

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING UNDERSHERIFF RICK CASTLE FOR HIS 35-YEAR CAREER IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 24, 2023

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Undersheriff Rick Castle’s distinguished career of service. Undersheriff Rick Castle is a lifelong law enforcement officer who has spent 35 years serving and protecting his local community.

Undersheriff Castle was born and raised in Waterford, New York and graduated high school from Troy’s La Salle Institute in 1988. Finding himself drawn to a life of service, that same year he joined the Waterford Police Department and began working as a dispatcher. The following year, Undersheriff Castle was hired by the Sheriff’s Department and spent the next three decades dedicating himself to Saratoga County.

Throughout his long career in law enforcement, Undersheriff Castle made a point to continue his formal education, earning a B.S. in Public Safety Management from the University of Albany in 2006 and a Master of Public Administration from Marist College in 2020. He also joined the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary in 2008 and has proudly served for over 14 years.

While Undersheriff Castle began his career with the Saratoga County Sheriff’s Department as a desk officer, his commitment to the people of Saratoga County allowed him to continually rise through the ranks. Over the span of 33 years, he was regularly promoted and, in 2016, was selected to serve as county Undersheriff. Undersheriff Castle also served as an investigator and instructor for the collision reconstruction unit, a systems administrator for the IT department, and a licensed emergency medical technician.

Undersheriff Castle is a lifelong public servant, a loving husband and father, and a distinguished member of the Saratoga County community. On behalf of New York’s 21st District, it is my honor to recognize the storied career of Undersheriff Rick Castle.

RECOGNIZING THE PASSING OF WALTER WILLARD COLE, SR.

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 24, 2023

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the passing of a true Portland icon. A beloved member of the LGBTQ+ community, a pioneer for equality, and a dazzling performer, Walter Willard Cole Sr. embodied the spirit of Portland. Walter passed away on March 23rd in Portland, Oregon after a long and accomplished life. I am honored to

have known Walter and deeply admire his many contributions to our city, both as a civic leader, small business owner, activist, philanthropist—and yes—as the drag performer Darcelle.

For decades, Darcelle was a fixture in Portland’s live entertainment scene, captivating audiences as the world’s oldest working drag queen. For over 50 years Darcelle entertained patrons acting as master of ceremonies to a cadre of drag performers and dancers, all the while bantering with audience members and performing memorable routines in extravagant, hand-made gowns.

In 1967, Walter purchased a bar in Portland’s Old Town neighborhood, then skid row, that would later be known as the Darcelle XV Showplace. Well before the gay rights movement took hold, Darcelle XV experienced its share of protests, threats, and hardships. Yet Walter persisted, creating a welcoming and inclusive space for audiences to relax, laugh, and enjoy a show.

As LGBTQ+ acceptance grew throughout Portland and the country, the nightclub’s impact cannot be understated. Darcelle had a way of putting people at ease and created an environment where patrons, both gay and straight, felt comfortable and welcomed. At Darcelle XV, drag queens had a stage to perfect their act before taking their performance on the road, showcasing their talents for the broader public. The nightclub and Walter’s stewardship were influential in advancing mainstream acceptance of drag performance and contributed significantly to the broader societal acceptance of gay rights. Today, Darcelle XV is considered a Portland institution and a pioneering establishment in the fight for LGBTQ+ equality.

Outside the club, Walter was a fierce advocate for Portland’s LGBTQ+ community. He understood and embraced his position as a community leader who worked to create positive and lasting change. Walter used his performances to raise awareness and funds for the causes he cared deeply about. During the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s, Walter stood up for his community. He helped raise money for medical research, people living with AIDS, and their families.

In 2020, I was honored to support the effort to preserve Walter’s legacy by including Darcelle XV in the National Register of Historic Places. This was the first institution recognized in Oregon that honored our LGBTQ+ community and its history. I’m glad we were able to honor Walter’s work in this way and protect his legacy for generations to come.

Walter will be dearly missed by his friends and family, the LGBTQ+ community, and all of Portland.

COMMEMORATING THE 108TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 24, 2023

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives and legacies of Mardiros Deovletian, Shooshan Hounanian, Azniv Totigian, Mariam Minasian, Hadji Martiros Temelian, Annenouhi Toutikian. These names represent a few, but a precious few, of the more than 1.5 million men, women, and children who lost their lives in the first genocide of the 20th century.

One hundred and eight years ago, the Ottoman Empire began a systematic effort to destroy the Armenian people. Teachers, writers, businessmen, and doctors were rounded up and killed, clergy were tortured and burned alive in churches, infants were ripped from their mothers’ arms, sons and daughters witnessed their fathers being murdered, and children died gasping for a drop of water. Many Armenians were killed outright, and others, including Komitas Vartabed, considered the father of Armenian music, suffered emotional trauma after witnessing the sheer horror of the brutal massacres.

Despite the overwhelming evidence of this methodical mass killing, Turkey has long engaged in a campaign to deny the genocide and to silence those who would speak the truth.

But the United States will no longer be silenced. In 2019, for the first time in history, the U.S. House passed my resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide by a near unanimous and bipartisan margin. The Senate too passed a resolution affirming the facts of the Armenian Genocide. And in 2021, President Joe Biden finally cast aside decades of shameful silence by our nation to become the first sitting U.S. president to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide.

These historic achievements happened because of a resilient and enduring Armenian diaspora. It’s a testament to the unwavering efforts of thousands of activists, organizations, communities, and church leaders. It’s a victory for human rights, and for truth itself, and it’s something we achieved together.

But we know there remains work to do. Our thoughts and our hearts are with Armenia and Artsakh, because the Armenian people are still under duress and attack and have suffered the losses of many who died in Artsakh, the thousands who were forced to flee from the unprovoked aggression by Azerbaijan and Turkey, and those who remain prisoners of war. Azerbaijan’s unprovoked assaults on sovereign Armenian territory and the brutal blockade of Artsakh risk another genocide. We have seen this before, and we must not allow it to happen again.

These are the horrific consequences when aggression and hatred grow unchecked and

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