

their 150th Anniversary. This milestone is a great testament to the commitment this parish has shown to the Lord, their parishioners, and the entire community.

CELEBRATING THE 176TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARION MILITARY INSTITUTE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Marion Military Institute on 176 years of service to our nation's Armed Forces. Located in the heart of Alabama's Black Belt, and only thirty minutes from my hometown of Selma, MMI is a pillar of the 7th Congressional District. Since its founding, MMI has achieved a national reputation for preparing young men and women for successful civilian and military careers.

Marion Military Institute is one of only four military junior colleges in the United States, and is the nation's oldest military junior college, tracing its origin back to 1842 with the founding of Howard College in Marion, Alabama. MMI is also one of the first schools to establish a Student Government Association and a student honor system. Former President Howard Taft was the president of the board of trustees, and former president Woodrow Wilson was the keynote speaker of the convocation at MMI chapel in 1905. Marion Military Institute continued as a private high school and junior college until 2006, when the Alabama State Legislature incorporated the military institution into the Alabama Community College System.

I was reminded of Marion Military Institute's legacy when I recently addressed the impressive Corps of 446 cadets. As our country's oldest military junior college, MMI has produced over 210 Generals and Admirals for our Armed Forces. I am also proud to say that there are 348 men and women MMI graduates in all five Service Academies.

College students across the nation attend MMI to establish a strong foundation for their careers and to take advantage of its leadership development opportunities. Marion Military Institute teaches students to never give up, to push forward, and to excel in all of life's pursuits.

In the student body, about 40 percent of the cadets will pursue a civilian career and are enrolled in the Leadership Education Program. Others are working toward receiving an appointment to one of the five U.S. Service Academies. Unique to the four military junior colleges is the Early Commissioning Program, which provides an opportunity for qualified students to earn a commission as a Second Lieutenant after receiving their associate's degree to serve in either the National Guard or the U.S. Army Reserve. Students also can enter the U.S. Marine Corps Program that allows students to work and train with a Selection Officer. Lastly, students can enter the Air Force ROTC, a program that is designed to give men and women the opportunity to become Air Force officers while completing their degrees.

This summer, I was also pleased to have a wonderful Marion Military Institute graduate

named Jordan Ceasar intern in my Washington, D.C. office. Jordan learned about a new side of public service as he assisted constituents, studied the legislative process, and learned how to advocate for policy reforms.

Marion Military Institute has a strong history of developing our country's future leaders for military, government, and community service, and I am thrilled to celebrate their 176th Anniversary. With college enrollment averaging an all-time high, I am sure Marion Military Institute will continue to be a pillar of the Black Belt and produce America's leaders for another 176 years.

RECOGNIZING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR ERIC B. HILL

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Mr. LaHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize Command Sergeant Major Eric B. Hill on his retirement from a career of honorable service in the United States Army.

In 1983, Command Sergeant Major Hill enlisted in the Army and was initially assigned to the 388th Chemical Company. As he continued his service, Command Sergeant Major Hill excelled in a multitude of duty assignments and was repeatedly promoted as a non-commissioned officer. From his days as a young Sergeant serving in the 388th Chemical Company to the highest rank of Command Sergeant Major in the 419th Movement Control Battalion, he has exemplified the true meaning of leadership and commitment. Command Sergeant Major Hill honorably served our nation through several combat deployments including Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2003 to 2008 and Operation Enduring Freedom from 2010 to 2011.

Throughout his duty assignments, Command Sergeant Major Hill was highly decorated in recognition of his exceptional service. He is a recipient of several service awards including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Combat Action Badge, Meritorious Service Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters.

I would like to acknowledge Command Sergeant Major Hill for his 31 years of service and sacrifice to our country. I am grateful for his dedication, bravery, and selfless service. It is an honor to recognize servicemen like Eric Hill and I thank him for his sacrifice for our country.

TRIBUTE TO ANNE AND JERRY TOWNSEND

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Anne and Jerry Townsend of Mount Ayr on the very special occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary.

Their lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa's values. As the years pass, may their love continue to

grow even stronger and may they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many more years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 60 years together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. JONI MCGEE'S 15 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE PECOS COUNTY VSO

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Mr. HURD. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to offer my sincere gratitude to Ms. Joni McGee upon her retirement from 15 years of service with the Pecos County Veterans Service Office. Her commitment to the Pecos County community has and will continue to have an impact on all those she has worked with.

I am proud to serve alongside hardworking men and women like Ms. McGee in the 23rd Congressional District of Texas. Her time as a County Veteran Service Officer has undoubtedly had a tremendous impact on the wellbeing of veterans in our community. I wish her all the best in the many years to come.

PROTECT HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR ALL

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to bring awareness to the Republicans' effort to dismantle the Affordable Care Act and weaken protections provided by Medicaid and Medicare. Republicans began their sabotage of the ACA when many of their Governors, including Alabama's Governor, refused to expand Medicaid. In these states, the full benefits of the law haven't been realized. Working families have been left behind, rural hospitals have closed, and premiums have risen.

Make no mistake, these governors created an environment in which Republican politicians could campaign on the failures of the ACA, all while taking NO credit for the failures they created. The millions of working Americans who fall in the Medicaid gap and live in non-expansion states have been overlooked! This body needs to be laser focused on improving the marketplace for the working Americans who have fallen victim to the lack of Medicaid expansion.

Last year, I sat down with my hairdresser in Birmingham, and she immediately told me about how she had lost her health coverage. She didn't know why, but as she explained her situation, I quickly realized that she had fallen into our state's Medicaid gap.

A few years before in 2014, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, she received Cost Sharing Reductions to afford commercial health insurance for the first time at an affordable rate.

Unfortunately, President Trump has decided that he doesn't value those CSRs and has pulled those subsidies. But last year, before his harmful decision was implemented, my hairdresser fell victim to another form of health care sabotage—our Republican Governor's failure to expand Medicaid.

Since 2014, my hairdresser had comprehensive coverage through Blue Cross, subsidized by cost sharing reductions from the ACA. She had access to primary care appointments and everything she needed to lead a healthy life. Unfortunately, hairdressing is one of the many careers in the service economy in which income fluctuates from year to year. And in 2017, her income fell below the poverty line.

If she lived in an expansion state, she would have had the option to be covered by Medicaid while she continued to work. But instead, she lives in Alabama. She was left without coverage because she made too much to qualify for Medicaid.

She was forced into the commercial market with no premium assistance whatsoever. Premiums are higher in states that didn't expand Medicaid. Therefore, premiums in Alabama are much higher than what she could afford. President Trump's elimination of the cost-sharing reductions has been cited by insurers as a driving force behind premium hikes in 2018.

My hairdresser was anxious about having an emergency in which she would be left with large medical bills she couldn't pay. I was heartbroken seeing her pain. Fortunately, we were able to connect her with patient navigators at a large hospital in Birmingham. The Trump Administration has ended contracts with navigators under the ACA, but since the hospital has sufficient resources, they have taken the cost of continuing the program on themselves.

I was happy we could help her, but there are millions of working Americans like her who don't have that kind of access to their Member of Congress. For these Americans, even a year without basic health care coverage can be catastrophic.

When I think about the health disparities currently plaguing Republican states, I think about all of the constituents I've met while in Congress. We cannot allow our working constituents to continue being victims of political malpractice. We can no longer ignore the vulnerable residents of non-expansion states and their needs.

Make no mistake, the ACA strengthened access to primary health care services across the country, even in non-expansion states. In Alabama alone, the law gave 897,000 mental health and substance use disorder benefits, treated more than two million children and adults for pre-existing conditions, and gave more than 650,000 Medicare enrollees free preventives services. However, approximately 235,000 Alabamians would have gained health insurance coverage if the state expanded Medicaid.

It is my sincere hope that Congress will work together to alleviate the economic constraints of health care access for hardworking individuals across America. We need to restore what was best about the ACA and improve access for all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 27, 2018, I was recorded as a NO on Roll Call No. 302. I had intended to vote YES on Roll Call No. 302.

CRISIS IN THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we held a hearing on human rights abuses and targeted killings in the Anglophone region of the Republic of Cameroon. We explored the roots of this emerging crisis, and U.S. policy options for addressing human rights violations and instability in the Anglophone region, which affects not only stability in Cameroon, but also in the region.

The increased tempo of government repression is fueling secessionist sentiment, leading to instability in the country in advance of presidential elections scheduled for October. Cameroon's political stability is of great importance to the U.S. because the country plays a critical role in American counterterrorism efforts against Boko Haram in the west and central Africa.

We also have ongoing concerns about 85-year-old strongman Paul Biya, who has either served as Prime Minister or as President since 1975 and who seems disconnected if not at odds with many of the people he is supposed to serve—particularly the English-speaking minority.

As the U.S. is involved in training and equipping Cameroonian security forces to strengthen regional capacity to combat terrorism, it is necessary to re-evaluate further counterterrorism cooperation with Cameroon to ensure the protection of Cameroonian civilians and respect for civil and political rights—including the most fundamental of rights, the right to life.

Understanding the history of Cameroon—or, rather, “the Cameroons,” as the choice between the singular and plural form is fraught with significance—is necessary for understanding the present crisis.

While it is a country of great African ethnic diversity, the main dividing line is linguistic, reflecting a colonial past which saw the French-speaking region gain independence from France in 1960 and union with the southern portion of the former mandate territory of British Cameroon the following year.

The country that was formed was the Federal Republic of the Cameroon, and the national flag that was adopted had two stars, signaling to the world the union of two coequal states under one constitution. English speakers were always a minority, however, and the political and constitutional basis under which they entered into a union eroded over time.

In 1972, then-President Ahmadou Ahidjo abolished the federal system of government and created a unitary “United Republic of

Cameroon.” The flag was not changed until 1975 to reflect this new imposition of monist rule, when the two stars gave way to one. In 1984, President Biya again revised the Constitution, which changed the country's name to the present “Republic of Cameroon.” The current Constitutional iteration dates back to 1996, and on paper, at least, restores a certain degree of federalist autonomy in response to Anglophone demands.

The reality is, however, different.

In 2016, the central government triggered a crisis by appointing French-speaking teachers and judges in the Anglophone areas.

To English-speakers, it felt like an occupation. Certain Anglophone activists declared independence of a “Federal Republic of Ambazonia” in 2017, which had led to a heavy-handed response by the military. Security forces have reportedly burned down villages, arrested and killed protesters in Anglophone areas, though it also must be noted that French-speaking teachers have been targeted by English-speaking separatists.

As Congress, we need to address whether we can continue to cooperate with Cameroon's security forces, given the reported abuses, and if so, how.

As the International Crisis Group—which is supplied one of our witnesses—has emphasized, the Cameroonian government's use of the military against its English-speaking citizens has exacerbated the situation. Indeed, our U.S. Ambassador to Cameroon Peter Barlerin has criticized Cameroon's actions and has expressed his concerns about the government's use of disproportionate force.

The Anglophone crisis casts a shadow upon the upcoming presidential elections. The credibility of the election, slated for October, is already under question as the government has yet to make serious preparations. It is assumed that strongman Paul Biya will run for re-election, but given his age and frequent absences abroad it is uncertain who will succeed him eventually.

There are also growing humanitarian concerns attributable to the Anglophone crisis. An estimated 160,000 people have been displaced within Cameroon, and over 21,000 Cameroonians have fled to neighboring Nigeria as refugees.

The continued malign presence of Boko Haram in northeastern Cameroon, attacking people in both Cameroon and in Nigeria, is a further complication which has led to an estimated 96,000 Nigerians fleeing the other way to Cameroon. Congress must then also weigh the need to assist Cameroon in its fight against Boko Haram.

Given all these spillover factors, we can see that a failure to solve the Anglophone crisis is not purely a domestic affair, but a regional one which implicates U.S. security interests.

HONORING ROSA BILSTON

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Rosa Bilston, my constituent from New Haven, for her commitment to the nation and to public service. Despite recent shootings at schools across the country, Congress has