

Mr. Speck has served as an outstanding educator and leader in our community and demonstrates a unique and experienced understanding of our community's needs. He was sworn in for his first term as County Superintendent on January 3, 2011 and was re-elected and sworn in for his second term on January 5, 2015. Mr. Speck is known for his fair-mindedness and his strong belief in the potential of each individual student to learn and develop academically.

During his career, Mr. Speck pursued training in interest-based problem solving and collective bargaining to enhance his skills as a trusted leader, highly skilled problem-solver, and ardent collaborator. Mr. Speck has a solid educational foundation with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Davis and holds teaching credentials from both California State University, Los Angeles and California State University, Sacramento. Mr. Speck has represented Solano County public schools as a member of many organizations including the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, the Association of California School Administrators and the Workforce Investment Board.

Mr. Speaker, Superintendent Jay Speck has served our community with admirable leadership and dedication for forty years. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today and extend our best wishes for an enjoyable retirement.

HONORING JIM HARRIS OF
WAUSAU, WI FOR HIS SERVICE
TO OTHERS

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand before you today to recognize Mr. Jim Harris of Wausau, Wisconsin for his exceptional service to others.

Mr. Harris worked for more than 30 years in education. First, as a teacher in the Wisconsin Indian Teacher Corps, where he taught children of the Ho Chunk Tribe, and later as one of the first male kindergarten teachers in Wisconsin. Along his journey in education, Mr. Harris also spent two decades as a school administrator and an activist for public health.

During his many years of service in education, Mr. Harris got to know the children of Hmong Refugees who fled war in their home country to seek a better life in Wisconsin. Our state has a vibrant Hmong community that Mr. Harris has grown close to. He founded We Help War Victims, a nonprofit organization, with his wife, Marty, also a public school educator. Founded over 30 years ago, We Help War Victims has been working with refugee families in the Wausau, Wisconsin area, providing dozens of Lao schools with their first libraries, and helping families receive access to medical care.

Since 2006, his organization has been working with villagers in Laos to destroy land mines, bombs, rockets, mortars, and other unexploded ordnance. Mr. Harris' example directly inspired me to fight for this cause in Congress and his advice has directly affected the focus of my efforts. Countless farmers and families across Laos live in safer communities

because of Mr. Harris' work and my community in Wisconsin has been strengthened by the work he and his wife do through We Help War Victims.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today to congratulate Mr. Harris on his accomplishments and work on behalf of others. His selfless demeanor in which he answers the call to serve in our district is truly valued.

IN HONOR OF SERGEANT 1ST
CLASS JOHN MIMS

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Sergeant 1st Class John Mims of the 82nd Airborne Division, a World War II veteran and Bataan Death March survivor who passed away on Sunday, November 27, 2016. Sergeant Mims was a true American hero and our thoughts and prayers go out to his friends and family as they mourn the loss of this great man.

When his country needed him the most, it was John Mims who answered the call to serve our great nation. After losing his father when he was young, Mims lied about his age in order to join the Army. At the age of 15, Mims served for nearly a year before the Army discovered his true age and discharged him. However, a few short years later Mims re-enlisted in the Army and headed out to the Philippines to begin his training.

After a year in the Philippines, Mims fought alongside his brothers in arms in the Battle of Bataan which culminated in the surrender of 75,000 allied soldiers. The men were then forced to march 65 miles, without food or water, to a prisoner-of-war camp in the Tarlac Province in what became known as the Bataan Death March. One of the greatest atrocities of the entire war, the men suffered beatings, endured torture, and witnessed unimaginable horrors as he faced what can only be described as a living hell. In total more than 10,000 men died during the trek.

Following the war, Mims continued his service in the Army, returning to Japan from 1952 to 1954 as sergeant in charge of the Tokyo Quartermaster Depot. After he retired in 1963, he returned home where he worked in a rug factory and a curtain company. Living in Aberdeen, North Carolina, he became an advocate for other veterans and was a constant presence at ceremonies remembering his fallen comrades. His work in the community made certain that the memories of those lost were not forgotten, and it is that legacy which we celebrate today. While we may have lost this great man, his legacy will live on and we will never forget the sacrifices made by Sergeant Mims or any of those who fought to protect our freedoms against unimaginable dangers.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in commemorating the life of Sergeant 1st Class John Mims for his service to God and country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, due to other commitments, I missed the following roll call votes; had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Roll call no. 594. I would have voted no.
Roll call no. 595. I would have voted no.
Roll call no. 596. I would have voted no.
Roll call no. 597. I would have voted no.
Roll call no. 598. I would have voted yes.
Roll call no. 599. I would have voted no.
Roll call no. 600. I would have voted no.

HONORING MR. JOHN SUTTER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable life and career of Mr. John Sutter, and to congratulate him on his retirement from the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District.

As an outdoor enthusiast and lifelong resident of Oakland, California, John's life has been dedicated to preserving and protecting the environment of California's Bay Area. Throughout his sixty years in public service, he has been involved in the conservation of over 35,000 acres of land.

John's career in public service began in 1954 when he became an Alameda County deputy district attorney. He stayed in this position until 1965, when he was appointed to the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) by Governor Pat Brown.

John also served as a member of Oakland's City Council for over a decade from 1971–1982, twice holding the position of vice mayor.

In 1982, John was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to serve as a judge on the Alameda County Superior Court. He remained a judge for 14 years until his election in 1996 to the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors.

Over John's illustrious career, he has been directly involved in a variety of community projects and organizations with special emphasis on preserving the natural environment of the Bay Area.

In the 1950s he was prominently involved in the protection of the San Pablo Reservoir and the foundation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline. In 1961, John was the leader in the campaign that preserved Oakland's Snow Park.

In addition to his elected and appointed positions, John was a founding board member of the Greenbelt Alliance; and he has served as a board member for the Alameda County Solid Waste Management Authority, Oakland Charter Revision Committee, Oakland Cultural Affairs Commission, Chabot Space and Science Center, Save the Bay, Alameda County Bar Association, California Democratic Council, Oakland Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal, and the Metropolitan YMCA.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, I wish to congratulate Mr. John Sutter on a well-deserved retirement, and thank him for his many years of service to our community.