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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

**CELEBRATING THE DESIGNATION OF OLD FORGE,
PENNSYLVANIA, AND FELITTO, ITALY AS SISTER CITIES**

Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a remarkable and historic milestone that unites two communities across the Atlantic Ocean. It is with great pride and joy that I announce the official designation of Old Forge, Pennsylvania, and Felitto, Italy, as sister cities. This designation not only honors our shared heritage but also strengthens the bond of friendship and cultural exchange between our two communities.

Old Forge, situated in the heart of Northeastern Pennsylvania, has long been a beacon of Italian-American culture. Known affectionately as the "Pizza Capital of the World," Old Forge boasts a rich history that is deeply intertwined with the Italian immigrant experience.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, waves of immigrants from Felitto, a picturesque town in the Campania region of southern Italy, made their way to Old Forge, then known as Mudtown. Their arrival marked the beginning of a new chapter in the community's history, bringing with them their traditions, values, and, of course, their beloved culinary heritage.

Felitto, located in the province of Salerno, is renowned for its artisanal fusilli pasta and its vibrant annual celebration, the Fusillo Festival. This festival is a testament to Felitto's commitment to family, community and the joy of food. The town's dedication to preserving its cultural traditions and fostering a strong sense of community is mirrored in the spirit of Old Forge.

The Felittese Association of Old Forge, now in its 35th year, hosts the city's annual Felittese Italian Festival on the second weekend in September in commemoration of Our Lady of Constantinople, who has been venerated in the town of Felitto since 1790. Much like Felitto's Fusillo Festival, this annual celebration stands as a proud homage to Old Forge's Italian roots by celebrating the rich tapestry of Italian culture through homecooked food and music with family, friends and neighbors. It is a cherished tradition that underscores the deep connections that bind our two communities.

The sister city designation between Old Forge and Felitto represents more than just a symbolic gesture; it is a recognition of the shared heritage and enduring ties that unite us. It honors the legacy of the Italian immigrants who contributed so profoundly to Old Forge, the

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. and acknowledges the vibrant culture that continues to thrive today.

This partnership will strengthen economic ties and enhance the mutual understanding between our communities. It is a celebration of our shared history and a commitment to continuing the traditions that have enriched our lives and nations.

As we commemorate this new chapter in the relationship between Old Forge and Felitto, let us honor the contributions of the Italian immigrants who helped shape our communities. Their legacy lives on in the vibrant celebrations, the delectable cuisine, and the strong sense of community that define both Old Forge and Felitto.

As the member of the U.S. House representing Northeastern Pennsylvania, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on this historic achievement. May this sister city relationship continue to flourish, bringing us closer together.

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