

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF COLONEL JOHN G. BUCK, DISTRICT COMMANDER FOR THE SEATTLE DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 26 year service record of Colonel John G. Buck, District Commander for the Seattle District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and I am proud to offer my sincere congratulations on his upcoming retirement.

Col. Buck received his U.S. Army commission in 1991 from the United States Military Academy. He has served in various leadership positions throughout the United States, Europe, and the Middle East.

In 2005, he was awarded the Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal for his outstanding performance of duty. He then served as commander of the 14th Engineer Battalion at Joint Base Lewis McChord, where he effectively trained a battalion for deployment to Afghanistan. His successful training methods served as a model for other engineering units.

Throughout his career, Col. Buck has demonstrated strong dedication and leadership that has been an asset in every position he has held, exemplifying the values and ideals of the U.S. Army and the Corps of Engineers.

I have had the honor of knowing and working with Col. Buck over the past three years while he served as Commander of the Seattle District where he spearheaded the advancement of a number of key projects for the State of Washington.

During his tenure, the Seattle District successfully completed their first two favorable reports in nearly a decade. Thanks to his direction, the Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project and the Skokomish River Ecosystem Restoration Project were approved and congressionally authorized in 2016. Collectively these projects represent roughly half a billion dollars in new authority to complete over 2,000 acres of aquatic ecosystem restoration in our state. This is an enormous accomplishment.

I am also especially grateful for his hard work and dedication to resolving a difficult and complicated permitting issue and providing some much needed regulatory clarity to shellfish growers in our region. Thanks to his efforts, more people will have more economic opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to represent a man of this caliber here in our nation's capital. I am humbled to be able to speak in recognition of his impressive career and service record today in the United States' Congress, and I am grateful for the many contributions he has made to our country as well as the State of Washington.

IN RECOGNITION OF 26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ATHLETIC TEAMS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize recent athletic victories within my district. I am proud to announce that the Argyle High School boy's golf team has claimed the title of state champions this spring.

The Argyle High School boy's golf team attained their third straight state title by thirteen strokes. The Eagles three-peat performance in the UIL Class 4A state tournament was led by Coach Brady Bell. Also of note, Luke Griggs took fifth place in individual performance at the state tournament. The team has won its local district tournament for six consecutive years, and continues to excel in this area of athletics. The team effort displayed by Argyle's High School golf team in the state tournament demonstrates the continued success and dedication in District 26.

It is my honor to represent Argyle High School boy's golf team in the U.S. House of Representatives. These dedicated student athletes and their coaches have represented the 26th District well, and our community looks forward to more successful seasons to come.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) JORGE LUIS PENA-ROMERO, JR.

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen soldier Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Jorge Luis Pena-Romero Jr. who gave his life while in service to our nation on July 16, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SSG Pena-Romero was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle in Baghdad. SSG Pena-Romero was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Irwin, Texas, which was attached to the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team from Mississippi.

According to the Los Angeles Times, SSG Pena-Romero, a Guadalajara, Mexico native, moved with his family to the United States when he was 2. He loved to draw and build model planes and cars. He also loved anything military-related. He collected newspaper clippings, according to his wife, Melissa.

SSG Pena-Romero joined the Army in 1995 after graduating from Fallbrook High School. He played football, basketball and baseball. While stationed in Fort Hood, he met his wife on a double date with his roommate. Melissa recalls that date.

"My sister and his roommate didn't last," Melissa said. "We did."

The article also states that SSG Pena-Romero served tours in Korea and Kosovo. He became a U.S. citizen in 2003, the same year that he was assigned to Ft. Irwin.

SSG Pena-Romero was known in the Army for being generous and compassionate. He provided personal equipment if a soldier was missing a canteen or a first aid pouch.

In his personal life, SSG Pena-Romero preferred to spend time with his family. He played soccer with his daughter, Alexis. He played football with his sons, Jorge III and Adrian.

SSG Pena-Romero is survived by his wife, Melissa; parents, Jorge Sr. and Maria Pena; three children, Alexis Jorge III, and Adrian; and four siblings.

SSG Pena-Romero became a citizen of the United States to live the American dream and defend the freedoms we all enjoy. His service will always be remembered.

RECOGNIZING GREG ELLIOT FOR RECEIVING THE JOE WARNER PATIENT ADVOCACY AWARD

HON. ALEXANDER X. MOONEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly outstanding constituent in the field of health care, Greg Elliot of Charleston, West Virginia. Mr. Elliot has been selected this year as one of the recipients of the prestigious Joe Warner Patient Advocacy Award.

The National Center for Assisted Living, a branch of the American Healthcare Association (AHCA/NCAL), is the nation's largest association of professional long term health providers. They bestow this annual award on Association members who have worked diligently to educate Members of Congress about the needs of long term care patients, and to advance quality in the long term and post-acute care community.

These members share the same passion and commitment to progressing long term and post-acute care as the late Joe Warner of Illinois-based Heritage Enterprises, for whom the award is named. All the recipients share a compassionate and caring view of our nation's frail, elderly, and disabled.

Greg Elliot's commitment to improving long-term care continues today as the Vice President of American Medical Facilities Management in West Virginia. Mr. Elliot is a second-generation owner of AMFM, which operates 17 long-term care, skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers throughout West Virginia.

Three of these centers are located in my congressional district including the Braxton Health Care and Rehabilitation Center in Sutton, Clay Health Care Center in Ivydale and the E.A. Hawse Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Baker.

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