

While Ms. Erickson is an exceptional educator, she credits her success and achievements to the amazing students she has had the privilege of teaching. The most rewarding aspect of her profession is that she is able to watch her students grow as they learn.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Heather Erickson as the Okaloosa County, Florida Teacher of the Year and thank her for her commitment to service to Northwest Florida. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Ms. Erickson, and we wish her all the best.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2013

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, I missed rollcall votes 48, 49, and 50 for unavoidable reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall No. 48: "nay" (On motion to adjourn.); Rollcall No. 49: "yea" (On motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 77, the Academic Competition Resolution of 2013.); Rollcall No. 50: "yea" (On approving the Journal).

HONORING THE LIFE OF RAYMOND MINNITE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2013

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay to tribute to the life of Raymond Minnite, who lived a long and fulfilling life of 95 years. As founder of the town of Three Rocks in California, Raymond was a true supporter and advocate for our Central Valley. His kind heart and generosity will be greatly missed.

Raymond was born into a large family with nine brothers and sisters. His parents were first generation immigrants from Italy. Growing up in an immigrant family of 12, Raymond quickly developed great values and principles. He knew the importance of treating others with respect, compassion, and consideration. Raymond's charitable acts were witnessed by many because helping those in need was essential to him.

As a young man, Raymond served in the Army in World War II. He was stationed in Germany, Italy, and France. Raymond did not discuss the brutalities of war with his family and friends. Instead he shared about the times when he would take extra food to the hungry children. Raymond's positive outlook on life was apparent to all of those around him.

After Raymond married Bernadette and they had their children: Gary, Jack, Bernadette, Janis, Dion, and John, he purchased 20 acres of land at the intersection of Clarkson and Highway 33. There was nothing built on the land, but he had a vision. Bernadette believed in his plan, so he had his families support. Raymond's boys took part in the project and helped him salvage old wood and nails. Slowly a small town was built, and Raymond named it Three Rocks. Surrounded by farming communities, it serves a place for farm laborers to

live. Today, Three Rocks has about 230 residents.

Raymond had an ingenious idea, and he made it into a reality. He truly achieved the "American Dream." Raymond's children, 17 grandchildren, and 31 great-grandchildren have an outstanding role model that they will hold in their hearts forever.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the life of Raymond Minnite. His presence will be greatly missed, but his legacy will surely live on in Fresno County.

HONORING DONALD AND BARBARA HORAN

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2013

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my constituents, Donald and Barbara Horan of Greensburg, Indiana.

Don and Barb were married and actively involved in their church and community. After working with several local businesses, Don acquired Collection Associates Incorporated and developed it into a thriving business. Don served on the Decatur County Fair Board, Greensburg Redevelopment Board, and the Decatur County Community Foundation. Barb volunteered with Tri Kappa and the Decatur county YMCA Board, among others. They were both actively involved in St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Don and Barb will forever be remembered as devoted parents to their daughters and lifelong friends of their community. I ask the entire 6th Congressional District to keep their four daughters Rebecca, Olivia, Regan, and Adrienne, along with the entire extended Horan family, in your thoughts and prayers.

OPPOSITION TO SEQUESTRATION

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2013

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to sequestration. I am appalled by the complete and utter abdication of leadership and responsibility by Speaker BOEHNER and House Republicans to bring a bill to the House Floor that would replace the catastrophic and needless sequester.

Early this week, President Obama reminded us of the untold damage that the automatic, across-the-board spending cuts would inflict on our fragile economy, on the lives of working families, children, students, and on our military. I am outraged that House Republicans would stand idly by and allow these disastrous, self-inflicted cuts to go into effect causing between one and two million people to lose their jobs. We should be adopting policies that create jobs, instead of succumbing to policies that eliminate jobs.

California residents cannot afford another GOP-manufactured crisis. That is why, on behalf of all the residents of California, and es-

pecially the residents of the 51st Congressional District, I have joined with my colleagues to call on the House Republican leadership to do what is right for our Nation's economy, security and families and take action this week on a balanced plan to avert these damaging and mindless spending cuts.

The Office of Management and Budget released a report earlier this week that substantiates many of the devastating and widespread impacts that sequestration will have on local communities in California, several of which are included below:

Military Readiness and Jobs: In California, approximately 64,000 civilian Department of Defense employees would be furloughed, reducing gross pay by around \$399.4 million in total. My district includes portions of San Diego, which has one of the largest military presences in the Nation and is the headquarters for the Navy Region Southwest. These cuts to defense spending will cause the maintenance and repair of ships and aircraft to be cancelled, putting at risk the safety and security of our men and women in uniform. As nearly 25% of the jobs in San Diego County are directly connected to the defense industry, these brutal cuts will cause extraordinary harm to the struggling economy and put thousands of jobs at risk.

Job Search Assistance: Around 130,000 fewer Californians will get the help and skills they need to find employment as California will lose about \$3.3 million for job search assistance, referral, and placement. My district includes Imperial County which suffers from one of the highest unemployment rates in the Nation, nearly 30%. My constituents cannot afford to lose critical employment assistance.

Nutrition for Seniors: California would lose approximately \$5.4 million to help provide meals for seniors. Many of our seniors live on limited fixed incomes and rely on these programs to help provide basic necessities. We cannot sit here on our hands and allow our seniors to go hungry.

Child Care: Up to 2,000 disadvantaged and vulnerable children could lose access to child care, which is also essential for working parents to hold down a job.

Vaccines for Children: In California around 15,810 fewer children will receive vaccines for diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, whooping cough, influenza, and Hepatitis B due to reduced funding for vaccinations. It is callous and unacceptable to put the health and safety of our children at risk.

Public Health: California will lose approximately \$2.6 million to help upgrade its ability to respond to public health threats including infectious diseases, natural disasters, and biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological events. In addition, California will lose about \$12.4 in grants to help prevent and treat substance abuse, resulting in around 9,400 fewer admissions to substance abuse programs. And the California State Department of Public Health will lose about \$2 million resulting in around 49,300 fewer HIV tests.

Teachers and Schools: California will lose approximately \$87.6 million for primary and secondary education, putting around 1,210 teacher and aide jobs at risk. In addition about 187,000 fewer students would be served and approximately 320 fewer schools would receive funding.

Head Start: Head Start and Early Head Start services would be eliminated for approximately 8,200 children in California, reducing