

is yet another prestigious recognition of the outstanding work of Mr. Sponzilli.

I have known Richard for many years now as well as have attended the Dean McNulty Dinner for many years and know that this is a well-deserved honor. His story has not only inspired me but has inspired many of those around him. I value Rich's friendship and, as his friend, am happy to see him acknowledged in so many ways.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of individuals such as Mr. Richard Sponzilli.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Mr. Sponzilli's coworkers, family and friends, all those whose lives he has touched, and me, in recognizing the work of Mr. Richard Sponzilli.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. EMELIA ROSE  
YANKAH

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of the Fifth Congressional District of Florida, I am pleased and honored to join the chorus of family, friends, loved ones and many well-wishers who join in praise and give thanks to Mrs. Emelia Rose Yankah.

As you reflect on the numerous memories and triumphs you have been blessed to experience over the last eight plus decades your professional, community leadership, and membership with numerous civic organizations have given you the opportunity to make an indelible impact in the lives of many.

We are forever grateful to our Heavenly Father for having put Mrs. E.R. Yankah in our midst on April 16, 1930, and for filling her with grace, compassion and love. Today as your family, friends, community and congregation stand to celebrate your 85th Birthday, know that I am exceedingly honored to join this celebration and extend our humble gratitude. Countless lives have been made all the better and richer because of this kind spirit.

We ask:

May the Lord Bless you and Keep you.

May the Lord let his face shine upon you.

May the Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace.

As you look forward to the years ahead, know that I am praying for your continued health and happiness.

COL. HENRY CYR

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Colonel Henry L. Cyr III, United States Air Force, for his exceptional service to the United States of America. After twenty-six years of

service, Colonel Cyr will soon retire from his position as the Commander of the 461st Air Control Wing, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

Born in Hopedale, Massachusetts, Colonel Cyr was commissioned through the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Boston University in 1989, receiving his Second Lieutenant rank in historic Faneuil Hall. Throughout his career, Colonel Cyr has served with great distinction in prominent command and staff positions and operational flying units in the United States and around the world.

His staff tours include two assignments to the Pentagon; first, in 2002, as Air Force staff responsible for overseeing two U.S. and NATO Command and Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance aircraft acquisition programs, and again in 2009 as United States Strategic Command staff leading the Global Force Management Division, responsible for supporting the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance requirements of our Combatant Commanders around the globe. In 2011 Col. Cyr returned to Robins Air Force Base to serve as the Vice Commander of the 461st Air Control Wing.

Colonel Cyr has been awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Air Medal, and multiple campaign medals. His aviation career includes more than 4,700 flying hours, including more than 900 in combat and combat support missions. He has flown operations in Saudi Arabia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo and Iraq, as well as worldwide Sensitive Reconnaissance Operations missions. Currently, he is the commander of the Air Combat Command's 461st Air Control Wing responsible for leading nearly fifteen hundred Airmen in achieving the worldwide E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System and Deployable Air Traffic Control and Landing System missions.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize Colonel Henry Cyr's successful and decorated career. I commend Colonel Cyr for his service, leadership, and example. I also wish to recognize the sacrifices and contributions made by Colonel Cyr's family including wife retired Lt. Col. Linda Bethke-Cyr, their children Alexandria and Marcus, and his parents Mrs. Geraldine Francis Cyr and retired Colonel Henry Leonard Cyr, Jr.

We are a nation grateful for the military service of the men, women, and families whose sacrifices secure our freedom. I wish Colonel Cyr and his family the best in his retirement and next steps.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF LAS POSITAS COLLEGE

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the accomplishments of Las Positas College in Livermore, California.

Las Positas has been serving residents of the Tri-Valley with quality educational and vocational training for the past forty years.

Las Positas serves 8,500 students from all walks of life. Their dedication to training and

educating all those that seek to better themselves, from recent high school graduates to veterans to mid-career professionals, is second to none.

In the heart of one of America's fastest growing business and residential regions, Las Positas College has been a staple for higher education and skill development for decades. The college provides the local rapidly growing technological, science, and business industries with the trained personnel they need to be successful.

Las Positas' slogan is "Students First," an ideal mantra that all institutions of higher education should follow. It exemplifies the goals of providing an excellent, equitable, and complete education.

On this day we recognize Las Positas College as being one of the premier educational institutions in the California Community College System for the past forty years and I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing them continued success in the future.

THE LIFE OF ALEX MICHEL ODEH

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Alex Michel Odeh.

Alex was born on April 4, 1944 in Jifna, Palestine and immigrated to the United States in 1972.

He was married to Norma Odeh and settled in Orange County, CA where they had three daughters, Helena, Samya and Susan Odeh.

Throughout his professional career, Mr. Odeh dedicated his professional life to teaching and served as a lecturer of Arabic Language and Middle East History at Coastline Community College in Santa Ana, California.

He dedicated his life to the pursuit of combatting discrimination both at home and abroad as a civil and human rights activist.

He was tireless in working with community and religious organizations to build bridges and foster peace and understanding between diverse groups.

Unfortunately, his life was cut short and Alex was assassinated on October 11, 1985, when a bomb exploded as he entered the office of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) at 1905 East 17th Street in Santa Ana, California during his service as the Western Regional Director of ADC.

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of his murder and the community and his family has yet to gain closure and justice for his death.

In June of 2013, I sent the Department of Justice a letter asking for closure in the case of Alex Odeh and we have yet to get a concrete answer from them, even though the FBI has characterized Mr. Odeh's death as a domestic "terrorist attack."

I will continue to fight for answers to Alex's death and bring those that killed him to justice, but let us mark his death by remembering what he stood for and what he dedicated his life to: the pursuit to civil and human rights, as well as peace and mutual understanding between our diverse communities.

RECOGNIZING MARCH 5 AS NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL DESIGN DAY

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 16, 2015*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize March 5, 2015, as the First Annual National Industrial Design Day. I also want to congratulate the Industrial Designers Society of America on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. This day is being used to recognize those in the profession of industrial design, which has enhanced people's lives, not only in the 11th District of Virginia, but also across the United States and the world.

The term "industrial design" was first recognized by the U.S. Patent Office in 1913, but the importance of this field was not fully recognized at that time. Originally comprised primarily of architects, package designers, and stage designers, the field expanded to include many diverse professionals including those in manufacturing, furniture design, graphic design, and automobile design, among others. The focus evolved to using design as a tool to make products more efficient, more cost effective, and more relevant.

Today, the contributions of industrial designers include advanced technology such as GPS, digital interfaces, environmental graphics, communication systems, surgical equipment, MP3 players, and countless others. The economic impact of this industry helps fuel our national economy. In the United States, product design and related services generate billions in sales and the number of U.S. awarded design patents has reached an all-time high.

Promotion of innovation and creativity has created a growing interest in industrial design. What was first hailed as a "modern movement" at the 1927 Exposition of Art in Trade in New York City is now taught at universities around the world.

The Industrial Designers Society of America, headquartered in Herndon, Virginia in the 11th Congressional District, which I am pleased to represent, should be commended for being an instrumental force in the growth and expansion of this profession. Its membership now includes thousands of industrial designers in 29 countries. In addition, it has hosted education symposiums and conferences to ensure the continued growth of this field.

I ask my colleagues to join me in proclaiming March 5 as National Industrial Design Day and in expressing our appreciation for the innovation and creativity of its members. Their designs and creations improve our lives in every way and are worthy of our recognition.

THE CONTINUING THREAT OF  
NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 16, 2015*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) are a group of 17 parasitic and bacterial diseases which blind, disable, disfigure, and sometimes kill sufferers among more than one billion of the

world's poorest people, trapping the most marginalized communities in a cycle of poverty. The list ranges from chagas to rabies to leprosy to dengue fever. However, there are others not on this list of 17 diseases that also receive too little attention. These include such diseases as polio and smallpox, which have largely been eliminated from the planet, and often fatal, fortunately rare NTDs, such as kuru. Prior to last year, that list of rare diseases included Ebola.

Even though not immediately fatal, these diseases can keep children from attending school and their parents from working, as well as resulting in excessive loss of blood by mothers during birth and low birth weight babies. These conditions constitute a significant hurdle to achieving economic growth and dilute the impact of foreign assistance programs.

Last year, the world witnessed an Ebola disease pandemic that hit six African countries and spread to Spain, Scotland, and the United States. Furthermore, in recent years diseases such as dengue fever and chickungunya have spread into the United States. These and other tropical diseases most often victimize the poor who live in tropical climates—whether in Africa, Latin America or parts of the United States.

Even in the face of the worldwide challenge these tropical diseases pose, the administration has proposed cutting the budget in this area by 17%. Yesterday's hearing examined the problem of neglected tropical diseases and U.S. current and potential efforts to address this problem.

Eight NTDs account for almost all worldwide cases. Seven of them can be treated with low-cost medication that can be dispensed by non-health workers irrespective of disease status. Nearly 80% of all NTD cases are comprised of people carrying intestinal worms.

In our June 27, 2013, hearing on NTDs, we learned the catastrophic nature of these preventable intestinal worm infections. So many of the problems we struggle with, such as difficult births and malnourishment, cannot be remedied without dealing with the infections themselves. These intestinal worms not only steal nutrients from their hosts; they steal their very futures by denying them a healthy life.

We can no longer look at photos of happy young children standing in muddy water without shoes and not think of the possibility that they are losing their future even as we see them enjoy a break from the poverty in which they live. Yet we must understand that these are not merely diseases affecting people in faraway lands.

Current U.S. law favors research on those diseases threatening the American homeland, but in today's world, diseases can cross borders as easily as those affected by them or the products imported into the United States. For example, chagas is most prevalent in Latin America, but it has been identified in patients in Texas, and cases of dengue fever have recently been reported in Florida. We cannot afford to assume that what may seem to be exotic diseases only happen to people in other countries. (And of course, even if that were true, we have a moral obligation to aid and assist those who contract these diseases and mitigate transmittal to the greatest extent possible). Ten years ago, West Nile Virus, another rare disease, was not seen in the United States or anywhere else outside the east Afri-

can nation of Uganda, but in less than a decade, it has spread across this country and much of the rest of the world.

More than 10,000 people have died of Ebola worldwide thus far. Although only one person died in this country due to that disease, we saw clearly how unprepared our medical services and the rest of the world were initially to deal with a rare disease that had previously been confined to isolated areas in Central Africa. There are other rare diseases—not to mention the recognized NTDs—that can cause havoc if they find their way to populated international transit areas as Ebola did last year.

Meanwhile, far too many people live lives of quiet suffering from diseases we must fight more effectively. This is why I have introduced H.R. 1797, the End Neglected Tropical Diseases Act. Among other provisions, H.R. 1797 calls on the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to modify its NTD programming with respect to rapid impact package treatments, school-based NTD programs and new approaches to reach the goals of eliminating NTDs. This bill also sets forth measures to expand the USAID program, including by establishment of a research and development program.

In our effort to achieve reachable goals to prevent and eliminate NTDs, the projected 17% cut in funding for such projects in the FY 2016 budget would pose a serious setback. I have appealed to the appropriators to maintain NTD spending at the most recent regular budget levels in FY 2014, and our hearing yesterday examined how our current NTD programs will be affected either by the planned budget cut or by maintaining the level of funding we saw before the Ebola response skewed the level of such funding.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL (RETIRED)  
JOSE GERARDO GARCIA, M.D.

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 16, 2015*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Colonel (Retired) Jose Gerardo Garcia, M.D. of Laredo, Texas.

Jose Gerardo Garcia was born on the 21st of November, 1935 to Gerardo and Anita Garcia in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. He received a Bachelors in Biological Sciences at la Escuela Preparatoria Federal and his Medical Doctor degree from la Universidad de Nuevo Leon Medical School in Monterrey in 1957. Following graduation, he completed psychiatry internships at Warren State Hospital in Warren, Pennsylvania and Austin State Hospital in Austin, Texas.

IN 1965, Dr. Garcia became a naturalized citizen of the United States. His love of country compelled him to enlist in the United States Army in 1969. Dr. Garcia's 20 years of service allowed him to use his medical training, serve his country, and help others. Beginning as a major at Fort Dix in New Jersey and then as a surgeon in the Army National Guard, 36th Airborne division, he developed an expertise in aerospace medicine. With this knowledge, Dr. Garcia became a charter member of the U.S. Army Aviation branch upon its creation in 1983. Additionally, he was the first native