

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 594, YEA on Roll Call No. 595, YEA on Roll Call No. 596, YEA on Roll Call No. 597, and NAY on Roll Call No. 598.

HONORING MR. DOUG SIDEN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the invaluable service to our community from the leadership of Mr. Doug Siden, and to congratulate him on his retirement from the East Bay Park District Board of Directors.

Mr. Siden has served for the past 24 years on the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Board. During his tenure, Mr. Siden recognized the importance that the East Bay Parks play in the lives of so many local residents, and has worked tirelessly to provide access and an enjoyable experience for visitors to all of the District's 66 locations.

As an EBRPD Board member, he worked diligently to help EBRPD pass Measures CC and WW to support and expand the system. At \$500 million, Measure WW was the largest bond measure ever awarded to a local district to acquire and develop new parks, and it helped the Park District meet the increasing demand to preserve open space for recreation and wildlife habitat.

Mr. Siden served for many years on the East Bay Economic Development Alliance's Executive Board, was a founding member and served as a chairperson of the Martin Luther King Freedom Center in Oakland, and led the fight to establish the Alameda County Creek and Watershed Symposium. Additionally, during his career he has served on the advisory committees of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Pt. Reyes National Seashore.

Mr. Siden is also a longtime Rotarian and has served as a Baptist minister for over six decades. He directed a youth camp for Baptist Churches of the West for 20 years, and led the effort to establish year-round camps in Santa Cruz and near Lake Tahoe. He holds an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the American Baptist Seminary of the West for his leadership.

On a personal note, Doug has been a longtime friend and partner in the East Bay, and I greatly appreciate his leadership and counsel. I wish him well on this new chapter of his life.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, I congratulate Mr. Doug Siden on a well-deserved retirement. We honor his tireless support of open space, parks, and healthy recreation, and also for his vision of a more ideal world in which all can enjoy and benefit from these natural treasures.

BEST OF LUCK TO TEXAS 02'S FOOTBALL TEAMS AT STATE SEMI-FINALS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, sweet tea, BBQ, and football—these are just some of the things Texans love dearly. From high school football to college football, Texans will come out to every game no matter what the temperature and weather are. Our commitment to our football teams is so strong that preachers will find a way to mention the local team in their sermons and make sure you get home just in time to watch the game with friends and family.

Football is a very special part of the culture in Texas. From the stadiums to the food to the different student clubs that gather in the stadiums, football games unite Texans. The bands, the drill teams, the cheerleading teams, the students that form it all—they are an extraordinary group that make the culture and character of Texas so unique in the United States. More than just uniting families and friends, football allows our community to share in the joy of victory and the sadness of temporary defeat; it teaches our children to keep working hard for their goals both individually and with their teammates.

Although professional and college football receive the most national attention, high school football is just as important in Texas. I still remember going to my son's football games, from his start at pee-wee leagues to his career playing for my alma mater, Abilene Christian University. Those memories make me even more proud to say that two high schools in my district have met their goals and broken records this season.

Atascocita High School is fighting for a chance to compete in the state championship. Last year they had a record-setting playoff run, reaching the Region II-6A Division I final. This year, they raised the bar even higher. With the outstanding sportsmanship of their players, the football team of Atascocita High School has exceeded expectations. I know how proud the players, their parents, and their school must be. Ranking at Number 18 in the state, the Eagles have some of the most promising players on their team.

Quarterback Daveon Boyd, now a senior, has received four awards throughout his high school football career. He has surpassed the national average in number of yards, yards per game, touchdown passes, completion percentage, attempts, and interceptions. This season alone, he's had a 63 percent pass rate for 4,139 yards and 46 touchdowns.

But Boyd is not the only outstanding player in Atascocita High School. Samuel Cosmi, the offensive tackle, is a University of Houston pledge. Defensive tackles De'Marius Brooks and Kendrix Burford, along with defensive backs Justin Campbell, Alerick Soularie, and Travian Blaylock give the Eagles an edge in size and speed.

Another high school in my district, Klein Collins, won its first regional semi-finals at Baylor's McLane Stadium in the Division II Region II-6A playoffs. While all the players have done outstanding work, senior running back D'Anthony Doyle rushed 167 yards and got a

couple of touchdowns, making him the hardest working player that game. His teammate, Josh Powell, also earned the team two more scores. At the end of the game, the team's hard work left the team with a 54-16 victory over John Tyler. As a proud dad who beamed in the stands watching his son play, I know how thrilled their parents will be watching them play against Spring Westfield on December 2.

I am incredibly proud of the students of the Atascocita and Klein Collins High School football teams for their successes this season. It is great to see students in my district represent us so well with their hard work and talent. I look forward to their upcoming games and seeing them succeed and exceed expectations for years to come. Best of luck at State Semi-Finals.

And that's just the way it is.

MERCHANT MARINE OF WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 30, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for the bipartisan H.R. 2992, the "Merchant Marine of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act," introduced by my colleague, Congresswoman SUSAN BROOKS of Indiana.

I stand to recognize every service member who has dedicated his or her life to the protection of this nation and the world.

The Merchant Marines of World War II were vital in the collective effort to defeat the Axis powers.

Serving our military as a distributor, Merchant Marine fleets carry imports and exports during peacetime and become a naval auxiliary during wartime, delivering troops and needed war supplies and materials.

Many Merchant Marines have sacrificed their lives, perishing at the highest rate of casualties of any service members, sometimes as high as 1 in 24 in any given mission.

During World War II, a total of 1,554 ships were sunk by German U-boats, including 733 ships weighing over 1,000 gross tons.

One hundred forty Merchant Marines have been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Merchant Marine's highest honor, seven of whom were cadet graduates from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 2992 which honors those civilians who answered the call to serve our nation in the United States Merchant Marines during World War II.

GEORGIA DAY OF CODE

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, computer technology dominates our ever-evolving world. As we continue moving towards a society dependent on communicating through our technical devices, the need for qualified people in the STEM fields is rapidly growing.