

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING SERGEANT FIRST CLASS (RETIRED) ROY F. TACHIAS

**HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a great New Mexican and a true American hero, Sergeant First Class (ret.) Roy Tachias of Albuquerque, New Mexico. On this day, we also honor the entire Tachias family for their continued military service in support of the country they love.

To truly comprehend the significant service and sacrifice of Sergeant Tachias to our nation, it is important to understand his humble beginnings. Roy Tachias was born on January 25, 1932, in Cabezón, New Mexico. The village of Cabezón is located at the base of Cabezón Peak in a remote part of northwestern New Mexico, surrounded by tall mesas and bordering the Navajo Nation Reservation. It was a small village of nearly 200 people, very isolated from modern society. Most of the homes had dirt floors, and no one in the village had water, gas, or electricity. Roy fondly recalls memories of his early years when his mother would bake bread and make soap with his help and the help of his seven brothers and sisters. Each day, the family would haul back water from the local arroyos—arroyos which they shared with the local cattle. Laundry was a three-day process and the whole village would hang their clothes outside to air dry. The villagers were either farmers or cattle ranchers, and all lived off the fruits of their daily labor.

When Roy was in elementary school, the Tachias family moved to the city of Bernalillo. At age 16, Roy and a few of his friends hitchhiked to Albuquerque and enlisted in the United States Army. In 1949, at the age 17, Private Roy Tachias received his first military orders, was posted to Japan, and eventually became a member of the 21st Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division. That unit evolved into the infamous Task Force Smith, the first combat group of American fighting forces deployed to face the North Korean Army following their incursion into South Korea. During this effort, 40 percent of his unit was lost and many more were wounded. In the next few years, Task Force Smith members would go on to fight with distinction against both the North Korean and Chinese Armies. Sergeant Tachias describes the rough conditions, recalling times that his unit marched on without food and supplies, and even used old rags wrapped around their feet when their boots wore out.

In July of 1950, Task Force Smith was ordered to fight a delaying action until reinforcements arrived. Their mission was to join forces with the South Korean Army. At that time, the North Korean army had surged over the border and was headed toward the southern coast, leaving death and destruction behind them.

American soldiers met an estimated 6,000 North Korean troops near Osan, slowed down the enemy advance, and delayed their progress until they halted it altogether. Sergeant Tachias recalls the many times he leaned heavily on his faith to get him through. He says he prayed every day and night and believed that God walked beside him and protected him.

After extensive fighting, the American forces pushed the North Korean Army to the border of China. For five days and five nights straight, both armies fought an exhausting engagement. It was on one of those nights when Sergeant Tachias was ordered to be the sole individual to man a forward listening post in enemy territory, 5,000 yards from his unit on the front line. That night, in the darkness, Roy began to hear and feel a rumbling sound and witnessed the Chinese Army approaching him in waves.

Instinctively, Sergeant Tachias began to shout, shoot, and throw hand grenades at the waves of Chinese descending upon him. His efforts threw the enemy unit into disarray and successfully stopped the attack. He later said, "I confused them, I guess." By the time morning came, Sergeant Tachias had killed 33 enemy soldiers singlehandedly and taken a man prisoner. He was awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and heroism. The Stars and Stripes wrote an article and called him the "One Man Army" for his heroic efforts. Sergeant Tachias was wounded five times during his time on the Korean Peninsula. He also received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star with Valor.

After his service with the U.S. Army in Korea ended, Roy Tachias married the former Ramoncita Angelina Gonzales and settled in California, where he worked for Lockheed Aircraft. He eventually returned to the Army and served two tours in Vietnam, where he earned another Bronze Star. His leadership as a non-commissioned officer throughout his 20-year military career was second to none. In 1976, he retired from the military and returned to his home state of New Mexico, a man forever changed by the memories of those who fought alongside him, the battles he survived, and a lifetime spent in service to his country.

Sergeant Tachias and his wife, Ramoncita, traveled the world in service to our nation and they established a beautiful family with four children: Kathleen, Michael, Jeanette, and Brian. A soldier cannot perform at his best without the love and support of his family—especially without the support of a dedicated spouse, who, at times, must bear the burden of being both mother and father. So we also would like to commend Ramoncita Tachias for the many years of loving service and dedication she has shown to her family and to our nation. Roy and Ramoncita celebrate 65 years of marriage this year, so please join me in congratulating them on this milestone as well.

The Tachias family is known for their patriotism and their support for our Armed Services in their local communities. Due to his example, both sons followed in their father's footsteps

and are also combat veterans. Sergeant Tachias' oldest son, Michael, is a retired Lieutenant Colonel with over thirty years of service in the U.S. Army. After retirement, Col. Michael Tachias established the Cabezón Wounded Warrior Haven in Cabezón, New Mexico to provide a refuge for wounded warriors and their families.

Sergeant Tachias' younger son, Brian, retired as a full Colonel. Because his father's life was so greatly impacted by his military service in Korea, his son, Colonel Brian Tachias, wanted to serve there as well. As a young Infantry officer, he was stationed with the 506th Infantry Regiment on the Korean Demilitarized Zone some 38 years after his father. Colonel Tachias then continued his service as an Army Aviator and he recently retired with 29 years of active duty service.

The legacy does not end there. Sergeant Tachias' grandsons, Joe Garcia, Jr., Brian Tachias, Jr., and Nicholas Tachias, also stepped up to answer a new generation's call to service.

It is with great pride and deep respect that we today recognize the service of this outstanding individual. New Mexico is humbled to honor Sergeant Tachias' contributions to this nation, contributions that began on that Korean peninsula in 1950 and have had generational effects that continue onto a new page of history that is yet to be written. With a third generation of Tachias soldiers guarding America's freedom, we can have confidence that our nation's future is in good hands.

RECOGNIZING STEPHEN PEGRAM FOR LEADERSHIP IN FIRE SAFETY

**HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Stephen Pegram, the Chief of Fire and Emergency Medical Services in Goshen, Ohio.

I am deeply grateful for the service of firefighters like Chief Pegram for the great work they do in Southern and Southwestern Ohio, and beyond. While others run from danger, they run toward it, charging burning buildings, responding to hidden danger, saving lives, and keeping our communities safe.

Chief Pegram has distinguished himself as firefighter worthy of our recognition and gratitude in this Congress. He led the Goshen Fire and EMS in their life-saving missions during this year's historic flooding; in addition, he also serves as the President of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI). ISFSI's mission is to improve training to increase firefighter safety and reduce fatalities and injuries. This mission is critical to protecting those who risk their lives every day to protect us.

Under Chief Pegram's leadership, ISFSI is being awarded the Paul S. Sarbanes Fire Service Safety Leadership Award. This well-

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deserved honor is given annually by the Congressional Fire Services Institute and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to organizations for their outstanding contributions to the health and safety of firefighters.

This award is a true testament to the ISFSI's success in improving firefighter training.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives, I'd like to thank the International Society of Fire Service Instructors for their outstanding training and education for firefighters everywhere.

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BANDIMERE SPEEDWAY

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bandimere Speedway for being recognized as the 2017 Genesis Award winner by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation (Jeffco EDC).

The Genesis Award honors an individual, elected official, city, company or organization that has contributed to the economic vitality of Jefferson County through leadership, innovation, facilitation, and collaboration. A quarter-mile dragstrip located in Morrison, Colorado, Bandimere Speedway opened in 1958 and hosts the NHRA's Mile-High Nationals. Bandimere Speedway has shown their commitment to the community, families and education through its "Race to Read" program reaching more than 35,000 elementary age children each year. The program is now in its 22nd year and continues to find new and innovative ways to grow with support from racers and businesses.

Congratulations to Bandimere Speedway for this well-deserved award, and I thank them for their contribution to our community.

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HONORING NAPA VALLEY COLLEGE

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Napa Valley College on the 75th anniversary of its founding.

Napa Valley College is an important institution in our community. The college has educated thousands of Napa Valley residents and issues certificates and degrees to hundreds of students annually. It has provided students with job training and preparation for four-year universities. Napa Valley College is essential to our region, in part, as the largest wine school in the United States. There are more than 400 students in the Viticulture and Winery Technology Program and dozens of graduates have gone on to establish and run wineries.

In 2015 and 2016, BestColleges.com named Napa Valley College the best community college in California, weighing the rates of graduation, student retention, transfers to four-year universities, and dropouts. In addition to educating many Napa Valley residents, the col-

lege also provides venues for events such as community discussions, performances, debates and naturalization ceremonies.

In 1942, the founder, Dr. Harry McPherson saw the need for a local college and cultivated the public support necessary to establish a successful institution. With his leadership, a bond issue for Napa Valley College passed with 90 percent support.

I attended Napa Valley College on the GI Bill and am proud to have this exceptional institution in our district. It is an honor to be an advocate and supporter for the college and its role in providing access to higher education to people in the Napa Valley.

Mr. Speaker, Napa Valley College is an essential institution in Napa Valley and in Northern California. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor the college on the 75th anniversary of its founding.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN RICHARD SCHMIDHAUSER

**HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the life of John Richard Schmidhauser. Mr. Schmidhauser was born in the Bronx, NY. He lost his father when he was a teenager and lived through the Great Depression with his mother in Maryland, an experience that shaped his work ethic and created a lifelong support for issues related to social justice.

Following his high school graduation, Mr. Schmidhauser enlisted in the U.S. Navy at the outbreak of WWII. He worked as a Communications Officer and French hornist in the ship's band and, following VJ-Day, as a member of the occupying force in Japan.

He later enrolled in college under the GI Bill and earned a BA from the University of Delaware and a MA and PhD from the University of Virginia, in Political Science, with honors. Mr. Schmidhauser also served as a professor at the University of Iowa, where he was highly respected and admired amongst students.

Mr. Schmidhauser produced groundbreaking scholarly work on the U.S. Supreme Court. He authored numerous books and articles on the judiciary and public and constitutional law. He was active in politics and public service throughout his life and was known by many as a pioneer in his field.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join with the nation and the Schmidhauser family in celebrating this special life, which ended peacefully on February 21, 2018.

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REMEMBERING GAINESVILLE'S WALT SNELLING

**HON. DOUG COLLINS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of "Gainesville High School's biggest fan," Walt Snelling, who recently passed away at the age of 81.

For over 30 years, Walt announced ball games for his alma mater, Gainesville High

School. Having played for the Red Elephants as an offensive lineman, he fostered a passion for sports early in life.

Before Walt became "the voice of the Red Elephants," he graduated from the University of North Georgia with honors in 1959. He later enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving as an officer for 12 years before returning home to manage the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Department.

The children in the community were the ones who inspired him to participate in the local sports scene. He proudly announced games from the loud speaker because he wanted each player to hear his or her name called and understand how special they are.

Walt's memory will endure in the hearts of Gainesville residents. I stand with many others today to mourn the loss of this legend, and I ask us all to remember the Snelling family in the weeks ahead.

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IN RECOGNITION OF SALLY ANNE CONVIRS JAMES

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 16, 2018*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Sally Anne Convirs James who is receiving the 2018 Community Care Award from the Associated Parents' Group of Hillsborough for her exemplary involvement in the school district and the community at large.

Sally started as a parent volunteer in the classroom and at events while her children attended South School and Crocker Middle School and became the librarian at South in 2008. Sally's creativity is boundless. She developed several library programs and educational practices that bring classroom learning to life and instill a love of reading in all South students. South's Reading Tiger, her best-known literacy program, earned the California Gold Ribbon Award in 2016. Sally also created the Summer Reading Challenge and the Long-Term Reading Challenge and she continues the Birthday Book Club tradition.

Sally is a staunch advocate of hands-on learning. She walks students through history in programs such as Colonial Day, A Walk Through the American Revolution, Gold Rush Day or Ohlone Day. She has brought numerous authors to the library and works closely with parents and teachers to come up with the most fun and beneficial activities for her students. She also maintains the website and social media pages. Sally is truly a multitasking gem.

Before becoming the librarian, Sally served as a member of the Citizen's Oversight Committee and on the Board of Directors of the Hillsborough Little League. She was an inaugural member of the school district's HTV team and started a Girl Scout troop.

In addition to her library responsibilities, Sally is passionate about the environment and green initiatives. She helped set up trash sorting facilities and has participated in creek clean ups. She also helped establish a partnership between South and Samaritan House which teaches students about public service and social justice. Nurturing students to become our leaders of tomorrow, Sally helped revamp the student council format and process. Sally is all about helping others—she is