

IN RECOGNITION OF THE MASONIC
PALESTINE LODGE NO. 357 F. &
A. M. OF DETROIT

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the many contributions of one of Detroit's longest-serving fraternal and service organizations, Palestine Lodge No. 357 F. & A. M.

Founded January 26, 1881, Detroit's Palestine Masonic Lodge has operated for one hundred forty years. The Palestine Lodge can count among its past members many high-profile residents, including James Vernor, originator of Vernor's Ginger Ale, a Detroit staple, and automotive pioneer Henry Ford. More recently, the Palestine Lodge, in affiliation with the Michigan Masons, has helped make significant contributions to its charitable foundation to make meaningful impacts on the lives of countless Michigan residents. These actions are not limited to its scholarship programs for students, its bikes for books child literacy incentive program, as well as its S.A.Y. Detroit tutoring and literacy program. In addition, the Palestine Lodge members give countless hours of volunteer time on local community initiatives.

Please join me in recognizing Detroit's Palestine Lodge No. 357 F. & A. M.'s many contributions to the residents of Michigan and the 13th Congressional District over the past one hundred forty years.

AYUDA ACT OF 2021

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO
SABLAN**

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Assuring You Uniform Dietary Assistance (AYUDA) Act, making the Northern Mariana Islands part of the national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). My bill ensures individuals and families in our islands who rely on this help to put food on the table are treated equitably and receive similar levels of assistance available in other parts of our nation.

Inclusion in SNAP for the people I represent remains a priority goal for me. I first introduced the AYUDA Act in the 112th Congress. And in the years since, a pilot program has demonstrated the feasibility of including the Northern Marianas in SNAP. Taking this action will avoid future disruption in vital food aid. And it will relieve the administrative burden on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to manage a one-off, block grant for our islands when right next door in the U.S. territory of Guam SNAP works perfectly well.

The current block grant approach to food aid for the Northern Marianas continues to reduce assistance to those in need compared to other Americans. Because the arbitrarily capped block grant funds do not automatically respond to changing economic conditions, families in need face the prospect that their benefits will be reduced or cut off completely.

In fact, just last October, the Commonwealth government stated it had no choice but to remove households from eligibility for the new fiscal year due to insufficient funds. Moreover, benefits were substantially cut by 25 percent on October 1, 2020.

The time has now come to right the disparity that keeps the majority-minority community I represent excluded from this critical safety net program that has kept millions of Americans from going hungry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At a time when the Marianas economy continues to be shut due to the coronavirus crisis, I urge my colleagues to support this bill so that those in need are not treated differently simply because of where they live in America.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SAFE AND
QUIET SKIES ACT

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. CASE. Madam Speaker, today I am reintroducing my Safe and Quiet Skies Act from the 116th Congress to ensure that commercial air tour flights are adequately regulated to ensure in-air and on-ground safety and address widespread and accelerating community disruption. I extend a special thanks to my colleagues, Congressmembers NADLER, NEGUSE, NORTON, SHERMAN, and SIRES, for co-introducing this necessary measure.

In 2019 alone, there were 17 sightseeing tour flight and skydiving accidents nationwide with 37 tragic deaths from six of those crashes. In my Hawaii alone, we saw three dead in the crash of a commercial air tour helicopter into a residential neighborhood, eleven more dead in the crash of a commercial skydiving plane, and then seven more dead in a commercial air tour helicopter crash in a remote mountain region. Many other areas of the country have been equally impacted, especially those with high commercial usage, more dense populations, valuable natural resources, significant defense installations and other factors.

These tragedies occurred amidst a rapid increase in commercial helicopter and small plane overflights including residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods, cemeteries and memorials, land and marine parks and other recreation areas, and sensitive military installations. These have disrupted whole communities with excessive noise and other impacts, destroyed the peace and sanctity of special places, increased risk to not only passengers but those on the ground, and weakened security and management of defense operations.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) currently has virtually exclusive jurisdiction over these aircraft operations. Following these and other recent tragedies across the country, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which is responsible for investigating accidents but not for direct safety regulation, strongly recommended to the FAA that safety-related regulation of commercial tour helicopters and small aircraft skydiving operations is generally insufficient.

Regarding ground disruption and risk, the FAA takes the position that its responsibility is

strictly operational safety and national airspace efficiency and does not extend to ground disruption and other negative impacts. As a result, the operators, aside from strict takeoff and approach, avoidance of established flight paths and other limited circumstances, are virtually free to fly wherever, whenever, and as often as they want. And they do, with little to no self-regulation.

This situation is unacceptable for both safety and community impact concerns. It is also not limited to Hawaii, with growing concerns in other areas with high commercial tour usage, more dense populations, valuable natural resources, significant defense installations and other factors.

This bill would first require the FAA to implement the NTSB's recommended enhanced safety regulations. It would also prohibit flights over federal property that requires privacy, dignity, and respect, to include military installations, national cemeteries and national parks, wildlife refuges and wilderness. It would further require the use of standard equipment to monitor the location of flights, apply the "sterile cockpit rule" to tour flights (meaning in part that the pilot could not also be the tour guide), prohibit flights lower than 1,500 feet over actual ground, and limit decibel levels to those commonly applied to operations in residential areas. Additionally, the bill would allow states, localities, and tribes to impose stricter regulations on tour flights in their jurisdictions with required public engagement.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this bill into law.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILEY DECK

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, today I wish to honor a great American and steadfast public servant. James Wiley Deck is leaving the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) after having served in critically important roles of increasing responsibility over the last four years. A polished leader and expert communicator, Wiley worked tirelessly throughout his time at DOT to keep the public safe on our nation's roadways while helping to build the infrastructure needed to accommodate the future of American transportation.

Wiley joined DOT in 2017 as the Director of Government Relations for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). While in this role, he served as the principal advisor to the FMCSA Administrator with respect to legislative affairs, Congressional relations, and all policy matters affecting Federal, state and local governments, as well as public and private interest groups. His innate ability to collaborate with a variety of government stakeholders led to multiple legislative successes—including the securing of \$100 million in autonomous vehicle research and development funding for DOT.

In 2019, Wiley transitioned to the Office of the Secretary, where he served as Senior Policy Advisor to Secretary Elaine L. Chao. In that role, he served as the principal strategic advisor to the DOT Secretary on issues pertaining not only to the FMCSA, but to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Office of Drug and Alcohol