country. Firmán joined the 34th division of the U.S. Naval Reserves in Green Bay in 1940 at the age of 17. He entered the Navy a few months later and was assigned to the USS Maryland in April of 1941. When the USS Maryland left for Pearl Harbor in July of 1941, Firmán was aboard as a seaman as a gunner’s mate, and was aboard at the time of the attack.

The morning of December 7, 1941, Firmán was preparing for Mass aboard the USS Oklahoma when he saw the first Japanese bombers flying overhead. The USS Oklahoma was next to the USS Maryland in the harbor when it sustained major damage and capsized. Firmán bravely ran into the face of danger and took up arms as he defended the base with anti-aircraft guns. He later helped pull his deceased brothers in arms from the sunken ship. On that tragic day, 460 men perished on the USS Oklahoma and the USS Maryland lost five brave souls. The 4 days following the attacks, Firmán and his fellow soldiers rescued 32 men from the hull of the USS Oklahoma.

Firmán continued his brave service to the country for 3 years on the USS Maryland participating in Guadalcanal, the Battle of Tarawa, and the Battle of Kwajalein Atoll. After the war, Firmán was assigned to the USS Bayfield APA 33 and was sent to the Marshall Islands for atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll. On February 7, 1947 he was discharged from the Navy after six years and seven days on active duty.

Firmán was one of more than 16 million ordinary people that did extraordinary things during World War II. His willingness to share his story in 2003 at the age of 80 allowed many across Wisconsin, including students throughout Wisconsin, to hear his account of that day. It was in 2003 that he first visited the Punch Bowl Cemetery in Hawaii and realized he wanted to be a voice to tell part of the story of these 2,335 servicemen and women who perished on that day of infamy. With each retelling of his story, Firmán shared an important message: “Truly, man has got to learn to get along with each other.” Firmán’s wise words still ring true today.

Mr. Balza was 95 when he passed away on Wednesday, October 10, 2018. He was born September 25, 1923, to Theophile and Mary Balza, the youngest of 11 sons. On April 23, 1949, he married Nathalie M. Larscheid. He was a true lover of the outdoors, he enjoyed camping with his family and hunting and fishing with his brother-in-law, Carlton Larscheid. He was very proud of becoming a licensed pilot at the age of 63.

Words cannot justly thank Mr. Balza for his many years of service to our country. A treasure for a community and nation, Mr. Balza cannot be replaced. May his service, dedication, and sacrifice be remembered by all.

HON. MICHÈLE LUJÁN GRISHAM
OF NEW MEXICO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Ms. MICHÈLE LUJÁN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Diego Zamora, who lost his life after a long battle with cancer at the age of 60. Over the past three decades, Diego built a highly successful law practice in Santa Fe and was a significant figure in New Mexico’s legal community.

Diego was born in New Mexico to a family with a history of success in the legal field. His father, Matías, served as a district court judge in San Miguel, Mora, and Guadalupe counties. His sister, Monica, served as a district court judge in Albuquerque and now serves on the state Court of Appeals. His brother, Geno, serves as a Santa Fe city attorney and was previously a general counsel for Governor Bill Richardson.

Following in his father’s footsteps, Diego received his law degree from Georgetown University in 1984. For decades, he had a successful law practice with a focus on personal injury, wrongful death, employment, and civil rights cases. Fighting for the little guy was his passion, and he successfully took on powerful interests time and again in order to achieve justice for his clients. In addition to his intellect and passion, he was also known for his warm personality that allowed him to connect with juries.

Diego also devoted a great deal of time to the New Mexico Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program, an organization that helps members of the legal community dealing with substance abuse issues. He took countless lawyers under his wing during difficult times and was known as a mentor for many. He was a true fighter and each challenge he overcame made him stronger. His compassion and strength defined him, especially in the face of adversity.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my sincere condolences to all of Diego’s family and loved ones. I hope his family is comforted by cherished memories of Diego, and by the fact that so many in our community mourn his loss and celebrate his life with them.

HONORING JOYCE OVERTON WITH CALIFORNIA’S THIRD DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joyce Overton as a woman of the year. She has devoted a lifetime of service to the community of Clearlake. She has established herself as a strong public servant, advocate, and champion for the county’s most vulnerable populations: youths, seniors, and the homeless. In her role as a City Council member, Ms. Overton has prioritized economic revitalization programs and advocates for sound fiscal policy, road improvements, and the reinvigoration of the Lakeshore Corridor. Ms. Overton has also been instrumental in leading the recovery efforts after the devastating fires and floods that have ravaged Lake County. She has selflessly contributed her time and resources supporting the community at the evacuation centers. Her passion for volunteerism in the community is also evident in her roles as founder and past Executive Director of Lake County Youth Services, a nonprofit youth services organization, and as a leader in providing a positive support system to young people in her Lake County. She is currently the Executive Director of Highland Senior Services Center.