

as a captain in the United States Air Force, working in the Judge Advocates Office. A few years later, he returned to Georgia to begin his 40-year career in real estate law at a firm that would later become Stewart, Melvin & Frost.

Often referred to as “larger than life,” John led a life full of leadership and service. He was an Eagle Scout, a member of Leadership Georgia, and a deacon and elder at First Presbyterian Church of Gainesville, where he taught Sunday School and sang in the choir for over 40 years. John also served as president of the Gainesville Rotary Club from 1988 to 1989 and was recognized as Gainesville Rotary’s Man of the Year in 1999.

John Marshall Melvin leaves behind an honorable legacy of integrity, leadership, and service to his community. He was known around town as a well-respected lawyer, but he will always be remembered first and foremost as a loving husband, father, brother, uncle, and grandfather. John will be greatly missed by many, but his impact will continue to reach generations to come.

On behalf of the people of Northeast Georgia, I hope you will join John’s family in celebrating his remarkable life.

REPORTING ON THE 2019 SPRING
SESSION OF THE NATO PARLIAMEN-
TARY ASSEMBLY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, from May 30 to June 3, 2019, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) held its Spring Session in Bratislava, Slovakia. I led a bipartisan delegation to the Session, which included Representatives MICHAEL TURNER, JOHN SHIMKUS, SUSAN DAVIS, LINDA SÁNCHEZ, JIM COSTA, BRETT GUTHRIE, PAUL COOK, FILEMON VELA, BRENDAN BOYLE, NEAL DUNN, JAMES SENSENBRENNER, and staff.

The NATO PA was founded in 1955 to serve as an inter-parliamentary organization for NATO. The NATO PA brings together the legislators of the NATO Member States to promote awareness and understanding of challenges facing NATO and strengthen the transatlantic relationship.

In February in Brussels, Belgium, we were honored to have the Speaker of the House of Representatives NANCY PELOSI address the gathered delegates of the NATO PA and attend a meeting of the North Atlantic Council. The Speaker conveyed Congress’ unshakable commitment to the Alliance and was received with great warmth.

In early April, NATO celebrated its 70th Anniversary with a meeting of foreign ministers in Washington, DC—the site of the signing of the Washington Treaty in April 1949. On April 3, 2019, in observance of the 70th Anniversary, Mr. TURNER and I introduced H. Res. 286, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States remains committed to NATO. On April 4, 2019, at the invitation of Speaker NANCY PELOSI, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg addressed a Joint Meeting of the two houses of Congress, the first head of a multilateral organization to deliver such an address.

On April 25, 2019, NATO’s 100th Rose-Roth Seminar was held in Brussels, Belgium. To recognize this milestone, Ripley Rand, former United States Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina, spoke to commemorate and reflect on the work of his godfather and co-founder of the seminars, Congressman Charlie Rose of North Carolina.

On May 30, 2019, in Bratislava, NATO PA convened its Spring Session to conduct the committee work of the NATO PA.

The Defense and Security Committee heard three reports. Joseph Day of Canada gave a report on modernization of arms control and Allied nuclear forces, which mentioned NATO’s new nuclear deterrence policy and how this has paved the way for a potential new era of rearmament and potentially destabilizing arms race. Another report was given by Mr. Nicholas Soames of the United Kingdom on NATO’s ‘Evolving Security in the North Atlantic,’ which discussed five recommendations to help secure Allied interests and activities in the North Atlantic. Lara Martinho of Portugal delivered a report on NATO exercises and investments, which among other things identified opportunities for investment Member States can take to improve mobility of the military.

The Economics and Security Committee heard a report from Ausrine Armonait of Lithuania on North Macedonia, NATO’s soon to be 30th member. The head of Norway’s delegation, Christian Tybring-Gjedde, gave a report on how economic sanctions can be used as a tool for foreign policy and considers the conditions under which these tools can be effective. The committee also received a report from Jean-Marie Bockel of France on the impact of digital technology on the global economy and international trade in North America and Europe.

The Science and Technology Committee heard from three reports. One from Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS on “NATO in the Cyber Age: Strengthening Security & Defence, Stabilising Deterrence,” which described the growing importance of cyber security to NATO’s defense capabilities. Matej Tonin, the head of Slovenia’s delegation, delivered a report on artificial intelligence, which discussed the challenges and opportunities presented by military uses for artificial intelligence and global artificial intelligence research and development. Finally, the report “NATO Anti-Submarine Warfare: Rebuilding Capability, Preparing for the Future,” was presented by Leona Alleslev of Canada.

The Political Committee heard three reports. I presented my report, “NATO at 70: Why the Alliance Remains Indispensable,” which stressed that NATO’s success over the past 70 years is not only due to its military capabilities, but also the fact that it is an alliance underpinned by common values. This emphasis on shared values has been pivotal in maintaining Alliance cohesion for seven decades, and it will be decisive for continued success. The Alliance must continue to insist that Allies uphold the founding democratic principles of the Alliance and consider support for democratic institutions as a condition for continued and future membership in the Alliance. Julio Calha of Portugal delivered the report “Security and Stability in Africa—Challenges and Opportunities for NATO.” Also, Raynell Andreychuk of Canada presented a report on NATO’s relations with Russia, addressing

Russia’s likely confrontational attitude toward NATO, as well as areas where NATO and Russia have common areas of interest that could be developed.

Finally, the Civil Dimension of Security Committee heard a report from Ulla Schmidt of Germany, which reaffirmed the Alliance’s values. The report explored NATO’s historical commitment to democratic institutions and outlines recent challenges to these values. The committee also heard a report from Jane Cordy of Canada, examining Ukraine five years after the Revolution of Dignity. Finally, Lord Jopling of the United Kingdom, presented a report that emphasized that border security has become a top priority for many NATO Allies and examined border management strategies on both sides of the Atlantic.

During the Spring Session, the United States Delegation also met with the Speaker of the Slovakian Parliament Andrej Danko and was hosted by the German delegation for a bilateral working lunch.

I want to thank the members of the U.S. Delegation who work hard to support the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and in doing so demonstrate a steadfast commitment to transatlantic security and maintaining a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. I also want to recognize the incredible support the NATO PA and our delegation receive from the Speaker of the House. It is noticed and appreciated on both sides of the Atlantic. Our delegation will continue its work in London in October at the 2019 Annual Session of the NATO PA.

HONORING CLYDE “ERNIE” HIERS
AND HIS 39 YEAR CAREER

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Clyde “Ernie” Hiers on his 39 years of service to our communities as Fire Chief in Temple Terrace, Florida and the City of Kannapolis, located in North Carolina’s Eighth Congressional District.

Over the years, Ernie has made countless contributions to our community. He started his career in 1980 as a driver for Temple Terrace Fire Department at age 21 and retires today as Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator at Kannapolis Fire Department.

Ernie is known throughout the community for his big smile, endless supply of jokes, and passion for service. Through his leadership, Kannapolis Fire Department has experienced a time of unprecedented growth. Ernie saw the number of firefighters rise from 33 to 84 on any given shift, transitioned to an all paid staff, and implemented thermal imaging and sophisticated 911 systems. Exemplary of his prowess, Kannapolis Fire Department constructed two new replacement stations and improved Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings for the City.

Ernie now plans to spend more time with his wife, Dora and their family, travel more, and to partake in his favorite hobby of serving as a Kansas City Barbeque Society Master Judge. I know I speak for everyone in the community when I say we are truly grateful for his unwavering service and cannot thank him enough. I