

Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney, Civil Division Chief, Deputy Chief for the White Collar/General Crimes unit, Administrative Officer, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Coordinator and Chairperson, Violent Crime Coordinator, Basic Criminal Advocacy Coordinator and Supervisor, Public Affairs Officer and District Office Security Manager.

Ms. Rodríguez-Vélez was appointed U.S. Attorney by the Attorney General in June 2006 and received a presidential nomination in January 2007. On October 13, 2007, the seven judges of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico unanimously appointed Ms. Rodríguez-Vélez to serve as United States Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico. On October 4, 2011, Ms. Rodríguez-Vélez was re-appointed to a new term as United States Attorney, pursuant to the unanimous vote of the Court.

U.S. Attorney Rodríguez-Vélez has implemented numerous initiatives to combat drug trafficking and violent crime in Puerto Rico, including multiple drug strike forces responsible for over 2,400 arrests; an Illegal Firearms and Violence Reduction Initiative, responsible for over 500 arrests; and a RICO Unit to prosecute violent drug trafficking organizations. She has received numerous awards and commendation letters during her years of service from both the Puerto Rico and United States Departments of Justice, as well as from state and federal law enforcement agencies.

Her character has been tested many times, often facing unfair political attacks and obstruction, especially when addressing the fight against the scourge of public corruption, yet she has remained a steadfast prosecutor, always serving justice and believing in her oath to the U.S. Constitution and Law. Because I can attest to her courage, her integrity, her professional excellence and her heartfelt belief in justice and American values, I congratulate her on a well and faithfully executed career—42 years working in both the Puerto Rico and U.S. Departments of Justice, 12 of them as the U.S. District Attorney for Puerto Rico.

I personally admire the courage of Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodríguez and recognize her as a role model for women. I thank her for her service and, I wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on November 12, 2019 during roll call no. 610, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 4162, GI Bill Planning Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea." I was also unavoidably detained during roll call no. 611, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 3224, Deborah Sampson Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING LE GAUB FOR THE 2019 MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. GREG GIANFORTE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Le Gaub of Bozeman, a recipient of the 2019 Montana Congressional Veteran Commendation for his service to his country and leadership in his community.

Mr. Gaub is a veteran of the U.S. Army. In his distinguished service from 1972 to 2003, He earned multiple commendations, including the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and Armed Forces Reserve Medal.

Serving his community through Troops to Teachers, Mr. Gaub works as a program manager to secure funding for military veterans seeking to transition to careers in K–12 education. He is a friendly face around many schools in Montana and in veteran support groups and nonprofits where he invests much of his time. Since his start with the Troops to Teachers program, he has helped bring in a substantial amount of grants ensuring its success.

I ask colleagues to join me today in commending Le Gaub for his dedication and service.

HONORING THE KICK FOR NICK FOUNDATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, just a few weeks ago I had the extraordinary opportunity to participate in a local fundraiser for the Kick For Nick Foundation and was so inspired by the generosity of the participants and the mission of the Foundation that I wanted to share the experience with my colleagues.

PFC Nicholas A. Madaras of Wilton, Connecticut served our country bravely in Iraq until his life was cut tragically short by an IED on September 3, 2006. He was just 19 years old and weeks away from the scheduled end of his deployment. Nick had been an avid soccer player, coach, and referee growing up and when he had last came home on leave he had shared stories about connecting with young Iraqi children through the sport, often using anything they could find as a ball, most times nothing more than a tin can. Nick asked friends and family to send him a few soccer balls to share with the children in Baqubah. Unfortunately, he never got that chance.

Yet, from their grief, Nick's family and friends found a new mission—a way to pay tribute to Nick's memory, his passion for soccer, and his desire to make a difference in the lives of the children he had met in the war-torn country where he served. Shortly after his passing, Nick's family was approached by Ken Dartley, also of Wilton, who had read Nick's story and asked to start a program collecting soccer balls in his honor to fulfill his wish to share his love and passion for the game with

Iraqi children. It was through this first effort that the Kick For Nick Foundation was born.

What began with a few soccer balls in a net donated at the James P. Whipple American Legion Post 86 in Wilton has since grown exponentially with over 50,000 soccer balls having been donated and distributed to date. The Kick For Nick Foundation has received donations from 47 of the 50 states and, prior to distribution, each one is inscribed three times with Nick's name. Initially the balls were distributed only by US troops in Iraq, but over the years, in addition to soldiers, the distribution network has grown to include US military contractors, volunteers, individuals, schools, and charitable organizations. Balls have been given to underprivileged children in more than 50 countries including Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon, Bhutan, Guatemala, Colombia. Beyond the distribution of soccer balls, when they have the opportunity and the supplies, Kick For Nick has also provided uniforms, cleats, shin guards, personal hygiene supplies such as toothbrushes and toothpaste, school supplies such as pencils, notebooks and backpacks, as well as occasional food supplies.

As I walked through the fundraiser and the many who had gathered to support the Foundation, I was inspired by the displays showing pictures of troops distributing the balls and of notes of thanks from the soldiers distributing them as well as the young people receiving them. I had the opportunity to speak with Nick's father, Bill, as well as several of his family members, finding myself in awe of their strength and determination to ensure Nick's memory continues to make a difference in the world. The Kick For Nick Foundation is an extraordinary effort and a wonderful tribute to PFC Madaras. It is my hope that their success continues to grow and that they can continue in their mission to foster peace, good will and stability across the globe by collecting soccer balls and delivering them into the hands of underprivileged children around the world—honoring the memory of PFC Nicholas A. Madaras and giving life to his dream of bringing a bit of hope and joy to children living in difficult circumstances.

RECOGNIZING CHIEF DAVE SPILLER

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the dutiful work of my constituent, Police Chief Dave Spiller, on the occasion his retirement from the Pleasanton Police Department after 17 years of service.

Chief Spiller joined the Pleasanton Police Department in 2002 after more than a decade serving the San Diego and Mountain View Police Departments. In 2011, Chief Spiller was appointed to be Pleasanton's sixth police chief. He has served in every sworn rank of the police profession—from officer to chief.

Chief Spiller's colleagues can attest not only to his professionalism but to his commitment to safety and quality of life in Pleasanton. His leadership as police chief was characterized by compassion, integrity and responsiveness to the city.