

conviction of 53 individuals who have served a combined 1083 years wrongfully imprisoned, and at any given time is working on 20 or so cases at various stages of investigation.

I cannot stress strongly enough the courage and heart Jim exemplifies in this now crowded field of work. He not only chose to work for people he did not know, but he used his own money to do so. Unlike most of the people doing similar work today who have universities to pay their salaries and give them office and staff, Jim had only himself to rely on. He lived modestly and devoted himself to this cause. His commitment to these individuals he works for does not end with their freedom. They are family.

Although Jim has announced he will no longer have an active role in the day to day operations of Centurion Ministries in the spring of next year, I know that he will continue to be a force for justice for years to come. He is a very special person. I join many admirers of Jim McCloskey in thanking him for his work and wishing him well in the future.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), which helps provide civil legal aid to low-income Americans who otherwise would be unable to afford legal representation. LSC was created in 1974 through a bipartisan effort by Republicans and Democrats in Congress and was signed into law by President Nixon.

Today, LSC provides funding to 134 local legal aid programs, which operate nearly 800 offices in every congressional district around the country. Funding provided through LSC supports low-income Americans, including women seeking protection from abuse, mothers trying to obtain child support, families facing unlawful evictions or foreclosures that could leave them homeless, veterans seeking benefits duly earned and seniors defending against consumer scams, among other cases. LSC-funded attorneys help parents obtain and keep custody of their children, assist parents in enforcing child support payments and help women who are victims of domestic violence. In fact, three out of four legal aid clients are women, and legal aid programs identify domestic violence as one of their top priorities.

As chairman of the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee from 2001–2006 and again since 2011, I have worked closely with the LSC leadership to support these programs and ensure that funding is spent efficiently and appropriately. I have also worked with my colleagues in Congress and LSC leadership to mitigate partisan issues that undermine support for this program. Through these efforts, we have been able to ensure that LSC funding is focused on supporting legitimate civil legal aid needs by those Americans who need it most.

Over the past several years, I have encouraged LSC to do more to engage law firms and

bar associations to expand pro bono services in coordination with the corporation. In response, the LSC board created a Pro Bono Task Force in 2011 and produced a comprehensive report with innovative ideas to bolster national pro bono efforts. I want to credit LSC Board Chairman John Levi and LSC President Jim Sandman for their leadership on this project, which has the potential to further extend LSC's support for low-income Americans.

Forty years after its creation, the LSC fills a critical gap by providing low-income Americans with legal assistance they wouldn't otherwise have access to. I want to commend the Legal Services Corporation and the attorneys working in our communities for the work they do every day on behalf of Americans who need qualified counsel.

IN HONOR OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) on its 40th anniversary. Forty years ago, President Nixon signed into law the LSC Act, establishing the Legal Services Corporation as one of the major sources of funding for civil legal aid. In the time since, LSC has grown to be the single largest funder of civil legal aid for low-income Americans, including many military families and veterans.

Legal Services Corporation-funded legal aid programs continue to make a crucial difference to millions of Americans by assisting with the most basic civil legal needs, such as addressing matters involving safety, subsistence, and family stability. LSC funds 134 legal aid organizations that serve hundreds of thousands of low-income individuals, children, families, seniors, and veterans across America. These individuals range from women seeking protection from abuse, mothers trying to obtain child support, families facing unlawful evictions or foreclosures that could leave them homeless, veterans seeking benefits duly earned, and seniors defending against consumer scams.

Demand for legal services and the need for legal aid attorneys has never been greater in this country. In recent years, however, over 1,000 full time employees have been terminated as a result of a continued lack of funding for LSC. So while we reflect on the achievements of LSC over the last forty years, Congress must also renew its commitment to providing LSC the critical resources it needs to assist our most vulnerable.

On this anniversary, I salute the Legal Services Corporation and LSC-funded attorneys for the vital work they do every day on behalf of Americans who need qualified counsel. Every day that a legal aid attorney protects the safety, security and health of our most vulnerable citizens, they bring this nation closer to living up to its commitment to equal justice for all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during rollcall vote numbers 433, 434, 435, and 436 on July 22, 2014, and rollcall vote numbers 437, 438, 439, 440, and 441 on July 23, 2014.

I would like to submit how I would have voted:

On rollcall vote No. 433 I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall vote No. 434 I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall vote No. 435 I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall vote No. 436 I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall vote No. 437 I would have voted "no."

On rollcall vote No. 438 I would have voted "no."

On rollcall vote No. 439 I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall vote No. 440 I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall vote No. 441 I would have voted "yes."

RECOGNIZING MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP POLICE SGT. MARK WERT

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to offer my congratulations to Middletown Township Police Sgt. Mark Wert for 33 years of outstanding service to the people of my home community and its police department.

As always, the community owes a debt of gratitude to those first responders who, each day, selflessly protect our lives and property. Sgt. Wert began his career on July 15, 1981, moving to squad supervisor and then administration overseeing the Traffic Safety Unit. He also was the instructor for Emergency Vehicle Operations and one of the department's first Field Training Officers. His dedication is recognized by the responsibilities he took on within the police department and also in the community. He was a director of the Transportation Management Association of Bucks County and active in the community's volunteer fire service—Skyline Fire Association and William Penn Fire Co.

Sgt. Wert's retirement begins on August 1, 2014 and so, on behalf of the grateful community where I live and that I represent in this House, I extend sincere appreciation to Sgt. Mark Wert and wish him many healthy and happy retirement years.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 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 \$17,610,253,000,219.65. We've added \$6,983,375,951,306.57 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.9 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

STRENGTHENING THE TRANS-
ATLANTIC ALLIANCE IN THE
FACE OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION**HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2014

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, ongoing events in Ukraine, especially the tragedy involving Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17, pose a significant security threat not only to Europe but also the world. Russia's military aggression, its tacit support of pro-Russian Ukrainian separatists, and its use of energy as a political weapon warrant a strong response. The United States and our European allies must take strong and definitive action to strengthen the transatlantic alliance, and stem Russian aggression and its efforts to destabilize the region.

The United States must stand with our European allies and re-emphasize its commitment to a strong security alliance. While I agree with the overall goal of President Obama's European Reassurance Initiative to increase U.S. rotational deployments, allied training, and strategic planning, ultimately this proposal lacks a long-term strategy and commitment to our partnership with Europe. We can and must do more.

That is why I authored H.R. 4433, the Forging Peace through Strength in Ukraine and the Transatlantic Alliance Act, which calls for decisive action to remedy the current crisis in Ukraine and deter greater Russian aggression in Europe. Specifically, the measure would bolster U.S.-Ukraine security relations by seeking to provide technical assistance to the Ukrainian military and increase U.S. intelligence information sharing. H.R. 4433 would also authorize the Secretary of Defense to ensure the operational availability of the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense system site in Poland and require the deployment of a short-range air and missile defense system to Poland. In addition, the bill would require the Secretary of Defense to stop plans for the relocation and consolidation of U.S. dual-capable aircraft based in Europe, conduct site studies for the construction of weapon storage and security systems and protective aircraft shelters in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries, and coordinate with NATO

countries to assess the possibility of altering the posture of forward deployed U.S. nuclear weapons. Several of the provisions of my legislation are included in the House-passed version of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act.

Strengthening the NATO alliance is also a critical component to pushing back against Russian aggression. The partnership between the United States and Europe through NATO has been the bedrock of stability in the region. However, it is clear that Russia seeks to once again destabilize much of Eastern Europe and restore its control over territories lost following the collapse of the Soviet Union. We must provide immediate reassurance to our European allies that the United States remains firm in our commitment to security. We must also make a strong push for the further enlargement of NATO. Specifically, the United States should support the accession of Montenegro, put a full diplomatic press on the issue of resolving the conflict between Macedonia and Greece, seek resolution to the constitutional issues of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and encourage the membership prospects of Georgia through the Membership Action Plan process. In fact, I authored an amendment, which the House approved unanimously, to the House-passed Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act expressing strong support for the ongoing NATO enlargement initiatives.

Bolstering regional and global energy security is another key aspect of the transatlantic alliance. Russia has repeatedly used natural gas pricing to draw governments closer to its orbit and punished West-leaning governments with higher prices. Previous disputes between Ukraine and Russia led to natural gas shutoffs in 2006 and 2009, negatively affecting downstream European countries. In April 2014, Russia's state-owned monopoly, Gazprom, increased the price of natural gas on Ukraine by 80 percent. And in early June 2014, Gazprom cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine.

The United States must continue to support efforts to help our European allies diversify their energy resources. In fact, multiple U.S. Administrations have previously supported initiatives to supply Europe with alternative and reliable sources of energy, such as the Southern Gas Corridor which will bring natural gas from Azerbaijan to Europe. That is why I authored H. Res. 284, a bipartisan resolution which recognizes the importance of the Southern Gas Corridor to energy security and our strategic partnerships.

At the same time, energy diversification initiatives may offer opportunities to benefit the United States economically. For instance, U.S. companies are involved in the development of growing recent natural gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean, which may help countries in the region to bolster political and economic ties and present another source of energy for Europe. And many of our European allies have expressed strong interest in purchasing U.S. natural gas to help diversify their resources and strengthen their independence.

Increasing U.S. natural gas exports, along with development of other sources such as the Southern Gas Corridor and the Eastern Mediterranean, will help diversify world natural gas supplies and create a more competitive, transparent, and diversified global natural gas marketplace. This will help curb the ability of

countries like Russia to use energy as a political weapon.

In fact, U.S. natural gas production has already influenced global markets. Natural gas previously destined for the United States, but no longer needed as a result of increased production, was diverted to other markets. This increased supply has made the global natural gas market more competitive, helping to put pressure on contracts indexed to the price of oil and allowing several European countries to successfully renegotiate their long-term contracts with Gazprom.

Lifting self-imposed restrictions on U.S. natural gas exports will emphasize to our allies that the United States is a strong energy security partner and send an immediate signal to markets that new supplies of natural gas will be available, helping to influence prices and new infrastructure construction decisions. And regardless of where U.S. natural gas is shipped, increasing supply in the global marketplace will help provide international consumers with greater choice and thus increased leverage to negotiate pricing contracts. In fact, Obama Administration officials, including the State Department's energy envoy, Carlos Pascual, have made this very argument.

In addition, fostering a more diverse and competitive global natural gas market can complement U.S. and European sanctions on Russia. Oil and gas receipts constitute more than 50 percent of Russia's federal revenues.

President Obama, in a March 2014 joint statement with European leaders, welcomed U.S. natural gas exports to help our European allies. While I am encouraged by the President's statement, immediate action is needed to put force behind these words.

Over the past several years, I have worked to reduce self-imposed regulatory barriers to exporting U.S. natural gas. Specifically, in the 112th Congress I authored with then-Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN), H.R. 6699, the LNG for NATO Act, which sought to expedite U.S. natural gas exports to NATO countries. In the 113th Congress, I authored with Senator JOHN BARRASSO (R-WY), H.R. 580, the Expedited LNG for American Allies Act, to expedite U.S. natural gas exports to NATO countries, Japan, and other countries of national security interest. I also authored H.R. 4139, the American Job Creation and Strategic Alliances LNG Act, to expedite U.S. natural gas exports to World Trade Organization countries.

And I am an original co-author of H.R. 6, the Domestic Prosperity and Global Freedom Act, which the House recently approved with bipartisan support, to require the Department of Energy to consider natural gas export permit applications in a timely manner. It is imperative that the President work with Congress on these energy security initiatives to follow through on his stated support of global energy security and U.S. natural gas exports.

The United States, in partnership with our European allies, must respond strongly to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. Reinforcing our defense relationships with Europe, particularly Ukraine and Eastern Europe, strengthening our strategic partnerships through NATO, and enhancing European and global energy security are critical components to bolstering the transatlantic alliance and deterring further Russian aggression in the region.