

Madam Speaker, I am proud to call Nonnie Burns a friend and grateful for the advice I have been able to get from her over the years. In particular, during her tenure as Insurance Commissioner, she was of significant value to those of us on the Financial Services Committee in her thoughtful and prompt responses to questions we had affecting insurance policy. I congratulate Discovering Justice for recognizing her value and presenting her with this award, which, as I noted, I will not be able to note in person because I will be here on the floor when the event goes forward.

HONORING RALPH L. FLETCHER

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Ralph L. Fletcher, the mayor of Lakeland, a city in my 12th Congressional District of Florida. Ralph has worked tirelessly to represent the best interests of the citizens of Lakeland. Moreover, as a small business owner, he has successfully run his Fletcher Printing Company and helped form the successful real estate company, Arch Inc.

"Buddy" Fletcher enjoyed building one-on-one relationships with the citizens of Lakeland. As his deputy city manager, Tony Delgado told the Lakeland Ledger, Monday mornings became Buddy Time—where the mayor would share with him all of the complaints and suggestions he had gathered from residents of Lakeland over the weekend. No task was too small or big for Mr. Fletcher, and he was dedicated to making sure that the issue was addressed properly.

Mr. Fletcher truly is Lakeland's own. He first attended Lakeland High School and then later pursued his education even further at Florida Southern College. Mr. Fletcher first served as one of Lakeland's City Commissioners from 1989 to 1992. He was then elected as mayor of Lakeland in 1993 as has served in that office ever since.

When he first decided to run for office, his wife suggested that running a campaign only on economic development would not be sufficient. However, during his tenure as mayor he helped bring in Watkins Motor Lines and the headquarters of the grocery chain Publix downtown to add jobs in the city. Always with an eye for the long term benefits to Lakeland, Fletcher is remembered by his admirers for improved economic development, city beautification and the restoration of parks.

Fletcher has been well renowned for his accessibility to residents. He instructed his staff to give out his cell phone number to any resident who wanted to reach him personally. People he has golfed with had several anecdotes about taking weekend calls out on the course. A reporter once asked him how many hours a week he dedicated to job. Fletcher was baffled by this question because he considered himself always on duty from when he woke up at 4:30 a.m. until he went to sleep.

In 1998, he was recognized for his volunteer service earning the Sun 'n Fun Chairman of the Board Award. The Sun 'n Fun organization is a volunteer group focused on aviation education and running the Florida Air Museum.

In 2001, he earned the Jere Annis Leadership Award. These awards are granted to

those who have graduated from the Lakeland Leadership Program—which has provided consistent leadership in enhancing quality of life and cohesion in the Lakeland community.

Mr. Fletcher truly is a great leader in the community and his extensive volunteer efforts reflect that. In February of 2004 he earned the Distinguished Citizen of the Gulf Ridge Council of the Boy Scouts of America for outstanding leadership. In May of 2009, he earned the University of South Florida Polytechnic Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to USF Polytechnic and service to the community.

Mr. Fletcher looks forward to spending his retirement with his devoted wife of 57 years, Weetsie.

Lakeland City Commissioner Dean Boring had this to say of Fletcher, "He's been Lakeland's No. 1 cheerleader, and he'll never stop doing that. If you cut Buddy Fletcher, Lakeland would pour out. He lives, sleeps, eats and drinks Lakeland."

IN RECOGNITION OF FAMILIES
FLU VACCINATION DAY AND
FAMILIES FIGHTING FLU

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, today I rise in recognition of Families Flu Vaccination Day and Families Fighting Flu. Influenza is a serious disease that kills nearly 100 children younger than five years of age every year in the United States. In fact, more children die from the flu than from chicken pox, whooping cough, and measles combined. The flu is a highly contagious viral infection of the respiratory tract. With the recent development of H1N1, a deadlier strain of the flu, it is more important now than ever to vaccinate our children and educate the American public. Indeed, more than 240 children in the United States have died from the H1N1 virus.

I commend the efforts of Families Fighting Flu, a non-profit, volunteer-based organization of families who have experienced firsthand the death of a child or have had a child experience severe medical complications from seasonal or H1N1 influenza. Families Fighting Flu and its medical advisors are dedicated to educating people about the severity of influenza and the importance of vaccinating children against the flu every year. The members of Families Fighting Flu have suffered terrible personal losses as result of the virus. We are grateful that they are sharing their personal tragedies so that others will not have to suffer such loss. Influenza is unpredictable, but we know that the more people who are vaccinated, the less likely the disease will spread.

Every year in the United States more than 20,000 children under the age of five are hospitalized due to influenza. Additionally, children are two-to-three times more likely than adults to get sick with the flu because of their less developed immune systems. Because the flu vaccine is typically 60 to 90 percent effective when administered to children, getting an annual flu vaccination is an easy way to help stop the spread of the virus.

This week is National Influenza Vaccination Week, a national observance that was estab-

lished to highlight the importance of continuing influenza vaccination, as well as foster greater use of the flu vaccine after the holiday season into January and beyond. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that all children 6 months through 18 years of age get vaccinated against the flu every year. In addition, the CDC recommends that all contacts and caregivers of children from birth to age five should be vaccinated.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Families Fighting Flu. This non-profit organization is determined to help prevent the tragedy of losing another child by encouraging annual flu vaccinations for all children. I look forward to working with my colleagues to support Families Flu Vaccination Day and make influenza immunization for children a national health priority.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber yesterday evening and today. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "present" on rollcall vote 1, "nay" on rollcall vote 2 and "yea" on rollcall votes 3, 4 and 5.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. DEAN HELLER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Mr. HELLER. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 3288, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2010:

Requesting Member: Congressman DEAN HELLER

Bill Number: HR 3288

Account: Military Construction—Army National Guard

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Nevada National Guard

Address of Requesting Entity: 2460 Fairview Dr., Carson City, NV 89701

Description of Request: \$2,000,000. Funding will be used for wind, solar, and geothermal energy projects at facilities and training sites operated by the Nevada National Guard.

Requesting Member: Congressman DEAN HELLER

Bill Number: HR 3288

Account: Military Construction—Air National Guard

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Nevada National Guard

Address of Requesting Entity: 2460 Fairview Dr., Carson City, NV 89701

Description of Request: \$10,800,000. Funding will be used for the design and construction of a new fire station at the Nevada Air National Guard base located at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport in Reno, Nevada. The