

Nation honorably, both in uniform and following their return to civilian life. The recipients of the 2019 Congressional Veteran Commendation exemplify the time-honored qualities of patriotism, service before self, and bold leadership. Following their time in service, their efforts in our community have earned these fine individuals recognition as the recipients of this prestigious commendation. Their stories of sacrifice will encourage future generations to pursue a life dedicated to the very values we cherish as Americans: faith, freedom, and democracy. One such hero is Staff Sergeant Jim Skinner of Melissa, Texas.

Staff Sergeant Jim Skinner's history of service began in 1979 when he entered into the United States Air Force, quickly earning the title of Security Police Military Working Dog Handler after completing the rigorous patrol and drug dog handler training. He would spend the next seven years in the role of dog handler, investigator, and SWAT team operator in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and New Mexico. For his dedicated efforts in defense of our nation, Staff Sergeant Jim Skinner would receive the Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, and Outstanding Small Unit Award.

While Skinner would leave the military in 1987, his desire to protect the innocent would continue, leading him to pursue a Juris Doctorate from the University of Houston Law Center in 2001. Upon graduation he would work as a civil rights lawyer, representing child victims of sexual abuse. In 2007, he was appointed as an Assistant District Attorney and Special Prosecutor of the Collin County Criminal District Attorney's Office and later served as the Second Assistant District Attorney and Chief of the Special Prosecutions Division.

Jim further developed his passion for serving the public when he was elected as the 39th Sheriff of Collin County in January 2017. His drive to protect the most innocent led to the creation of the Child Exploitation Unit. Additionally, Sheriff Skinner was responsible for bringing together the Sheriffs of seven counties to form the North Texas Sheriff's Office Criminal Interdiction Unit, which targets criminals who are illegally transporting narcotics, weapons, cash or persons involved in human trafficking on our highways.

Sheriff Skinner has found countless ways to serve our community including his role as a board member for the Child Advocacy Center of Collin County, as a Trustee for Collin County Meals on Wheels, as a former board member for the North Texas Crime Commission, and as the Judge Advocate for the Bill Bryant Post 110 of the American Legion. Jim Skinner is a devoted public servant who has spent his entire life giving back to the community and working towards ensuring the values that we hold dear as Americans are maintained and he is to be commended for work to improve our nation.

Today, a grateful Nation thanks Staff Sergeant Skinner for his exceptional service and congratulates him on this recognition. May his steadfast example of leadership inspire others to live a life of service to a cause greater than themselves. It is my extreme honor to award him the 2019 Congressional Veteran Commendation for the Third District of Texas.

RECOGNIZING THE HONOR FLIGHT OF THE QUAD CITIES FOR ITS 50TH FLIGHT

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2019

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Honor Flight of the Quad Cities for its 50th flight.

The Quad Cities formed a local chapter of the Honor Flight Network, called Honor Flight of the Quad Cities (HFQC) in 2008. The mission of HFQC is to fly America's veterans to Washington, D.C. in order to honor their sacrifices by allowing them visit memorials dedicated to their service. I especially extend my gratitude to Robert "Bob" Morrison, the founder of Honor Flight of the Quad Cities, for his dedication to serving local veterans and ensuring they can travel to visit the memorials. Mr. Morrison passed away October 7, 2019. He was the first Hub Director and took more than 3,000 veterans on 33 flights to see the memorials in our nation's capital. His memory and impact on our community will be well regarded for generations to come. Thank you again to this organization for its commitment to our veterans over the course of the 50 flights they have organized.

It is because of organizations such as the Honor Flight of the Quad Cities that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate the Honor Flight of the Quad Cities on its 50th flight.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON ESTES

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2019

Mr. ESTES. Madam Speaker, I was not present for Roll Call vote No. 581 on the Lesko Amendment No. 2 to H.R. 4617. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Madam Speaker, I was not present for Roll Call vote No. 582 on the Republican Motion to Recommit H.R. 4617 with Instructions. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Madam Speaker, I was not present for Roll Call vote No. 583 on the Final Passage of H.R. 4617, as amended. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

Madam Speaker, I was not present for Roll Call vote No. 584 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 777. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARY ON THE OPENING OF ITS NEW FACILITY

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2019

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor The Galway Public Library on the opening of its new facility.

Over the past decade, the entire community of Galway has been contributing to the effort

to construct the new library. This new facility is more than three times the size of the old one, which was founded in 1997, and will act as a holistic community center. It will offer venue space and technology resources for all the residents of Galway to use and benefit from in addition to the collection of books and other media. The library has been supported not only by tax dollars but also by private donations, grants and bonds approved by the voters. Further, the move from the old library was supported by over one hundred volunteers who worked hundreds of hours ensure that the transition was successful. This level of civic involvement highlights everything that makes the North Country so vibrant and makes me proud to be its representative in Congress.

On Behalf on New York's 21st Congressional District, I want to congratulate the residents of the Town of Galway on this amazing accomplishment. I look forward to the success of the new Galway Public Library as a centerpiece of the community long into the future.

CONGRATULATING THE MATER DEI GOLF TEAM

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2019

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of the Mater Dei Knights golf team, which recently brought home the Illinois Class 1A State Golf Championship.

It was a very tense tournament. At the end of the first round the Knights found themselves tied for first with the Althoff Crusaders. However, with a great deal of grit and determination the Knights eventually pulled out a hard-fought one stroke victory over rival Althoff to claim the state title.

My hearty congratulations go to team members Grant Goebel, Carter Goebel, Nathan Rivera, Blake Kloeckner, Ian Benderson, Tanner Gerdes, head coach Dennis Trame, athletic director Ron Schadeegg, and school principal Dennis Litteken.

Madam Speaker, these student-athletes and their coaches have represented themselves, their school, and their community in the best tradition of high school athletics. I am pleased to join with the other Members of this House in congratulating them on their victory and wishing them all the best in their future academic and athletic careers.

RECOGNIZING SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT BARNETT WALKER, RECIPIENT OF TEXAS' THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2019 CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. VAN TAYLOR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2019

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, today, it is my privilege to honor twelve distinguished military veterans from Texas' Third Congressional District who answered the call to serve their