

trusted to keep these refugees safe. I have traveled to Iraq several times. On my last trip, I asked Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki to let me visit Camp Ashraf. He refused. It seemed like he had something to hide. Mr. Speaker, there were 7 hostages taken on September 1. All we know is that they are somewhere in Iraq still. If we don't find these hostages soon, it is almost certain that they will be killed in Iraq or taken to Iran and executed. Our government must do everything in its power to secure their release. And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, September 25, 2013, I missed the following votes: H.R. 1961—To amend title 46, United States Code, to extend the exemption from the fire-retardant materials construction requirement for vessels operating within the Boundary Line. H. Res. 354—Providing for the concurrence by the House in the Senate amendment to H.R. 527, with an amendment. Had I been present, I would have voted: "no" on rollcall No. 484, "yes" on rollcall No. 485.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I regret I missed votes on September 27, 2013. Had I been present, my intention was to vote "yes" on Senate Amendment to H.R. 1412—Improving Job Opportunities for Veterans Act. Further, I would have also voted "yes" on H.R. 3096 to designate a Federal Bureau of Investigation building as the "Michael D. Resnick Terrorist Screening Center."

A meeting in Detroit to address the economic situation of the City with senior White House officials, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, and Attorney General Eric Holder and others in the Michigan Congressional Delegation was the reason for my absence. Additionally, Governor Rick Snyder, Mayor Dave Bing, and Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr were in attendance. I felt my participation vital to the interests of my constituents.

HONORING TRISTAN MICHAEL OTT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tristan Michael Ott. Tristan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Tristan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Tristan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Tristan has earned the rank of Brave in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and became a Brotherhood Member of the Order of the Arrow. Tristan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Tristan completed a much needed landscaping project at St. Therese School in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tristan Michael Ott for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

SOUTHEAST ARIZONA LAND EXCHANGE AND CONSERVATION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 687) to facilitate the efficient extraction of mineral resources in southeast Arizona by authorizing and directing an exchange of Federal and non-Federal land, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, today's legislation proposes to give two of the world's largest, foreign-owned mining companies—Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton—2,400 acres of the Tonto National Forest, which has been protected since 1955, in exchange for land the companies currently own. The companies believe the Federal land contains significant copper ore deposits.

I am not opposed to responsible domestic energy and mineral production as long as Americans get full value for the use of their resources and environmentally sensitive areas are protected. Today's legislation does not meet either test. The bill includes a convoluted appraisal process that fails to take into account the copper deposit on the land and requires no future royalty payments for that resource. It does not require mitigation or even analysis of damaging effects on the local ecosystem, waiving environmental review and Endangered Species Act protections. Finally, the bill does not guarantee preservation of traditional Native American sacred sites.

Ultimately, the bill gifts an environmentally sensitive and historically significant area to a foreign company without proper review or compensation for the American taxpayer. I urge a no vote.

HONORING CHARLES M. GOSSELIN III

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles M.

Gosselin III. Charles is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Charles has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Charles has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Charles has earned the rank of Brave in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and became a member of the Order of the Arrow. Charles has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Charles designed and constructed a changeable billboard sign, along with the accompanying landscaping, at Divine Mercy Park in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Charles M. Gosselin III, for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE JACK E. HIGHTOWER

HON. MAC THORNBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House that one of our former colleagues, the Honorable Jack E. Hightower, has passed away at the age of 86.

Jack Hightower was the very definition of a Texas gentleman and leader, leading a life of public service until his death. His life-long dedication to serving his country began with military service during World War II, before going on to become a lawyer, a member of the Texas House, District Attorney, member of the Texas Senate, U.S. Congressman, Assistant Attorney General of Texas, and later, Justice of the Texas Supreme Court.

He was born in Memphis, Texas, to Floy and Walter Hightower on September 6, 1926. After graduating from Memphis High School, he enrolled in summer classes at Baylor University. However, that fall he joined the Navy and served two years during World War II. After being discharged, he returned to Baylor where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree, followed by a law degree. It was during this time that he married his wife, Colleen Ward, of Tulia, Texas. He joined the Storey, Storey and Donaghey law firm in Vernon, Texas, and soon thereafter, served in the Texas House of Representatives from 1953–1955. He was appointed District Attorney for the 46th Judicial District, followed by a term in the Texas Senate for the 23rd District. In 1966, he was elected to the new 30th Senatorial District and eventually became President Pro-tempore of the Texas Senate. During his service as a Texas State Senator, he received a Doctor of Laws degree from Howard Payne University.

Mr. Hightower served the constituents of the 13th Congressional District of Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1974 to 1985. After Congress, he served as Assistant Attorney General of Texas. He was then elected to the Texas Supreme Court, where he stayed until 1996. In 1999, Mr. Hightower was

appointed by President Clinton as a Commissioner on the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, where he served until 2005.

His passion for Texas was only surpassed by his love for God, his family, his church, and Freemasonry of Texas. Jack was an active member of the First Baptist Church, not only in Vernon, Texas, where he spent most of his life, but also in Austin, Texas, the latter part of his life.

Jack was a member for over fifty years and Past Master of Vernon Lodge #655, Vernon, Texas. He also belonged to University Lodge #1190, Austin, Texas, and the Texas Lodge of Research. He served the Grand Lodge of Texas as District Deputy Grand Master, Grand Orator, member of the Masonic Jurisprudence Committee, and was elected to serve as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas in 1972.

Jack was also a Knight of the York Cross of Honor, a member of the Red Cross of Constantine, and a Thirty Third Degree, Scottish Rite Mason, and served as the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of Texas. Jack was also a member of the Maskat Shrine, Wichita Falls, Texas, and served on the boards of the Scottish Rite Hospital in Dallas, Texas, and the Scottish Rite Dormitory at the University of Texas, Austin, Texas, and the Scottish Rite Education Association of Texas.

Jack is survived by his wife, Colleen, and his three daughters, Ann Thornburg; Amy Brees; and Alison Suttle.

With more than 50 years of public service, Jack Hightower will always be remembered for his selfless devotion to the people of his State and his country. Whether holding a position at a local, state, or national level, he always put the interests and considerations of his country above all else—the living embodiment of a public servant. He will surely be missed.

HONORING OUR GOLD STAR
MOTHERS OF UTICA, NEW YORK

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of this Nation's Gold Star Mothers, especially those in New York State and in particular in New York's 22nd Congressional District.

It is fitting that we recognize the American Gold Star Mothers, whose sons and daughters have died in defense of the ideals of individual liberty. On Sunday, September 29, 2013, our Utica chapter will host its Gold Star Mother's Day at 2 p.m. at the CPT George A. Wood Postal Facility at 100 Pitcher St. in Utica, New York.

This day is made possible in large part due to the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 944, which annually honors our Gold Star Mothers and families during this event complete with Color Guards, a rifle salute, the singing of our national anthem, and a wreath-laying at Gold Star Mothers monument.

Our Gold Star Mothers should be honored and offered respect and gratitude for their personal sacrifice. Gold Star Mother's Day is intended to honor women who deserve special recognition and gratitude for their tremendous personal loss on behalf of our country.

During the early days of World War I, a Blue Star was used to represent each Soldier in military service of the United States, and as the war progressed and Soldiers were killed or wounded in combat or died from wounds or disease, a Gold Star superimposed over the Blue Star designated the loss of these individuals. This tradition recognized Soldiers for their ultimate sacrifice to our country and the Gold Star offered families an outward symbol by which to honor the loss of a loved one.

Our Gold Star Mothers serve as the strength and inspiration for this country. They are part of an exclusive group—one that no one ever hopes to belong. One can imagine that there is no pain more far-reaching or deeper than losing a child.

While it's not possible to ever find solace in losing a child, our Gold Star Mothers find comfort in the women standing beside them. Their hurt may be soothed by knowing the lives of their sons and daughters live on through them. Their children live not only in their hearts, but in the heart of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe to serve one's country—particularly during times of war—is one of the most noble and selfless acts available to man. I urge all of my colleagues to appreciate the services rendered to the United States by the mothers of America who have strengthened and inspired our Nation throughout history. May we always honor the Gold Star Mothers of America for their courage and their strength.

IN RECOGNITION OF GENE RUDDY
FOR RISKING HIS LIFE TO SAVE
THE LIVES OF OTHERS

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patrolman Gene Ruddy, whose heroic action saved the lives of at least eight people in Dunmore, Pennsylvania on Saturday, September 21, 2013. Patrolman Ruddy was on patrol just after 2:00 a.m. Saturday on Chestnut Street when he smelled smoke nearby. He immediately searched the area near Chestnut and Drinker Street and looked for the source. He saw smoke coming from 113 Chestnut Street, a building that housed five apartments and a business.

As he approached the building, Patrolman Ruddy saw flames and he knew he needed to act quickly. He called 911 and ran into the building through a stairwell. Patrolman Ruddy went to the second-floor apartment that appeared to be the source of the growing blaze. He yelled into the apartment, pounding on the door, but no one responded. Undaunted, he ran up to the third floor to make certain the building was completely evacuated. Fortunately, he found a group of several young adults who were completely unaware the building was on fire and guided the group to safety.

Patrolman Ruddy ran to the neighboring apartment, breaking down the door and evacuating a family of three. Shortly thereafter, the situation escalated and the building became too dangerous to re-enter. Thankfully, by that time fire fighters had arrived on the scene.

Patrolman Gene Ruddy is, in every sense of the word, a hero. Without a moment of hesi-

tation, he risked his own life to remove several people from grave danger. Patrolman Ruddy deserves full recognition from his community and country for his acts of valor in the line of duty.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTORS
TO THE UPDATED GUIDELINES
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF
ACUTE CERVICAL SPINE AND
SPINAL CORD INJURIES

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 2013

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, there are an estimated 12,000 spinal cord injuries every year in the United States. These injuries most often result in temporary or permanent loss of sensation and paralysis, and they can forever change the lives of those who have been injured. However, thanks to the dedication of top scientists and medical professionals across the country, we hold out hope for more effective treatments, and one day, a possible cure.

In recognition of September as Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month, we'd like to take this time to acknowledge the leadership of several neurosurgeons who worked diligently to review and update the Guidelines for the Management of Acute Cervical Spine and Spinal Cord Injuries, published in the March 2013 edition of Neurosurgery. This work describes the "state of the literature" with regard to the treatment of patients with cervical spine and spinal cord injuries and is a useful guide to help clinicians make important decisions in the care of their patients.

The contributing members of this work include Mark N. Hadley, Division of Neurological Surgery, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Beverly C. Walters, Division of Neurological Surgery, University of Alabama at Birmingham and Inova Health System in Falls Church, Virginia; Bizhan Aarabi, Department of Neurosurgery, University of Maryland; Sanjay S. Dhall, Department of Neurosurgery, Emory University; Daniel E. Gelb, Department of Orthopaedics, University of Maryland; Mark R. Harrigan, Division of Neurological Surgery, University of Alabama at Birmingham; R. John Hurlbert, Department of Clinical Neurosciences, University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada; Curtis J. Rozelle, Division of Neurological Surgery, University of Alabama at Birmingham and Children's Hospital of Alabama; Timothy C. Ryken, Iowa Spine and Brain Institute, University of Iowa; Nicholas Theodore, Division of Neurological Surgery, Barrow Neurological Institute.

Mr. Speaker, the standardization and refinement of surgical techniques over the last decade embodied in this work is a substantial accomplishment. It is a testament to the experience and dedication of its contributors, and I, along with Representatives TERRI A. SEWELL, ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, JOHN LEWIS, BRUCE L. BRALEY, and ED PASTOR, hope you will join us in recognizing them for their impressive work. Due to their commitment, numerous lives are improved daily through the increased understanding and treatment of spinal cord injuries.