

President Allen served as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at Iowa State University. President Allen has been a hard-working leader for UNI and the Cedar Valley community. Under President Allen's leadership, UNI has established priorities for increasing student achievement in undergraduate performance, and providing statewide leadership in Pre-K through 12 education.

Ben Allen led UNI through exciting and challenging times. I have always respected Ben's love for the University and his contributions to higher education at both UNI and Iowa State. I'm proud to call Ben my friend and I wish Ben and his wife Pat all the best in their future plans and endeavors.

**HONORING MR. MICHAEL HIGGINS
ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM CONGRESS**

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 25, 2013

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and some sadness that I rise to honor Mr. Michael R. Higgins, a Professional Staff Member of the Armed Services Committee, on the eve of his retirement.

For over forty years, Mike has dedicated himself to his country and the Armed Forces. He served in the United States Air Force for twenty years and retired as Lieutenant Colonel. For the next 23 years, it was our great fortune that he chose the Armed Services Committee as the home for his incredible talents.

Mike served 7 HASC chairmen and 8 subcommittee chairmen, helping to steer our committee through war and peace. His sage advice guided members out of the Cold War and through the sporadic conflicts of the 1990s, social changes both large and small, and a tough 11 years of war. For any analyst looking to answer the question, "How did the all-volunteer military survive those war years?," I would urge them to examine the contributions of Mike Higgins.

When the Pentagon struggled to attract quality recruits, Mike helped improve military recruiting and retention programs. When issues arose with outdated military pay and retirement policies, Mike modernized those systems. When the strains of combat brought in Wounded Warriors to rehabilitate, Mike helped guarantee attention to their needs.

Mike encountered an historic array of challenges to the Armed Forces. Some were structural, some were strategic, and some were social. But Mike's consummate professionalism, commitment to the military people that he loved, and perseverance in the face of the toughest political and policy debates helped us meet each issue with wisdom and experience. For that, I am grateful and in his debt.

His legacy is unmistakable. Whenever the military and Congress found themselves at odds, whenever there was a shared obstacle to overcome, and whenever a member of our committee—Republican or Democrat—needed advice or counsel, Mike was there.

Mike Higgins is a giant. He shaped the service of every man and woman of the Armed Forces over the last two decades. Every mili-

tary retiree, their survivors, and each military family benefited from Mike's commitment to them. Mike will cast a long shadow far beyond his retirement.

His humility is matched only by his intellect, his ability to listen and a fearsome ability to see to the heart of an issue. When oversight is your business, sharp eyes are your sword. And no sword was sharper than that of this modest, unassuming Airman, who served his country with the tenacity of a lion, yet would today be surprised that so much is being made of all that he accomplished. Thank you, Mike.

TRIBUTE TO THE SHAW VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY NUMBER ONE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 25, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable volunteer fire department in the Mississippi Delta.

The Shaw Volunteer Fire Company Number One was established on November 15, 1921 with Chas F. Hill as Fire Chief, R. V. Farmer as Assistant Chief, and N. L. Chapman as Captain and twenty firemen. Recently, the Shaw Volunteer Fire Department became a part of the Bolivar County Fire Department and is known as District 5. This has increased their service area to surrounding communities and they currently serve 4,000 residents.

Since its establishment, the Shaw Volunteer Fire Department has been a great benefit to the citizens of Shaw by saving many lives, businesses, and personal property. The fire department has been the first responders and rescuers at numerous incidents like automobile, school bus, and natural disasters.

The Shaw Volunteer Fire Department was one of the first departments to have female firefighters. Under the direction of its current Fire Chief, Timothy Caninco and Captain Bernice Boone and 12 firefighters, they have established the Shaw Fire Academy to educate and train youths and adults on fire safety. The fire department has received numerous outstanding performance certifications and awards.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the City of Shaw Volunteer Fire Department for its dedication to serving the citizens of Shaw and responding to call for help within the surrounding area.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TULSI GABBARD

OF HAWAII
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 25, 2013

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, on February 4, 2013, through February 6, 2013 I was unable to record my votes for rollcall No.31–No.38. Had I been present I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 31: Yes—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 225.

Rollcall No. 32: Yes—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 297.

Rollcall No. 33: No—Ordering the Previous Question.

Rollcall No. 34: No—On Agreeing to the Resolution.

Rollcall No. 35: Yes—On Agreeing to the Takano Amendment.

Rollcall No. 36: Yes—On Agreeing to the Schrader Amendment.

Rollcall No. 37: Yes—On Motion to Recommit with Instructions.

Rollcall No. 38: Yes—On Passage.

**HONORING THE HONOREES OF THE
OXFORD HILLS CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AWARDS**

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 25, 2013

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the recipients of the 2013 Annual Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce Awards. Representing over 400 area businesses and organizations, the Oxford Hills Chamber has been instrumental in advocating for economic growth throughout the greater Oxford County region.

Each year, the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce honors local businesses, business leaders, and individuals who promote and advance a vital and healthy economic environment. These honorees embody the kind of entrepreneurship and resourcefulness which has helped the state to weather one of the harshest economic climates in American history.

This year's award recipients include Business of the Year, Oxford Casino; Employee of the Year, Steve Holbrook, teacher at Oxford Hills Christian Academy; Rising Star of the Year, ServiceMaster Fire and Water Restoration of Oxford. Additionally, the staff at Responsible Pet Care will receive the Community Service Award.

These recipients are among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and incredible commitment to their communities and to the region, Maine is a better place to live and to do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the Oxford Hills Region Chamber of Commerce and these individuals on their outstanding service and achievement.

WASHINGTON FIRE COMPANY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 25, 2013

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Washington Fire Company No. 1, which will celebrate 155 years of service to the Borough of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania and the surrounding counties.

The Washington Fire Company is one of the oldest operations of its kind still servicing Cumberland County. Named after our country's first president, the company was formally constituted on February 22nd, 1858. The town hall was used to house equipment and hold meetings until 1860, when a firehouse was built on East Main Street, a facility the Washington Fire Company still uses to this day.

The Washington Fire Company has been an important force against many historic fires in