which will be featured at this year's Music Festival.

This celebration is a fitting tribute to a woman who escaped slavery and devoted her life to advancing the freedom and equality of African Americans and the rights of women. I am honored to recognize the Harriet Tubman Freedom Music Festival and I wish it continued success in the years to come.

HONORING AMELIA MORÁN CEJA,
RECIPIENT OF THE AMERICAN
DREAM AWARD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Amelia Ceja, whom I have selected to receive the American Dream Award for California's 5th Congressional District. This award recognizes the achievements of immigrants in my district who have made remarkable contributions to our

communities in the areas of Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, or Community Service. Ms. Ceja is very deserving of this award and recognition.

Ms. Ceja was born in Las Flores, Jalisco, an agricultural village in Mexico, and immigrated to the United States at the age of 12. She is a successful businessperson and an important member of our community.

Ms. Ceja moved with her family to the Napa Valley American Viticulture Area in California as a child. Her parents worked for a local vineyard management company, her father as a mechanic and her mother as a farm worker. She met her husband, Pedro Ceja, while picking grapes with their families. In 1983, the Ceja family came together to purchase 15 acres and to plant their own grapes. The family later founded Ceja Vineyards, Inc. in 1999. Today they own 113 producing acres. Ms. Ceja is the first Mexican American woman to be the president of a California winery. Her vineyard and winery are famous for their quality grape harvests and production of premium Carneros wines.

Ms. Ceja cares deeply about the family business and employees. She is dedicated to producing the highest quality of wine. The California Legislature recognized her contributions to the community on March 15, 2005 by naming her "Woman of the Year." Ms. Ceja's story is one of sacrifice and determination. Stories like hers make America great.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize Ms. Amelia Morán Ceja for her achievements and for enriching our community. It is fitting and proper that we honor her here today with the American Dream Award.

IN RECOGNITION OF REV. JIM
HOLLEY FOR HIS CAREER AS A
PASTOR AND COMMUNITY ACTIV-
IST

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rev. Jim Holley of the Historic Little Rock Missionary Baptist Church. For 45 years, Rev. Holley has been a tireless advocate on behalf of Detroit as a faith leader and community activist.

After receiving theological training at the Chicago Theological Seminary, Rev. Holley began his career as a pastor at the Little Rock Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan. During his time with the church, Rev. Holley has distinguished himself as a key member of the greater Detroit community who understands the spiritual needs and concerns of the city and its residents. His service in church leadership roles, including President of the Council of the Baptist Pastors, speaks to his dedication to the congregation and the well-being of the city at large. Rev. Holley has also been involved in the business community, working with local real estate organizations and founding an advertising agency to empower Detroit's residents and create jobs. In addition to these duties, Rev. Holley also served as the City of Detroit's Director of Community and Civic Affairs during Mayor Duggan's administration, where he was a liaison between the mayor's office and the Detroit community at large.