

their three distinguished alumni, Ronald Hall Sr., Dennis Archer, and William Pickard. Their influence and community engagement will make a difference for decades to come.

URGING CONGRESS TO ADDRESS
EPIDEMIC OF VETERAN SUICIDE

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2017

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I work to ensure that our service members receive all the resources they need when they volunteer to defend the United States. But it is important that Congress not only provides them with support during their service, but in the years after they faithfully executed their duties as a member of the Armed Services. That is why I rise today to address the epidemic of veteran suicide in our country.

September is recognized as “National Suicide Awareness Month” and currently our veterans are suffering from a substantially higher rate of suicide than the general population. According to a 2014 report by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), 20 veterans take their lives every day, a rate that is 150 percent greater than the general population. Although the VA has dedicated a significant amount of effort and resources to address veteran suicide, the fact remains that of the 20 average veteran suicides that occur on a daily basis, 14 were not utilizing VA services. As the 2016 VA report “Suicide Among Veterans and Other Americans” explains, up to 22 percent of Post-9/11 veterans have depression disorders, and up to 43 percent of all struggle with symptoms of mental health issues, such as drinking excessively, smoking, and/or sleeplessness. In addition, female veterans and those living in rural areas face a higher risk of suicide and we must address the barriers to care for these populations.

It is clear that we must extend more resources to help our veterans and prevent the unnecessary loss of life. The VA’s 2016 study and upgrading crisis hotlines are steps in the right direction, fully addressing veteran suicide remains a complex issue that will require a multi-faceted approach. But their suffering does not have to continue and we must reverse the trend of veteran suicide.

Raising awareness about the issue begins in Congress, but every day citizens can also join in the effort year-round. Moreover, the effort to raise awareness about veteran suicide will have benefits across our society as a whole, contributing to the de-stigmatization of mental health issues. It is no secret that the stigma surrounding mental health prevents many veterans from obtaining care for these issues, forcing our country’s heroes and heroines to suffer in silence. De-stigmatizing mental health care is critical to open up dialogue about a pervasive issue and provides opportunities for treatment and prevention of suicide. In addition, Congress must provide the VA with additional resources so that they better serve the female and rural veteran population with child care services and extensions of specialized care to remote, rural areas. We must continue to support innovation within the VA so that the agency will be more willing to em-

brace new approaches to treatment, such as canine service animals, art and outdoor therapies.

It goes without saying that we owe our veterans a tremendous debt for their service to our nation in defense of the freedoms we all enjoy. In return, we must care for them as a demonstration of our nation’s core values. Raising awareness of the suicide epidemic and de-stigmatizing care throughout society, in addition to embracing innovative modes of therapy and furthering the VA’s outreach will go a long way to honoring the service of veterans’ to our nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in ensuring that we address the veteran suicide epidemic immediately.

HONORING HOMETOWN
NEWSPAPERS

HON. KRISTI L. NOEM

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2017

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, in honor of National Newspaper Week, I rise today to recognize the 126 individual news organizations of South Dakota.

Living in the information age, data is constantly at our fingertips. It is the local newspaper, though, that tells the story of everyday America and documents community history in a way that will forever be available to future generations. The local news reminds us that the world is made of neighborhoods and shared experiences, that love of country still exists, and that diversity of opinion truly makes our country great.

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press must ever be protected, for it is only through a free system that democracy can thrive. As Thomas Jefferson said, “our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost.”

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking local journalists, particularly those serving South Dakota, for giving a voice to the individual and cultivating the road to free speech for all.

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY
ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 25, 2017

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this critical bill that will help ensure that women have a meaningful role in peace and security around the world. From Syria to Myanmar to South Sudan, violent conflicts are becoming more widespread and deadly. Women in conflict zones suffer tremendously, and women and girls make up around half of any refugee population, where they are at risk of unspeakable violence.

But women are not only victims. They also help moderate violent extremism and are key to post-conflict society building. Yet so few are present at the tables of power. In peace processes between 1992 and 2011, women made up only 9 percent of negotiators. When

women have a seat at the table, the prospect that peace negotiations will succeed rise significantly, as does the likelihood that women’s rights and interests will be addressed. A recent study from the International Peace Institute found that a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last for at least 15 years if women participate in its drafting.

This legislation would require a government-wide strategy to promote women’s participation, and institutes training for State Department, USAID, and Pentagon personnel to facilitate women’s engagement in conflict prevention and resolution.

I’d like to commend the progress made under President Obama on this issue, which includes issuing the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. In the last five years alone, the percentage of peace agreements referencing gender equality has increased from 22 to 70 percent.

We have an opportunity to make our voice heard on the issue of women in conflict. The UN Security Council will convene next month to hold its open debate on Women, Peace and Security. The United States should highlight its commitment to ensuring women’s equal participation in peacemaking, and protecting their physical and economic security. That begins with sending a high-level delegation.

I urge adoption of the bill.

INDIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY
FIGHTS HURRICANE HARVEY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, since Hurricane Harvey hit our area last month, stories of Harvey Heroes continue to bring our community together and make us grateful for the incredible people that we call neighbors. There are many uplifting stories of those who grabbed their personal boats and set out in the waters to rescue individuals, many of whom they did not know. Our first responders answered the call time and time again. And so did so many people whose names we may never know. For all of them, we thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

So many people have opened their homes, their hearts, and their wallets to help Houston recover. One such community was the Indian-American community right in the greater Houston area. They have already raised over \$1.6 million dollars. 700 Indian-American volunteers have dedicated more than 24,000 hours to their city, and together, they have distributed over 28,000 meals to our neighbors in need.

One specific story I would like to highlight is that of a group of Indian-Americans, led by Houstonian, Jiten Agrawal, made their way through the unparalleled flooding after the Hurricane to reach a student apartment complex near my alma mater, the University of Houston, that had been flooded and was without power. The president of the Indian graduate students’ organization, Ravi Shankar, reached out to the community to help, and help is what they gave. These volunteer rescuers brought food and water to over 180 students and helped transport them back to their families or a safe location.

We are grateful to these volunteers, some of the many Harvey Heroes, for helping

Houstonians get through a very difficult time. They are just one of the reasons why we are Houston Strong.

And that's just the way it is.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 28, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

OCTOBER 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of John Marshall Mitnick, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Wells Fargo one year later.

SD-538

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine international tax reform.

SD-215

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the Every Student Succeeds Act, focusing on unleashing State innovation.

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Administration's decision to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

SH-216

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine tax reform and entrepreneurship.

LHOB-1100

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the status of energy storage technologies, reviewing today's technologies, and understanding innovation in tomorrow's technologies.

SD-366

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on Energy

To hold hearings to examine S. 186, to amend the Federal Power Act to pro-

vide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review, S. 1059, to extend the authorization of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978 relating to the disposal site in Mesa County, Colorado, S. 1337, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to make certain strategic energy infrastructure projects eligible for certain loan guarantees, S. 1457, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out demonstration projects relating to advanced nuclear reactor technologies to support domestic energy needs, S. 1799, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to facilitate the commercialization of energy and related technologies developed at Department of Energy facilities with promising commercial potential, and S. 1860 and H.R. 1109, bills to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

SD-366

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine combating kleptocracy with incorporation transparency.

SD-562

OCTOBER 4

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the Equifax cybersecurity breach.

SD-538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SH-216

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances, and Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, David Ross, of Wisconsin, and William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, each to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

SD-406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 146, to strengthen accountability for deployment of border security technology at the Department of Homeland Security, S. 1847, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to ensure that the needs of children are considered in homeland security, trafficking, and disaster recovery planning, S. 1281, to establish a bug bounty pilot program within the Department of Homeland Security, S. 1769, to require a new or updated Federal website that is intended for use by the public to be mobile friendly, S. 1305, to provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection with adequate flexibility in its employment authorities, S. 1791, to amend the Act of August 25, 1958, commonly known as the "Former Presidents Act of 1958", with respect to the monetary allowance payable to a former President, S. 708, to improve the ability of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to inter-

dict fentanyl, other synthetic opioids, and other narcotics and psychoactive substances that are illegally imported into the United States, H.R. 3210, to require the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau to submit a report on the backlog of personnel security clearance investigations, H.R. 70, to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, an original bill entitled, "TSA LEAP Pay Reform Act of 2017", an original bill entitled, "Direct Hire of Students and Recent Graduates Act of 2017", an original bill entitled, "Temporary and Term Appointments Act of 2017", an original bill entitled, "Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment Adjustment Act of 2017", an original bill entitled, "FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017", an original bill entitled, "Reporting Efficiently to Proper Officials in Response to Terrorism Act of 2017", an original bill entitled, "Whistleblower Protection Coordination Act", and the nomination of John Marshall Mitnick, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, Liles Clifton Burke, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, Michael Joseph Juneau, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Tilman Eugene Self III, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia, and John C. Demers, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian gaming, focusing on new issues and opportunities for success in the next 30 years.

SH-216

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law

To hold hearings to examine Equifax, focusing on continuing to monitor data-broker cybersecurity.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Melissa Sue Glynn, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Enterprise Integration), Cheryl L. Mason, of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and Randy Reeves, of Mississippi, to be Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SR-418

3 p.m.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Cheryl Marie Stanton, of South Carolina, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, and David G. Zatezalo, of West Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Mine Safety and Health, both of the Department of Labor, and Peter B. Robb, of Vermont,