

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING NOAH WEBSTER STUDENT GOVERNMENT

HON. ANDY BIGGS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2019

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of five students from the Noah Webster Charter School in Mesa, Arizona. Madisin Bauer, Brody Kelly, Lucus Martin, Kelly Conboy, and Logan Carter were elected by their peers to lead the Wildcat's student government in the 2019–2020 school year. To qualify for the election, each student was recognized by their teachers for outstanding leadership skills and exceptional moral character.

Over the next year, I have no doubt that these young leaders will excel in service to their school and one another. I look forward to hearing about their experiences as they plan town hall-style meetings, run pep assemblies, and organize community projects.

These students' willingness to serve gives me hope for our future. Our country needs people of all ages with hearts of servants to represent and lead Americans who need a voice. I am honored to have such talent and leadership in my district.

RECOGNIZING PETER VARGAS

HON. VAN TAYLOR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2019

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Peter Vargas for his twenty years of dedicated service to the City of Allen, Texas.

Mr. Vargas earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Education from the University of North Colorado in 1972, and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Colorado, Denver, in 1978. Following his graduation, Paul began his career in municipal management in the City of Arvada where he swiftly rose from serving as an Administrative Assistant to Assistant to the City Manager. He would later hold the position of Assistant City Manager for the City of Englewood, Colorado, and eventually be selected as the City Manager in Laredo, Texas.

Mr. Vargas would later serve as the Executive Director of the City of Dallas' Trinity River Corridor Project, prior to joining the City of Allen in 1999 as City Manager. As Allen's long-time City Manager, Peter has worked tirelessly to improve the City's financial stability, raise the bond rating, and improve and increase the City's capital infrastructure program. Such efforts to create a high-quality, sustainable community have led to Allen's national recognition as a "Community of the Year" and "20 Best Places to Live in America." Peter is also known for championing the

development of regional economic development programs with area governments in our fast-growing region.

Peter is often lauded throughout North Texas for his efforts to build sustaining relationships with partners in both the public and private sectors. His unique ability to work in tandem with Allen's citizens and City employees to ensure that expectations are exceeded has earned him the respect of his colleagues and all those in the community.

While the list of professional associations and accolades for Mr. Peter Vargas is impressive, perhaps his proudest achievement is serving as husband to Cheryl Dyer Vargas, and the father to his daughter, Jenna.

The Allen community and all those who have had the honor of working with Peter over the years have been witness to the tremendous growth and success of the region due in part to his vision. Today, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Peter for his dedicated and tireless efforts to make Allen a great place to live, work, and raise a family. We wish Peter well as he begins this next chapter in his life.

ESCAPE ACT OF 2019

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2019

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I reintroduce the "Enhancing the Strength and Capacity of America's Primary Evacuation routes (ESCAPE) Act," with Congressman WILLIAM R. KEATING (D-MA). I want to thank Congressman KEATING for his leadership as the sponsor last Congress and partnering with me this year.

This bicameral bill would establish a new U.S. Department of Transportation grant program for roadway, bridges, and other transportation projects that strengthen and protect routes essential for mass evacuations caused by natural disasters and other emergency events. With increasingly frequent and severe disasters across the country due to climate change, Congress must provide dedicated funding for resilient evacuation routes.

In 2017, nearly 200,000 Californians were forced to evacuate when they learned that Oroville Dam, the tallest dam in the nation, was on the verge of failing. Thousands of drivers funneled onto a narrow two-lane highway, spending hours in bumper-to-bumper traffic to reach safety along the Sacramento Valley's major north-to-south evacuation route.

Last year, Paradise, California, just north of my district was reduced to rubble by the devastating Camp Fire. As the flames engulfed the single-lane road that served as the city's primary evacuation route, residents were forced to abandon their vehicles and escape on foot—some to their death. The lack of adequate evacuation routes in our nation—par-

ticularly for small rural communities—is costing lives every year. Our bicameral legislation would provide dedicated federal funding for evacuation routes that save lives in times of crisis.

I hope that any infrastructure package passed this Congress will include our "ESCAPE Act." I plan on making this a major priority in my work as a senior member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to join Congressman KEATING and me in cosponsoring this critical legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CLAY HIGGINS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2019

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, during these votes, I was with the President in Louisiana. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 203; YEA on Roll Call No. 204; NAY on Roll Call No. 205; NAY on Roll Call No. 206; NAY on Roll Call No. 207; NAY on Roll Call No. 208; and YEA on Roll Call No. 209.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE HONORARY CONSULATE OF LATVIA IN MASSACHUSETTS

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2019

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the official opening of the Honorary Consulate of Latvia in Norwell, Massachusetts.

The United States and the Republic of Latvia share an important bilateral relationship that has only grown stronger with time. The ties that our two nations have fostered over the years remain meaningful, whether it be through security assistance and cooperation, trade agreements, or our shared membership in critical international organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, United Nations, and World Trade Organization.

In today's ever-changing international climate, it is crucial to applaud and encourage new opportunities for cooperation, dialogue, and friendship with treasured allies. The opening of this new Honorary Consulate is such an opportunity, and I am thrilled that my district can have a place in this progress. I would like to extend particular commendation to Uldis K. Sipols, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Latvia in Massachusetts. As a longtime resident of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and a seasoned professional in the business world, I know that he will bring much needed enthusiasm and experience to his new diplomatic role, and I wish him the best.

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

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