

. . . And so, let me conclude by saying that for those of us who care about religious freedom, we have a job to do.

First and foremost, each of us as citizens needs to make the case to our fellow Americans on behalf of supporting religious freedom abroad. We need to explain why this matters for our country and for our world.

We must tell others the story about what is happening to victims of religious persecution around the world. We must not let them be forgotten or let their plight be ignored.

And then, as we increase our numbers on the ground, we can move Washington to do the right thing by supporting religious freedom. We must make it clear to those in public office that we expect them to honor religious freedom both at home and abroad, and that we intend to hold them electorally accountable if they fail to do that. We must insist that religious freedom be given the priority it is due under the International Religious Freedom Act in the conduct of our international diplomacy and foreign policy. Trade considerations are important; geopolitical strategic considerations are important; but religious freedom is important, too. It is not a second-class concern—at least not since IRFA became the law of the land. . . .

I have not spoken much today about domestic religious freedom issues. I do not want to close, however, without saying this: The first and most important way in which the President of the United States can promote religious freedom abroad is by honoring religious freedom here at home. Again, speaking for myself, and not on this occasion as Chairman of USCIRF, I call on President Obama to withdraw the HHS mandates that threaten religious freedom in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act—and to do so before being compelled to withdraw those mandates by the Supreme Court in the lawsuits now pending. Indeed, the administration should—across the board, at home and abroad—embrace a robust view of religious liberty, one going beyond the mere “freedom of worship”—one that respects the right of religious believers and religious institutions to honor the requirements of their consciences without governmental interference, except in those circumstances—mercifully rare in our own country—where restrictions on religious freedom are necessary to protect the religious freedom of others or to prevent violence or other intolerable harms. . . .

HONORING BEURT SERVAAS

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Beurt SerVaas, a dedicated community leader and former president of the Indianapolis City-County Council.

Beurt SerVaas was an accomplished businessman and a devoted public servant who spent the better part of his life serving the people of Indianapolis. Dr. SerVaas was first elected to the Marion County Council in the early 1960s and became a chief architect of the Uni-Gov changes that consolidated parts of city and county government. Dr. SerVaas' distinguished business career included bringing the Saturday Evening Post to Indiana and rescuing several struggling businesses ranging from engine rebuilders to makers of cleaning products.

The state of Indiana and the city of Indianapolis have lost one of their most distin-

guished citizens and a dedicated civic leader. On a personal note, Dr. SerVaas was a friend and a supporter of mine, who could always be counted on for his gentle wisdom and smile.

Beurt SerVaas set an example to which we can all aspire. He was a visionary leader who dedicated his life to serving others and making his country and community better places to live. This included service in the United States Navy and the Central Intelligence Agency. His commitment to Indiana will be forever appreciated. I ask the residents of the 6th Congressional District to join me in keeping his wife Dr. Cory Jane SerVaas, daughters Joan, Amy, and Kristin, and his sons Eric and Paul, in their thoughts and prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote number 38, the DeFazio Amendment No. 6 to H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Acts of 2013, I was recorded as an “aye.” It was my intention to vote “no” on the amendment.

As an avid sportsman, I strongly oppose legislation that would threaten opportunities for recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting on our Nation's public lands.

IN RECOGNITION OF MERRILL BLUM

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Merrill Blum upon his retirement from the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Cape and Islands.

Following his service in the United States Army, Mr. Blum found his true calling working for numerous veterans' services programs throughout Massachusetts, and his remarkable efforts were recognized by the Department of Labor as a model for the nation. His commitment to serving veterans brought him to work with the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Cape and Islands, focusing on projects such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project, Homelessness Prevention Council, and on my Advisory Commission on Veteran Services. Throughout his career Mr. Blum has demonstrated his true commitment to helping soldiers improve their lives once they return home. In finding his calling in life, Mr. Blum made a lasting impact on countless American heroes within our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Merrill Blum upon his retirement. I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking Mr. Blum for his service and commitment to our nation's veterans.

CONGRATULATING FLIR SYSTEMS, INC.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate FLIR Systems, Inc. on the launch of FLIR ONE, the first consumer-oriented thermal imaging system. Introduced on January 7, 2014, FLIR ONE is the first product of its kind that provides thermal imaging technology to consumers using a unique smart phone accessory case. This is a tremendous step toward making infrared technology accessible and affordable to the general public.

FLIR Systems, Inc. is a global leader in the design, manufacture, and marketing of sensor systems that enhance perception and awareness. Their technological innovations have a wide range of utility including aerial and ground surveillance, environmental monitoring, navigation and transportation safety.

The work of FLIR Systems, Inc. is not only positively impacting Central Florida by providing our community with jobs; their innovations are resonating around the world. With the global debut of FLIR ONE scheduled for Spring 2014, I wish FLIR Systems, Inc. continued success.

RECOGNIZING GO TO 2040 FOR RECEIVING THE EPA SMART GROWTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, this week the Environmental Protection Agency recognized seven organizations from across the country that are working to ensure sustainable urban growth with the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. I am proud to recognize the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's GO TO 2040 initiative for receiving this honor.

GO TO 2040 focuses on sustainable prosperity—working within Chicago and around the world to cement the city's place as an economic and cultural center. By 2040 Chicago will need to accommodate up to 25 percent more residents. The plan addresses public transportation, community planning, government cooperation, and resource management to ensure that Chicago remains a vibrant and diverse city, with room for our communities to grow.

GO TO 2040 has four challenges for city and state government to consider—creating livable communities, maximizing the potential of human capital, ensuring efficient government, and promoting regional mobility. Those issues impact all major metropolitan communities, and this roadmap is an important step as we look to build a sustainable future for our cities.

GO TO 2040 is a leading example of the type of work that will preserve and improve our urban centers for generations to come. I am proud to recognize the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's work to keep our city great.