

Transparency Act of 2021” and the “Demographic Data Collection Improvement Act.” Finally, the HOLC team has been incredibly responsive and collegial in drafting multiple pieces of legislation on mental health and research, to include the “STRONG Veterans Act” and the “VA VIPER Act of 2021.”

MARK TAKANO,
Chairman, House Committee on
Veterans’ Affairs.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Over the last year, the Office of the Legislative Counsel has worked alongside the staff of the House Committee on Ways and Means as we undertook the herculean task of moving both the American Rescue Plan and Build Back Better Act through the committee and on to the House floor. This process has been anything but straightforward and has required late nights, last minute drafting sessions, and even work through holidays and weekends. Throughout, this learned band of legislative counsels with deep expertise across the varied jurisdiction of the Committee has provided expert advice and drafting assistance. Their unfaltering commitment to their craft and continued professionalism under extraordinary pressure distinguish them as true public servants. The Committee on Ways and Means thanks you and the following members of your staff for tireless work on behalf of the American people: James Grossman, Jessica Shapiro, Scott Probst, Henry Christrup, Mark Synnes, Justin Gross, Paul Kubicki, Megan Hawkins, Michael Sribinder, Adam Schilt, Adrienne Thomas, Karl Hagnauer, Kalyani Parathasarathy.

RICHARD E. NEAL,

Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF RICHARD BANBURY

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the members of the House to join me in mourning the passing of Richard Banbury, a highly respected attorney, dedicated public servant, loving husband, father, and grandfather, and a cornerstone of the Marlborough community for decades. Richard sadly passed away on December 2, 2021, at the age of 83. He represented the pinnacle of civic and community engagement, leaving behind a legacy of service and commitment to others. His service in the legal and political spheres will be held in high regard by all those he impacted.

A son of Connecticut, Richard was born in Hartford in 1938. He excelled academically, attending Yale University where he graduated with his Bachelor's in Economics in 1960. Upon graduation, Richard remained at Yale to pursue his passion in law, later graduating from Yale Law School in 1963. Immediately, Richard began making an impact within the legal field, serving as the Chair of the Jerome Frank Legal Aid Society in 1963 where he guided the organization in providing legal assistance to those who could not afford private attorneys. He continued this passion into his budding career, serving as a Law Clerk to Associate Justice John P. Cotter, of the Connecticut Supreme Court. As a result of his unwavering dedication to helping others through the law, Richard became a State's Attorney and later Chief Assistant Attorney for Hartford County, where he served for nearly a decade.

Richard's legal career evolved throughout the years, as he began to find new areas in which he could make an impact. Amidst this evolution, Richard was chosen in a highly selective process to become a Guggenheim Fellow at Yale Law School from 1976 through 1977. This respected fellowship allowed Richard to further delve into his legal passions and develop legal academia. Richard's next legal pursuit began with Rome McGuigan, P.C. in Hartford, where he worked as a civil litigator, an arbitrator, and defense counsel. As a defense counsel, Richard represented the Mohegan Tribe and the Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority located here in Southeastern Connecticut. Throughout these years, Richard served an additional twenty-five years on the Connecticut Bar Examining Committee as well as thirty years as the Executive Director and Counsel to the Council on Probate Judicial Conduct in Connecticut. Throughout each and every one of his legal endeavors, Richard continuously held himself and the practice of law itself to higher standards of success, improving upon the quality of representation available throughout the region and beyond. On a personal note, I first met Richard at the Hartford Superior Court at 95 Washington Street when I was an intern in the public defender's office in 1978 and had a chance to watch him argue cases before judges and juries. He stood out as a very effective advocate who conveyed a deep grasp of the law and a friendly but very strong persona that connected with his audience. Later, after I passed the bar and encountered him as a young lawyer, he always had an encouraging word in the hallways of the courthouse that I will never forget and still deeply appreciate. Years later, in 2006 he was a staunch supporter of my race for Congress which succeeded by only 83 votes out of 241,000. He was a tireless campaigner and once again, I will be forever grateful to him for his friendship and good counsel.

Richard lived a life of service, actively participating on various town committees in Marlborough and the town's Democratic Town Committee. He used his voice to advocate for the well-being of his community members and for the issues he was passionate about, including through his published editorials in the Hartford Courant. His active engagement transcended politics, and he spent substantial time fostering a community with his graduating class of Yale. He found enjoyment through service and the many pastimes he enjoyed, including swimming in the beautiful Lake Terramuggus. His passion for life was admirable and showcased the wealth and joys of community.

All those who had the pleasure of knowing Richard saw firsthand his tireless work ethic and love of life. He is survived by his wife of twenty-seven years, Nicolette Banbury, six children—Michael, Anthony, Andrea, Jennifer, Samantha, Thomas, and twelve grandchildren. He has left an immeasurable impact on his beloved Marlborough community and the entirety of Eastern Connecticut. I am honored to have known Richard and have felt the impact of his life's work. As a chamber, please join me in sending our deepest condolences to the Banbury family and expressing our greatest respect for Richard's work. Madam Speaker, to that end, I ask that we immortalize the life and legacy of Richard Banbury.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT
OF WILLIAM LEFEVRE FROM
THE TRENTON CITY COUNCIL

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Councilman William LeFevre on the occasion of his retirement from the Trenton City Council after over thirty years of service to the City of Trenton, Michigan. His significant contributions to our downriver community are worthy of commendation.

William LeFevre was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1948, his family moved to Southgate, Michigan that same year. A 1966 graduate of Southgate High School, he attended Central Michigan University from 1966 to 1970. In 1971, he joined his parents in running the family business, B & D Vacuum, where he remains today. In 1973, Trenton became his home.

Councilman LeFevre was appointed to the Trenton City Council in February 1990 to fill a vacant seat, since then he has been reelected every year since. A trusted colleague among his peers, he's served as Mayor Pro Tem six times. He is also the chairman of the Trenton Brownfield Committee. While serving on the Council he has been an advocate for Trenton's financial growth and development and strong voice for the City's public safety officers.

An active member of the community, Councilman LeFevre is a Trenton Rotarian, a Trenton Jaycee, and a longtime member of Trenton Faith United Methodist Church. His sharp wit, caring personality, and compassionate ways—as well as his colorful wardrobe—makes Councilman LeFevre someone that leaves a mark on each person that he meets. All who know him can attest to his generosity and love for his community. A gifted emcee, he has been the host of the annual Trenton City Awards Banquet, Trenton Education Foundation events, the Trenton Rotary Wild Game Lunch, and the Trenton Memorial Day and Christmas Parades for countless years. Councilman LeFevre and his wife Linda reside in Trenton, along with their two children Matthew and Andrea who are proud graduates of Trenton High School.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Councilman William LeFevre for his dedicated service to the citizens of downriver. We are immensely grateful for all that he has done to improve the lives of Trenton, Michigan. I join with Bill's family, friends, and colleagues in extending my best wishes to him in retirement.

HONORING RAYMOND VENNITTI

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Mr. RYAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and pay tribute to Raymond Vennitti, of Mineral Ridge, who passed away on Saturday, November 20th, 2021, at his residence surrounded by his loving family. He was 76 years old.

Ray was a great friend and supporter. He loved his wife, his daughter, his church, and his community. He was a quiet and strong man who was always behind the scenes to help and support others. He was humble, never looking for credit. He was prayerful, dedicated, and genuinely happy to be with people. He was old school in these ways, and it was always so refreshing to see.

He was born February 15th, 1945, in Youngstown, son of William and Mary Belcastro Vennitti.

Raymond was a 1963 graduate of Niles McKinley High School and a graduate of All-State Barber College in Cleveland. He was a barber at Union Barber Shop in Niles from 1967 to 1972 and then went on to work at Delphi Packard Electric for 32 years, retiring in 2003.

Ray was a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Niles, where he served as a church usher and adult alter server. He was a member of St. Vincent DePaul Society, Mahoning Valley Olde Car Club, and enjoyed gardening, winemaking, and their '55 T-Bird.

Raymond was a sergeant in the U.S. Army, serving one year of active duty in Vietnam.

He will be missed by his wife, Laura Pajank Vennitti, whom he married on November 1st, 1975; a daughter, Clarise of Strongsville; and two sisters, Nancy DeGood of Howland and Angela Vandegrift and her husband, Richard, of Howland.

He was preceded in death by his parents and an infant brother, William Raymond Vennitti. Ray will be missed. And our community and church were much better because of his total commitment to serve others. God Bless Ray. I was honored to call you friend.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM T. JOHNSON FOR HIS SERVICE AND EFFORTS THAT SAVED THE LIVES OF NUMEROUS AFGHAN PARTNERS

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of Colonel (Ret.) William T. Johnson, a retired U.S. Army officer and member of the Armed Services Committee's professional staff.

The work of this legislative body is supported by staff who work determinedly on behalf of the American public. These public servants provide valuable policy advice to Members of Congress, assist in crafting legislation and facilitating Congress' oversight responsibilities, among many important duties. While the work of all congressional staff should be recognized, I want to take a moment to single out COL Johnson for going above and beyond his professional responsibilities.

COL Johnson has served for many years on the Armed Services Committee as an expert on Afghanistan policy. This past year, COL Johnson provided invaluable advice to Members of Congress both on and off the Armed Service Committee, staffed critical hearings and briefings, drafted essential, late-breaking updates to the Department's authorities for the scope of its work in Afghanistan. As events unfolded in Afghanistan, offices across Capitol

Hill received countless requests for assistance from Americans, Afghan partners, and members of the international community seeking safe passage out of Afghanistan. Many of those seeking assistance approached the Committee and COL Johnson took great initiative. He not only navigated the formal Defense and State Department process but also leveraged his own informal networks, based on his prior military service and time serving in Afghanistan. COL Johnson made connections that helped vulnerable individuals navigate their way safely to the United States. His tireless efforts and hours of work saved countless lives.

The Armed Services Committee and Member offices received many testimonials in the form of pictures, emails, and text messages confirming that individuals COL Johnson assisted had made it to safety. Without the tireless work of the men and women of the United States Armed Forces, the State Department, and public servants like COL Johnson, such messages of gratitude would not have been possible. This was a tremendous accomplishment. Speaking for myself, other Members of Congress, the American people, Afghans, and other partners, I thank him for his service and efforts.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO DESIGNATE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AS AN EMPOWERMENT ZONE

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that would statutorily add the District of Columbia to the national empowerment zone program, which provides federal tax incentives for businesses to locate and invest in low-income areas. In 1993, Congress created the national empowerment zone program and left it to federal agencies to designate a certain number of low-income areas as empowerment zones. The District was not one of the areas selected. However, in 1997, working primarily with Republicans in Congress, I created federal tax incentives for investment in the District by businesses and individuals. The business incentives were similar to, but more generous than, those available under the national empowerment zone program. I got the D.C. incentives reauthorized regularly until 2011, when Congress refused to extend only the D.C. incentives. At the same time, the national empowerment zone program continued to be extended and was last extended through 2025. Under my bill, certain low-income neighborhoods, particularly in Wards 5, 7 and 8, would be treated as empowerment zones as long as the national empowerment zone program remains in effect.

The wisdom of the bipartisan, modest, targeted business tax incentives for D.C. has been amply and visibly demonstrated in the economic resurgence of parts of the nation's capital where they were utilized. Among the most visible examples are the formerly rundown area around Capital One Arena, which is now surrounded by offices, restaurants and