

he was recognized as a California State Certified Fire Captain for the impacts made across the county and state. Tom continued to advocate issues at the RCFD as both the President of the Riverside County Volunteer Fire Association and Vice President of the Riverside County Fire Chiefs Association.

In the mid-1990s Tom expanded his influence when he was hired by the US Forest Service. There he was promoted to the position of Fire Crew manager for the Cleveland National Forest's Hotshot Crew. He transitioned to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as a seasonal Fire Prevention Technician at the Barstow District, Apple Valley Fire Center. His leadership was soon recognized, and he was promoted to Battalion Chief and permanent Fire Prevention Officer for Palm Springs and South Coast Regions. In 2003 was promoted to Division Chief and filled the position of California Desert District Fire Operations Supervisor. There, he was responsible for training, equipping, and standardizing engine crews, thus increasing professionalism of the teams and interoperability throughout the district. Most recently, Tom has acted as California Desert District Fire and Aviation Manager, where he enhanced interagency cooperation throughout the State of California, formalized federal air support to fire, and reinforced the reputation of BLM as a viable firefighting service.

Today, Tom and MaryAnn reside in Corona, where MaryAnn is a Librarian of 25 years at Jefferson Elementary and a member of the Corona Library Board of Trustees. Tom has also been a member of the Elks Club and supports veterans issues as an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Their son, Tom began following his father's footsteps as a volunteer firefighter until he entered the United States Air Force Academy in 1991. He is currently a Colonel-Select in the United States Air Force's Security Forces and a student at the National War College at Ft McNair. Their daughter, Nancy, is a Global Clinical Research Program Manager at City of Hope in Pasadena, California.

Throughout his career, Tom's unending love for the fire service created a drive that never ceased to encourage those around him. Fortunately, his legacy will live on through the countless firefighters he has mentored. I am proud to honor such a tremendous member of our community. Passion of this level is rare, but it is the standard that Tom has set for his family, his fellow firefighters, and his community members. I believe I speak for the countless individuals who have benefited from Tom's service when I thank him for the contributions he has made and salute him as he retires after 50 years of service.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2014*

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I want to state for the record that on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, I unfortunately missed rollcall votes as I traveled to New Britain, CT, with President Barack Obama on official business.

Had I been present I would have voted:

"No" on the Previous Question (roll #93). Had a majority of the House voted no, this bill

would have allowed a vote to renew the emergency unemployment insurance to help over 35,000 jobseekers in Connecticut;

"No" on H. Res. 497 (roll #94), which prevented any amendments to H.R. 4118 from being considered;

"Aye" on H.R. 938, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act (roll #95), which I proudly co-sponsored;

"Aye" on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 4118 (roll #96) to prevent H.R. 4118 from altering, weakening, or delaying the ACA's prohibition of discrimination based on pre-existing conditions or gender and tax credits and rebates;

"No" on H.R. 4118 (roll #97). Back in July of last year, I was concerned that the federal marketplace would not be ready for the October 1, 2013, start date for enrollment under the Affordable Care Act. And, in fact, as we saw last fall, the federal website was not ready to handle the volume from states that didn't set up their own exchange. The website problems were unacceptable. Based on the situation that I saw eight months ago, I believed that giving folks an extra year to learn about the benefits and responsibilities under the new law without penalty was a reasonable modification, particularly with misinformation spread about the Affordable Care Act and the uncertainty about the readiness of the marketplace.

I believe that my job is to solve problems and vote based on actual facts in my state and district, not ideology. And the facts in Connecticut in March 2014 are quite different than they were in July 2013. The exchanges have been up and running for five full months, and Connecticut is leading the way. With less than one month left in the enrollment period, over 130,000 people in Connecticut have signed up for health coverage through Access Health CT, exceeding the state and federal government's goals. Now is not the time to retroactively delay the individual mandate. As I've previously stated, the individual mandate, upheld by the Supreme Court, is a critical part of the Affordable Care Act. Since July 2013, I've held workshops for small businesses and individuals to learn more about the Affordable Care Act and how to sign up for health insurance. I've heard stories from constituents about how the Affordable Care Act has helped them access affordable, quality health care. A woman from Canaan, a breast cancer survivor, is now saving over \$1,500 on her monthly premium; a former small business owner in New Britain can afford health insurance for the first time in 12 years.

The law is not perfect, and improvements can, should, and have been made. I will continue to raise concerns I've heard from folks in my district and to work with the Obama Administration to fix problems as they arise. But there is no question that the responsible course of action is to continue to move forward;

"Aye" on H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act (roll #98), which was a bipartisan bill to expand energy efficiency standards.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2014*

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 98 on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, I was inadvertently recorded as "nay" when I intended to vote "aye" on H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014, as amended.

I've long been a proponent of improving energy efficiency across the board. I know the cheapest and cleanest kilowatts are the ones we don't need to generate because we are using energy more efficiently.

I've even authored my own bill to improve the energy efficiency of consumer electronics, the Smart Electronics Act. I wholeheartedly support the package of measures that were included in H.R. 2126, which include improving energy efficiency at federal data centers, increasing efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters, promoting efficiency retrofits on low-income housing, and creating incentives for landlords and tenants to boost energy savings in commercial properties.

I hope that House passage of this bill will enable progress in the Senate on energy efficiency legislation; and I want to reiterate my support for H.R. 2126, which I had intended to express through an "aye" vote.

#### CONGRATULATING THE OXFORD HILLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

### HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2014*

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce Business and Community Award Winners. The Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce serves the people and business communities of central and western Maine, working hard to strengthen economic opportunity throughout the region and the state.

Each year, the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce recognizes local businesses, business leaders, and individuals who promote and advance a vital and healthy business environment. These individuals and businesses are committed to strengthening opportunity and prosperity in Maine.

This year's award recipients include: Oxford Federal Credit Union, recipient of the Business of the Year Award; Ronald Kugell, recipient of the Community Service Award; Catherine Fanjoy-Coffey, recipient of the Employee of the Year Award; and Buy the Fire, recipient of the Rising Star Award.

These recipients are among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and incredible commitment to their communities and the region, Maine is a better place in which to live and do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce and these award recipients on their outstanding service and achievements.