HONORING THE SERVICE AND DEDICATION OF SARAH M. TUKE

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and dedication of Sarah R. Tuke, a member of my staff who is leaving my office to pursue the next phase in her career.

Sarah Tuke is a Tennessee native, raised in the Nashville area. After graduating from the University of Virginia with a bachelor's degree in History, she moved to St. Louis to work for a non-profit organization. Sarah quickly realized, however, that working in politics interested her more, and she returned to Tennessee to volunteer for Harold Ford Jr.'s U.S. Senate campaign in 2006.

Following the campaign, Sarah moved to Washington, D.C. to further pursue her interests in politics and the legislative process. She joined my staff in February 2007 after an internship with the House Science and Technology Committee.

From the first day she walked into my office, her enthusiasm and kind spirit impressed me and everyone she worked with. Her commitment to helping Middle Tennesseans has always been strong—I have never had a staffer with the patience and kindness that Sarah exudes, especially when answering questions from constituents and volunteering to help her co-workers with projects. She has also worked hard to understand the complexities of adoption and veterans issues, which has helped me in pursuing my legislative priorities.

Madam Speaker, if you would like to package kindheartedness, you could just put a bow on Sarah. It's Sarah's ''can-do'' attitude, combined with her genuine compassion to others that has led this wonderful individual to rise and succeed as she has done in my office.

Sarah, we're all going to miss you. I wish you the best of luck in your new position with the Japanese Embassy.

RETIREMENT OF COLONEL STEPHEN M. CHRISTIAN, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I want to take a moment to honor a fine officer who will shortly be leaving active duty. COL Stephen M. Christian will be retiring from the United States Army on October 12, 2009, after more than 30 years of active military service, culminating as Garrison Commander for the United States Army Garrison, Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.

Colonel Christian enlisted in the Army in 1978 and in 1984 attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as an Air Defense Artillery Officer. Throughout his career Colonel Christian has held numerous high level command and staff positions, including tours with the 7th Infantry Division (Light) at Fort Ord, California; the 25th Infantry Division (Light) at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York. He commanded at the battalion level on two occasions and served two tours of duty in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, during which he was awarded two Bronze Star Medals. Colonel Christian's civilian education includes a master of science in administration and a master of security strategy from the National War College, National Defense University. Colonel Christian is married to Laura Christian and they have two adult children, Captain Nicholas Christian and Leslie Roop.

Madam Speaker, our active duty families make many sacrifices for the rest of us, and this is especially true of those who make the military their career. I thank Colonel Christian for his long and honorable service to our Nation, and I wish him and his wife Laura the very best as they prepare to enter a new phase in their life journey together.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise to correct my vote on the Motion to Instruct Conferees for the Fiscal Year 2010 Homeland Security Appropriations Act that was considered on the House floor on October 1, 2009.

The Motion to Instruct Conferees (rollcall No. 746) made recommendations that would prohibit the transfer of detainees currently held at Guantanamo Bay to the United States, even for prosecution. My vote in favor of this motion was a mistake and contradicts my views on our detention policies.

To be clear, I strongly support President Obama's decision to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and move our detention policies forward in a responsible manner, even if that means transferring some detainees to the United States. I intended to vote ''yes'' on rollcall vote No. 663.

TRIBUTE TO FRED NELSON

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to an exemplary public servant from my District in Tennessee.

Fred Nelson recently retired as the General Manager of the Lenoir City Utilities Board in Lenoir City, Tennessee. His career is a testament to the American dream and community service.

Fred began working at the Lenoir City Utilities Board in an entry-level position for $1.90 per hour. More than four decades later, he retires following a successful tenure as General Manager. Dedicated public servants such as Fred are the seeds of any great community, and I only hope that more people follow in his footsteps.

Like many of his generation, Fred also served his country admirably in the Marine Corps in Vietnam. We owe a debt to Fred and many others who selflessly put their community and country before themselves.

Recently, the News-Herald in Lenoir City published an article commemorating Fred's service, which is reprinted below. I gladly bring the service of Fred Nelson to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD, and I wish him all the best in his much-deserved retirement.

[From the Lenoir City (TN) News-Herald, Sept. 23–24, 2009]

NELSON SET TO RETIRE

(By Greg Wilkerson)

After a more than 43-year career with Lenoir City Utilities Board, General Manager Fred Nelson announced his retirement Monday, effective Jan. 22.

''It's been my life,'' Nelson said as he reflected on his long career.

Nelson got his start with the utility after leaving the Marine Corps in 1966.

He said his plan had been to make a career in the armed forces, but his mother did not want him to return to Vietnam, so he left to start a civilian career.

He considered a position he was offered in Florida within the space program, but ultimately decided to come to Loudon County because of an offer to work at the Hosiery Mill.

That job paid $1.80 an hour and the LCUB job paid $1.90 an hour and he's been working there ever since.

''I think the Lord's led me and actually guided me in ways I needed to go,'' he said. ''It's always been right.''

Nelson said health concerns were a major factor in his leaving. Doctors have encouraged him to retire for years because of advanced artery disease in his heart and he said he recently had his sixteenth and seventeenth stints put in.

''I'm going to start walking on the trail and try to lose weight and hopefully play golf,'' Nelson said. He also said he plans to do more travelling and see more of his out-of-town friends.

When Nelson started with LCUB he worked for about six months as a groundman before starting a four-year apprenticeship to become a lineman. He said he still pays his lineman dues to stay a part of their union.

''There's not much I haven't got to do here,'' he said.

His career has included the title of foreman, assistant superintendent, superintendent, manager of operations and in 2004, general manager.

''It's been a wonderful ride,'' he said.

He said he will miss the employees the most.

''We have a great bunch of employees and everybody is very friendly,'' Nelson said. He recognized there have been disagreements through the years but everything always gets worked out.

''If somebody was to need something, the employees are always ready to help,'' he said. ''Since I came to work at LCUB in 1966, 46 people have passed away that I worked with. I have a lot of good memories with all of them.''

Nelson was quick to thank the board for giving him the opportunity to be general manager and said he was proud of the accomplishments of the utility in the five years he's been in charge. He also attributed much of the success to his department heads.

''We've built five new substations in the last three years and we paid for them in-house without having to borrow any money,'' he said. They also haven't been to the bond market since 2001, and Nelson said they used to go every three years.

''We've really tried to buy the best equipment you can get,'' he said. ''We've had an excellent safety record.''