

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