

subsequent years, he has been elected to serve as Chairman by his fellow commissioners. Through his friendship and professional relationships with judges, clerk magistrates and clerks of court throughout Norfolk County, Fran helped institute physical changes and improvements to Norfolk County court houses.

On February 16, 2017, Fran lost the love of his life, Nancy, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease and the onset of Alzheimer's. Tragically, 19 months later, he lost his beloved daughter, Marlene, suddenly on September 15, 2018, after her longtime fight with multiple infectious diseases.

As Fran reaches the proud age of 90 years old, he remains living independently in Dedham, with his son, daughters and grandchildren close by his side for support. Not surprisingly, you'll find him still helping people, still caring for the town he loves, and still devoted and loyal to his family and friends.

Madam Speaker, Francis W. O'Brien epitomizes the definition of a truly dedicated public servant. His life-long vocation of service to his community is on constant display as he continues to honorably serve the Town of Dedham. I urge my colleagues, and all who know Fran, to wish him the best on his 90th birthday.

EDUCATING MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS AND OPTIMIZING WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY AND READINESS FOR HEALTH ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2019

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I am grateful to Representatives GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN, STEVE STIVERS, KENNY MARCHANT, WILLIAM KEATING, ZOE LOFGREN, and LAUREN UNDERWOOD for their support of H.R. 2781, the Educating Medical Professionals and Optimizing Workforce Efficiency and Readiness (EMPOWER) for Health Act. They wanted to cosponsor this bill but were unable to be added in time.

When H.R. 2781 passes the Senate and is signed into law, we will increase the diversity of our health care workforce, improve geriatrics education and training to address gaps in caregiving and health care for older adults, and grow the critical pediatric health care workforce. I look forward to working with my colleagues as we continue our efforts to make sure health care is more equitable and accessible for our constituents.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 31, 2019

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 due to a business call I was unable to vote on H.R. 2181,

the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 597.

RECOGNIZING THE STRONG HISTORY OF COLLEGE FOOTBALL IN AMERICA

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 31, 2019

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first ever college football game played between Rutgers and Princeton in 1869. Just twenty-one years later, the Big Ten university in my district, the University of Illinois, would field its first football game in 1890.

Since those days, college football has become one of our nation's most beloved pastimes. Today, it's enjoyed by millions of Americans and the sport has grown immensely with nearly 80,000 student-athletes taking to the field every fall.

In many ways, it is a game that embodies the spirit of what makes us great as a country. As Americans, we have a determination to succeed; we believe in teamwork; we embrace our individual roles as we work together toward a common goal bigger than ourselves. Over the last 150 years, we've seen college football players become U.S. Presidents, Rhodes Scholars, actors, activists, CEOs, successful entrepreneurs, academics, and yes—even elected officials.

So today we recognize the strong history of college football in our nation: the games, the teams, the rivalries, and the memories. My family and I are longtime fans of college football, and I am proud to celebrate 150 years of its history today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 31, 2019

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed a vote series.

Had I been present, I would have voted yea on Roll Call No. 593; yea on Roll Call No. 594; yea on Roll Call No. 595; yea on Roll Call No. 596; nay on Roll Call No. 597; yea on Roll Call No. 598; yea on Roll Call No. 599; yea on Roll Call No. 600; yea on Roll Call No. 601; and nay on Roll Call No. 602.

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF DR. VIVIANNE CISNEROS WERSEL

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 31, 2019

Mr. LONG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Dr. Vivianne Cisneros Wersel.

Dr. Wersel has a long and storied career caring for our nation's veterans, and she knows what it means to pay the ultimate sacrifice. She is the widow of Lieutenant Colonel Richard Wersel, Jr. of the United States Marine Corps. Lieutenant Colonel Wersel served two tours of duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom and unfortunately died just one week after returning home from Iraq. Dr. Wersel grew from this tragedy and not only continued to help veterans through her role at Walter Reed Medical Center, but also as an advocate for Gold Star Families.

Dr. Wersel holds a Doctorate of Audiology from the School of Audiology-Salus University. She is also a graduate of the Defense Language Institute (DLI), Monterey, CA and holds a language certificate in Spanish. She earned a Masters and a Bachelor's Degree in Communicative Disorders (Audiology) from San Diego State University.

Dr. Wersel currently works full time as an audiologist at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and is designated as a prestigious Master Clinician. In addition to caring for the active-duty military, retirees, and their families, she provides hearing health care for members of Congress, including myself.

Over the past 30 years as an audiologist she provided hearing care support to service members, retirees and their families at Camp Pendleton, CA; Twentynine Palms, CA, Nellis Air Force Base, Fort Bragg NC, Camp Lejeune NC, Fort Dietrick MD, Fort Belvoir VA, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda. But her service to our nation's veterans goes beyond her role as an audiologist.

Shortly after her husband's passing in 2005, Dr. Wersel discovered she was not eligible for the newly enhanced survivor benefits. She subsequently became instrumental in changing the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Death Gratuity so that all active duty widows are now eligible for enhanced benefits. Today, she is considered a subject matter expert on Military Survivor Benefits and has testified before this body twenty times on the subject.

In addition to her work on survivor benefits, she is a member of the Gold Star Wives of America (GSW) Public Relations; past chair of the GSW Government Relations Committee, President and founder of Arlington Gold Star Wives; military survivor advisor for the "Got Your Back Network"; is an active participant in the VA/DoD Survivor Forum, and founder of, and advisor to the Surviving Spouses Support Group II MEF, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. She was a local representative for the National Military Family Association and was a volunteer for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and Military Officers Association of America.

Dr. Wersel has devoted her career and her life to caring for our nation's veterans and advocating for Gold Star Families. In recognition of her work and her much-deserved retirement, I will be flying a flag over the United States Capitol in her honor. Madam Speaker, I ask that you and the rest of this chamber join me in congratulating Dr. Wersel on a job well done.