

clear reflection of Secretary Scalia's and his staff's commitment to witnessing North Carolina's economic drivers in action.

COVID-19 has impacted North Carolina in many ways, but the resiliency of our State's frontline workers and businesses, which we witnessed on a firsthand basis, continues to propel North Carolina in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, no matter the challenge, the American people rise together. The men and women I was privileged to meet on this trip are the epitome of American resiliency in action. Though they are not recognized in the media for their tireless work, they show up to work every day with the same goal: to support their communities.

We still have work to do on the local, State, and Federal levels to combat COVID-19 and to restore our economy, and I am certain progress will continue to be made on all fronts.

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As a Nation, we have overcome monumental challenges before, and we will do it again with the same spirit and grit we have always had.

The great American comeback is unfolding before our very eyes, and the progress we have seen to date is undeniable.

Look to the performance of the stock market, the recent jobs report, the multitude of businesses reopening their doors to the public across the country, and the skyrocketing innovation that has been spearheaded by the private sector.

Many times I have come to the floor and spoken about American resiliency. I have highlighted businesses in my district, constituents who have stepped up to the plate in their communities, and the unwavering spirit of frontline workers.

Resiliency, in and of itself, has no designated boundaries. It does not ebb and flow or wax and wane. It is a trait that is engrained within our work and within our values as Americans. We will continue to work until this virus is defeated, and we will come out stronger and more resilient than ever before.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO U.S. NAVY COMMANDER WILLIAM "BILL" VOGT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary San Diegan and World War II veteran, U.S. Navy Commander William "Bill" Vogt. Bill passed away in February, at the age of 107, and will be laid to rest at Miramar National Cemetery today.

Bill served with honor and distinction as an intelligence officer for nearly 30 years and was, according to Navy records, the oldest living U.S. military officer.

Bill joined the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1940 and was called to Active Duty on December 8, 1941, the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. His first assignment was to the District Intelligence Office covering the southern coast of California. There, he searched for submarine activity and intercepted Nazi mail bound for Mexico and sent summaries of it up the chain of command.

He served in Guam, where he headed an operation that led to the surrender of the last two Japanese army holdouts, who had hidden in the jungles there since the U.S. landings in 1944.

Later, Bill served in the Pentagon as an intelligence watch officer during the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis. In 1969, during his last tour of duty in San Diego, William debriefed sailors of the USS *Pueblo* after they had been held captive in North Korea for 11 months.

At one point during his remarkable career, during a time of significant labor unrest, Bill was contacted by Roy Cohn, Senator Joseph McCarthy's lawyer. Cohn asked Bill to conduct domestic spying in support of McCarthy's anti-Communist hearings. Bill viewed the request as illegal and refused it, and he refused to turn over the files Cohn wanted on the Longshoreman's Union. Then, and until the very end, Bill Vogt was a fierce defender of our Constitution.

Bill was one of the first students to attend San Diego State University and lived to be its oldest known graduate. In 1934, he completed his degree in commerce.

The Nation was in the midst of the Great Depression, so Bill set off immediately to begin working and so never received his official diploma. Eighty-four years after earning it, San Diego State President Adela de la Torre presented it to him at the age of 105.

Bill met his beloved wife, Lillian, in Coronado, and they were married for 67 years. He is survived by his son, Bob; his daughter, Michelle; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Bob described his father as a "best friend, a hero, and a role model."

Bob wrote to me in 2019 and told me his father lived near me and wanted to spend some time talking about his country with his Congressman and have a drink. It was an honor to spend some time with Bill, to raise a glass with this great American.

Still sharp at 106, with somewhat diminished hearing, I must say, he shared stories from his extraordinary military career. He showed me his collection of books about history and politics, and he told me of his deep concern over the state of our democracy. He urged me to keep fighting to protect it and to never give up the fight. He still had not.

Bill Vogt represented the best of San Diego and the best of America. On behalf of a grateful Nation, we thank him and wish him and his family fair winds and following seas.

#### RECLAIMING ABANDONED MINE LANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to our Nation's abandoned mine lands.

Our abandoned mine lands desperately need to be reclaimed to prevent harm to our communities and to our environment. When these sites are cleaned up and mines reclaimed, it improves the quality of our air, soil, and water.

Pennsylvania has more abandoned mine sites than any other State in the country. In fact, my district, Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District, has more abandoned mine sites than each of the remaining 434 congressional districts combined.

This past September, my Democratic colleague from Pennsylvania's Eighth Congressional District, MATT CARTWRIGHT, joined me to introduce H.R. 4248, the Abandoned Mine Land Reauthorization Act.

The abandoned mine land trust fund is set to expire in September 2021, and this bill will not only reauthorize the fund for the next 15 years but help spur economic growth in coal communities impacted by mine closures.

For more than 40 years, this program has properly closed more than 46,000 open mine portals. To continue this momentum, the AML trust fund must be reauthorized.

There is still work to be done.

This past month, I had the pleasure of visiting the Anderson Creek watershed in Clearfield County. Reed Johnson, a constituent of mine who has owned property in that area for 30 years, has been working tirelessly ever since to clean up the abandoned mine site on that property.

Mr. Speaker, what was mined on that site was clay, and it was clay that was made to manufacture kiln bricks, the kiln bricks that were used to produce the steel that allowed the industrial revolution to occur and allowed us to provide the arsenal of democracy to win World War I and World War II. But we have a legacy that we need to clean up there.

During that visit, Reed welcomed me, as well as State and local officials, for a tour of the property. One of the other attendees was Clearfield County Conservation District's Watershed Specialist Kelly Williams.

The impact of abandoned mine lands on our environment is obvious, but there are community and economic considerations as well. Ms. Williams underscored the impact that abandoned mine lands have, not only on the environment, but on our communities as a whole.

Outdoor recreation is very popular in the area, specifically, boating and fishing. When abandoned mine lands are left untouched for too long, they have