

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE SECOND ANNUAL IOWA SAFE SCHOOLS PRIDE CAMP

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2019

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the second annual Pride Camp held by Iowa Safe Schools. As the largest LGBTQ summer camp in the nation, Pride Camp is a crucial experience for LGBTQ youth in the state of Iowa to take advantage of opportunities to be creative, learn, grow, network, and most importantly have fun.

During Pride Month and throughout the year, I am proud to express my unwavering support of our LGBTQ community. Too many young people in the LGBTQ community still experience discrimination daily, and Pride Camp offers a safe and supportive environment to connect with peers and build lasting bonds. From arts to policy to STEM, camp activities give campers daily opportunities to challenge themselves and build valuable skills.

Pride Camp is an invaluable experience for LGBTQ youth who may otherwise not have the same interactions at school or in their community. By working with fellow campers, counselors and staff, Pride Camp participants can work together to build change and leadership for tomorrow. We still have a long way to go to fulfill our promise of equality, opportunity and justice for all, and it is important we foster this generation of change makers.

I am pleased to acknowledge and congratulate Iowa Safe Schools on its second annual Pride Camp, and I wish all attendees a week full of learning and fun.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN LEGION POST 5 IN DOWNTOWN COLORADO SPRINGS

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2019

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize American Legion Post 5 in downtown Colorado Springs on their 100th Anniversary.

Since its founding, Post 5 has been a consistent advocate for our incredible military community in Colorado Springs. Post 5 helped the "Pikes Peak or Bust" Rodeo become a huge success. Their group led a campaign to elevate Medal of Honor recipient Floyd K. Lindstrom's memory which led to a VA outpatient clinic being named after him.

American Legion Post 5 is a steadfast advocate for veterans and their families. The group hosts memorial services, supports homeless and impoverished veterans by sponsoring food and toy drives, and is a place for the veterans community to join together in fellowship to dis-

cuss important issues pertaining to their lives. As we celebrate our veterans' service to our great nation, we must thank this inspiring organization for their tremendously important service to our veterans in Colorado's 5th Congressional District. Please join me in wishing American Legion Post 5 a happy centennial anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EQUAL DEFERMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2019

Ms. MENG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of the Equal Deferment Opportunity Act and to impress upon my colleagues the importance of all servicewomen having equal protections after childbirth. Current law permits a 12-month deferment from deployment after an active duty servicemember gives birth—thereby ensuring that, before putting their lives on the line to defend America, servicewomen are physically recovered during postpartum.

These same protections, however, do not apply to servicewomen in the Reserves or National Guard; my bill would fix this by expanding the 12-month postpartum deployment deferment to all servicewomen.

Across all branches of the military, women serve with honor and distinction. Their service ensures our nation is safe from hostile actors that seek to do harm to us. Retaining talent is a critical issue and Congress must ensure the Defense Department is permitting all members of the military have equal access to benefits that allow for critical healthcare needs. As such, this fix is desperately needed.

I also applaud Chairman SMITH, Ranking Member THORNBERRY, and my House colleagues on the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020. This bill represents a clear vision of a national security strategy that keeps our nation safe, and advances programs and policies that prioritize the wellbeing of our servicemembers and their families. I was especially pleased to see the adoption of my three amendments that include:

Permanent Authorization of the Suicide Prevention and Resilience Program: The Suicide Prevention and Resilience Program provides members of the Reserves and National Guard and their families with training in suicide prevention, resilience, and community healing.

Equal Deferment After Childbirth: This provision extends existing allowances for active duty servicewomen to defer deployment after childbirth to all members of the armed services, including the Reserves and National Guard.

Lead Service Lines Report: This requires the DOD to submit a report on the number of military installations that may have water lines made out of lead, and whether DOD has es-

tablished an awareness campaign to inform servicemembers and their families about them.

I look forward to seeing these amendments enacted into law. Above all else, we must ensure our servicemembers and their families are fully valued.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 2019

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2500) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of Amendment No. 47 to H.R. 2500, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020, an amendment I offered with my good friend from Nebraska, Mr. Fortenberry.

The Fortenberry-Eshoo amendment declares that the safe return of religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq to their ancestral homelands, and the restoration of fundamental human rights to these communities, remains a priority for the United States.

Iraq is home to some of the oldest Christian communities in the world, yet less than 200,000 Christians remain in Iraq, down from 1.4 million in 2002.

Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities suffered horrific oppression and violence beginning with the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and again at the hands of ISIS beginning in 2014.

In March 2016, Congress, under the leadership of Mr. Fortenberry and myself, declared this brutal and system persecution constituted genocide, one of only three times in history that Congress has made such a declaration.

Despite efforts by Congress to help religious and ethnic minorities return to their homelands in Iraq, harassment and threats from armed militia groups continue to jeopardize their safety and long term security.

Congress cannot stand by and watch as one of the oldest Christian communities in the world is wiped out. As the daughter of parents who fled religious persecution in the Middle East, this is personal to me.

I'm pleased Amendment No. 147 was included in En Bloc 5 to H.R. 2500, which will help ensure Congress does not give up on these vulnerable populations who continue to face persecution and oppression in Iraq.

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

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