

Squadron while assigned in Vietnam, 1968; Man of the Year, NAACP, 1979; Honorary Doctorate, Virginia Union University, 1987; and the Gray Eagle Trophy, August 21, 1987–June 15, 1988.

LtGen Petersen has certainly accomplished many things in his life but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of his wife of 39 years, Alicia, and his children; Frank III, Gayle, Dana, Lindsey, and Monique.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me, the United States Marine Corps, and all Americans, in extending our sincerest appreciation to Lieutenant General Frank E. Petersen, Jr., an pioneering leader who, in addition to achieving the distinction of a number of “firsts” for African-Americans, has the respect, admiration, and affection of his fellow Marines and leaves behind an outstanding legacy of service and leadership in the Marine Corps of the United States of America.

THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

**HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 28, 2014*

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this weekend we celebrated the 24th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, signed into law by President Bush on July 26, 1990. Twenty-four years later, the ADA remains one of the most significant and comprehensive civil rights laws of our time. Its enactment affirmed our collective belief in America’s fundamental promise of equality and opportunity for all. Today, the ADA and the subsequent ADA Amendments Act—which I was proud to help pass in 2008—continue to open doors and ensure greater access, inclusion and justice for millions of people living with disabilities.

On this anniversary, we honor the civil rights pioneers who championed the ADA and express our sincere gratitude to those who continue the fight to fulfill its promise and expand opportunities for the entire disability community. As someone who has lived with the challenges of a disability since the age of 16, I know firsthand the positive impact the ADA has had on everyday activities for countless Americans. It has broken down barriers to education, employment and technology. It has made public transportation more accommodating, improved voting accessibility, and reduced the prevalence of discrimination throughout communities nationwide. I am proud future generations will live in a world that is more inclusive, more accessible, and increasingly recognizes the unique talents and abilities of individuals with disabilities.

As we celebrate progress, however, we must also acknowledge areas where we have not yet accomplished our goals. Equal employment opportunities and fully integrated community living has not been fully realized; recent data shows 31 percent of disabled individuals live below the poverty line and less than 34 percent are fully employed. It is more important than ever that we educate businesses and connect them with proper resources to create more employment opportunities. We must ensure that transportation is

available and accessible to everyone so they can get to their job, the doctor, or the grocery store. We must also address changes that accompany the modern age, such as fully accessible internet services. And we must ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to reaffirm our country’s longstanding role as a leader in global disability rights.

Clearly, our work is far from done. As we approach the silver anniversary of the ADA, I look forward to reaffirming our commitment to equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities everywhere.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 28, 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 \$17,613,901,518,929.04. We’ve added \$6,987,024,470,015.96 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.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OAKDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 28, 2014*

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the firefighters and residents of Oakdale, Minnesota on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Oakdale Fire Department.

The department was started in 1964 in the garage of local resident Mr. Dean Arnt in what was then the undeveloped community of Northdale. Beginning with a volunteer staff of twelve people, an old Jeep, and an early 1950s model Ford fire truck, what the department lacked in physical resources, it made up in generosity and hard work. Thirteen local residents used their own money to send letters to residents getting the word out about the creation of the department and to ask for donations to build a fire station. A small station was finally built by the volunteer firefighters in 1967, and the department responded to 24 calls during its first year.

The area served by the Oakdale Fire Department has doubled in size since 1964 and the department has expanded with it. Now operating out of two, much larger fire stations, the department employs 40 paid-per-call and eight full-time firefighters. Many of the staff are trained as emergency medical technicians or paramedics who provide support 24 hours. The department now responds to more than 2,000 medical, fire, and rescue calls per year.

Despite its impressive growth, the Oakdale Fire Department still retains its commitment to

the community and stands as an example of the very best in public services funded by taxpayers. Mr. Speaker, the valuable efforts of the Oakdale Fire Department during the past five decades are commendable and worthy of recognition. In honor of many people who have built the success of the Oakdale Fire Department, it is a privilege to submit this statement in honor of its 50th anniversary.

HONORING JAMES RODARTE

**HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 28, 2014*

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of the late James Rodarte, a lover of music and photography, and a passionate community leader in Southwest San Antonio. Mr. Rodarte served his community through his vocal advocacy for transportation solutions in Southwest San Antonio.

Mr. Rodarte was born August 12, 1959, to James and Anita Rodarte. He inherited his witty sense of humor from his mother and the two were often caught laughing at their own private jokes. He was adored by his sisters Debra, Diane, Denise, and Dori. Mr. Rodarte attended Ivanhoe and David Crockett Elementary Schools, Edgewood Middle School, and graduated from Kennedy High School in 1978.

Mr. Rodarte had a lifelong passion for music and photography. Every Christmas growing up he turned the family living room into a photo studio, sweetly providing a family portrait as his yearly gift. As an adult he volunteered his time taking pictures of Edgewood High School activities and received particular joy from taking photos of all athletic teams.

A talented musician, Mr. Rodarte played the trombone, drums, and bass guitar. He particularly enjoyed playing his five-string bass with conjuntos. Mr. Rodarte played with the legendary San Antonio Marching Band, and though diabetes may have prevented him from marching, he didn’t let his condition stop him from participating. He would drive the “chase vehicle” behind the band. Whenever a musician tired, they could pull out of the ranks and get into his vehicle to rest for a while.

Mr. Rodarte combined his love of music and photography by taking pictures and videotaping Tejano performances, especially during San Antonio’s yearly Fiesta celebration. He would upload performances to YouTube for the local community to enjoy.

The legacy that Mr. Rodarte will most be remembered for was his dogged campaign to provide relief for the citizens living in the Zarzamora Street and Frio City Road area from traffic delays caused by train traffic. These daily delays force the community to wait longer than 30 minutes while the trains inexplicably stop in the middle of this residential neighborhood.

Mr. Rodarte spearheaded the community’s demands for a solution. He was a constant presence at City Council and Commissioners Court meetings, presenting a plan to build an overpass to provide relief to the community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the life of James Rodarte, a lover of music and photography, and a dedicated community leader.