

presiding at a time of great change at the shipyard which went from a workforce of around 30,000 down to just 8,500 in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union. Mel worked tirelessly to assist the people he represented, making sure they were given transitional help as downsizing occurred. All the while, he continued to advocate for the Navy's investment in a new class of Seawolf and Virginia submarines, which in hindsight we now know kept that shipyard alive.

Madam Speaker, as the Congressman from Eastern Connecticut I had the honor to work with Mel in the shipyard's efforts to keep the unique, irreplaceable skills that made Southeastern Connecticut "The Submarine Capitol of the World." When I was elected to Congress in 2006, and was selected to serve on the Seapower Subcommittee on the House Armed Services Committee, we immediately began a push to boost submarine production, building a coalition of the UAW, the Metal Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, and industry to "plus up" the 2008 shipbuilding budget. By the Fall of 2007 we defied conventional wisdom that a freshman member would never pull that off, when \$588 million was added to the defense budget, igniting a new era of hiring in Groton. Mel's support and advice did not end there. He always made himself available, with good advice and a ready smile, if I had a question or challenge to face. I will always treasure his friendship.

Madam Speaker, when Mel stepped down from his union office in the 2000s, after 47 years of work at the yard, I think most would agree he had earned a quiet, easy retirement. However, as many noted, Mel's "retirement" marked the beginning of a second career when he threw himself into the region's Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB), the job training platform designated by the federal Workforce Investment Act, to shape education and apprenticeship programs to meet the region's local economy. Mel was perfect for this role. While at Electric Boat, he was always pushing for the shipyard to connect young people to the specialized work that went on there, and he fostered a mentorship program for high schoolers that still operates today. At EWIB, he saw that the need to recapitalize the submarine force was going to cause a new hiring spree that the tech schools, community colleges and apprenticeship programs needed to adjust to—fast. With his help, EWIB's innovative Manufacturing Pipeline Program received \$6 million from the U.S. Department of Labor in 2014, establishing an accelerated "pre-apprenticeship" program. The program far outperformed Labor's targets and has become a national model used all over Connecticut and the U.S. to generate new job-ready workers. Back home the pipeline has enabled Electric Boat to regrow to a workforce that reached 17,000 this year. Electric Boat also restarted its own apprenticeship program that Mel had been pressing for years. It is showing impressive results, with a new generation of diverse talent—more women and minorities in particular—who are embarking on not just jobs, but careers. For Mel, this type of work, which was done in collaboration with Electric Boat's unions and management, was the essence of the value of collective bargaining. Seeing a person's life transformed because of the pipeline or an apprenticeship was, in my experience knowing Mel, what truly animated him

and made him happy. It also demonstrated to me what a caring person he was, particularly when it came to helping young people.

What also made Mel very happy was his beautiful family. He shared 54 years of marital bliss with his wife Dorothy DeGroot Olsson. Together, they have a daughter, Alyssa A. Olsson Gaus, and two grandsons, Kyle Chase Olsson, and Gavin Olsson Gaus. Mel was also close with his brother Karl and his wife Glenda of Niantic. Despite all of his time-consuming work in the region, his family always came first. Madam Speaker, Mel is truly an example of "a life well lived." His funeral service in New London where he was born was packed with family, co-workers, and friends who shared a deep awareness of what a special person he was. Please join me in expressing our deepest condolences to Mel's family for their loss and our highest respect and regards for his inspiring legacy.

HONORING CAROLYN EDWARDS

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. DeFAZIO. Madam Speaker, on behalf of myself and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, today I would like to recognize the outstanding career, significant accomplishments, and invaluable contributions of Carolyn Edwards, a dedicated civil servant who in January will retire after a distinguished 46-year career with the U.S. Department of Transportation—44 of these with the Federal Highway Administration.

Among her many exemplary accomplishments, Ms. Edwards has been involved in every Federal surface transportation bill since TEA-21 in 1998. This has included support—through the technical assistance process—for Congressional Committees, countless Members of Congress, and their staff on legislative and highway policy issues.

This is the fourth time that a Congressional Committee Chair (or Ranking Member) has publicly thanked Ms. Edwards, by name, for her contributions. Prior instances include—

On July 29, 2005, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (Senator JIM INHOFE) thanked her on the Senate floor during floor consideration of the conference report for SAFETEA-LU;

On June 29, 2012, in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (the Honorable John Mica) thanked Ms. Edwards, among others, for her work on MAP-21; and

On December 3, 2015, I thanked Ms. Edwards on the House floor for her work on the FAST Act.

Ms. Edwards joined the Federal Highway Administration in 1973 as an economist within the Agency's Office of Highway Planning. There, she helped to establish FHWA's Highway Performance Monitoring System—a system that 40 years later continues to provide national-level data on the extent, condition, performance, use, and operating characteristics of the nation's highways. Over the ensuing four-and-a-half decades, Ms. Edwards has gone on to serve in a range of high-level analytical positions at FHWA, including stints in FHWA's Office of Highway Policy Information

and in FHWA's Office of Legislative Affairs and Policy Communications.

As one example, during the mid-1990s, Ms. Edwards served in FHWA's Office of Highway Information Management. While there, she identified—then helped to resolve—a \$1.6 billion error in the Treasury Department's calculation of Highway Trust Fund revenues, which impacted the State-by-State distribution of Federal highway funding. Later, she also worked in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs, with a portfolio that covered Federal-aid highway programs and the Highway Trust Fund.

Ms. Edwards is ending her career as a member—and former leader—of FHWA's legislative analysis team. In this capacity, she serves as an unparalleled national expert on a wide range of highway-related topics, including Federal highway legislation, the Highway Trust Fund, and the operations of the Federal-aid highway program. For years, she has been a go-to reference on these topics for both agency and departmental leaders. Furthermore, as testament to the quality of her work, over the course of her career, Ms. Edwards has been recognized with multiple FHWA Superior Achievement Awards, a Secretary's Team Award, and two Secretarial Awards for Partnering for Excellence.

In closing, on behalf of myself, the Committee, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and our staff, I would like to thank Ms. Edwards for her steadfast public service, her support for the Congress, and her immeasurable contributions to the Federal-aid highway program.

HONORING CHIEF JAMES ANTHONY SECRETO

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor James Anthony Secreto, a native Brooklyn son and longtime public servant. James, or Jimmy as his friends call him, has dedicated his life to helping the people of New York City, most recently as the Chief of Housing at the New York Police Department (NYPD). As he retires this week, I wanted to pay homage to the work he has accomplished on behalf of so many New Yorkers.

Jimmy was born and raised in Brooklyn's Albany Houses, a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) development, in Crown Heights. He received his early education at St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Elementary School in Crown Heights for grades one through five. He joined the Robert F. Kennedy Incentive Program and later received an academic scholarship from the Brooklyn Catholic Interracial Council to attend Power Memorial Academy.

In 1979, he began his career with the NYPD on patrol in the 25th Precinct. He was promoted to Sergeant in December 1984 and steadily rose through the ranks. In 2014, Jimmy was promoted to Chief of Housing, his current position. In that capacity, he oversees the security of NYCHA, the largest public housing organization in North America, housing over 400,000 tenants.

During his 35-year career tenure with the NYPD, James has spearheaded a multitude of

food and clothing drives; an annual holiday toy drive he started in 1999, that continues today; a Thanksgiving community outreach initiative in which turkeys are distributed to families; and an annual Queens Breast Cancer Awareness Walk, which has successfully raised over \$100,000 since its inception nine years ago.

For these and other achievements, Chief Secreto has been honored by countless community groups, as well as several NYPD fraternal organizations. In 2009, the New York State Shields honored him as Man of the Year, and in 2014, the Tri-State Law Enforcement Foundation honored James as Person of the Year.

A devoted family man, Chief Secreto has been married to his wife, Yvonne, for 35 years. They are the proud parents of three children. Kiesha, Shamioka and Chanel. The couple also have eight grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, the people of New York owe a debt of gratitude to Chief Secreto for his years of service. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting him as he moves on to his next phase of life. I wish him and his family all the best and thank him for all he has done for Brooklyn, for NYCHA and all New York residents.

HONORING OUACHITA NATIONAL
FOREST SUPERVISOR NORMAN
WAGONER

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Norman Wagoner for

his decades of service with the United States Forest Service.

Mr. Wagoner began his career with the Forest Service in 1986, right in the Fourth District's own Ouachita National Forest. He worked his way up from a co-op student to a Forester Trainee to a Forester, later serving as a District Ranger in Colorado and Wyoming. Mr. Wagoner returned to the Ouachita National Forest in 2006 to become the Forest Supervisor, where he served until his retirement in 2019.

I was privileged to work alongside Mr. Wagoner on numerous occasions, and always admired his commitment to forestry and environmental stewardship. He has been a fantastic leader and advocate for Arkansas forestry, and will be greatly missed. I wish him all the best in retirement.