

IN MEMORY OF MAYOR KEN  
MERCER

**HON. ERIC SWALWELL**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 16, 2014*

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ken Mercer, the former mayor of Pleasanton, California, who died this past Monday at age 71.

Ken devoted his life to public service in Pleasanton. He was elected to three terms on the Pleasanton City Council, serving from 1976 to 1986. Then he became the first person directly elected to serve as mayor, and held that position from 1986 to 1992.

It is in part thanks to Ken's dedication that Pleasanton is the wonderful and vibrant community that it is today. His diligent efforts helped pave the way for the Hacienda Business Park and the Stoneridge Mall, among other developments.

He also held various posts in the community, including with Pacific Bell and ValleyCare Health System.

His enthusiastic devotion to Pleasanton serves as an inspiration.

My condolences go out to Ken's daughter Shelley, son Chuck, brothers Ron and Norm, and his grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. He will be missed greatly.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL  
DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 16, 2014*

Mr. COFFMAN. 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 \$17,287,251,611,151.62. We've added \$6,660,374,562,238.54 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING SUSAN RASKY

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 16, 2014*

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Susan Rasky, former political reporter for The New York Times and lecturer at the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. Known throughout the nation as an accomplished reporter, Ms. Rasky has left an indelible mark on the national discourse. With her passing on December 29, 2013, we look to the outstanding quality of her life's work and the inspiring role she played in shaping the nature of political reporting and inspiring future journalists.

Born on June 10, 1952, Susan Rasky was raised in the Los Angeles area. Her passion for politics grew out of discussions at family

dinner, where it was common place for her to bring up the most salient political issues of the day. Her drive and enthusiasm for political discussion propelled her to study History at UC Berkeley, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974. Ms. Rasky went on to earn her Master's degree in Economic History from the distinguished London School of Economics.

Arriving in Washington, D.C. with an academic background in economics and an interest for journalism, Ms. Rasky began her career as a reporter. She covered issues concerning the economy and economic policy for different news organizations, including the Bureau of National Affairs and Reuters. After just five years, she began reporting for The New York Times as a Congressional correspondent. At The New York Times, she wrote more than 1,700 articles for both New York and Washington, D.C., exploring issues relating to the tax code and the Federal Reserve.

Renowned for her insight and powerful voice, Ms. Rasky received the George Polk Award in 1990. Acknowledged for her coverage of the Congressional budget crisis, she and her colleagues shared recognition for this prestigious award for their critical and insightful research and reporting on these complex issues facing the nation.

Later, as a UC Berkeley senior lecturer, Ms. Rasky effortlessly moved from the newsroom to the classroom. Ms. Rasky left an imprint on a generation of students, specializing in teaching political and government reporting. Through her mentorship, students were continuously inspired and challenged to "twist the lens" and find a more nuanced perspective in journalism. Her teaching was so influential that students began to refer to themselves as "Rasky-ites", illustrating their devotion to her and her style of political reporting.

In addition to her prolific career, Ms. Rasky established and supervised the J-School's California News Service, offering students the opportunity to cover government and politics for news organizations throughout the country. She enjoyed being able to guide younger generations of journalists on how to cover presidential and other campaigns. Even after her students graduated, she was known to advise them well into their professional careers. She will be remembered as a distinguished reporter, a supportive leader, and a dedicated mentor.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and stalwart journalist, Susan Rasky. As a constituent and UC Berkeley professor, Ms. Rasky inspired many future journalists and impacted so many lives throughout the nation. I join all of Susan's loved ones in celebrating her incredible life. She will be deeply missed.

TRIBUTE TO REBECCA TAYLOR

**HON. TOM LATHAM**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 16, 2014*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Rebecca Taylor of Urbandale, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Rebecca's host country for the 2013-2014 academic year is Colombia.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Rebecca from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award and I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

IN TRIBUTE TO WINTHROP BEAN  
OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT

**HON. PETER WELCH**

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 16, 2014*

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Bean family of Strafford, Vermont, and in tribute to their exceptional young son and brother murdered thirty years ago because of his sexual orientation, I submit the following Herald of Randolph story. Winthrop Bean's story is a tragic tale of senseless loss in the face of homophobia and reminds us of the need to end discrimination and achieve fundamental equality for all.

[From the Herald of Randolph]

WINTHROP BEAN REMEMBERED

(By Bruce Kogan)

This month will mark the 30th anniversary of a guilty plea entered in a New York City court by a man named Alfred Desjardin, 25, pleading guilty to manslaughter-1 in connection with the stabbing death of Strafford native Winthrop Bean on May 19, 1983.

It was a story little reported in the mainstream media, but in the White River Valley of Vermont it was the major news of the year, because of the effect that Winkie Bean had on all around him.

My own connection with this case came with my job at New York State Crime Victims Board, where I was an investigator.

A woman named Linda Strohmeier, who volunteered at the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, approached me on behalf of Alta Varney, Winthrop's mother, who had filed a claim for funeral reimbursement. Ms. Strohmeier was from the area and knew Winkie and his family.

She told me of his ambitions for a career in the theater, which was why he was in New York City, living with friends on East 93rd Street. I knew that the location where his body was found was right near a gay bar called Chaps, long since gone now.