

Postal Service. When Smoky passed away earlier this month at the age of 94, he was warmly remembered by his daughter Jeanne-Marie and many relatives and friends for his constant kindness, humor and love of nature.

Throughout his life, Smoky demonstrated the importance of service to his family, our community and our nation. As a Letter Carrier for more than 40 years, he rose as a leader in the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 28 in Saint Paul, always a steadfast advocate for his brothers and sisters who deliver the U.S. mail every day. In his role as Legislative Liaison for Branch 28, I was privileged to work with him to ensure that Letter Carriers have a voice in the U.S. Capitol, and receive fair wages and benefits for their hard work.

In retirement, Smoky stayed active well into this year, because he truly understood the importance of unions, and that Americans depend on Letter Carriers for reliable, six-day, door-to-door mail delivery. His endless dedication and mentorship of rising leaders and collaborative skills truly made a difference. He personified the mission of the U.S. Postal Service to ensure that neither snow, rain, heat nor dark of night get in the way of the delivery of our mail.

It was my pleasure to know and work with Smoky and call him a friend. He was a kind and extraordinary person who will be deeply missed.

Madam Speaker, thank you for rising with me to pay tribute to Clarence "Smoky" Smekofski.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RALPH NORMAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, on roll call no. 685, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA. Also, on roll call no. 686, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA.

HONORING DR. C. ELAINE SMITH FOR RECEIVING THE WOMAN IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

HON. ELAINE G. LURIA

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Dr. C. Elaine M. Smith on receiving the 2020 Outstanding Woman in the Community Service Award for the Tidewater Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. This award was developed to honor women who are making significant contributions to their community through their time, actions, talents, and dedication. This is an amazing accomplishment.

This award recognizes Dr. Smith's lifetime of service and commitment to the promotion of respect among people of diverse backgrounds. Dr. Smith generously serves the community with civility and justice.

As a second grader, Dr. Smith was one of the first to integrate the Virginia Beach City

Public Schools, then known as Princess Anne County. At the age of 6, her parents supported her on a journey of learning experiences that were both negative and positive yet vital to her development.

Dr. Smith has been an agent for change and an advocate for students with disabilities (SWD) as she sought Specials Education as her vocation. She retired from Norfolk Public Schools after more than 30 years, where she served in numerous leadership capacities. Her professional experiences are vast as she has taught students with emotional disabilities, autism, and learning disabilities. As a Teacher Specialist at the district central office level for secondary students with disabilities and as an Educational Diagnostician, her duties were to assess both general and special education students who experienced academic and behavioral challenges in school. In these positions, she made recommendations to improve academic and behavioral deficits and to keep students in the least restrictive environment based on their individualized needs.

Her service to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., National Alliance for Black School Educators, National Allies for Parents in Special Education, has allowed her to put enormous efforts in strengthening ties to the local community with her civic involvement with various organizations. Dr. Smith's dedication as a leader within our community is truly inspiring. I am proud to honor and recognize Dr. Smith's leadership and the role she plays in making our community a better place. Coastal Virginia has significantly benefited from her presence.

VETERANS CEMETERY GRANTS IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Veterans Cemetery Grants Improvement Act, which helps get important operations and maintenance funding to locally-run veterans cemeteries nationwide faster by increasing the amount of grant funds the Department of Veterans Affairs can award for this purpose each year from \$5 million to \$10 million.

Our nation's veterans and their families have sacrificed so much to ensure that our country remains safe and free. While we may never fully repay these men and women for their sacrifices, we must do more to ensure their final resting place, whether in a national cemetery or a locally-run veterans cemetery like the CNMI Veterans Cemetery on Saipan, is operated and maintained with the high standards their families expect and deserve. As more veterans choose to be buried closer to home, more states, territories and tribal governments have applied for funding from the Department of Veterans Affairs to help cover the increasing costs of operating and maintaining their own veterans cemeteries. While the list of pending applications grows, the amount of grants the Department can award each year by law has not.

Under current law, no more than \$5 million in operations and maintenance grants can be awarded per year. The Veterans Cemetery

Grants Improvement Act updates the \$5 million cap to \$10 million so more cemeteries can receive the funding they need to keep up with the rising cost of maintaining them. Increasing the cap to \$10 million is critical as the need for operations and maintenance grant funding grows consistent with the growth of new and expanded cemeteries.

The Veterans Cemetery Grants Improvement Act will help expedite federal support for the over one hundred veteran cemeteries across our country operated by states, tribal nations and territories including my district, the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Act has the endorsement of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion.

The gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. STEIL, is an original cosponsor of the bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

HONORING LYLE MARTIN ON HIS RETIREMENT AS CHIEF OF POLICE IN BAKERSFIELD

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lyle Martin, Chief of Police for the Bakersfield Police Department (BPD), who is retiring after 31 years of service with the department, the last three as its Chief.

Lyle grew up in southeast Bakersfield, attended South High School, and earned his Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. Throughout his career with the BPD, Lyle has served with distinction and been promoted over the years, including serving as a lieutenant in the Gang Unit, Assistant Chief of Police, and finally Chief of Police.

When he is not saving lives, protecting our community, or leading our police force, Lyle can often be found serving many of the important causes in Bakersfield. He is a member of the Bakersfield Downtown Rotary, a member of both the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the California Police Officer's Association, and serves as Co-Chairman of the Mendiburu Magic Foundation Board, helping provide local children and their families with support as they battle life-threatening pediatric conditions. As President of the Bakersfield Police Activities League, Lyle has been a key leader in helping develop concrete plans to educate and benefit many of the at-risk youth in some of Bakersfield's most crime-ridden and poverty-stricken neighborhoods.

I want to thank Lyle for all the hard work and long hours he has put in for the City of Bakersfield. I also want to thank his wife, Connie, and their five children, Karl, Warren, Lyle Jr., William, and Lia for their patience over the years as he protected our hometown. I am looking forward to his continued efforts in safeguarding the City of Bakersfield, and now greater Kern County, as he transitions into his new position as the Attorney Investigator for Kern County. I am confident that in his new position, Lyle will continue to work to make Kern County safer and stronger, and that he will continue to serve our community with the highest dignity and respect as demonstrated over his past three decades in law enforcement. On behalf of a grateful community and