

In recent years, Tom has witnessed the devastating effects of the prescription drug epidemic in his hometown of Lynch, Kentucky and across our rural region. Rather than quietly standing by, Tom has committed his life to making a difference both as a selfless community leader and a compassionate little league coach.

After earning a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Kentucky, Tom returned to Lynch where he worked in the private sector and served as Mayor for 13 years without taking a salary, due to tight budgets. He is now a Coalition Coordinator for Operation UNITE, a non-profit organization designed to combat substance abuse through law enforcement, treatment and education, serving the Fifth Congressional District of Kentucky. Through his work with UNITE, Tom helps coordinate community anti-drug events and reaches out to families and individuals grappling with addiction on a daily basis.

For the last 34 years, Tom has spent his evenings and weekends coaching little league baseball, a lifelong passion. Tom is more than a successful coach, however. He is also an excellent mentor and role model, encouraging players to stay off drugs, make healthy life choices, and never give up. Tom makes sure that every child gets to play, regardless of talent. All he asks for in return is that they give their best effort on the field. Additionally, Tom organizes free baseball camps for youth and assists with various drug-free programs, including Shoot Hoops Not Drugs and Hooked on Fishing—Not on Drugs. In honor of his contributions to the sport of baseball, Tom received the 2012 Major League Baseball Commissioner's Play Healthy Award through the Partnership at DrugFree.org in conjunction with MLB Charities.

Tom's talents far exceed his boundaries, yet he is determined to help transform his small community and our rural region of southern and eastern Kentucky. As some of those same little league players have grown up, Tom has encountered a few in handcuffs during drug roundups, but his immediate response is to kneel down beside them in prayer, offering words of encouragement. It is his courage of conviction and steadfast resolve to help those in need that drive his unwavering kindred spirit. His message of hope and perseverance in the face of adversity is manifested every day through his tireless effort to encourage the youth of his community to reach for a brighter future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Tom Vicini for receiving the MLB Commissioner's Play Healthy Award, and for his unwavering commitment to the youth of Harlan County.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 4, 2012

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent due to a family emergency on November 29th and November 30th, 2012. As a result, I missed rollcall votes 611, 612, and 613 related to H.R. 6429, the STEM Job Act of 2012. Had I been present, I would have

voted "no" on rollcall vote 611, "yes" on roll call vote 612, and "no" on roll call vote 613.

THE IMPENDING FISCAL CLIFF NEGOTIATIONS AND THE EXTENSION OF TAX CUTS FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 4, 2012

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as Congress and the President continue to move toward a compromise addressing the "Fiscal Cliff," I support a balanced approach that creates jobs and supports long-term economic growth. A key component of sustained economic growth is the extension of the current tax rates for middle class Americans. Furthermore, I support an approach that boosts the confidence of small business owners and provides them with the certitude they need to meet the demands of a recovering economy. Congress must support an approach that avoids the harmful sequestration spending cuts that may affect nearly every sector of our economy and threaten our economic recovery. It is my hope that my colleagues and I can act as partners in promoting economic fairness that will steer America toward a brighter future.

JESSICA FORD

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 4, 2012

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Jessica Ford had big dreams of becoming a doctor when she was growing up. Like many young girls, Jessica was just trying to find her way in life when she ran away from home. After she ran away, she met a man who made her feel safe. He claimed to have all the answers to her problems. She fell in love. Unfortunately, Jessica didn't realize she was falling in love with a predator.

Unbeknownst to Jessica, her new love identified her as prey and lured her in to his control by taking advantage of her vulnerability. Before she knew what was happening, she was his slave—threatened, raped and forced into prostitution. Her predator sold her for sex in her city and trafficked her in other places. This nightmare—living in slavery—lasted for thirteen years.

Jessica lived in constant fear of the men who owned her during those years. Not only did they steal her childhood, they stole her identity. She was an object to them, sold on an underground market just like any other commodity in demand. The sick reality of this market is best explained by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sherri Zack: "With selling a girl there's a huge advantage. After you sell a kilo of cocaine, you have to then buy another kilo of cocaine, but you can sell a girl or boy over and over again. It's an incredible renewable resource." Jessica's nightmare didn't start in a third world country; it started right here in Houston, Texas.

Human trafficking is the second largest organized crime business in the world, gener-

ating \$32 billion a year. This dastardly deed occurs all over the world, but most people don't know that it occurs right here in the United States. Unfortunately, Texas has become a hub for human trafficking—in 2007 nearly 1/3 of the calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline came from our state. The many interstates, airports and ports in Houston make our city convenient for traffickers. Trafficking rings operate in places that you see along the streets in our communities, like some massage parlors where women are sold for sex. This modern day slave trade occurs right in our own backyard. It seems like a Hollywood movie, but this is reality.

There are many faces of trafficking victims, but typically the victims are women—both adult and child. In less frequent instances, the victims are men. Some are people who are smuggled here from another country believing they will have a job. Others are vulnerable American children. In many cases, these victims are forced into sex and/or labor trafficking to repay a debt. Sadly, too many of them are treated as criminals and not what they really are—victims of crime.

When I came to Congress, I founded the bipartisan Congressional Victims Rights Caucus. The Caucus works to bring attention to human trafficking. Legislatively, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act has brought about considerable changes in the way that the federal government responds to trafficking and coordination worldwide. We are working towards reauthorizing this important bill.

On the state and local levels, Texas has taken significant steps forward to prevent trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and help victims. In Harris County, Precinct 4 Constable Ron Hickman and County Attorney Vince Ryan have made cracking down on human trafficking a top priority. They're working hard to close illegitimate businesses and arrest and prosecute those exploiting the vulnerable. The biggest challenge we face to battling this crime is the endless demand by customers.

Human Trafficking is modern day slavery. It's a human rights issue. Bringing awareness to the problem is the first step. We must continue to tell stories like Jessica's. Collaboration between federal, state and local governments is also key. Together, we can strengthen penalties for traffickers and buyers. And most importantly, we can't forget that those who have been trafficked are the victims. We must treat them like victims. They need assistance as they recover from servitude and rebuild their lives. Together we can eradicate the scourge of human trafficking. And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF MARIO GUILIO MUSCIANO, SR.

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 4, 2012

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the beloved Mario Giulio Musciano, Sr. of Somerdale, New Jersey who passed away on Friday, November 23rd, 2012.

Born and raised in Camden, Mr. Musciano's life has been an inspiration to the citizens of South Jersey. As a United States Army veteran, he served with distinction during World