

Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute.

Team Vermillion, led by his son Joe, has committed to raising funds to support the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society through February 27. Team Vermillion's efforts are a fitting tribute to a good man who sought to help lift others throughout his life.

Steve, you are greatly missed, but you will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF EARL THOMAS BROWN

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and work of Attorney Earl Thomas Brown of Greenville, North Carolina, who this past Saturday tragically died in a one-car collision at the age of 64.

Attorney Brown was a native of Edgecombe County, though he lived and worked in the city of Greenville. He was an extraordinary lawyer. During my years as a Superior Court judge, Earl appeared before my court on many occasions. He treated each case as unique, exceptional in his scholarship, compassionate for his clients.

At the time of his passing, Attorney Brown was a candidate for District Court judge, a position he wanted to achieve so very much. Not only was Earl an exceptional lawyer, but a man of faith and a strong patriarch for his family.

He is survived by his wife, Dr. Hazel J. Brown; a son, Attorney Derek Brown; a daughter-in-law, Joni Marie; and grandchildren, Austin, Alanna, and Myles. He is also survived by his beloved mother, Mrs. Anna Brown, and many other relatives and friends too numerous to mention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating the life and work of a great American, Attorney Earl Thomas Brown.

PRESIDENT OBAMA IS IGNORING THE LAW

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 10 days ago Congress expected the President to submit his plan to counter the rise of Islamic terrorism in the Middle East. American families deserve to know that the President has a strategy to defeat ISIL and keep us safe.

The 2016 National Defense Authorization Act signed by the President was clear that the President must submit a plan to Congress by February 15 on how to defeat ISIL and reduce risks to American families.

Sadly, the President has not presented a strategy. This is another example of the President's continued dis-

regard for law and the Constitution. We should support our troops by giving them a clear mission and a clear strategy to protect American families.

While I am disappointed that the President has failed to submit a strategy, we cannot be surprised, after he dismissed ISIL as the JV team. He claimed ISIL was contained just 1 day before the Paris slaughter, and he incorrectly assured Americans to be confident just as the mass murder was beginning in San Bernardino by ISIL terrorists.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

RECOGNIZING AWARD-WINNING ARTIST HARRY DAVIS

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to recognize a fellow North Carolina artist and living legend, Harry Davis.

Originally from Wilmington, North Carolina, Harry Davis' natural talent was evident from his early drawings. After serving our Nation in the U.S. Army, an accidental shooting left him permanently confined to a wheelchair, which led him to turn to oil painting as a means of expression and therapy.

Self-taught artist Harry Davis' attention to detail and the use of bold and brilliant hues and compositional precision have captivated audiences around the country.

An award-winning artist who has gained national recognition, Davis' work is in private collections of more than a dozen actors, actresses, and public figures.

He has received many honors throughout the country since the 1970s, including best of show in the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and featured artist for the Greensboro African American Arts Festival.

Harry Davis has also worked tirelessly to share his love for the arts and African culture with students throughout North Carolina. We applaud him on this day. We thank him for his service to this country and his service to the arts.

CLOSURE OF GUANTANAMO BAY PRISON

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday President Obama presented his plan to close the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay and proposed transferring up to 60 prisoners to the United States mainland.

Bringing dangerous terrorists to the American homeland has been consistently rejected by bipartisan majorities in Congress. The President's plan is lacking key details required under the

law, including the exact cost and location of an alternate detention facility.

On the same day that the President announced his plan, Spanish and Moroccan police arrested four suspected members of a jihadi cell that sought to recruit fighters for Islamic State, including one individual described as a former Guantanamo detainee who once fought with militants in Afghanistan.

President Obama's stubborn insistence on fulfilling an ill-advised campaign promise to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay distracts from ongoing threats to American national security and highlights the failures of his foreign policy agenda.

AFRICAN AMERICAN POVERTY

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, I rise to commemorate Black History Month and highlight the disproportionate impacts of poverty on the African American community.

Sadly, our Nation has a long history of individual and institutional racism, from slavery and Jim Crow to redlining and overpolicing. This has locked many, many families out of opportunities, even with the enormous progress that we have made with our great civil rights leaders and foot soldiers whom we honored yesterday.

These deplorable disparities and inequalities continue at every level of our society. For example, the African American poverty rate is 26 percent, nearly triple the poverty rate of White Americans. One in three African American children lives in poverty.

The unemployment rate in the African American community is more than 8 percent, twice the unemployment rate of White Americans. The median wealth of White households is 13 times the median wealth of African American households, the widest gap since 1989.

Poverty doesn't just hurt African American families. We know that communities of color are two times more likely to live in poverty and too many rural White and Native Americans have felt persistent poverty for generations.

These statistics paint a clear and stark picture that Congress cannot ignore. We need to get serious about ending poverty and giving everyone, including African Americans and people of color, an opportunity to live the American Dream.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM AMOS "BILL" USHER

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a personal friend, Major William Amos Usher. Bill passed away at the

age of 86 on Sunday in Paducah, Kentucky.

From 1952 to 1962, Bill served as a fighter pilot in France and Germany for the United States Air Force and Air Force Reserves. Bill proudly served in the 417th tactical fighter squadron and was awarded the Commendation Medal for his outstanding work with the United States military.

In 1962, he retired and returned home to Paducah to help with the family trucking company, Usher Transport. Bill became the manager of the company and eventually the owner for many years. Bill established the local Christmas Cop organization, was honored as a Kentucky Colonel and a Duke of Paducah for all of his contributions.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the life and legacy of Major William Amos "Bill" Usher for his many outstanding contributions to the community as well as his service to our country. God bless him always.

NATIONAL RARE EYE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my resolution expressing support for the designation of February 28, 2016, as National Rare Eye Disease Awareness Day. In solidarity with those living with rare eye conditions and blindness, I am introducing it in braille.

Joining me today is the Smedley family from my district in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, whose sons, Michael and Mitchell, suffer from a rare eye condition which has caused them to lose their sight at a very young age.

But this has not stopped them from pursuing their dreams. Michael serves in his high school student government and is a member of the track team. Mitchell is on the wrestling team and performs in school plays.

National Rare Eye Disease Awareness Day will highlight exceptional individuals like Michael and Mitchell as they overcome challenges and show us true inspiration.

In doing so, this day will increase awareness for all rare eye diseases and conditions that lead to blindness as well as the need for increased funding for research and for accessibility of treatments.

As a member of the congressional Rare Disease Caucus and as a voice for the Smedleys and the millions more living with blindness, I am proud to introduce this resolution today. I urge my colleagues' support.

CLOSING GUANTANAMO IS A MISPLACED PRIORITY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act

prevents the President from closing the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay unless he submits a plan that receives congressional approval. He has not. This week President Obama submitted the plan to close the prison anyway.

There are currently 91 detainees at Guantanamo Bay. There were 242 when the President took office. His plan calls for transferring 35 of the remaining detainees to other countries.

These detainees have been cleared for transfer by the relevant national security agencies. Approximately 60 detainees will be transferred to facilities in the United States on our own soil. These are not even specified in the plan.

The Department of Defense has identified many potential sites, but again this has not received congressional approval. Construction for a new facility on American soil would cost nearly half a billion dollars.

With all these things going on, with the former GTMO detainees being rearrested for recruiting new ISIS members and an expiration of the timeline for developing an ISIS plan to defeat ISIS, this is a misplaced priority by the President.

We need to stick to the business of what is going to keep our country safe, not fulfill some campaign promise.

□ 1215

FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA WEEK

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, I rise today in recognition of Future Farmers of America, or FAA, Week.

Earlier this week, the Nation marked the birthday of our first President, George Washington. Since 1948, the week of Washington's birthday has also been FAA Week due to the President's legacy as an agriculturalist and a farmer.

Agriculture is a key to not only the history and heritage of our Nation, but also to Pennsylvania and to our Commonwealth's Fifth Congressional District. It is important that we help the future leaders of this industry continue to grow, ensuring that the future of agriculture is just as bright as its present and past.

"I believe in the future of agriculture" are the first words from the FFA creed. Earlier this year, I met with FAA members from across Pennsylvania, at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, where I held a forum focused on agriculture issues. I was impressed with their knowledge of issues currently impacting farming across the Nation and was inspired by their vision for the future. Echoing the words of the FFA creed, I am sure that, with the dedication of FAA members across the

Nation, the future of agriculture is in good hands.

GUANTANAMO BAY PRISONER TRANSFERS

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on November 25, 2015, our Commander in Chief made the 2016 National Defense Authorization bill the law of the land.

Section 1030 of that law states, in part, that no amounts authorized may be used to transfer or release, within the United States, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or any other detainee.

On Monday, despite those clear words, our Commander in Chief announced that he would try to transfer Guantanamo Bay detainees to American soil. His reason? A political campaign promise he made nearly one decade ago is more important than keeping Khalid Sheikh Mohammed behind bars.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's last breath to be in prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This House—their House—will grant their wish.

RESTORING ARTICLE I

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about legislation that my colleagues and I recently introduced that works to restore our article I powers of the Constitution.

We all learned about separation of powers in our grade school civics class. As you know, this separation protects that one branch of government doesn't overrule or overstep another. It also ensures that the power of the American people is never diminished.

Article I specifically grants legislative powers to Congress, as Congress was established to be the most direct voice of the people. We are the people's House. It seems the President simply chooses to ignore this.

I have consistently heard from folks in the 12th District who are sick and tired of this administration overstepping its boundaries and oversteering its welcome in their lives. Americans—myself included—are frustrated with an executive branch that goes around Congress to create new rules and regulations daily.

My biggest disappointment as a new Member of Congress is our lack of authority to carry out the will of the American people in this House. As an original cosponsor of H.R. 613, I strongly support this legislation and urge my colleagues to join me in restoring and respecting the most sacred document in our Nation's history—our Constitution.