

RECOGNIZING GRANT BAKER, BENJAMIN GILES, DYLAN ROGERS, AND COURTNEY THOMPSON

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Grant Baker, Benjamin Giles, Dylan Rogers, and Courtney Thompson for their hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Sixth District as interns in my Washington, D.C. office for the summer of the 114th Congress, Second Session.

The work of these young men and women has been exemplary and I know they all have bright futures. They served as tour guides, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity to these four and look forward to seeing them build their careers in public service.

All four of our interns have made plans to continue their educational careers back in Colorado and throughout the United States. I am certain they will continue in their great success and wish them all the best in their future endeavors. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Grant Baker, Benjamin Giles, Dylan Rogers, and Courtney Thompson for their service this summer.

HONORING DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT POLICE OFFICER BRENT THOMPSON

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and sacrifice of Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police Officer Brent Thompson. Officer Thompson tragically lost his life during the tragic shooting in Dallas on July 7, 2016. He was the first DART police officer to be killed in the line of duty since DART first formed a police department in 1989.

Officer Thompson was hailed as a "great officer" and one who had served the DART Police Department admirably since joining in 2009. His wife, who he had married just weeks before his death, regarded Officer Thompson as "the most amazing, caring, loving, selfless man" she has known. He is the father of six wonderful children, all of whom will carry on his legacy with his passing.

Some know Officer Thompson as the veteran officer who bravely charged at the shooter in an attempt to stop him during his rampage. Others know him as a former Marine who helped train and mentor local police in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, all now know Officer Thompson as the brave officer who gave his life in the defense of his fellow citizens in Dallas.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud by the way our nation has come together during this difficult time to honor Officer Thompson and the four other officers who lost their lives that day. Today, I would like to thank Officer Thompson for his bravery and sacrifice, and I join with my con-

stituents in expressing my incredible gratitude and appreciation for all that Officer Thompson has done for Dallas and the great State of Texas.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROEPER SCHOOL

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th anniversary of The Roeper School. This anniversary is a reflection of the hard work of the students, faculty and staff of The Roeper School that have established a legacy of educational excellence which continues to this day.

Ever since George and Annemarie Roeper founded The Roeper School in 1941, it has been a leader in gifted education. George and Annemarie were refugees from Germany and witnessed first-hand the full measure of the human cost of Hitler's Third Reich. They dedicated their lives to creating an environment in which a powerful few would never again be able to impose their will upon an unchallenging majority. The Roeper School has been known for educating and empowering children at every level and instilling the attitudes, values and skills that will enable them to be leaders in the community. The school the Roepers founded continues to be a highly valued resource for gifted education, consulting on educational projects as varied as the creation of Children's Television Workshop, to the publications of the President's Council on Gifted Education.

The Roeper School continues to fulfill its mission: educating and inspiring gifted students to think as individuals and engage as a community with compassion for each other and this world. Their current "no cut" policy allows all students to participate in sports they wish to play. Roeper students pursue a challenging curriculum in math, science, arts and technology that prepares them for college and beyond. The Roeper School has a dedication to diversity, democracy, and community service that dates to its founding and is still very present today. Armed with a first class education, Roeper graduates have gone on to make extraordinary contributions to our society in every imaginable field of study and work.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the 75th anniversary of The Roeper School. For 75 years, The Roeper School has supported students' academic, intellectual, emotional and social growth and we wish them many more successful years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ANNA G. ESHOO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during roll call vote number 434 on July 13, 2016. I would like the record to reflect that on roll call vote number 434 I would have voted YES.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

SPEECH OF

**HON. ALAN GRAYSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 13, 2016*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5538) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes:

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I want to make a statement regarding the passage of H.R. 5538, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017. Specifically I would like to make a statement about my amendment, Grayson Number 113. My amendment simply put the House on record of supporting a final funding amount of \$27,191,000 for the National Estuary Program and Coastal Waterways. It does so by removing and then reapplying \$468,000 within the \$2.5 billion appropriation for the environmental programs and management account within the Environmental Protection Agency.

The report accompanying this bill originally called for \$26,723,000 for the National Estuary Program and Coastal Waterways, which is \$468,000 below both the Senate's proposed appropriations level and the President's request for fiscal year 2017. Hence, the amount specified in my amendment.

The National Estuary Program and Coastal Waterways subaccount within the EPA does important work, including work in my State, especially on the Atlantic Coast. This program addresses ocean acidification, seeks to remove coastal watersheds, furthers the National Estuary Program's restoration goals, and assists in the implementation of the very important Gulf of Mexico hypoxia action plan.

This past March, in Central Florida, the Indian River Lagoon, which has been part of the National Estuary Program since 1990, experienced the worst fish kill in the history of the watershed. This fish kill is the result of hypoxia, caused by a recent algae blooming in the lagoon. Nobody knows how many fish died. And what's worse, nobody understands how "brown tide," the algae which caused the hypoxia, and is typically found in salty water, got into the Indian River Lagoon. With ecological disasters like this, we should be moving to fully fund the President's request.

Part of the funding for this program is used to try to overcome the hypoxia situation that has arisen in the Indian River Lagoon, while learning what happened, and more importantly, how to return the lagoon to a healthy ecosystem. This is just one of the 28 estuaries funded by this program, located along the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts.

The estuarine regions of the United States comprise just 12 percent of land area of the United States, but they contain 43 percent of the U.S. population and provide 49 percent of all U.S. economic output. The economic value of coastal recreation alone in the United States—beach going, fishing, bird watching, snorkeling, diving, and so on—has conservatively been estimated by NOAA to be between \$20 billion and \$60 billion annually.

Clearly, the \$468,000 increase in funding for the National Estuary Program and Coastal Waterways will result in real returns for the American economy, an enhanced quality of life for the American people, and a healthy ecosystem which supports endangered and threatened species. I thank Chairman CALVERT and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MR.  
JOE OSCAR ERNI

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of Mr. Joe Oscar Erni, who passed away last summer at his home in Sun City Center, Florida. Joe lived the quintessential American story—one that personified the Greatest Generation.

Joe was raised on an Indiana dairy farm and studied at Purdue University. When World War II broke out, he traded in his textbooks for a uniform, serving in the Pacific as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Joe served his country with distinction as an aerial spotter for field artillery, having been awarded the Air Medal, with four bronze oak leaves, for his service in combat operations.

Following the war, Joe completed his education at Hanover College, and soon went on to marry the love of his life Elizabeth “Betty” Rodgers in May of 1948. Joe became a venerable part of his community while managing the New Albany Inn for 25 years, which led to his title of President of the Indiana Hotel/Motel Association. He cared deeply for his community and led many philanthropic efforts. He became the 1956 Chairman of the Floyd County March of Dimes, and served on the Floyd Memorial Hospital Board of Directors. Joe was a humble man whose life impacted everyone he touched in an extraordinary way. He cared deeply for so many people, especially his wife Betty, his three children, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Everywhere Joe went, he made friends with ease due to his gentle and generous spirit. Joe will be remembered for his exceptionally kind heart, his loving personality, and his tremendous service to his community and our country. I was proud to call Joe a friend and a relative, and I will miss his presence in our family.

Thank you, Joe, for your years of dedication and service. My thoughts and prayers are with your family and friends.

TRIBUTE TO YOUNG STAFF MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS AND THE UNITED STATES

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress we know well, perhaps bet-

ter than most, how blessed our nation is to have in reserve such exceptional young men and women who will go on to become leaders in their local communities, states, and the nation in the areas of business, education, government, philanthropy, the arts and culture, and the military.

We know this because we see them and benefit from their contributions every day. Many of them work for us in our offices as junior staff members, congressional fellows, or interns and they do amazing work for and on behalf of the constituents we are privileged to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is no higher calling than the call to serve a cause larger than ourselves. That is why I ran for public office. I was inspired to serve by President Kennedy who said, “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,” and by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said:

Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

By this measure, there are several other great young men and women who served as volunteers this year in my offices. They may toil in obscurity but their contributions to the constituents we serve are deeply appreciated. That is why today I rise to pay tribute to six extraordinary young persons for their service to my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas and to the American people. They are: Stephanie Gomez from the University of Houston; Bunyad Bhatti from the College of New Jersey; Sara Ali from the University of California at Berkeley; Ashley Hogan from Texas Tech University; George Brewster from Texas Southern University; and Jeremy Dang from Georgetown University.

Mr. Speaker, the energy, intelligence, and idealism these wonderful young people brought to my office and those interning in the offices of my colleagues help keep our democracy vibrant. The insights, skills, and knowledge of the governmental process they gain from their experiences will last a lifetime and prove invaluable to them as they go about making their mark in this world.

Because of persons like them the future of our country is bright and its best days lie ahead. I wish them all well.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that such thoughtful, committed young men and women can be found working in my office, those of my colleagues, and in every community in America. Their good works will keep America great, good, and forever young.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HONORING MR. TIM TESCONI

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tim Tesconi upon his induction into the Sonoma County Farm Bureau’s Hall of Fame for his 43 years of service to our local agriculture community and commitment to preserving agricultural land throughout our county.

A third generation Sonoma County resident, Mr. Tesconi grew up on a dairy farm in Santa

Rosa and was a Future Farmer of America (FFA) during his time at Santa Rosa High School. He later went on to earn his Bachelor of Science degree from California State University, Chico and completed graduate work in Journalism at the University of Missouri, Columbia before dedicating his professional life to Sonoma County’s agriculture community.

Mr. Tesconi has held a number of positions during his impressive career that spanned over four decades. For 33 years Mr. Tesconi worked as an agriculture reporter for the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. Mr. Tesconi’s outstanding coverage of the North Bay farming community made him a household name and led to his appointment to multiple local boards including the 4-H Foundation of Sonoma County, Sonoma County Farm Trails, and the Santa Rosa Junior College Ag. Trust. For the last 10 years of his career, Mr. Tesconi worked as the Community Relations Coordinator and later the Executive Director of the Sonoma County Farm Bureau. His dedication to our agricultural and wine communities has strengthened our Sonoma County community as a whole.

Mr. Tesconi is admired by his peers for his unrivaled depth of knowledge, passion, and unwavering advocacy on behalf of our agriculture community.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Tesconi has spent his entire career working to strengthen and preserve agriculture’s role as the backbone of our local economy, natural landscapes, and way of life in Sonoma County. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF ALFRED LOMELI

**HON. MARK DeSAULNIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 14, 2016*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of a longtime Contra Costa resident, Mr. Alfred Lomeli.

At an early age, Al committed to his passion for serving others by making his first attempt to join the Armed Forces. When he was turned down for being too young, he returned at the age of 18, after his graduation from Alhambra High School, and joined the Marines. Upon joining the Marines in September 1944, Lomeli and his division were the first to land on Peleliu, a tiny island in the western Pacific Ocean. While the mission was expected to only last a few days, the fighting dragged on through November and led to heavy American casualties. Al and his brother Raul’s experiences in the Pacific Theater are the subjects of a book written by Al’s daughter Rhonda entitled “Semper Fi! Marine.”

Al’s time in the Marines further shaped his commitment to service and to those he loved. After meeting his wife Guadalupe and settling in the Bay Area, Al began his career in finance that ultimately led him to the county treasurer-tax collector’s office, which he was to in 1978. He also served as president of the National Association of County Treasurers and Finance Officers and the California Association of County Treasurers and Tax Collectors.

Al’s dedication to his job, his family, and his community was admirable. Al passed away on June 26, 2016. He will be missed sincerely by