

Christine started as a temporary employee in 1979 but soon became a permanent member of the GE staff. While raising two sons, working full time, and completing a bachelor's degree at Salem State College and a master's degree in Management at Lesley College in Cambridge, Christine progressed in various roles throughout the Lynn Aircraft Engine unit and became one of the first women in the company to become a Six Sigma Black Belt—a team leader responsible for measuring, analyzing, improving and controlling key processes that influence customer satisfaction and productivity growth.

Christine completed her General Electric career at the end of 2011 as a Senior Tech Manager for Turbo Shaft & GE38 Marine & Commercial Programs. The GE38 engine is believed to be the most technologically advanced turbo shaft engine in its class, and it is my understanding that the United States Marine Corps has selected it to power the Sikorsky CH53K Super Stallion helicopter.

General Electric has been in Lynn since 1892, and members of Christine's family have proudly worked there for most of that time. Christine's grandfather, Martin G. Higgins, entered the apprentice program at Lynn General Electric in 1904 and worked there for 34 years. Her father, John J. Higgins, worked at GE for 33 years, from 1943 to 1975. Christine's husband, Michael Taillon, also worked for 41 years at Lynn GE. In total, that is 140 years of service to General Electric in Lynn.

I congratulate Christine on her remarkable career and wish her all the best in her retirement.

HONORING JIMI YAMAICHI

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 8, 2012

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with Representative ZOE LOFGREN to honor Mr. Jimi Yamaichi. On November 3, 2011, Mr. Yamaichi was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays, from the Government of Japan. Mr. Yamaichi is being recognized for his contributions to Japan-U.S. relations arising from decades of community involvement. On February 24, 2012, the Consul General of Japan in San Francisco, Hiroshi Inomata, will present Mr. Yamaichi with this distinguished award.

Mr. Yamaichi grew up on his family owned farm in San Jose, California during the Great Depression era. As a young student, Mr. Yamaichi dreamed of becoming a carpenter. However, racism within the carpenter's union and the outbreak of World War II postponed that dream. With the signing of Executive Order 9066, Mr. Yamaichi and his family were forcibly removed from their home to the Pomona Assembly Center, then to the internment camps at Heart Mountain in Wyoming and at Tule Lake in California. While at Tule Lake, he oversaw building projects as the camp construction manager. After the war ended, Mr. Yamaichi doggedly pursued union membership, which he was finally granted.

With his experience in the internment camps and as a carpenter, Mr. Yamaichi has turned his attention towards memorializing the experi-

ences of Japanese Americans. Over the years, he has served on a variety of boards and committees in San Jose's Japantown. Currently, he leads the effort to restore the Tule Lake Relocation Center in addition to leading biannual pilgrimages to the internment camp. Through the restoration and pilgrimages to Tule Lake, Mr. Yamaichi shares the harsh reality of life in internment. Driven by the desire to tell the story of Japanese Americans, Mr. Yamaichi became a charter member of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose. As the curator of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose, he has managed projects and played a key role in the construction of the new museum. One of the key exhibits is the replica of the camp barracks, complete with artifacts found at Tule Lake.

Mr. Yamaichi's lifelong work to preserve Japanese American history was recognized by the Government of Japan in the 2011 Conferment of Decoration. Mr. Yamaichi is receiving the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays, for his work in Santa Clara County.

Mr. Speaker, we commend Mr. Jimi Yamaichi for his years of dedication and commitment to Santa Clara County and the Japanese American community. His contributions ensure that Japanese Americans' experiences of persecution will never be forgotten.

URGING PASSAGE OF THE STOCK ACT

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 8, 2012

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of The STOCK Act. This bill will make government more transparent and accountable to its citizens.

It is unacceptable for any Member of Congress, federal official or their staff to use non-public information obtained during their work as a public servant for their own financial gain.

The STOCK Act will give our constituents peace of mind that no one will gain from insider trading. This legislation greatly improves the Senate-passed version by extending these requirements to include the Executive Branch. All public servants must be held to the same standards.

I urge my colleagues to support this responsible legislation.

U.S. COMBAT OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 8, 2012

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I commend President Obama's administration for the steps it is taking to bring the longest war in our nation's history to a close. Last week, Defense Secretary Panetta expressed the hope that "by mid- to the latter part of 2013 we'll be able to make a transition from a combat role to a training, advice and assist role." I urge the administration to fulfill this aspiration and bring our troops home to their families. They have sacrificed enough.

Afghanistan began as a war of necessity. After the horrific September 11th attacks, we sent troops to eliminate Al Qaeda, killing their leaders and destroying their training camps to prevent a future terrorist attack. Our troops carried out this mission with extraordinary courage and dedication. Osama Bin Laden was driven out of Afghanistan and he is now dead. Furthermore, our intelligence community affirms that Al Qaeda is virtually extinguished from Afghanistan, yet the war continues. End this war now and focus like a laser on terrorists wherever they may be.

Our troops in Afghanistan are no longer fighting terrorists who pose a threat to the United States. They are now fighting domestic Afghan factions and defending a corrupt and inept Afghan government. Our service-members are dying in another country's civil war. This has become a war of choice.

I recently met with Lt. Col. Danny Davis who described to me what that civil war looks like on the ground. He has served two combat deployments in Afghanistan, and has traveled throughout the country talking with US troops stationed all over. A recent evaluation of Col. Davis reads: "His maturity, tenacity and judgment can be counted on in even the hardest of situations, and his devotion to mission accomplishment is unmatched by his peers." This is how Col. Davis describes what he has observed:

What I saw bore no resemblance to rosy official statements by U.S. military leaders about conditions on the ground. Entering this deployment, I was sincerely hoping to learn that the claims were true: that conditions in Afghanistan were improving . . .

Instead, I witnessed the absence of success on virtually every level.

I saw the incredible difficulties any military force would have to pacify even a single area of any of those provinces; I heard many stories of how insurgents controlled virtually every piece of land beyond eyeshot of a U.S. or International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) base. I saw little to no evidence the local governments were able to provide for the basic needs of the people. Some of the Afghan civilians I talked with said the people didn't want to be connected to a predatory or incapable local government. From time to time, I observed Afghan Security forces collude with the insurgency. . .

Col. Davis's candid testimony reinforced my conviction that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, only the prospect of continued shedding of American blood in a war that is not ours to fight. Only through a negotiated political settlement amongst the Afghan factions, not through an open-ended U.S. military presence, could Afghanistan become a stable, developing country.

America faces new threats now. The more than a trillion dollars spent on two wars over the course of a decade undermines our financial stability and takes away from much needed funds for American jobs and investments at home. The Obama administration has shown courageous leadership in eliminating Osama Bin Laden and other top Al Qaeda leaders. They have also shown leadership in bringing the war in Iraq to an end and in planning to ensure that the U.S. military commitment in Afghanistan is not an open-ended one. As President Obama clearly stated in his speech on the drawdown plan last year, we need to focus on nation-building at home. I agree, and I strongly support ending U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan and bringing our troops