

Treatment Services Court, and Chairman of the Memorial Day Parade committee. He is also active in Honor Guard, Color Guard, and other veteran organizations. In addition to his work with veterans' groups, he serves as a community sports advocate and official.

Mr. Albright is the son of a World War II and Korean War veteran, and he has inspired his son and grandson to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending Len Albright for his dedication and service.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
BENJAMIN C. PALACIOS

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of an outstanding Soldier and a very dear friend, retired Command Sergeant Major Benjamin C. Palacios who passed away on November 9, 2018.

Affectionately known as Ben, Command Sergeant Major Palacios was born on November 11, 1950 on the island of Saipan in the Northern Marianas. He later moved to Guam where he graduated from George Washington High School and was drafted into the United States Army in 1969.

Ben spent the next thirty-four years in exemplary service in the Army as an armor Soldier. His duties have included diverse assignments ranging from Tank Commander to Command Sergeant Major of some of the premier organizations in the United States military. He served as the Operations Sergeant in several Armor Battalions including an assignment as a Senior Enlisted Advisor for the 50th Armored Division, New Jersey Army National Guard in 1988. In 1991, Ben deployed to Saudi Arabia in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm as the 3-69 Armor Battalion Command Sergeant Major. In 1994, Ben served as the Brigade Command Sergeant Major for the 2nd Vanguard Brigade in the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and in 1996 he was selected to be the 24th Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major. Following this assignment Ben served as the Command Sergeant Major for the Third Mobile Armored Corps at Fort Hood in Texas and was subsequently selected to serve as the United States Army Forces Command's Command Sergeant Major in July 1998. Ben's illustrious Army career culminated in one of the most prestigious assignments as the command sergeant major of the United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, United States Forces Korea and 8th United States Army in the Republic of South Korea.

On his retirement in 2003, the Republic of South Korea awarded Command Sergeant Major Palacios the Order of National Security Merit Gwanbok Medal on behalf of the President of South Korea. Ben was the first enlisted soldier to receive this prestigious medal since the end of the Korean War.

Ben's most prestigious awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Republic of Korea Order of National Security (Gwangbok) Medal, Bronze Star Medal, and

Meritorious Service Medal. Some of these he was awarded more than once.

Since 2003 Ben has remained engaged in Guam and the Pacific region working for companies associated with improving the United States security posture and contributing to the local community. One of his most devoted efforts was as a member of my Veterans Advisory Council which I founded to assist my advocacy on behalf of veterans residing in Guam. His dedication and personal efforts at improving services, support, and benefits for the U.S. military veterans living on Guam was greatly appreciated and a welcome improvement to the quality of life of all veterans.

I appreciated his warm, welcoming and inclusive approach to serving our veterans and everyone he engages.

I will miss Ben and his ever-optimistic attitude. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife of 45 years Estella Kosaka Palacios, and his sons; Benjamin, Bryan, Bradley, Brent, and their families.

Rest in peace my friend.

TRIBUTE TO BENNETT "BEN"
DRAKE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Riverside County farming and water leader Bennett "Ben" Drake, who passed away on Wednesday, November 7, 2018. Ben served the people of Riverside County in many ways throughout his life and he will be deeply missed.

Ben was born in Riverside, California on July 8, 1949, to Richard and Martha Drake. Ben was a graduate of Fresno State University and also a member of Class XII of the California Agricultural Leadership Program. Ben was a fifth generation farmer in Riverside County and a resident of Temecula since 1973. Ben founded Drake Enterprises, Inc., a farm management company 40 years ago. They manage 750 acres of avocados and 450 acres of winegrapes in the Temecula Valley. Ben served as past President of the Temecula Valley Winegrape Growers Association and past Chairman of the California Association of Winegrape Growers.

As a prominent farmer and water advocate, Ben played a significant role in the successful growth of the Temecula Valley Wine Country. In the 1990's, an outbreak of Pierce's Disease threatened to wipe out grape vineyards throughout the region and state. As I witnessed first-hand, Ben's leadership during the crisis made a tremendous impact and resulted in a coordinated response from local, state and federal agencies that ultimately saved the region from devastation. Ben was elected to serve on the Rancho California Water District's Board of Directors in September, 2001, and faithfully served on the Board for 17 years. For all of his many accomplishments Ben was named California Association of Winegrape Growers Leader of the Year 2013; Boy Scouts Distinguished Citizen of the Year 2014; Riverside County 4H All Star; and received the Robert M. Howie Award for Outstanding Service to Riverside Agriculture 2010.

Ben is survived by his wife of 43 years, Sharon (Clark) Drake and his children Katie (Drake) and JD Harkey, Chase Drake, Kourtney Drake, Kara (Drake) and MacLain Atkinson. I want to extend my heartfelt condolences to the entire Drake family, his friends, and everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him. Although Ben may be gone, the many contributions he made in Riverside County will have a lasting impact.

CONGRATULATING JOHN
NICHOLAS "NICKY" SMITH

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate John Nicholas "Nicky" Smith, Mayor of Albany in the 1st District of Kentucky, on his retirement from public office and offer my best wishes as he focuses on doing what he enjoys most—spending time with his loved ones.

As a staunch advocate for the citizens of Albany throughout his tenure, Mayor Smith secured over \$27 million in grants and loans to improve the livelihood of each of his neighbors through improvements to downtown infrastructure and the expansion of vital community services. His leadership on Area Development District Boards of Directors and his chairmanship and involvement with multiple community boards and committees during his career are a testament to his fervent spirit and lifelong commitment to bettering those around him.

I join with his family and friends as well as all those who have benefited from his efforts to wish him the best in this new chapter of his life. I am grateful for his steadfast leadership and profound influence on countless residents of the 1st District of Kentucky.

HONORING JERRY WHITE

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a former longtime member of my staff, Jerry White, for his work in my office and his service to our state.

Jerry started on our team during my first term in Congress, serving as my Deputy Chief of Staff in Washington, D.C. and later as the Staff Director of the Republican Policy Committee. During his time in our office, he advised me on a variety of policy issues, developed and wrote numerous bills, and managed the Republican Policy Committee. Since leaving our office, Jerry has gone on to serve as the Legislative Director for Rep. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and now works as the Policy Director for the House Republican Conference.

On a personal note, Jerry and I share a love of the life lessons of sports and a commitment to putting family first in our life. Jerry has been my advisor, but more importantly, I consider Jerry my friend.

I wish Jerry continued success in all that God has planned for him and his family. I