

been a remarkable advocate for the people of Bergen County for decades, serving first as Assistant Administrator of Bergen County, on the Teaneck Council, then in the New Jersey Assembly and now in the New Jersey State Senate. She is currently the Senate Majority Leader.

Majority Leader Weinberg has used every post she's held to fight tenaciously on behalf of the people of New Jersey. She's advocated relentlessly for making the investments in our infrastructure that we need to keep our economy humming and create new jobs, for ethics and transparency in government, for strengthening our communities, and for women, and for all of those left out of the circle of opportunity.

I salute Weinberg for her strong and dogged voice, her countless accomplishments, and for her tireless advocacy on behalf of the people of New Jersey. I look forward to working with her to serve our mutual constituents in Bergen County.

HONORING STAN JONES

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 6, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend of mine—a policy leader who dedicated his life to providing better educational opportunities for Hoosier kids. His work spanned decades. I am speaking of Indiana's own, Stan Jones.

Most recently, Stan founded Complete College America in order to build a network of states committed to substantially increasing the number of Americans with a postsecondary credential.

Earlier in his career, Stan was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives at age 24. As a member of both the House Education and State Budget committees, he developed expertise in higher education and higher-education finance. All told, Stan served 16 years in the Indiana state legislature and more than five years as a senior advisor to Governor Evan Bayh.

His service as Indiana commissioner for higher education spanned 12 years and the tenure of four different governors from both political parties. As commissioner, he was credited as a primary architect of several landmark education policy initiatives in Indiana. These initiatives included the 21st Century Scholars program, an early promise scholarship program aimed at increasing the number of low-income students attending and completing a postsecondary education; the development of Indiana's new community college system; the creation of Indiana's Education Roundtable; and the implementation of Core 40, a college prep curriculum that has contributed to a significant increase in high school seniors going to college.

Stan was also instrumental in the high school drop-out reform legislation that I authored as a state legislator a decade ago. Those reforms helped drive Indiana's extraordinary progress with its statewide graduation rate improving to nearly 90 percent—an almost 20 percent increase from a decade before.

It is no exaggeration to say those reform ideas were hatched over cheeseburgers and

fries at Loughmiller's Pub & Eatery right across from the Indiana State Capitol. Truth be told, Stan had the ideas, and I simply worked to implement them.

Another great Hoosier, former champion UCLA basketball head coach John Wooden once said, "it's amazing how much can be accomplished if no one cares who gets credit." At his very core, Stan Jones exemplified that ideal.

You will be missed, my friend.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 2, 2017

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.J. Res. 40, disapproving of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) rule-making on the Implementation of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007. While I have reservations about the rule, I do not believe the Congressional Review Act is the way to fix it.

Under the rule, individuals with a severe, long-term mental disorder who SSA determines are unable to manage their benefits would be placed on the NICS list and prohibited from purchasing a firearm. That tens of thousands of Americans die each year due to gun violence is unconscionable, and I do believe that the government has a role to play in alleviating this public health crisis.

However, as Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus, I understand the concerns of many mental health and disability rights advocates that this rule also has the potential to perpetuate the stigma that people with psychiatric or intellectual disabilities are more prone to violence, when they are often more likely to be the victims of violence. I also believe the due process procedures in this rule can and should be strengthened. Nonetheless, I believe these concerns can be addressed without resorting to the Congressional Review Act, and I cannot support this resolution of disapproval.

This is particularly true as passage of the resolution of disapproval could limit SSA's future regulatory activity in this area and could discourage other ongoing efforts to improve gun safety laws. I look forward to working with both the disability community and the Administration to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities while maintaining the integrity of the rulemaking process.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUBEN GALLEG0

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 6, 2017

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and was not present for two roll call votes on Monday, January 30, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Roll Call Vote No. 66—Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended: To remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105-384 and for other purposes—YES

Roll Call Vote No. 67—Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended: Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2017—YES

HONORING THE CAREER OF MR. GEORGE MESKUS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 6, 2017

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and achievements of Mr. George Meskus, outgoing Claims Representative at the Merced Social Security branch, and lifelong resident of the San Joaquin Valley. In over 35 years of service to the Social Security Administration, Mr. Meskus has consistently shown his colleagues an exemplary degree of dedication and passion for his work, earning praise from his coworkers and the community he's served over the course of his tenure.

Mr. Meskus's long life of service to the United States began in 1975 with his enlistment in the U.S. Air Force, where he would remain until he began his career with the Modesto Social Security branch in 1981. Mr. Meskus was initially hired as a Service Representative, but was quickly promoted to become a Claims Representative, and eventually moved to the Merced Social Security branch to continue his services.

Throughout his time at the Modesto and Merced Social Security offices, Mr. Meskus has gone above and beyond the expectations of his peers. He has displayed a keen awareness of the sensitive nature which prefaces many of the cases he processes, and always does so with the well-being of his clientele in mind. He has proven to be a fast and efficient employee, and frequently offers his peers direction and historical perspectives on complicated technical issues that so often face members of the Social Security Administration. His willingness to take on more than his fair share of cases has been invaluable to the productivity of the branches that he has served. Such selflessness will be deeply missed by those who have been lucky enough to call Mr. Meskus their coworker.

Mr. Meskus's decision to retire has been bitter-sweet news to process for many of his peers. The Social Security Administration is losing an integral colleague with a wealth of knowledge that has been essential to the efficiency of the branches he has served. The hard work and determination that he has demonstrated throughout his career has earned his well-deserved retirement to become a world traveler and to renew his devotion as a father and grandfather.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the career and achievements of Mr. George Meskus. His stalwart commitment to the greater cause of the Social Security Administration has bettered the lives of countless people in Modesto and Merced. As he prepares to travel the world with his wife, Gloria, we wish him the best of luck, and hope his journeys bring him a fruitful life in the years to come.