

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF AMY T. SAJDA

**HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the outstanding contributions made by Ms. Amy T. Sajda, who will retire from the Defense Logistics Agency in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on February 28, 2018.

Ms. Sajda's distinguished government career spans over 32 years, and her record of achievement during this period reflects greatly upon herself and upon the organization at which she has served, including her most recent role as DLA's Director of the Office of Small Business Programs. Her contributions to the national defense were significant and she will be missed as she moves on to new and exciting opportunities.

Ms. Sajda, originally from Bellmawr, New Jersey, entered the Federal service working for the Defense Industrial Supply Center, a Major Subordinate Command of the Defense Logistics Agency, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in July 1985. There, she held a series of positions in contracting, eventually becoming a contracting officer in August 1988. Ms. Sajda attended Glassboro State College (now Rowan University), the University of Phoenix, and is the recipient of special achievement and performance awards, including the Exceptional Civilian Service Award in 2009 and the Meritorious Civilian Service Award in 2014. In 2014, she was selected into the Executive Development Program and attended the Federal Executive Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia; a program designed to provide a Department of Defense framework for developing future civilian leaders.

In 1991, Ms. Sajda joined the Defense Logistics Agency Headquarters as a procurement analyst providing contracting expertise and guidance to field contracting activities. From 1993 through 2006 she participated in numerous Procurement Management Reviews of DLA's contracting activities, ensuring the integrity of the procurement process; becoming the Procurement Management Review Program Manager in 2004. In 2007 Ms. Sajda was selected to implement the Base Realignment and Closure Act 2005 decision to transfer procurement management and related support functions for Depot-Level Reparable from the Military Services to DLA. Her procurement expertise and conscientious commitment to serving the warfighter facilitated the smooth transfer a year ahead of schedule at a savings of \$357 million.

Ms. Sajda reached a career benchmark in 2011 with her selection as DLA's Director of the Office of Small Business Programs. In this role she is responsible for increasing the amount of Federal contract dollars awarded to small businesses. Her guidance and vision propelled DLA to steadily increase the amount awarded to small businesses during her ten-

ure culminating in award of over 33.5 percent of eligible contract dollars to small businesses in fiscal year 2017 for an Agency high \$10 billion dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Amy T. Sajda's contributions to the Defense Logistics Agency and the American people, and I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating her on her retirement from civil service. She epitomizes the dedication and professionalism that make our Federal civil service a model all over the world.

### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS MARKUP

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held a markup of very important pieces of legislation. I wish to commend Chairman Royce and the Ranking Member for the bipartisan approach to advancing a number of important measures.

Briefly, I want to comment on the Chairman's H.R. 2219 on increasing the role of the financial industry in combatting human trafficking.

This bill will force an appraisal of best practices to stop the flow of funds from human trafficking and integrate the Treasury Department into a whole-of-government effort to combat the scourge of human trafficking. In this regard, it echoes provisions in H.R. 2200, which passed the House earlier this year.

Wisely, it takes a "follow the money" approach, and asks the question, why do traffickers traffic? Because that is where the money is. Unlike hard to transport drugs, which are sold only once to end users and then consumed—human traffickers cynically see people as a commodity which can be bought and sold, used and exploited, over and over again. This will help staunch the flow of funds from such exploitation, and thereby disincentivize those whose greed drives them to reduce their fellow human beings as a means to an end.

Last week our subcommittee held a hearing on Advancing Human Rights to Combat Extremism. One of the takeaways underscored the need on supporting key allies in the Muslim world who bravely stand up against the extremists. In this fight, we have no more important ally than Jordan. I, therefore, strongly support the Chairman's "United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Extension Act."

The War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act, an amendment to the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956, is yet another effort to provide for the means to punish those who engage in genocide or war crimes. Since we continue to see such crimes committed in countries such as Syria, Iraq and the Central African Republic, we must continue our efforts

to apply justice to those who so heartlessly take the lives of entire groups of people.

While there is an International Criminal Court, and regional tribunals have been established to punish these criminals in countries such as Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, these criminals too often manage to escape punishment. Russia or China often block our efforts to engage the ICC, and even when the court is empowered to move forward, very little is accomplished.

That was why I introduced the concurrent resolution in the last Congress to create a special court for Syria. Unfortunately, while the House overwhelmingly passed that measure, the Senate declined to consider it.

Nevertheless, we must continue to press forward with efforts to make it easier to bring perpetrators of genocide and war crimes to trial—both to bring justice for their victims and as a warning to others that their actions don't provide for impunity. That is why I support Representative Foxx's bill.

### CELEBRATING THE MILITARY SERVICE OF SENIOR AIRMAN KATIE MAE COGBILL, USAF

**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank a great woman for her military service and to recognize her unprecedented accomplishments, Senior Airman Katie Mae Cogbill of the United States Air Force. Airman Cogbill was born on November 26, 1989 in Big Spring, Texas to Vickie Scales and Wayne Dial.

Airman Cogbill exemplifies all that is right with our young people of today and is an example of the great accomplishments one can achieve with determination and dedication.

After graduating from Bridge City High School, Katie married her husband, Daniel and on July 29, 2010 their son Barrett was born. That is when the course of Airman Cogbill's life changed and little did she know her destiny defined.

Barrett was diagnosed with Autism and Katie's fight for resources to help her son began. While fighting financial stress and a lack of resources, Katie's strength and hope never wavered. Her love, tenacity and dedication to her family led her to join the United States Air Force in 2014.

In addition to financial stability, Katie receives therapy benefits for Barrett and was shown that the Air Force fulfills its promise to take care of its people. Barrett now exceeds expectations and thrives.

Today, Katie is known as Senior Airman Katie Cogbill, 19th Medical Operations Squadron at Little Rock Air Force Base where she works as an Aerospace Medical Services Technician and is responsible for the patients of the Women's Health Clinic.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Katie's Air Force career is impressive and she has received several awards and recognition for her work ethic and dedication to her patients. Her most impressive and recent award was the 2017 Air Force Medical Service Aerospace Medical Technician of the Year for Air Medical Command, coined by 19th, MDG Commander, Col. Dawn Brooks.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Airman Cogbill for this prestigious award and thank her for her selfless service to our great nation and the United States Air Force.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE RAILSWEST MUSEUM

#### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the RailsWest Museum of Council Bluffs, Iowa, for maintaining 150 years of railroad history in Council Bluffs and Pottawattamie County, Iowa. RailsWest Museum is located in the former depot of the Chicago, Rock Island Pacific railroads.

The RailsWest Museum is operated by the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County and the building and grounds have been renovated to preserve its rich history. The depot that houses the current museum was built in 1899, but the original depot was built in 1870. During its years in operation the depot saw thousands of local soldiers leave Council Bluffs for military duty, and it was also a welcome sight when many of them returned home after their military service. The Rock Island Line's last day of operation was March 31, 1980. Today, the museum promotes 150 years of railroad history with displays, artifacts, and exhibits.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate the RailsWest Museum for their dedicated and devoted service in preserving the railroad history of Council Bluffs and Pottawattamie County. It is with great pride that I recognize them today. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the RailsWest Museum's accomplishments and in wishing the staff and volunteers nothing but the best.

#### CONGRATULATING KEWANEE, ILLINOIS FOR BEING NAMED A FINALIST FOR THE 2017 GOVERNOR'S HOMETOWN AWARD

#### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kewanee, Illinois for being named a finalist for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award due to its outstanding Step Ladder Tutoring Program.

The Step Ladder Tutoring Program targets middle school special education, borderline, and struggling general education students who need academic assistance. Certified middle school teachers serve as site coordinators for the Step Ladder Tutoring Program, while a

system of community volunteers, middle school students, high school students, college students and AmeriCorps members serve as tutors for the program. During the 2014–2015 school year, all eighth grade students receiving assistance were promoted to the ninth grade. 75 percent of the students had improved skills in math and reading, and 80 percent of the students had improved attendance rates and an overall improved attitude toward school and learning.

The generous and ambitious volunteers and leaders of the Step Ladder Tutoring Program make me especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Kewanee, Illinois for being named a finalist for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award and recognize all who organize and contribute to the Step Ladder Tutoring Program for their outstanding efforts and accomplishments.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF MARK WHITE

#### HON. DAVID A. TROTT

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the retirement of Wixom, Michigan resident, Senior Inspector Mark White of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection.

We honor Mark for his years of bravery and protection of our land, sea, and air borders.

During his time at the Detroit border, Mark committed himself to the interception of contraband. He apprehended numerous pieces of drug paraphernalia and in 1995; he seized nearly \$2.7 million dollars' worth of munitions bound for illegal exportation in Operation Exodus.

His most notable act of bravery occurred in October of 1997 at the Detroit Windsor Tunnel. A gunman under the influence of drugs attempted to hijack cars at inspection lanes and shot a civilian. Mark fatally wounded the gunman and provided first aid to the injured civilian. This act of heroism earned him a number of awards, including the U.S. Customs Service Meritorious Service Award for Valor.

Since 2000, Mark has worked as the Senior Inspector at Oakland County International Airport and spends his free time as a lacrosse coach for the Walled Lake Gladiators.

After 31 years of service, Mark will retire this December, and will return to his home state of Pennsylvania with his wife and daughter.

I applaud Senior Inspector Mark White for his service to the State of Michigan.

#### THE LONG ARM OF CHINA: EXPORTING AUTHORITARIANISM WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS

#### HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I made the following remarks at the

hearing held by the Congressional-Executive Commission on China which I co-chair with Senator Marco Rubio:

This hearing is the second in a series looking at China's foreign influence operations and the impact on universally-recognized human rights. With the Congress and U.S. public focused on Russian influence operations, Chinese efforts have received little scrutiny and are not well understood. This must change.

Attempts by the Chinese government to guide, buy, or coerce political influence, control discussion of "sensitive" topics, and export its authoritarian practices globally are widespread and pervasive.

Long-time allies Australia, New Zealand, and Canada have been rocked by scandals involving Chinese sponsored influence operations targeting politicians, businesses, and academic institutions.

Australia in particular is in the midst of a national crisis and all like-minded democratic allies should be supporting their efforts to root out those elements intended to corrupt or coopt Australian political and academic institutions.

All countries pursue soft power initiatives to promote a "positive" global image and build goodwill, but the Chinese government's use of technology, coercion, pressure, and the promise of market access is unprecedented and poses clear challenges to the freedoms of democratic societies.

An example of Chinese rewards given to companies and individuals for abiding by the Chinese government's rules is the case of publisher Springer Nature, the world's largest academic book publisher.

Springer Nature removed more than 1,000 articles from the websites of the Journal of Chinese Political Science and International Politics in order to comply with China's censorship directives and was later "rewarded" for its censorship by signing a lucrative strategic partnership with the Chinese tech giant Tencent Holdings.

In addition to academic publishers, the Chinese government is going to school on college and universities. American institutions are being seduced by the promised infusion of much-needed wealth from China.

But one always has to pay a price—play by China's rules, don't ruffle feathers and don't discuss or write about "sensitive topics." Universities committed to academic freedom are bound to run into problems eventually.

I have held two hearings on the threat to academic freedom posed by Confucius Institutes and the creation of U.S. campuses in China.

We should all be for creative research partnerships and expanding educational opportunities for U.S. students, but not at the cost of fundamental freedoms.

I have asked the General Accounting Office (GAO) to investigate academic partnerships between the U.S. colleges and the Chinese government. The first report came out last Spring.

The GAO is now in the process of conducting investigations of Confucius Institutes. I have written to all U.S. colleges with Confucius Institutes and asked them to make their contracts public and available for public inspection.

Many foreign businesses in China have already faced similar dilemmas. Some, like Apple, which recently removed from its Chinese app store applications that help users

bypass China's "Great Firewall." The networking site LinkedIn agreed to censor content and Facebook is promising to do the same in order to get access to the Chinese market.

Chinese operations to curtail the activities of dissidents and critics of the Communist Party are also pervasive, troubling, and must be stopped. We have heard multiple stories from U.S. citizens and foreign nationals living in the U.S. about efforts to intimidate, censor, and silence them.

The case of Chinese billionaire Guo Wengui is just the latest example of egregious behavior. High-ranking Chinese security ministry officials, in the US on transit visas no less, met with Mr. Guo multiple times in order to threaten and convince him to leave the U.S.

Chinese agents have repeatedly violated U.S. sovereignty and law according to the Wall Street Journal report on the incident.

These incidents and those we will discuss today are just the tip of the iceberg.

The Commission's 2017 Annual Report contains several recommendations to counter Chinese foreign influence operations—including expanding the mandate of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) to include Chinese government media organizations and think-tanks, expanded Internet Freedom initiatives and efforts to counter Chinese propaganda and disinformation at the State Department. I encourage those interested to look at our recommendations.

As we start to grapple with the scale and scope of Chinese influence operations, we will be looking for new legislative ideas and I hope our witnesses today can provide recommendations for the Commission's action.

We must be clear from the outset that we support better relations with the people of China and the United States. The issues we are discussing here today are part of influence operations conducted by the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese government.

President Xi Jinping, who has concentrated more power than any Chinese leader since Mao, is determined to make the world safe for authoritarianism. Beijing is intent on exporting its censorship regime, intimidating dissidents and their families, sanitizing history, and stifling critical discussions of its repressive policies.

These actions pose direct threats to deeply held core values and fundamental freedoms enjoyed by all democratic societies. We must find ways to effectively and resolutely push back. Doing so should be a critical national interest.

#### CONGRATULATING LANARK, ILLINOIS FOR BEING NAMED A PROJECT WINNER FOR THE 2017 GOVERNOR'S HOMETOWN AWARD

##### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lanark, Illinois for being named a project winner for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award due to its project, Workation 2016.

A group of volunteers from Lanark First Brethren Church, who were previously involved in Alaskan mission work camp pro-

grams, believed they needed a more local, neighbor-helping-neighbor type of program in Lanark. From this idea, Workation 2016 was created. This project sought requests from older residents that had small projects that they were not able to accomplish on their own. Volunteers would then complete these maintenance projects, safety upgrades, or landscaping projects at no cost to the resident. 30 different projects around town were completed by 30 volunteers. According to the volunteers, the greatest benefit of the program is the relationships that are developed and the rewarding feeling of making a home safer or more comfortable for a resident.

The hard work and generosity visible through Lanark's Workation 2016 project makes me especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Lanark, Illinois for being named a project winner for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award.

#### RECOGNIZING JUDGE WALTER F. DRAG UPON HIS RETIREMENT

##### HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Judge Walter F. Drag, who is retiring after more than three decades of judicial service to the City of Dunkirk, New York.

Judge Drag was recommended for appointment as Acting City Court Judge on January 1, 1985, and became City Court Judge in 1990. Over that time, he has heard thousands of cases and upheld the law with distinction. In addition, he maintained a private law practice until 2007, and spent several stints teaching law as a college professor.

Among Judge Drag's many accomplishments as City Court Judge is the establishment of a Treatment Court in 2002 for individuals charged with crimes related to substance abuse. In the years since then, more than seven hundred people have participated, with the majority successfully completing the treatment program.

It is a privilege to congratulate Judge Walter F. Drag on a distinguished career of service to the City of Dunkirk, and to wish him all the best in retirement. He leaves behind a legacy that will benefit the residents of his community for years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO JODY REYNOLDS

##### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jody Reynolds of Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. Jody has been a tireless advocate for children her entire life. Her experience with birth com-

plications with her third child opened her eyes to what services were and were not available, and led her to advocacy. She's helped to raise \$109 million for Variety—The children's Charity over the years, and served as the first female president of Variety International. One of the many words of advice she offered to the magazine was to press forward through adversity, and to also enjoy the journey.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Jody for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud her for her service to her community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jody for this outstanding achievement and in wishing her nothing but the best.

#### HONORING PEDDRICK M. YOUNG, SR. OF PENNSYLVANIA ON HIS RETIREMENT AFTER MORE THAN 29 YEARS OF SERVICE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

##### HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I extend my sincere congratulations to my constituent, Peddrick M. Young, Sr., upon his retirement from almost 30 years of service with the Lower Allen Township Board of Commissioners.

First, I thank Mr. Young for his service to our Nation in the United States Marine Corps. I've long appreciated the commitment of people who devote themselves selflessly to serving our Nation.

Mr. Young also has a demonstrated record of service to our communities. He previously retired from his position as facilities manager with Commerce Bank, staff to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, and staff assistant in the U.S. House to one of my predecessors, the late Congressman Bill Goodling.

Mr. Young's civic service included the Pennsylvania Crime Stoppers, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners, and many others. He also served as an active member of many community service organizations.

Mr. Young's tireless dedication, professionalism and sacrifice touched the lives of countless people and challenged all with whom he served to be the best. His legacy of service to our communities will endure.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, I thank and congratulate Peddrick M. Young, Sr. on his service and wish him and his family Godspeed, great happiness and success in their future adventures.

#### RECOGNIZING THE LENA-WINSLOW PANTHERS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR THEIR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

##### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Lena-Winslow Panthers Football

Team for their Class 1A championship win against the Tuscola Warriors.

The Panthers held a 21–7 lead at half-time, with 267 yards of total offense. By the fourth quarter, the Warriors had closed the Panthers' lead to one point. The Warriors had a chance at a game winning touchdown when Panther player Rahveon Valentine broke up a pass on fourth down with only 10 seconds remaining in the game. This secured Lena-Winslow's third state championship title in the last eight years and the program's first-ever unbeaten season.

Mr. Speaker, as a former athlete, I understand how important this is to the young men, the coaches and the community. They never gave up. They kept playing their best, and their team spirit and belief in themselves helped them become state champions. Their efforts and resilience should inspire us all.

#### HONORING MRS. JUANITA KNOTT

#### HON. JOHN J. FASO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound respect that I rise today to recognize and celebrate Mrs. Juanita Knott for being named a "New York State Registered Historian". This designation is reserved for those special few in our state who exemplify ingenuity and have an authentic passion for promoting local history.

Mrs. Knott has served the Town of Stuyvesant as its historian for over twenty years. Through actively conserving, interpreting, and presenting the town's history in unique and engaging ways, she has unearthed the wonders, heroes, and stories of Stuyvesant's past. Understanding local history is a key way in which we discover a shared identity and strengthen our democracy. That is why historians like Mrs. Knott play such a vital role in communities throughout New York and nationwide.

I am grateful for Mrs. Knott's years of dedicated service to the Stuyvesant community, to the 19th District, and to New York state. I wish her the best as she continues to preserve the historical integrity of Stuyvesant. Her work will be remembered for generations to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO PAUL DANFORTH

#### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Paul Danforth of Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. Paul is a longtime leader in the clinical social work community, having the distinction of being the first African-American to have a private practice in Des Moines and serving as an instructor at three universities. He's been a longtime advocate for social justice, and has devoted countless hours to making a dif-

ference for the community's most vulnerable people. One of the many words of advice he gave to the magazine included to not give up, and to think positively.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Paul for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud him for his service to his community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Paul for this outstanding achievement and in wishing him nothing but the best.

#### HONORING CHIEF DAVE BROWN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

#### HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Hemet Police Chief David M. Brown on his retirement after more than 30 years in law enforcement. His dedication to ensuring the residents of Hemet are safe and secure is truly commendable. Today, I want to recognize his outstanding life achievements and years of service.

Chief Brown is an esteemed member of our community. He moved to the San Jacinto Valley when he was a child and graduated from Hemet High School. He obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science from California State Polytechnic University and a Master's Degree in Leadership and Organizational Studies from Azusa Pacific University.

His commitment to keeping our citizens safe earned him many promotions over the years, starting as a patrol officer and eventually becoming Chief of Police. During his early years with Hemet Police Department, Chief Brown was one of the founding members of the department's first gang team, raising awareness about gang issues and providing enforcement training to fellow officers and members of the community. Throughout his stellar career in law enforcement, Chief Brown has excelled in several other positions, including field training officer, gang investigator, and SWAT team commander.

Chief Brown is an exceptional leader in our community, dedicating his life to public service. He has served as President of the Riverside County Police Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association, President of the Inland SWAT Commanders Association, a member of the Statewide Committee on Regionalized SWAT Teams, and a member of the CA Police Chiefs' Municipal Policing Resource Workgroup. His wealth of proven leadership experience earned him the award of "Man of the Year" by the Hemet/San Jacinto Valley Chamber of Commerce in 2013 and 2015.

Chief Brown has dedicated his life serving the residents of Hemet. His valuable contributions and arduous work strengthening our community will be felt for years to come.

On behalf of the entire 36th Congressional District, I am humbled to honor and recognize Chief Brown. I offer my sincerest congratulations on his accomplishments and years of public service. I wish him, his wife, and his children all the best on his well-deserved retirement.

#### FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF SANDY HOOK SHOOTING

SPEECH OF

#### HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I'd like like to thank the gentlelady from Connecticut for organizing this special order and for her commitment to honoring the victims of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

I rise to join her in remembrance and to call on my colleagues to take immediate action to end gun violence across our nation.

The horrific shooting spree in Newtown, Connecticut, five years ago shocked us all. Twenty innocent children and six brave educators fell victim to unspeakable violence—the work of a deeply disturbed young man armed with a semiautomatic rifle and two handguns.

More than ever, it revealed the desperate need to reform our gun laws.

But five years later, we have nothing to show for it but more mass shootings—more innocent lives lost. We have made no meaningful progress, and we have not passed any commonsense legislation, like banning high-capacity magazines, which the Sandy Hook shooter used.

It is far past time to enact laws to strengthen our background check system, closing loopholes that allow unlicensed gun dealers to sell firearms to Americans without background checks at gun shows and over the internet, putting us all at risk.

Instead, my Republican colleagues continue to try to weaken gun safety laws by passing legislation like the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which would override state law and allow domestic abusers, teenagers, and people untrained in gun safety to carry concealed weapons freely across the nation.

Moreover, they block federal funds from being used to even research gun violence, for fear it will be used to "advocate gun control."

This is simply unacceptable and morally irresponsible. As members of Congress, it is our duty to pass laws to make our communities safer. The only way to respond to mass shootings like the one at Sandy Hook Elementary is to take action that will prevent such tragedies from happening in the future.

Since 2012, more than 170,000 other lives have been ended by gun violence, more than 170,000 families devastated. The gun violence epidemic continues to plague our nation, and we must act now to stop it.

#### CONGRATULATING MS. PAM VAN KIRK FOR BEING NAMED AN ILLINOIS LIBRARY LUMINARY FOR 2017

#### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Pam Van Kirk for being named an Illinois Library Luminary for 2017.

Pam Van Kirk's library career started at sixteen years old with typing catalog cards at the

Western Illinois Library System. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Monmouth College and a Master's in Library Science from Rosary College. In 1998, Pam became the director of the Galesburg Public Library after working in school libraries in Illinois and Colorado for 19 years. In 2010, she retired as director of the Galesburg Public Library to serve as president of the Illinois Library Association in 2012 and 2013.

Pam was a member of the Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce and served on the board of the Downtown Galesburg Business Association. She also served on the board of directors for the Illinois Center for the Book and the Alliance Library System, where she participated in regional and statewide library conferences. Pam has been named Administrator of the Year by the Alliance Library System and a Paul Harris Fellow for her contributions to Galesburg. She has served as a mentor to many librarians. Her cheerful and determined attitude has made a positive impact on the Illinois library community.

I'm very proud of Pam's work and am pleased she has gained the title of Illinois Library Luminary. Mr. Speaker, I want to again formally congratulate Pam on her award, and I join the rest of our community to wish her every success in the future.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

### HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th Anniversary of St. John's Lutheran Church. As the church's congregation celebrates this valued center of worship, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring this historical place in Sacramento.

The first service at St. John's Lutheran was held on September 29th, 1867, when Pastor Matthais Goethe led the church's first members in prayer. Two months later, 23 founding members signed St. John's Lutheran's first charter. Although the building itself has been relocated twice, once in 1873 and again in 1912, it has remained a vibrant meeting place for both the faithful and other members of our Sacramento community.

Today, St. John's is more beloved than ever by its community. The congregation is renowned for geniality and generosity, and the church welcomes all who would take communion, worship, or simply observe with open arms. Despite its venerable age, this Sacramento institution shows no sign of slowing down.

Mr. Speaker, as our community celebrates the 150th Anniversary of St. John's Lutheran Church, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring this staple of the Sacramento area and all it has provided to the community.

#### TRIBUTE TO JOYCE CHAPMAN

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Joyce Chapman of Des Moines, Iowa, for her being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors those community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. Joyce dedicated 55 years to West Bank in Des Moines, where she became the first female executive vice president, established the bank's foundation which provides grants to charities, and served as a mentor to other women in the banking industry. Today, women make up half of the officers of the bank to which she devoted so many decades. She was also honored to be the first female president of the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. One of the many words of advice she offered to the magazine was to "show up each day to contribute and make a difference."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Joyce for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud her for her service to her community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Joyce for this outstanding achievement and in wishing her nothing but the best.

#### IN MEMORY OF MARK B. IHDE

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mark B. Ihde, who served as Sheriff of Sonoma County for seven years and worked as the Chief Operating Officer of the local chapter of Goodwill Industries until he passed away on November 14, 2017 at the age of 69.

Mark was born in Santa Rosa, California to Maurice and Louise Ihde. He had tremendous respect and admiration for his parents. He inherited his optimism and leadership style from his father. Mark was a loving husband to Barbara and a proud father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

A graduate of Mt. Whitney High School, in Visalia, California, Mark was a track and field athlete and a tuba player in the marching band. He earned his Associate Degree in Criminal Justice from the College of the Sequoias and studied Law Enforcement Administration at Sacramento State University. He was an FBI Academy graduate in Executive Development and Leadership.

Mark had a successful 27-year career with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department, where he served as Sheriff from 1990 to 1997. As Sheriff, Mark restored public trust in the department, adopted a community policing model and improved collaboration with local police departments.

Mark worked as a consultant and served on many boards, including the local chapter of

Goodwill Industries. The board drafted him to become their Chief Executive Officer in 2017. Following his prostate cancer diagnosis, he continued to work for Goodwill, organizing work meetings in his home within a week of his passing. He led Goodwill to become a thriving local business, more than doubling the number of stores.

Mr. Speaker, Mark B. Ihde had a passion for life, adventure and community. He was a loving, generous and kind man, known for his great smile and quick wit. It is fitting and proper that we remember him here today.

#### RECOGNIZING KENNY BARMAN

### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kenny Barman on his retirement as a Clover Township Trustee. For 44 years, Mr. Barman has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving his community.

Over the course of his elected service, Mr. Barman focused on keeping roads and equipment in good condition. During his time as a trustee, he was able to witness many positive changes in the community such as the building of a new township building. The Woodhull Municipal Building is now a shared structure with the village and township—another important project carried out during his tenure. Mr. Barman also helped the township through some tough times. During the snowstorm of 1979, many residents were left housebound for up to a week while area roads were closed for days. Mr. Barman gathered funds to purchase special equipment to plow the roads. He was a true public servant through times good and bad.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Kenny Barman for his longtime commitment to serving his community. Mr. Barman has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the citizens of Clover Township. I congratulate him on a well-earned retirement and wish him the very best in his future endeavors.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ANDRE LACY

### HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Indianapolis businessman, Andre Lacy, an icon in the Indianapolis community. Andre was born and raised in Indianapolis and graduated from nearby Shortridge High School in 1957. Andre's grandfather H.J. Lacy founded their family business, U.S. Corrugated Fiber Box Company, in 1912. Andre spent most of his career working, leading and transforming U.S. Corrugated into the successful distribution company it is today. Andre's first experience in the family business was at age nine. After his father's unexpected death in 1959, Andre, while still in college, came home to help his mother Edna with day-to-day operations. Andre graduated in 1961 with a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Denison University in Ohio and

his professional career began as an analyst at U.S. Corrugated Fiber Box Company. In 1972 under Andre's direction, U.S. Corrugated was renamed Lacy Diversified Industries (LDI) to reflect its expanded interests. LDI has made several dozen acquisitions since 1972 and while it has since sold many of its holdings LDI still owns OIA Global, UltiMed Inc., and an office building on the Circle in downtown Indianapolis. Andre served as the Chief Executive Officer of LDI from 1983 until his retirement in 2006 and was the Chairman of the Board from 1991 until his passing.

Andre's remarkable career as a transformative figure both within his family business and in his community is truly unmatched. Andre served as a board member for several companies including Patterson Companies, Inc., Ethyl Corporation, Albemarle Corporation, Tredegar Corporation, First Colony Insurance Co., IPALCO, National Bank of Indianapolis, and Merchants National Bank. He has held leadership positions with numerous civic organizations including as a trustee at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, board member of the Community Leaders Allied for Superior Schools and The Nature Conservancy of Indiana. Andre is a former chairman of the 500 Festival, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, and the United Way of Central Indiana, where he and his late wife, Julia, were Meridian Society members. Meridian Society members are the movers and shakers of our community. They lead the charge in improving the lives of thousands of people in Central Indiana through their leadership, dedication and generous gifts of \$25,000 or more annually. In 2016, Andre and Julia donated more than \$25 million dollars to Butler University's Business School, which now bears his family's name. This is the largest gift from an individual or family in the history of Butler University. In addition to his monetary donation, Andre donated his time and expertise to both the faculty and students at Butler University. From 2009 until his passing, Andre served as chairman of the Indiana State Fair Commission and was the driving force in the \$63 million renovation of the Indiana State Fairgrounds Coliseum. Andre and Julia donated \$2 million dollars to jumpstart this campaign.

In October of 2017, he was inducted into the Indiana Academy for lifetime achievement and contributions throughout the state by The Independent Colleges of Indiana. He was recently recognized as the 2017 Indiana Philanthropy Awards recipient by the Indiana Chapter of The Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Typically, the Sagamore of the Wabash honor is given for wisdom, public commitment, and a concern for the well-being of others. Andre embodied this award to the fullest, as he has been recognized as a Sagamore of the Wabash by Governors Roger Branigan, Robert Orr and Mitch Daniels. The Sagamore of the Wabash is the highest honor an Indiana governor can bestow.

In November of 2017 Andre was awarded the Whistler Award by The Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee. The annual Whistler Award recognizes individuals who, outside the regular duties of their chosen professions, have brought together the public and private sectors for civic improvement in Indianapolis. Andre's name will be added to a limestone and granite monument located in the Charles L. Whistler Memorial Plaza at the City Market in downtown Indianapolis.

Andre's legacy as a brilliant business and community leader will live on through his countless contributions to the Hoosier State. Andre had a well-known passion for motorcycling and adventure seeking. He tragically passed away at the age of 78 following a motorcycle crash on a private tour of Botswana. He lived his life to the fullest and chased his dreams and passions with such great vigor. Andre was a great son of Indianapolis, a leader in Indiana, who deeply loved our country. He will be missed by me and so many. I want to extend my most heartfelt condolences to his three sons, J.A., Mark, and Peter, and their families in their time of mourning as they carry on the Lacy Family legacy.

#### TRIBUTE TO DON BLUMENTHAL

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Don Blumenthal of West Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. Don grew up in his father's scrap-iron yard company, and launched several businesses over his career beginning in 1964 with Steel Warehousing, Inc. Don and his wife, Margo, are just as well-known through their philanthropic efforts in the Des Moines area, supporting organizations such as Youth Emergency Services and Shelter, United Way of Central Iowa, Varsity—The Children's Charity, Animal Rescue League of Iowa, and the Blank Park Zoo. One of his many words of wisdom he has offered to the magazine is to "remember the community that has made your life possible."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Don for being named a "Sages Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud him for his service to his community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Don for this outstanding achievement and in wishing him nothing but the best.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF LORI S. LIU

### HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Lori Liu who is leaving public service after four years on the Brisbane City Council, the last year as Mayor of this storied town near San Francisco Bay. Lori's deep commitment to public service is evident from her accomplishments and contributions to her community. She is a champion of education, children, the arts, recreation, economic development and the environment.

Lori was first elected to the council in 2013. While on the council, she served on, or as representative to, a number of organizations, including the Association of Bay Area Govern-

ments, the Peninsula Clean Energy Board of Directors, the County Library JPA, the council's Economic Development Subcommittee, the Health and Safety Subcommittee, the League of California Cities, the liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Airport Community Roundtable, the Planning Commission, the liaison to the Open Space and Ecology Committee, the Community Choice Energy Advisory Committee and many others. You may justifiably surmise from this lengthy list that Lori is well-versed in a variety of issues affecting the residents of Brisbane and the region.

Her leadership is notable as she tackled one of the most longstanding opportunities and challenges in the community, the Baylands Project. Lori was indefatigable as she conducted council meetings and listened closely to the community through hours of discussions involving possible offices, open space, housing, environmental cleanup and restoration, and the overall concept of a sustainable community. She carefully weighed the impacts of this project on Brisbane and our region.

She was instrumental in laying the groundwork to build a new library which will be constructed starting next year. Libraries are community spaces that connect generations and nurture life-long learning. The Brisbane Library will include a Maker's Space to spark the creativity of the next generation of innovators, spaces for children and teens, a quiet study area, an outdoor garden, a community center, and the first public arts project triggered by a city ordinance.

Lori has a long track record of working on environmental issues. In fact, when she moved to Brisbane in 2004, her very first volunteer activity was to attend an Earth Day clean up event. While on the council, she helped to secure a grant to renovate Crocker Park Trail. This funding will make the trail more usable for bicyclists, joggers and parents with strollers. It will also establish a safe pedestrian and bike-friendly connection between residential development at the Ridge and Lipman Middle School. Due in part to Lori's outstanding work, Brisbane received the Platinum level Spotlight Award from the Institute for Local Government for environmental leadership and best practices. With her support, the city signed up to have all municipal electric accounts serviced by 100 percent renewable energy.

Lori understands that a high quality of life for residents depends on a healthy balance of physical and financial security, education, functioning infrastructure, clean air and clean water, and recreation and entertainment. Life without music and fun would not be complete, so Lori supported the launch of two spectacular, family-friendly community events, the Marina Kite Festival and the Star City Music Festival. The kite festival celebrated its first anniversary this June and the music festival will have its premier in July next year.

Lori holds a B.A. from Tufts University and a J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law. She and her husband Raymond Liu live in Belmont with their two young children, Samantha and Noah.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Lori Liu for her exemplary service on the Brisbane City Council. Her public service made Brisbane a better place to live, work and visit. I personally regret

that she is leaving office and hope she will return to offer Brisbane her skills and talents in addressing the issues facing her beloved city. I have no doubt that Lori will continue to make enormous contributions to any effort she undertakes.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF  
CITALLI ORTIZ AS THE 2017 WOMEN'S YOUTH WORLD CHAMPION

**HON. RAUL RUIZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the determination, perseverance, and accomplishments of Citalli Ortiz, a young constituent who became the first female boxer in the Coachella Valley to win the gold medal for Team USA in the 2017 Women's Youth World Championships.

Citalli is a Coachella Valley High School student with an inspiring commitment and passion for boxing. Her dedication to giving her all in the ring has led her to become the first female boxer from Coachella Valley Boxing Club gym to achieve such high recognition.

She began boxing when she was a little girl, inspired by her father, Alex Ortiz, and her older sister, who was also a boxer. Her training started when a couple of boys were teasing and punching Citalli. Her father saw this and took the opportunity to teach her how to use some boxing moves for self-defense, including the "one-two" move. Citalli defended herself successfully against the boys, and decided to become a boxer, following in her sister's footsteps.

Citalli's road to success hasn't always been easy. In the beginning, trainers did not want to work with her due to her weight. As a result, her father decided to become her trainer and empowered her to fight for her dreams. After long hours of training in the gym, Citalli achieved her first victory at the age of 12 at the Desert Showdown.

Citalli brings agility and strength to the ring in every fight. She has won medals and beat national champions at the 2016 USA Junior and Youth Boxing Championships in Nevada, the 2016 USA Boxing Junior Olympic, and the Prep National and Youth Open Championships in Texas. Citalli is also the 2016 Oxnard National PAL Champion, 3x Desert Showdown Champion, and the 2015 Gene Lewis Champion. To this day, she remains undefeated.

Throughout her 8 years in boxing, Citalli has witnessed a large gender disparity in the ring. She is committed to become a professional boxer so she can represent women in boxing. Citalli's greatest inspirations are female professional boxers such as Cecilia Braekhus and Hannah Gabriel. Her goal is to represent USA at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Citalli Ortiz. On behalf of California's 36th Congressional District, I commend her accomplishments and passion for boxing. I look forward to her many more victories in the ring.

RECOGNIZING RETIRED UNITED STATES AIR FORCE CAPTAIN NATHAN NELSON

**HON. MATT GAETZ**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a true American hero and patriot.

Captain Nelson, USAF, Retired, enlisted in the military in 2006. After 4 years of enlisted service, Nelson applied to Officer Training School with the encouragement of his commanding officer. He attended Officer Training School in Montgomery, Alabama in 2011, followed by Intelligence Officer Training at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, TX.

Once Nelson finished training there, he was assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord as the Director of Intelligence for the 22nd Special Tactics Squadron.

Nelson was serving on his third tour in Afghanistan as the Special Tactics Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance liaison. While assisting a combat controller assigned to a 7th Special Forces Group ODA, Nelson was hit by a 107mm rocket and suffered a spinal cord injury from the blast.

In addition to that injury, Nelson also suffered severe shrapnel wounds, multiple spinal fractures, severe tissue damage to his left ankle, collapsed lungs, major shrapnel damage to his torso and lower extremities, and severely bruised organs. He also underwent a massive blood transfusion and tracheotomy, and suffered numerous other injuries.

Nelson spent 18 months in physical therapy, underwent 9 surgeries, and 46 units of blood. His injuries left him paralyzed from the chest down.

Nelson served 9 years honorably in the USAF and retired in November of 2015.

For his service to the country, Nelson received the Meritorious Service Medal, Purple Heart, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal, among many others.

Nelson has not let his injuries dampen his tenacious spirit or hinder him from continuing to serve his country. He currently holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Intelligence Studies, and an MBA in Finance. Nelson also helps countless veterans and active duty members by serving as my Deputy Director of Military Affairs for Florida's First Congressional District. His guidance and expertise is an invaluable asset to me and my team. His determination, bravery, and fortitude are an inspiration to all who are blessed to know and work with him.

To honor his great sacrifice for our country, Nelson will be gifted a mortgage-free home from nonprofit Building Homes for Heroes, an organization that builds and modifies homes to gift mortgage-free to wounded veterans and their families. Nelson, his wife Jennifer, and their daughter Eva will be welcomed into their new home for the very first time in Santa Rosa Beach, FL.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Nate and his family for all they've sacrificed for their country and their community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize and honor Nathan Nelson, Jen, and Eva, and congratulate them on their well-deserved, new home.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF RUTH BANCROFT

**HON. MARK DeSAULNIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Ruth Bancroft, renowned expert on drought-tolerant plants, founder of the Ruth Bancroft Garden, and resident of Walnut Creek.

Ruth had a keen intellect and an insatiable curiosity about plants and nature. She collected and categorized seashells and planted flower gardens around the home she shared with her husband and three children on the Bancroft property.

With the help of the New York-based Garden Conservancy, the Bancroft family formed the nonprofit Ruth Bancroft Garden on Bancroft Road which is protected by a conservation easement. It opened to the public in the early 1990s. In August, the garden broke ground on a visitor and education center with space for events and classes as well as offices for staff. Ruth worked in the garden every day until she was 97 years old.

Ruth was an inspiration and a friend. She was a stalwart in the Contra Costa community and we shared a passion for conservation and the environment. She passed away on November 26, 2017 at the age of 109. She is survived by her children Peter Bancroft, Nina Dickerson and Kathy Hidalgo and four grandchildren. Her friend, family, and our community will miss her dearly.

CONGRATULATING ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS FOR BEING NAMED A PROJECT WINNER FOR THE 2017 GOVERNOR'S HOMETOWN AWARD

**HON. CHERI BUSTOS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rock Island, Illinois for being named a project winner for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award due to its outstanding Kids Invested in Natural Growth (KING) Program.

The Kids Invested in Natural Growth Program is provided by the Martin Luther King Center. The program provides a variety of activities for youth ages 6 through 18, including homework help, sports and recreation, service learning, mentoring, life skills, and character development. The program's goal is to provide safe and enriching activities and encourage academic success. The Kids Invested in Natural Growth Program reaches approximately 1,200 kids each year. Thirty-five dedicated volunteers make the yearlong commitments to the sports component. An additional 15 volunteers are involved in the afterschool and summer programs.

The generous and caring volunteers and leaders of the Kids Invested in Natural Growth (KING) Program in the City of Rock Island make me especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Rock Island, Illinois for being



named a finalist for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award and recognize all who organize and contribute to the Kids Invested in Natural Growth (KING) Program for their outstanding efforts and accomplishments.

HONORING MR. JOHN F.  
TRENTACOSTA

**HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Trentacosta upon his retirement as President and CEO of Newtown Savings Bank in Newtown, Connecticut. For two decades, John has provided experienced and insightful leadership at Newtown Savings Bank, and his contributions have been crucial to guiding the institution through both successful and challenging economies.

John is a native of Bronx, New York, and completed his undergraduate degree at Manhattan College before going on to earn his Master of Business Administration at Iona College. He began working in finance in New York before moving with his wife Linda to Connecticut in 1988. Throughout his long and successful career in the financial industry, John has served in a number of leadership roles, such as Chief Financial Officer, for a variety of institutions. Following a decade of working at the Bank of New Haven, John joined Newtown Savings Bank as President and CEO in 1998. His experience and leadership have been instrumental in continuing the organization's success for the future.

In addition to his successful career, John has shared his time and expertise with a number of community and professional organizations in Connecticut. He currently serves on the Western Connecticut State University Foundation Board, and has previously been Director of Habitat for Humanity of New Haven and Chairperson of the Newtown Rotary Golf Fundraiser Event. John has also served as a board member of the Connecticut Society of CPAs' Educational Trust Fund, a member of the Connecticut Community Bankers Association's Executive Committee, and a member of the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce board.

Mr. Speaker, in his two decades of leadership at Newtown Savings Bank, John Trentacosta has been a successful leader in Connecticut's financial services industry, and he has also been a true partner to our community. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN ROBERTS

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Stephen Roberts of Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as men-

tors and leaders when others have retired. Stephen, a senior shareholder in the Davis Brown law firm, was an early advocate for women at the firm which lead to the quick hiring of its first five female attorneys. Stephen is well-known for his past service as chairman and national committee member for the Republican Party of Iowa, and has also been active with the American Cancer Society for over 40 years. One of the many words of advice he gave to the magazine included to "give something back to the community. You'll get more out of it than what you put in."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Stephen for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud him for his service to his community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Stephen for this outstanding achievement and in wishing him nothing but the best.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote today on the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 2396 (Roll Call No. 681), I would have voted aye. The motion would require financial institutions found to have engaged in deceptive or fraudulent practices to continue to annually report their policies and practices regarding the disclosure of nonpublic, personal information.

Additionally, had I been present for the vote on H.R. 2396 (Roll Call No. 682), I would have voted no. This bill would ease the annual privacy notice requirements for financial institutions that share consumers' non-public personal information with nonaffiliated third party companies, weakening important consumer protections.

I'm deeply frustrated that the House has, yet again, decided to take up a measure intended to violate U.S. obligations under the Iran nuclear agreement. Though the nuclear agreement explicitly commits the United States to resuming the licensing of new commercial aircraft sales to Iran for civilian use, H.R. 4324 would impose additional certification requirements on the Treasury Department in order to carry out these current obligations.

Given Trump's clear disdain for having to take affirmative action to keep the agreement intact, this attempt by Congressional Republicans to force his administration to act further on the sale of commercial aircraft is shameful. Thus, had I been present for the vote on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 4324 (Roll Call No. 683), I would have voted aye. Had I been present for the vote on final passage of H.R. 4324 (Roll Call No. 684), I would have voted no.

RECOGNIZING THE RIVERDALE RAMS' GOLF TEAM FOR THEIR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

**HON. CHERI BUSTOS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Riverdale Rams' Golf Team for winning the state championship in the Class 1A tournament.

Riverdale won by six shots over Hillsboro. The boys played through gusty winds and occasional rain showers and witnessed their lead slip to a mere two shots, but held strong to pull out a victory. This title makes school history, both as the Rams' first-ever golf title and first-ever state team title. I congratulate the Rams on their outstanding victory in their Class 1A win—a testament to the impressive leadership provided by Coach Trent Groves and teammates Tyler Bussert and Anthony Ruthey.

Mr. Speaker, as a former athlete, I understand how important this is to the young men, the coaches and the community. Their efforts and resilience should inspire us all.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COL.  
WESLEY L. FOX, USMC (RET.)

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Col. Wes Fox. Col. Fox enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1950 at the start of the Korean War to begin his 43-year career. Wes served 16 years as a noncommissioned officer before commissioning as a second lieutenant and retiring as a colonel.

Col. Fox valiantly served the nation and became a recipient of the Medal of Honor for his actions in Vietnam. He led his men through heavy fire, even picking up the weapon of a Marine killed in action, to continue fighting the enemy. Col. Fox sustained severe injuries from shrapnel, continued to lead his Marines, and called in air support. After the battle was over, Fox refused medical treatment, set up and supervised a defensive perimeter, and remained until all the Marines were evacuated. According to his Medal of Honor citation, "his indomitable courage, inspiring initiative, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of grave personal danger inspired his Marines to such aggressive actions that they overcame all enemy resistance and destroyed a large bunker complex." Col. Fox retired from the Marines in 1993 with decorations including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

After retirement, Col Fox served as the Deputy Commandant of First Battalion in the Corps of Cadets at Virginia Tech. Col. Fox authored two books: "Marine Rifleman: Forty-Three Years in the Corps (Memories of War)" and "Six Essential Elements of Leadership: Marine Corps Wisdom from a Medal of Honor Recipient." I am honored to have known Wes and to have served as a witness to the countless lives he touched through his selfless service and leadership. He is survived by his wife,



Dottie; three daughters; four brothers; four sisters; and nine grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me and countless others as we recognize the many contributions of Colonel Wesley L. Fox.

HONORING SUE SOUTHERN OF  
HALEYVILLE, AL

**HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the talents, achievements and dedication of Mrs. Sue Southern of Haleyville, Alabama on the occasion of her retirement as Municipal Court Clerk of the city of Haleyville, Alabama, which is in Alabama's 4th Congressional District.

Sue Southern began her career with Haleyville 29 years ago back in 1988 and since then has worked alongside numerous municipal judges, attorneys, mayors and members of the city council. I was fortunate to be one of those municipal judges during her time of service. I worked alongside of Sue in the mid-1990s as a young municipal judge for the city, having just graduated from law school a couple of years earlier.

As someone who worked alongside Sue for several years, I can say without a doubt, she always strove to make sure that every person who came through the court system was treated fairly and with dignity, yet she made sure the trains ran on time, as they say.

During her almost three decades as municipal court clerk, Sue has taken a particular interest in strengthening domestic violence laws in the state of Alabama. She has seen numerous cases come through the court system, of women who had nowhere to turn and no way to escape abusive relationships. Sue worked to change this and give a voice to countless women across Alabama.

Sue's family is also immeasurably important to her. She is married to David Southern and has two children, Brian Berry and Jason Berry. Sue also has four grandchildren: Blake, Madison, David and Katie.

Sue will be missed by those she has served for so many years, but I know she will continue to be active in her community. She has earned this retirement with her many years of dedication. I wish her all the best in her retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND  
SERVICE OF JOSEPH ALLEN  
DUFFEL

**HON. MARK DESAULNIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Joseph Allen Duffel, prominent Bay Area builder and real estate developer and resident of Orinda.

Joe's sharp intellect and irreverent sense of humor were his signature traits. He founded Duffel Financial and Construction Company in 1954, which grew to become one of Northern California's most active real estate develop-

ment and building firms. His love of family, reverence for education, strong work ethic, and drive led him to many successes throughout his life. He continued to work as the active CEO of the company to the very end.

In addition to his career in building and development, Joe had a passion for politics. He ran for State Senator in 1966 against George Miller, Sr. That political involvement catapulted him into becoming the advance man for Ronald Reagan during his campaign for the presidency in 1968. He personally advanced Reagan's appearances at the state delegations in most of the southern states. He later served as a delegate to four Republican conventions and was appointed by Governor Deukmejian to the California Transportation Commission where he served for 12 years after being reappointed by Deukmejian and Governor Pete Wilson.

Joe was also proud to have served in many capacities in business, community, and local political organizations. He served as president of the Orinda Rotary Club, president of the Bay Area Mortgage Association, and president of the Homebuilders Association of Northern California (formerly known as the B.I.A., or Building Industry Association of which Joe was a founding member). He served on the board of directors for California Symphony, and was a 40-year active member of The Family, a San Francisco social and charitable club. Joe and his wife, Jackie were longtime members of the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church.

Joe was an inspiration and a friend. He was a stalwart in the Contra Costa community. He passed away on December 1, 2017 at the age of 94. Joe will be deeply missed.

TRIBUTE TO JIM COWNIE

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jim Cownie of Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. After graduating from Notre Dame, Jim founded Heritage Communications which would become the ninth-largest cable TV operator in the country when he sold the company in 1987 and went into real estate development. Jim and his wife, Patty, have been longtime supporters of the United Way of Central Iowa and the Iowa State Fairgrounds. One of the many words of advice he offered to the magazine was to volunteer. "That's more important than money," he said. He continued, "We can't have a great city without great volunteers and philanthropists."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Jim for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud him for his service to his community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jim for this outstanding achievement and in wishing him nothing but the best.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

**HON. NANCY PELOSI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my fellow San Francisco Representative, JACKIE SPEIER, as well as my Congressional colleagues, Representatives BARBARA LEE, JUDY CHU, MADELINE BORDALLO, LOU CORREA, KEITH ELLISON, ANNA ESHOO, AL GREEN, JIMMY GOMEZ, COLLEEN HANABUSA, JARED HUFFMAN, RO KHANNA, RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY, TED LIEU, ALAN LOWENTHAL, MARK TAKANO, NORMA TORRES, GRACE MENG, STEPHANIE MURPHY, GRACE NAPOLITANO, ADAM SCHIFF, ERIC SWALWELL, JIM COSTA, and NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, in great sorrow to pay tribute to a dear friend and an extraordinary leader: Mayor Edwin M. Lee, who died suddenly and tragically on December 12.

Ed Lee served as Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco with devotion and distinction. All who knew Ed understood him as a true gentleman of great warmth, positivity and kindness.

His passing is not only a tragic official loss for our city but also an immense personal loss for all who were fortunate enough to call him friend.

Even through our heartbreak, we think of the exceptional person Ed Lee was, and we smile.

Born the fourth of six children to hard-working Chinese immigrant parents of modest means, Ed was raised in public housing, and lost his father at the age of 15.

Ed excelled at academics, winning a scholarship to Bowdoin College in Maine, where he graduated summa cum laude in 1974. He then graduated Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley in 1978.

Ed began his career as a community organizer and civil rights lawyer fighting for fair housing and on behalf of immigrant communities.

He started his public service as director of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, going on to serve as Purchasing Manager, Director of Public Works and City Administrator.

Ed then served seven remarkable years as Mayor of San Francisco, an office he held with exceptional dignity and great effectiveness. He took pride in being the first Asian American Mayor of a city with such a rich and robust Asian American heritage.

Ed's firm commitment to equality made strong progress toward securing affordable housing and a living wage for all.

His unwavering belief in justice helped combat the moral crisis of homelessness in San Francisco, particularly for our veterans.

And his bold, hopeful vision for the future further secured San Francisco's role as a model city for the nation.

In all aspects of his life, Mayor Lee's first priority was always the people.

He fundamentally understood that the strength of a community is measured by its success in meeting the needs of all its people.

Mayor Lee's greatest source of joy was his beloved family. Our city owes a debt of gratitude to his wife Anita and his daughters

Brianna and Tania for sharing this remarkable man with us.

Our deepest love and prayers are with his family. May it bring them some measure of comfort that so many mourn with them and continue to be inspired by him.

During this difficult time, our full support is also with Acting Mayor London Breed, the Board of Supervisors and all the people of San Francisco.

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SALVATION ARMY OF ROCK ISLAND COUNTY, ILLINOIS

**HON. CHERI BUSTOS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Salvation Army on its 125th anniversary in Rock Island County, Illinois.

The Salvation Army opened in Moline in 1892, 27 years after it was founded in London. The Moline Salvation Army was started after immigrants from Europe and Sweden came to the area in the 1890s in order to find work at John Deere. After arriving in the region, a group of Swedish men wrote back to their home country to ask that officers be sent to start a church. The Salvation Army's first services were held in a rented space above a saloon in the Browning Block Building on the southwest corner of 15th Street and 5th Avenue in Moline in 1892. A Rock Island Salvation Army opened just one year later. In 1993, the two merged to become the Moline Salvation Army, which has been in its current location since 2000.

The Salvation Army has given women the same leadership opportunities as men. Women serve as pastors, Bible teachers and social service workers; they also lead ministries and carry the same rank as male counterparts.

The Salvation Army's original mission has evolved over the years. It was first founded with the basic social services principles of taking care of the physical and emotional needs of the hungry and homeless, but has grown to take on disaster relief services, child care centers, summer camps, holiday assistance, services for the aging, veterans programs, shelters for women and children, family and career counseling, vocational training, correctional services, and substance abuse rehabilitation.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to congratulate The Salvation Army on its 125th anniversary in Rock Island County and wish it another successful 125 years.

HONORING FRAN MACALLISTER

**HON. LUKE MESSER**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend, Fran MacAllister, who passed away on December 8, 2017.

Fran was born in Portland, Indiana on February 1, 1922. She attended Ball State University and helped in the World War II efforts by

working as an accountant for a company that manufactured wings for bombers and volunteered as a nurse's aide for the Red Cross. Fran was deeply involved in the music and arts communities and played the organ and accordion. She shared her love for the arts with her family and enjoyed spending time with them in her favorite place, Naples, Florida. Fran also devoted her time to Habitat for Humanity, the local YMCA board, and the League of Women Voters.

On a personal note, Fran was a devoted wife to my good friend P.E. MacAllister who is one of my life heroes; a scholar, gentleman, sports fan, a devout Presbyterian, an extraordinary civic and business leader in Indiana, and one of the wisest and most decent men I have ever known.

Fran will be mourned most by those who knew her best, and she will be missed by all. Fran is survived by her husband, P.E., daughters Daphne (Walter), and Jodi; grandchildren Megan, Eryn, Corinne, Olivia, Thomas, Coulter, and Barrett and great-grandchildren Elena and Matthew, whom I give my deepest sympathies. Fran lived a gratifying life and had profound impact on countless Hoosiers, and her life should be an inspiration to us all.

THANKING THEODORE R. BECHTLTOL, JR. FOR HIS DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

**HON. GREGG HARPER**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to one of the truly outstanding individuals who works at the U.S. Capitol, Mr. Theodore R. Bechtol, Jr.

Better known to many of us as the Superintendent of the U.S. Capitol Grounds, Ted is responsible for preserving and maintaining more than 290 acres of the historic landscape and infrastructure across the U.S. Capitol campus.

Prior to being promoted to his current position in 2007, Ted served as the Deputy Superintendent for U.S. Capitol Grounds. As part of Ted's responsibilities, he ensures the routine and periodic landscape maintenance, comprehensive tree care, and upkeep of the supporting infrastructure, vehicles, and equipment are completed. Additionally, snow removal, trash collection, and support for major events, such as the annual December Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, are key responsibilities for supporting our U.S. Capitol campus. In total, Ted has taken part in 13 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree events.

Throughout Ted's years at the U.S. Capitol, he worked hard to bring recognition to the historical significance of the grounds and helped to produce cultural landscape reports. His depth of knowledge about Frederick Law Olmsted, the American landscape architect who designed the U.S. Capitol Grounds, has changed how each section of the grounds are cared for, with a focus on historical horticulture.

Ted has also consulted on historical horticulture work at many institutions throughout the east coast.

Under his leadership, the U.S. Capitol Grounds have received designation as an ac-

credited arboretum, a notable industry standard.

On Friday, January 5, 2018, Ted Bechtol will retire from his position as Superintendent of the U.S. Capitol Grounds for the Architect of the Capitol.

In retirement, he will be spending more time with his granddaughter, working on home improvement projects, and enjoy hiking and beach trips. He will continue to explore American history trails—he and his wife recently hiked Gettysburg and Civil War trails.

Although we are sad to see someone with Ted's accomplishments leave the service of the institution, I offer him my sincere best wishes in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO JAN AND KARL KNOCK

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jan and Karl Knock for being inducted into the Creston High School Hall of Fame as Distinguished Contributors on Friday, September 29, 2017.

Karl and Jan were deeply involved in the Creston school district by providing programs and opportunities for students. One of those programs is the school's Environmental and Spatial Technology class (EAST). They have also been involved with the Character Counts program and with diversity programs. Karl was a 1968 graduate of Creston schools and after moving back to Creston with Jan in 1989, wanted to make Creston a place where today's students can thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Jan and Karl for receiving this award, and for providing the youth in Iowa's 3rd district the education that they will need to be successful. It is with great pride that I recognize leaders like Jan and Karl in the United States Congress and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for this outstanding achievement and in wishing them both nothing but the best.

HONORING BERTHA ROGERS AND BRIGHT HILL PRESS & LITERARY CENTER OF THE CATSKILLS

**HON. JOHN J. FASO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I rise today to recognize the illustrious career of Bertha Rogers, the Founding Director of Bright Hill Press & Literary Center of the Catskills, on the occasion of her retirement and the twenty-fifth anniversary of Bright Hill Press. With her husband, Ernest M. Fishman, Bertha co-founded Bright Hill Press in 1992. Since then, through her dedicated work as an educator, mentor and an artist, Bright Hill has become an epicenter of free thinking and creativity, and a haven for writers both young and old.

Bertha is gifted with remarkable literary talent. Her work has appeared in hundreds of literary journals and in several collections, and her translation of Beowulf was published in 2000. She has been the recipient several NYSCA and NYFA grants and residency fellowships to the McDowell Colony, the Millay Artists Colony, Jentel, Caldera, Saltonstall, Hedgebrook, and Hawthornden International Writers Residence (Scotland). Using this talent, Bertha has left a permanent mark on the Treadwell community through her work at Bright Hill.

What started as weekly poetry readings, Bright Hill has grown to become an established and respected literary organization, attracting authors and poets both locally and worldwide. Largely the result of Bertha's time and efforts, Bright Hill now offers youth and adult writing workshops, reading series, small press publishing, and boasts an impressive literary library. Bertha's excitement for literature and poetry, combined with an authentic passion for teaching, has fostered an increased appreciation for writing and the arts in the Catskills.

It is an honor to recognize Bertha and Bright Hill for their distinctive milestones. Leaving behind an organization marked by ingenuity, creativity, and passion, Bertha has given Bright Hill a buildable legacy which will grow in future years. I wish Bertha every happiness as she embarks on this new chapter, and I am confident that even in retirement she will continue to be an advocate for the literary arts. The 19th District and New York State are a better place because of Bertha and Bright Hill Press. I thank them for helping to make the Catskills a cultural center.

HONORING DEBRA HOOD OF  
HALEYVILLE, AL

**HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the talents, achievements and dedication of Mrs. Debra Hood on the occasion of her retirement as City Clerk of Haleyville, Alabama.

Debra Hood began her career with Haleyville 30 years ago and worked alongside numerous mayors and members of the city council. She has also worked with numerous municipal judges and attorneys in the municipal court system. As municipal judge for the city of Haleyville, I had the privilege to work alongside Debra back in the mid-1990s. Debra's goal was always to advance the city of Haleyville and make it a better place to live, work and raise a family.

During her three decades as clerk, Debra Hood has taken a particular interest in community and economic development. Her work has directly helped the city of Haleyville to continue to be one of the most prosperous communities in Winston County.

Debra, along with other local leaders, played a valuable role in keeping hundreds of jobs in Haleyville through Exxel Outdoors. Exxel provides 100 jobs for area citizens and is one of the major manufacturers of sleeping bag in the nation.

I would be remiss if I did not point out the most important job Debra has had as city clerk: the chief election official of the city. She has overseen numerous municipal elections in

the past 30 years, ensuring that the people of Haleyville had their voices heard at the ballot box.

Debra's family is also immeasurably important to her. She and her husband Gary have two children, daughter Dana Saylor and son Bruce Hood. Debra and Gary have six grandchildren: Sydney, Bryant, Titus, Elijah, Abigail and Lydia.

Representing the city of Haleyville, my hometown, and the Fourth Congressional District, I appreciate the hard work and the dedication that Debra has given the city over the past three decades.

Debra will be missed by those she has served for so many years, but I know she will continue to be active in her community. She has earned this retirement with her years of dedication. I wish her all the best in her retirement.

RECOGNIZING TOM THOMS, JIM  
MILLMAN AND TOM ROWE FOR  
THEIR EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNITY SERVICE—

**HON. CHERI BUSTOS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tom Thoms, Jim Millman and Tom Rowe for their extraordinary service to children and families.

These three bicyclists took a 1,827 mile, 21 day bicycle ride from Itasca, Minnesota to Venice, Louisiana. These men set out on this journey with one common goal: to help break the cycle of child abuse by raising money and bringing attention to this pressing issue. They originally set a goal of raising \$42,000, but they drastically exceeded that goal by raising a total of \$108,494. All of the money raised went to three Quad-City charities—Alternatives, the Child Abuse Council, and Bethany for Children & Families. The men spent 146 hours on their bikes, which is the equivalent of six days and one night. Collectively, their bicycle tires spun more than eight million times.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Thoms, Mr. Millman, and Mr. Rowe, once again, for their outstanding efforts and selfless community service. The generous actions of individuals such as these men make me especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

IN RECOGNITION OF COMPUTER  
SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK

**HON. STEPHANIE N. MURPHY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, when I think about America's future, I know that its success will be driven by the bright, technologically-savvy minds of our young people.

That is why I am honored to recognize the winner of my district's 2017 Congressional App Challenge: Carlson Sharpless, a senior at Lake Brantley High School in Altamonte Springs, Florida.

Translating a good idea into lines of code, Carlson created an app called "Grammarlets," a tutoring program designed to help students

practice their grammar skills for the SATs. His creation stood out among several impressive and unique apps submitted by students seeking to solve everyday problems.

What these students have accomplished is an example of the kind of innovative thinking and entrepreneurial spirit that central Florida is known for.

As a nation, it's important that we continue to make meaningful investments in STEM education and that we empower our students with the tools needed to invent, to innovate, and to improve the lives of all Americans.

TRIBUTE TO RANDY HUGHES

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Randy Hughes. Randy was inducted into the Creston High School Hall of Fame as Distinguished Faculty on Friday, September 29, 2017.

For 36 years, Randy served the Creston community as an educator to their youth. He taught social studies with a relaxed style with which students could relate. He brought current events into the curriculum and related them to our country's history. He coached students for the Academic Decathlon for 10 years, served as the Student Council advisor and coached girls' tennis. After retirement from Creston high school, Randy taught at Southwestern Community College and continued to be an active part of the Creston community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Randy for receiving this award, and for providing the youth in Iowa's 3rd district the education that they will need to be successful. It is with great pride that I recognize leaders like Randy in the United States Congress and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for this outstanding achievement and in wishing him nothing but the best.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. IRIS  
LIZZETTE VÉLEZ

**HON. DAVID G. VALADAO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Iris Lizzette Vélez for her service to my office and the constituents of California's Twenty First Congressional District of California over the past year.

Iris Vélez was born on April 3, 1960 in the beach town of Guánica, Puerto Rico to Iris Lucía Santana Colón and Félix Gilberto Vélez Quiñones. Both high school teachers, her parents instilled in Iris the importance and love of learning at a young age. Iris and her three siblings spent most of their time feeding animals, harvesting crops, and fishing on their grandparents' farm in San German, Puerto Rico. It was during this time that Iris developed a true love and respect for nature.

After spending her youth in Puerto Rico and completing her high school education at the age of sixteen, Ms. Vélez attended the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, where she received a Bachelor's of Arts in Political Science and Government. Following the completion of her undergraduate studies, Ms. Vélez went on to complete two Master's degrees—the first in Political Science at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, and the second in Public Relations at Sacred Heart University in Santurce, Puerto Rico.

In 1980, Iris began her eight-year teaching career as a Professor of Political Science at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico but, in 1988, she was able to combine her passions of nature, political science, and public affairs while serving as the Public Affairs Specialist for the National Park Service at the San Juan National Historic Site. After two years of service, Ms. Vélez moved on to work for the United States Forest Service first as a Public Affairs Specialist and later as Program Manager.

In February of 2017, Ms. Vélez accepted a Congressional Fellowship in my Washington, D.C. office through the Brookings Institution. During her time in my office, Iris was a vital member of my team having handled legislative issues relating to natural resources, forestry, and energy policy. Iris was also instrumental in organizing constituent outreach programs to teach fire safety to the people of the California's Twenty First Congressional District. Outside of work, Iris enjoys meeting new people, exploring different places, and attending live musical performances.

On December 15, 2017, Ms. Vélez's time in my office will come to an end as she moves on to continue her dedication to public service. While I know she is very excited about her upcoming journey, she will be greatly missed as a member of my team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Iris Lizzette Vélez for her public service to the people of California's Central Valley and wishing her well as she begins the next chapter of her life.

RECOGNIZING TYLER BUSSERT  
FOR HIS STATE TITLE IN CLASS  
1A GOLF

**HON. CHERI BUSTOS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tyler Bussert, a senior at Riverdale High School, for earning the Class 1A title for the Illinois State Golf Championship.

Tyler Bussert shot a 36–37–73 both days at the state meet for a 146 total to earn his title as state champion, and I would like to recognize Tyler for this tremendous accomplishment. Tyler's first place win follows a ninth place finish as a sophomore and second place finish as a junior in the state championship. As a former athlete, I understand the amount of hard work and commitment it takes to earn such a title. Tyler is a competitor with strong dedication and work ethic. I am proud to see such young talent in our community, and to see him represent Port Byron on a state-wide platform.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Tyler Bussert on his title, and I join the rest of the community in wishing him every success in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICE  
OF PHILLIP TODD STEPHENS

**HON. KEVIN BRADY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Phillip Todd Stephens and his over thirteen years of dedicated service to Team Brady and the people of the Eighth Congressional District of Texas.

A native of Louisville, Kentucky, Todd began his life of public service as a Medical Specialist in the United States Army, which included a posting in the Demilitarized Zone of the Korean Peninsula.

Upon completing his service in the military, Todd went on to earn two Bachelor's Degrees in Philosophy and Political Science at the University of Kentucky and a Master's Degree in Political Science from Eastern Kentucky University.

Soon after his graduation, Todd returned to public service and began working in the Kentucky General Assembly—first in the office of the President of the State Senate and later as a bill drafter for the Committee on Veterans, Military Affairs, and Public Protection.

In 2004, Todd relocated to Washington, D.C., where he served as a Legislative Assistant in my congressional office for two years. Dedicated to working for the people of the Eighth District, Todd and his wife, Sarah, relocated their young family to The Woodlands, TX, in 2006. Todd served as my Director of Regional Issues, handling disaster relief efforts, local transportation issues, and many additional policy concerns directly affecting our communities. In 2013, Todd began working tirelessly as the District Director of my congressional offices in Conroe and Huntsville.

Todd's steady and caring personality has guided him throughout his many years of serv-

ice, and his dry humor and wit have time and again worked to encourage those around him and build relationships with the people of our community. He is an active member of Celebration Church and a volunteer with his son's Boy Scout troop—in addition to being a Texas burger and BBQ connoisseur.

Todd and Sarah, who also worked as my District Director, along with their children, Avery and Owen, are a perfect illustration of a family committed to serving their community.

On December 28, 2017, Todd will complete his final day of over thirteen years in my congressional office. While he will be sorely missed by my staff and me, I am fully confident that he will excel in his new role with The Woodlands Township. I am proud to join the entire Eighth District of Texas in thanking Todd for his years of public service and wishing him the best in the next chapter of his life.

TRIBUTE TO WAHL OPTICAL

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Thursday, December 14, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Wahl Optical of Council Bluffs, Iowa, for celebrating 80 years in business. Wahl Optical was founded in 1937 by Dr. G.H. Wahl. Today, they have two optometrists on staff who perform many services for their customers.

Bob Wahl, the current owner of his family business, has been working there since 1977. He came into the store to get his glasses fixed and started waiting on customers and answering the telephone. His father saw this and convinced his son to come on board to work in the family business. Bob decided to stay and give it a chance.

Over the years, Wahl Optical has built the reputation of being a friendly business, willing to go above and beyond for their customers. Bob said, "I take a lot of pride in making sure people in the Council Bluffs area have every opportunity to look as fashionable as they want to be."

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Wahl Optical for its many years of dedicated and devoted service to Council Bluffs, Iowa and the surrounding area. It is with great pride that I recognize them today and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Wahl Optical for this outstanding achievement and in wishing them nothing but continued success.