

am proud to share in the celebration of Special Operations Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Edward Gallagher's military career and as he and his family step into the next chapter of their lives, I ask my colleagues in this chamber to join me in wishing the Gallagher family fair winds and following seas.

IN HONOR OF JAMES PURTEE,  
CITY MANAGER

**HON. JULIA BROWNLEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2020*

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, after 31 years of public service, Palmdale City Manager James "Jim" Purtee announced his retirement effective at the end of 2019. Jim began his diverse career in public service with the City of Simi Valley in 1988. He spent over 27 years working for several city departments in Simi Valley and was involved in improving access to affordable housing, ensuring continued economic development, and contributing to city planning efforts. In addition, Jim spent his free time doing community services.

In July 2012, Jim was named as the City of Simi Valley's Assistant City Manager, where he was responsible for intergovernmental relations and served as the City's public information officer. While serving as the Assistant City Manager, Jim obtained S&P rating upgrade of AAA for the City of Simi Valley. He sponsored a \$5 million citywide investment in replacing technology services and turned a \$2.4 million budget deficit to a \$2.4 million budget surplus in just three years. Jim took the lead on working with city departments to complete a biogas fueling project for the City's transit buses and implement a \$15 million energy savings and production project. During his time in public service, Jim managed a \$160 million investment portfolio and increased investment returns by 400 percent over the benchmark and earned an additional \$9.7 million on City funds over a six-year period. Jim was instrumental in securing \$780,000 in grant funding to invest in citywide energy efficiency programs and oversaw countless affordable housing programs to benefit thousands of families.

In October 2015, Jim became the City Manager for the City of Palmdale. While serving as City Manager in Palmdale, Jim amassed a number of significant achievements and successes. As City Manager for the City of Palmdale, Jim obtained an S&P rating upgrade to AA- and engaged in community partnerships, which contributed to reducing the City of Palmdale's Part 1 crime rate by over 40 percent in just 5 years. Under Jim's leadership, the City of Palmdale was named as the 44th Safest City in the US, was ranked in the top 15 percent of fiscally responsible cities in California and as a top 25 city in the U.S. to Live the American Dream.

Jim implemented initiatives to assist thousands of families in obtaining safe, decent, and affordable housing. He carried out fiscal and legislative actions that provided over \$100 million in positive fiscal impacts to communities and worked on cutting edge sustainability projects such as waste to energy, groundwater recharge, and acquisition/conversion of 18,000 Streetlights to LED.

During his career, Jim served on multiple boards governing water, transportation, medicine, and regional planning. He served on the League of California Cities Fiscal Transparency, Revenue and Tax, and City Manager Committees. Jim supported the success of Air Force Plant 42 through maintaining strong relationships with all stakeholders. Jim worked tirelessly to ensure Palmdale, California will be California's High Speed Rail connection to the Western U.S. and partnered with academic stakeholders to educate and train the next generation of aerospace employees.

Jim obtained over \$300 million in grants, tax credits, and other financial resources to invest in transportation, housing, water, energy, and quality of life improvements for the City of Palmdale. He oversaw the development of strategic plans for increasing access to public arts, encouraging economic development throughout the city, and restoring air service to Palmdale. While serving as City Manager, Jim invested in local parks, building the City of Palmdale's first dog park, developing new City parks, and improving existing parks.

Jim was honored by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the premier local government leadership and management organization, at its annual conference in Baltimore earlier this year for his significant contributions and achievements in the advancement of local government administration for 30 years.

An avid supporter of military veterans, Jim has volunteered countless hours with local veteran organizations. He is also an advocate for supporting mental health programs, especially with our local youth population, and has also served on the Board of Directors for Palmdale Regional Medical Center. Jim holds both a bachelor's and master's degrees from California State University, Northridge, and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education for senior executives in state and local government program.

Jim has been happily married for the past 33 years to Tina, whom he has known since high school, and they are the proud parents of four children: Erika, Elyssa, Ariana, and Ethan.

REGARDING THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S TARGETED KILLING OF MAJOR GENERAL QASEM SOLEIMANI, HEAD OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2020*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committees on the Judiciary and on Homeland Security, I rise to address the Trump Administration's targeted killing of Qasem Soleimani, head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard, and the impact of this decision on American national security interests and the safety of American armed forces personnel and civilians in the region and around the world.

The decision to kill Major General Qasem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, may have rid the world of a major architect of terror but leaves unanswered the critically important question of why the action was taken at this time.

In addition, we do know whether the action taken was the product of a carefully developed geopolitical strategy developed after extensive discussion within the national security apparatus of the short and longterm consequences for the security of the region and our nation and its people.

Similarly, we do not know whether it was taken in consultation and agreement with our regional and international allies; and whether there is now in place a strategy to ensure that the action taken does not lead to a greater escalation of tensions between Iran and the United States or in the worst case, another war in the Middle East placing at risk the lives and safety of millions of persons.

Qasem Soleimani appears to be the apparent mastermind behind last week's attack on the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.

Soleimani as long-time chief of the Quds Force, the elite special forces battalion of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), assisted Syrian strongman Bashar al Assad slaughter hundreds of thousands of his own people in the Syrian civil war.

Soleimani also incited the Houthis in Yemen's civil war and oversaw the brutal killing of hundreds of Iraqi protesters recently demonstrating against Iranian influence in their country.

Iran's Quds Force, under Soleimani's leadership, has long been suspected by the U.S. Government of involvement in a 2011 plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States.

According to the U.S. Department of State, Soleimani was responsible for the 608 Americans killed by Iranian proxies since the 2003 inception of the war in Iraq.

But Qasem Soleimani was more than a military leader, he was a highranking political leader, second only in power and influence to the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In fact, Soleimani was regarded as a future president of Iran.

It was foreseeable that the killing of Soleimani by American forces was likely to invite retaliation by Iran putting at risk American military and civilian personnel, as well as its allies in the region and across the globe.

That is why it was essential that the Administration have in place a sound and well-considered and meticulously developed strategy for managing disputes with Iran.

That does not appear to be the case.

There is no evidence that the Administration consulted with Congress or the Gang of 8, no evidence that it enlisted or even consulted our allies in NATO or the region, no evidence that the Administration has a working and well-functioning national security council apparatus.

This is a critical Pottery Barn failure in dealing with the Middle East for as former Secretary of State Colin Powell stated before the Iraq War, "If you break it, you bought it."

Iran Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has vowed that a "harsh retaliation is waiting" for the United States as a consequence of the action taken yesterday by the Administration.

It is imperative that the Administration have in place a strategy to counter and deescalate any Iranian response and have in place measures to protect the safety of Americans residing or travelling abroad and to protect the security of the homeland.

We must be prepared and ready because the assassination of Qasem Soleimani has the potential to be the most consequential assassination of a political leader since the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Carl