

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING FORMER VILLAGE OF
LA GRANGE PRESIDENT ELIZA-
BETH ASPERGER ON HER YEARS
OF SERVICE

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Elizabeth Asperger for her accomplishments as the first woman elected President of the Village of La Grange, and her years of dedicated service to local residents. In order to recognize Ms. Asperger's positive impact on our community, the Village of La Grange is dedicating a garden at the historic Stone Avenue train station in her name on November 27th. I am pleased to be attending this celebration so that I can personally thank Ms. Asperger for her contributions and her tireless work to improve the lives of so many people.

Liz Asperger was elected President of the Village of La Grange after serving nine years as a trustee on the Village Board from 1996 to 2005. Prior to that she served on the village's Economic Development Commission beginning in 1993. Her two terms as President, from 2005 to 2013, were marked by tremendous accomplishments, and she was especially active on transportation and infrastructure issues. I was fortunate enough to work with Ms. Asperger and help La Grange accomplish vital projects including the parking deck behind Village Hall, modernization of La Grange's 9-1-1 call center, and the restoration of the Stone Avenue train station.

Prior to her time serving the Village of La Grange, Liz Asperger practiced law for sixteen years. As partner in her law firm, she specialized in real estate development. However, Ms. Asperger had a strong desire to serve our community, and in 1996 she resigned from her law firm in order to pursue opportunities in public service. After her retirement as President of the Village of La Grange, Ms. Asperger has remained committed to serving local residents and seniors. Liz and her husband, Jonathan, have resided in La Grange since 1983 and have one son, Kyle.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Elizabeth Asperger for her long history of public and community service. I am proud to have worked with such a dedicated public servant and leader, and I know that Ms. Asperger's example continues to inspire others to follow in her footsteps to work on behalf of La Grange and the region.

WISHING BUSTER AUSTIN A
HAPPY 107TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 107th birthday of Fourth District cattle producer, Buster Austin.

Mr. Austin was born in Madison County, Arkansas on October 20, 1912, and has lived most of his young life in the Fourth District. He has seen over one hundred years of American change and progress. Born before the start of World War I, he has now lived to see the end of polio and the start of the computer age. Today, he and his wife, Gayle, raise cattle in Madison County.

I find deep encouragement in hearing the story of Mr. Austin's life and history. I take this time to wish him a happy birthday and to thank him for his years of work and service in the Fourth Congressional District.

HONORING MELVINDALE-DEARBORN
FIREFIGHTER MICHAEL
BRANNON

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Melvindale-Dearborn Firefighter Michael Brannon as he retires after eighteen years of service.

During his eighteen years of public service, Firefighter Michael Brannon has garnered accolades for his bravery and dedication to safety along the way. In 2001, Brannon joined the City of Melvindale's Fire Department. From there, he was quickly promoted to Firefighter II, and ultimately, Firefighter III. A hardworking public servant, Michael Brannon has been acknowledged for his military service, exceptional driving record, and has spent countless hours advancing his certification, including rope rescue operations. Beyond this, Michael Brannon has been recognized for his courage in the line of duty both in military service and as a firefighter receiving awards like the Meritorious Company Commendation and the Fire Chief Unit Commendation.

Firefighter Michael Brannon has spent nearly two decades tirelessly working to ensure safety for the community. Please join me in saluting him for his years of public service as we wish him well on his retirement.

COMMEMORATING WORLD AIDS
DAY 2019

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, World AIDS Day affords us an opportunity to reflect on our progress in the fight against the global AIDS pandemic and to rededicate ourselves to ending the disease once and for all.

We have come a long way since the first World AIDS Day in 1988 by dramatically expanding investments in HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment, and research.

Strong advocacy has paved the way for the Ryan White Act, the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS Initiative, growing investments in NIH research, and an end to the ban on federal funds for syringe exchange.

Beyond our borders, our efforts have extended care to millions in the developing world, through increased resources for PEPFAR and the Global Fund.

Our investments have saved lives—preventing millions of new HIV cases, expanding access to improved treatments, and enabling medical advances that help HIV/AIDS patients live longer and healthier.

Here and across the globe, AIDS deaths are on the decline, and studies are pointing the way to new approaches to limit the spread of the disease, with treatment as prevention.

While our efforts have grown, we still only reach half of all people eligible for HIV treatment; and more must be done.

Working together, we must continue to strengthen—not weaken—our national and international efforts to combat AIDS and other infectious diseases.

We must work to achieve the goal of an AIDS-free generation.

We must honor the memory of those we have lost and act on our hope, optimism, and determination to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

We must continue to work with programs and clinics, like the Harris County Hospital District (HCHD), who are treating and caring for patients with HIV/AIDS.

In 1989, HCHD opened Thomas Street Health Center, the first free-standing facility dedicated to outpatient HIV/AIDS care in the nation.

The center has become the cornerstone of all HIV/AIDS care available to Harris County residents.

The Thomas Street Health Center has dedicated their services to about 25 percent of Harris County's HIV/AIDS.

Annually, the health center, along with HCHD, serves 4,463 unique patients for about 37,000 patients' visits.

We will continue to fight a tough fight against HIV and AIDS.

We will continue to strengthen and support centers like Thomas Street Health Center who work diligently with HIV/AIDS patients.

Our focus on HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness will be to ensure all of our friends,

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

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

relatives and children live healthy and full lives.

There is a pressing need to raise awareness and engage in education within the African American community where HIV infections have been and continue to rise.

The incidents of HIV have decreased for the majority population, while it has grown nearly unchecked among African Americans.

This must change—decisions regarding funding for agencies charged with infectious disease education and minority health must be supported.

TRIBUTE TO MADELINE ROANHORSE

HON. TOM O'HALLERAN

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to Madeline Roanhorse, former director of the Navajo Nation Abandoned Mine Lands Program.

Sadly, Madeline passed away earlier this fall.

Madeline worked diligently for over thirty years on uranium mine reclamation projects all across the Navajo Nation.

She played an invaluable role in many critical uranium mine clean up efforts.

This fall, the House voted to pass the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, legislation to permanently ban uranium mining in and near the Grand Canyon.

This vote was a direct result of the culmination of years of work by Madeline and other tribal leaders who refused to give up.

I wish Madeline had been here with us to witness this historic vote and see her hard work come to fruition.

I am honored to have worked with Madeline on these efforts, but I am more honored to have known her as a friend.

Pat and I are keeping Madeline's loved ones and the entire Navajo Nation community in our prayers as they mourn her passing.

RECOGNIZING COMMAND MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER ALVIN J. VEENSTRA FOR HIS RETIRE- MENT FROM THE NAVY RE- SERVES SEABEES

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it's my honor to recognize Command Master Chief Petty Officer Alvin J. Veenstra for his retirement from the Navy Reserves Seabees. Through his more than thirty years of excellence and commitment to service, CMDCM Veenstra has become an indispensable part of Michigan's First District.

The United States Naval Construction Battalions, more commonly known as the Navy Seabees, have a storied history in the United States Armed Forces—stretching from Normandy and Okinawa to Iraq and Afghanistan. Alvin decided to follow in this tradition of service early in his life, enlisting in the United

States Navy, Sea, and Air Mariner program during his sophomore year of college. He carried out a variety of roles throughout his 32 years with the Seabees—including deployment with the 7th Naval Construction Regiment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, where he served as the Senior Watch Chief for the II Marine Expeditionary Force. On September 6, 2019, Veenstra turned over his final command position as the Reserve Affairs Command Master Chief at Navy Facilities Engineering Command in Washington, D.C. Outside of his service in the military, Alvin is a graduate of Ferris State University and serves as Project Manager/Executive Assistant for W.B. Builders in East Jordan. Alvin's more than three decades of decorated service is commendable, and the impact of his work on his fellow servicemembers and the people of the United States cannot be overstated.

Madam Speaker, it's my honor to congratulate Command Master Chief Petty Officer Alvin Veenstra for his decades of service to the people of the United States. Michiganders can take great pride in knowing the First District is home to such a selfless individual. On behalf of my constituents, I wish Alvin all the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS

HON. DONNA E. SHALALA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Ms. SHALALA. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Michael Tilson Thomas, the Co-Founder and Artistic Director of the New World Symphony, America's Orchestral Academy in Miami Beach.

Michael Tilson Thomas is also Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony and Conductor Laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. In addition to these posts, he maintains an active presence guest-conducting with the major orchestras of Europe and the United States. The New World Symphony has helped launch the careers of more than 1,000 alumni worldwide.

Born in Los Angeles, Mr. Tilson Thomas is the third generation of his family to follow an artistic career. His grandparents, Boris and Bessie Thomashefsky, were founding members of the Yiddish Theater in America. His father, Ted Thomas, was a producer in the Mercury Theater Company in New York before moving to Los Angeles where he worked in films and television. His mother, Roberta Thomas, was the head of research for Columbia Pictures.

Mr. Tilson Thomas is a Chevalier dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, was Musical America's Musician of the Year and Conductor of the Year, Gramophone Magazine's Artist of the Year, and has been profiled on CBS's 60 Minutes and ABC's Nightline. He has won 11 Grammy Awards for his recordings. In 2008 he received the Peabody Award for his radio series for SFS Media, The MTT Files. In 2010, President Obama awarded him the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists in the United States.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE THIR- TIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, a significant anniversary for two of America's closest allies—the Czech and Slovak Republics.

Only eight days after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the same spirit of freedom that overcame Berlin made its way to Prague. On November 17, 1989, the country formerly known as Czechoslovakia freed itself from four decades of a communist totalitarian regime, transforming authoritarian rule of the nation into democracy. Initiated by student protesters in the streets, the protest of the regime and the demand for democracy quickly gained momentum with over a half-million Czechs and Slovaks filling Prague's streets and taking over Wenceslas Square.

Soldiers beat protesters, used water cannons on the crowd, and made numerous arrests during this time. However, the demonstrators remained peaceful. By the end of 1989, Czechoslovakia was on its way to holding its first presidential election since 1948. The successful movement is now referred to as the "Velvet Revolution" or the "Gentle Revolution," which signifies the idea that the revolution was brought about without violence.

The years following the Velvet Revolution brought the "Velvet Divorce," the unofficial name given to the separation of the Czechoslovakia into two nations: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Through peaceful mutual consent, Czechoslovakia separated on January 1, 1993. To solidify their places on the world stage and showcase their commitment to democracy, the Czech and Slovak Republics formally became members of the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the United Nations.

It is also worth mentioning that the Czech Republic has a local tie to Missouri's Fifth Congressional District. When applying for admission into NATO, the Czech Republic had the official documents signed at the Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri in 1999. The induction ceremony that took place included Poland and Hungary, and marked the first eastward expansion by NATO since the end of the Cold War.

Madam Speaker, please join me and all of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District in congratulating the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic for their achievements in independence and their efforts in promoting democracy.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF FLORENCE WEISS

HON. MARK DESAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Florence Weiss for her honorable service to the City of Concord, California as she begins retirement.