

as chair. He was a Rotarian, serving one term as president. He chaired the United Way of Greater Toledo campaign, was a member and president of the Ohio Historical Society Board and member of the Hayes Presidential Center. He served a decade as trustee, campaign chair, and president of the Fort Meigs Historical Society and was president of the Torch Club.

In all things: family, work, and community, Dr. Richard Ruppert gave all. He leaves a legacy few could match. His brilliance, humor, grace, kindness and insatiable curiosity and love of life were true gifts. He and his wife Libby have been a team unmatched, a gift that keeps giving to us all—our community, advanced medicines, academic excellence, friends and colleagues, loyalty to community, persevering leadership. Dr. Richard Ruppert made a difference for humanity and we are eternally grateful for his life and service to America.

HONORING THE EU FOR RECEIVING THE 2012 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, December 10, 2012, Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjørn Jagland presented European Leaders with the Nobel Peace Prize. The European Union (EU) received the distinguished award for its promotion of peace and human rights. Since the end of World War II, Europe has seen six decades without wars, turning a continent historically known for conflicts into a continent of peace.

Since the formation of the European Union's initial organizations, there has not been a single hostile incident between the member states now known as the European Union. While there has been violence and war on the edges of the EU, such as the Balkan Wars, these did not happen between EU members, and now with the goal of full EU membership the nations of the Balkans are beginning to look forward to the future.

Membership in the EU requires a nation to have a fully operating democratic government, protection of civil liberties for a broad variety of minorities, recognition of private property and a fully functioning free enterprise economy. EU membership is a demand for democracy and free enterprise which brings peace and security to every country that has joined. The growth from six western European countries to an organization of 27 member states that represent over 500 million people with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$17.6 trillion is a transatlantic accomplishment worth noting for generations to come. The U.S. can take pride in the support and cooperation it has provided the EU over the years, with both our economies representing 54% of world GDP and is responsible for 14 million "on shored" jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr. Speaker, peace is not simply an era without war, but a common goal we share and are committed to maintaining. Both our constituencies are faced with terrorism, climate change, and recovering economies. These problems know not of party lines or of national

borders. We are encouraged by the EU's achievements as a community of nations that have overcome so much in the pursuit of peace. Where there was war, now is peace. As we continue to work closer with our allies in the EU, I am confident that where there is now peace, peace shall remain.

Both the EU and the U.S. face a recovering economy. Towards that end, we are encouraged to hear of preliminary discussions regarding a comprehensive trade agreement with the EU and the impact it will have on jobs and economic growth for our economies. While the reduction of spending by nations is required, our efforts should also support a special emphasis on job creation. With the EU and the U.S. as the largest trade partners for each other, reduction in tariff and non-tariff barriers will help facilitate a job creating environment providing hope for the citizens we represent.

HONORING ASSISTANT SECRETARY RUSSELLYN ALI

HON. CHAKA FATAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. FATAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank a tireless advocate for all of America's children, Russlynn Ali, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education. Ms. Ali has recently transitioned from the Department into a new role and I would like to take the opportunity to share with this body the impressive accomplishments of the Office for Civil Rights under her leadership.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Ms. Ali for all that she has done to see the Equity and Excellence Commission draft a final report. I am confident that this document will provide a useful framework for policymakers, advocates and families at every level to create a more equitable and excellent system of public education that draws on the skills and talents of every American child. The Commission's success is because of the hard work of Russlynn Ali.

While revitalizing an underutilized federal office, Ms. Ali has led the Office for Civil Rights in an impressive direction, supporting states, school districts and schools in providing the equal access to education every child deserves. During her tenure, the Office launched over 100 compliance reviews many of which addressed first-of-their-kind issues and all of which were innovative in their comprehensiveness, scope, and approach. They entered into hundreds of robust resolution agreements that, with aggressive monitoring, will truly eradicate discrimination at its roots. They revamped technical assistance—conducting an average of 315 activities a year over the last four years, up from about 185 in 2008. They released 10 comprehensive Dear Colleagues and guidance documents, all dealing with urgent issues, and revamped them to include detailed application sections—guidances that advocates, superintendents and college presidents have referred to as "landmark" and "historic." The Office for Civil Rights made the opportunity gap data come alive with the transformed Civil Rights Data Collection. Now the CRDC site gets about 9,900 visits every month.

I ask this body to join me in thanking Russlynn Ali for all that she has done for America's young people and wishing her well on her next endeavor.

A TRIBUTE TO MICHIGAN STATE REPRESENTATIVE PAUL OPSOMMER

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to State Representative Paul E. Opsommer in recognition of his faithful service as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives. His fulfillment of three terms as State Representative concludes the most recent phase of what has been a remarkable career in public service, and he leaves behind a dedicated legacy in Lansing.

Before being elected to the 93rd district of Michigan in 2006, Paul had a career in business and local government. He served as Director and later Vice President of Action Management Corporation in Flint, and prior to that as a City Councilman and Mayor of DeWitt. His extensive experience serving on local government agencies and boards, including the DeWitt Schools Strategic Planning Board and the DeWitt Downtown Development Association, among others, also gave him a wide-ranging knowledge of issues important to the region.

In the Michigan House, Paul served on the Energy and Technology, Regulatory Reform, Insurance, and Health Policy Committees, and most recently as Chairman of the Transportation Committee and Associate Speaker Pro Tempore. As a legislator, Paul was dedicated to the passage of sound public policy, and his insights and experience brought a fresh perspective to the House.

Paul is an esteemed Michigan citizen and it is with great pride that I dedicate these remarks to his life and career. I wish him and his family the best as he closes this chapter of his life and begins his next endeavor.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE MICHIGAN LOTTERY'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark an important milestone in the history of the Michigan Lottery as it celebrates its 40th Anniversary. Over the last four decades the Michigan Lottery has been focused on fulfilling its mission to supplement state education programs through lottery revenues and provide Michigan residents and visitors with fun and entertaining games of chance, while doing so with a commitment to total integrity.

Since November 1972, when the Lottery offered its first game, a 50-cent green game ticket with weekly drawings, the Lottery has generated over \$50 billion in sales. In 1981, Governor Milliken took an important step to help Michigan residents further realize the