

Thankfully, Harris County Texas District Judge, Marc Carter, an Army veteran himself noticed that many of the defendants coming through the Harris County courts were veterans who had recently come home from fighting overseas. Judge Carter is judge of the 228th Criminal District Court of Texas. He replaced me after I served as judge in that court for 22 years.

Judge Carter and other members of the Harris County community recognized this problem in 2009 and took the initiative to create the first veteran's court in the state of Texas. The Harris County Veteran's Court Program specifically works with first time misdemeanors and felonies. If veterans choose to go through the program instead of going to prison, it requires two years of probation and treatment.

The reason why the Veteran's Court Program is so successful is because it addresses the root of the problem, which is PTSD and drug abuse. Many of these veterans are still mentally over seas fighting for ours and their lives and these programs give them the help they need to readjust back into society. Since 2008 veteran's treatment courts have been created in 27 States.

These men have been to the darkest places on earth to protect the American people and although there is a lot we owe our veterans, most importantly, we owe them a second chance.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT
COMMANDER TOM G. WEILER

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize those men and women who have served this great Nation with honor, men such as Lieutenant Commander Tom G. Weiler, United States Navy.

For the past year, Lieutenant Commander Weiler, a proud submariner and graduate of the University of Notre Dame, served on my staff as a Congressional Defense Fellow. During his assignment, he served as a senior member of my staff responsible for defense, veterans, foreign affairs and intelligence matters. Lieutenant Commander Weiler executed his work as a liaison to the constituents of the First District and the numerous defense installations in the First District with distinction. Furthermore, he provided exceptional support to me as my staff liaison to the House Armed Services Committee in my role as a Subcommittee Chairman and as the Co-Chair of the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus.

Lieutenant Commander Weiler directly contributed to my goal of providing excellent constituent service to the people of the First District. He was responsible for bringing numerous constituent inquiries to a successful conclusion and he was able to leverage his personal and operational experience to respond to the most challenging inquiries.

In addition to his efforts on behalf of the First District, Lieutenant Commander Weiler took on projects with regional, state and national implications, demonstrating his ability to view a challenge from many angles and de-

velop innovative solutions often requiring collaboration across many levels of government.

Lieutenant Commander Weiler's work ethic, duty to mission, and commitment to servant leadership is without equal. I believe that his personal drive to achieve excellence in his work has and will set a very high standard for his peers.

I would also like to thank Lieutenant Commander Weiler for the service and sacrifice he has made, and continues to make, for our Nation and our great Navy. His keen sense of honor, impeccable integrity, boundless work ethic, and loyal devotion to duty earned him the respect and admiration of my staff and the First District of Virginia. After spending eight of the last eleven years stationed in Hawaii, which included multiple patrols in the Western Pacific and a 12-month deployment to Germany, Lieutenant Commander Weiler is headed to the England as the only U.S. Navy submarine officer to participate in the Royal Navy Submarine Command Course in Portsmouth, England in 2013. Following this distinguished opportunity to train with the British Royal Navy, Lieutenant Commander Weiler will embark on his journey to become an Executive Officer of a United States Navy submarine and attend the Submarine Command Course. After this intense course of instruction Lieutenant Commander Weiler will return to sea and to leading Sailors as he goes back into harm's way to execute his trade as submariner in the "silent service" of this great Nation. I have no doubt that Lieutenant Commander Weiler will continue to serve the United States Navy honorably and with distinction.

I wish him the best of luck as he continues his Naval career. It was an honor and a pleasure having him serve on my staff. We all can sleep soundly at night knowing that men and women like Lieutenant Commander Tom Weiler are members of our all-volunteer force and they stand ready to defend our country and take the fight to our enemies; far away from their families and the comforts of the United States of America.

Lieutenant Commander Weiler, thank you. Best of luck to you and God bless you, your family, and all the Sailors you are charged with leading. Fair winds and following seas . . . and GO IRISH!

TRIBUTE TO TERESA VANZANT

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Teresa Vanzant, in honor of her retirement after dedicating 31 years of public service to Kentucky's Rockcastle County Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Teresa's passion and commitment to public service was inspired by her father and my dear friend, the late Denver Miller, who also served as Circuit Court Clerk in Rockcastle County for three terms. Denver instilled in his family, the value of being an engaged citizen and giving back to the community. Denver's service as Clerk and Administrative Assistant to the Administrative Office of the Court also influenced his son, James Miller who serves as Rockcastle County's Jailer. The tireless dedication of this entire family will be a legacy long admired in our region.

Teresa Vanzant is also a role model for women in public service in our rural communities. In addition to her role as Circuit Court Clerk, she has volunteered for the Kentucky Women's Missionary Union, the Mt. Vernon Elementary Family Resource Center Council, President of Kiwanis Rockcastle, the Education Chair of Kentucky's Circuit Court Clerk's Association, Secretary of the Trust for Life, and a board member of the anti-drug Rockcastle County UNITE Coalition. Teresa works diligently, to not only serve her county, but to be a voice for opportunity and vision for generations to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a leader and dear friend of southern and eastern Kentucky, Teresa Vanzant, on her retirement. My wife, Cynthia and I wish Teresa and her family all the best in the years to come.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$16,359,758,742,907.76. We've added \$5,132,881,693,994.68 to our debt in nearly 4 years. This is a \$5 trillion in debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

TRIBUTE TO ADOLFO JESUS
VALADEZ

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 80th birthday of Adolfo Jesus Valadez.

Adolfo Jesus Valadez, the son of Mexican immigrants who came to the United States fleeing the Mexican Revolution, was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. Adolfo attended local public elementary schools and in 1949, graduated from Central Catholic High School. He enrolled in the University of Texas at Austin to study business administration and pharmacy studies. However, his studies were interrupted when he was called to serve his country as part of the post WWII occupation forces. Adolfo served as an Army Corp medic in Germany, where he provided health care services to American troops and learned to speak German fluently.

When Adolfo returned to the U.S., he completed his studies at the University of Texas at Austin and received a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy, one of the few Mexican-Americans at that time to receive an undergraduate degree. Adolfo moved back to San Antonio and worked as a registered pharmacist serving the city's poor in various settings, including the Stella Mares Clinic on the west side of the city. Eventually, he opened his own small