Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Ms. Gilardi for her invaluable service to the City of Cotati and for the numerous projects she has overseen and led to completion. Her exemplary leadership has left a legacy for our community that will extend far into the future as she moves on to her new role with the County of Sonoma.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. LOUIS C. DEBERGALIS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Louis C. DeBergalis, who passed away on Saturday, February 2, 2013 at the age of 69.

A proud member of Ironworkers Local 6 who shared a family-owned small business, Mr. DeBergalis exemplified the American Dream. Along with his brother, Rocco Jr., he co-owned Rod Placing, a steel reinforcing company started by his father, Rocco.

Mr. DeBergalis was a family man. In addition to his role and pride in the family business, he loved his daughters, Tonya Balash and Jacquelyn Criola; son, Jeffrey; mother, Olympia; sister, Mary Rose Gaughan; and three brothers Joseph, Paul, and Rocco Jr.

Mr. DeBergalis lived most of his life in Buffalo's Lovejoy neighborhood. He took pride in his heritage and community, holding membership in the Big Timers Italian–American Club. In his down time, he enjoyed a variety of activities including gardening, cooking, and stone carving.

Mr. Speaker, I kindly ask you to join me and our colleagues as we stand in this moment to honor the life of Mr. Louis C. DeBergalis and offer our deepest condolences to his family.

CONGRATULATING JARRED AND SHELBY RAMBO

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate two elementary students from Ouachita Parish who participated in a national art exhibit opening in Washington, D.C. Eight-year-old Jarred Rambo and 10-year-old Shelby Rambo, children of Judge and Mrs. Wilson and Christine Rambo of West Monroe, La., cut the ribbon on the U.S. Department of Education's Student Art Exhibit Program.

This wonderful program is now in its 10th year and strives to highlight student accomplishment in the arts. This year, the exhibit featured works from the 2012 national PTA winners. Jarred won the PTA Reflections Award of Excellence for literature in the primary division for pre-K through second grade and Shelby won the PTA Reflections Award of Merit for dance choreography in the intermediate division for third grade through fifth grade. Both students were honored in the U.S. Department of Education's ceremony along with other winners from around the country.

Jarred and Shelby should be commended for their hard work and remarkable artistic ability. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating their wonderful achievements.

THE TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE POPULAR UPRISING IN BAHRAIN

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today is the two year anniversary of the day when the Arab Spring came to Bahrain. On February 14, 2011, the people of Bahrain took to the streets in spontaneous, peaceful protests calling for an end to oppression. Bahrainis were emboldened by the Arab Spring, which was sweeping across the Middle East and they were fired up by decades of human rights abuses by their government. Unfortunately, the Government of Bahrain brought in foreign troops and responded with violence, killing protesters and unleashing a systematic program of torture and unlawful detention that continues today.

It is disappointing that Bahrain, a close ally of the U.S. in the Persian Gulf, is engaging in torture, intimidation, and repression against peaceful protesters. Two years later, the judicial system is used to punish dissenters, freedom of expression is punished—Bahrainis are imprisoned for tweeting—and those responsible for even the most egregious violations are seldom brought to justice. The people of Bahrain deserve better, and I stand with them in their quest for basic human rights.

As an American ally, we must insist upon their compliance with the most basic of human rights for all of its citizens.

This should be an especially concerning situation for everyone in this body. Bahrain is the host of the U.S. Fifth Fleet and an important ally in the Gulf Region. The Government's outrageous treatment of its own citizens is creating deep divisions in Bahrain and sowing instability. We need a strong naval presence in the Gulf to keep our own country safe and we have put many of our eggs in one basket, Bahrain. However, the fact that an important ally to our great democracy is violating the very principles for which we have placed the Fifth Fleet therein is highly unacceptable. It is unacceptable to me, as it should be to the rest of this body.

It is absolutely essential that Bahrain set itself on a course that promotes stability and reconciliation and that will only happen when the Government moves to meet the people's legitimate calls for respect for human rights and enhanced democracy occurs. It appears that political dialogue may be starting in Bahrain. I call on the Government of Bahrain to engage fully in this dialogue—not as a moderator, but as a negotiating partner.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF RALPH WILLIAM BRAUN

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to honor the legacy of Ralph William Braun. Born on December 18, 1940 in Winamac, Indiana, Ralph is a lifelong Hoosier, proud family man, and entrepreneur whose contributions positively impacted thousands of lives in the community. As the Founder and CEO of the Braun Corporation, his company's specialized mobility products have improved the everyday lives of individuals across the globe.

Ralph's passion to help others was fostered at a young age, as he struggled with spinal muscular atrophy, a genetic defect that causes muscle damage. In an effort to improve his own mobility, Ralph developed and assembled a three–wheel scooter. Realizing that others suffered from the same issue, he founded the Save-A-Step Manufacturing Company in 1963, a company that later became known as The Braun Corporation. Today Braun Corporation has grown into a world-wide company, with its headquarters still based in the Second District of Winamac, Indiana.

His contributions did not stop there. In 2010, Ralph started the Ralph Braun Foundation to continue helping the disabled population obtain mobility equipment. His contributions were recognized by a robust group of organizations with awards and honors, including The White House's 2012 "Champion of Change" award. Ralph's effort and donations to the community have touched many, and he will be sorely missed.

Ralph leaves behind an incredible legacy that will surely live on to inspire future Americans and encourage new innovation. His family, including his wife, Melody, children, and grandchildren will remain in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

I am honored to recognize the life of Ralph William Braun and extend my deepest sympathies to his loved ones. Joining Hoosiers across the state, we mourn his loss and remember the leadership that will continue motivating us all to help others.