

In 2013, we imported approximately 925 million barrels of crude oil from Canada, with over 400 million of these barrels coming from tar sands and not subject to the tax that goes into the cleanup fund. This is a significant liability, without any investment being made for it and when there is a tar sands spill.

Oil that comes from tar sands is a thick, sticky form of crude oil that can be more difficult and costly to clean up than other types of crude. In 2010, for example, a pipeline owned and operated by a Canadian company, Enbridge, spilled more than 850,000 gallons of tar sands oil into a waterway that flows into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. That has been one of the largest and costliest pipeline spills in American history, with the price tag now at \$1.2 billion dollars.

I do not support the development of tar sands—doing so is environmentally destructive and carbon-intensive. Moreover, we should not keep in place a loophole that lets big oil companies off the hook for cleaning up their tar sands spills.

The Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act would add oil derived from tar sands and oil shale to the definition of crude oil, closing the current loophole and ensuring that oil companies pay into the fund.

Oil companies already get billions of dollars in taxpayer-based subsidies, and this bill will ensure they will not be given an additional free ride on tar sands and any future oil shale development.

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RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FLORIDA'S LGBT COMMUNITY

**HON. ALAN GRAYSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 8, 2015*

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Florida's LGBT community in their fight against discrimination. In particular, I would like to commend their commitment to bringing marriage equality to the great State of Florida.

Following decades of advocacy and exhaustive legal battles, marriage equality finally became legal this week in Florida. At 12:01 a.m. on January 6, 2015, the Osceola County Courthouse opened its doors. I stood with Armando Ramirez, the county's Clerk of Courts, as he conducted the first same-sex marriage ceremony in Central Florida, which united County Commissioner Cheryl Grieb and her partner of 22 years, Patti Daugherty. At long last, the promise of marriage equality was fulfilled.

More than twenty couples participated in marriage ceremonies, before the courthouse doors closed at 2 a.m. These couples had at last achieved one of the greatest promises of this nation, the promise of equal protection under the law.

What this demonstrated is that the American Dream is not really about a house, a job, or a 401(k) plan. The American Dream is also about love, opportunity, and equality—the promise that each and every one of us has the right to love whomever we please, and the opportunity to have our love recognized equally by the law.

Thanks to the unrelenting efforts of Floridians fighting for marriage equality, same-sex

couples in Florida finally had that opportunity. The marriages that began on January 6th at 12:01 a.m. could not have happened without the perseverance of these individuals.

To those Floridians who fought for this day, I say "congratulations" and "thank you." Thank you for helping our State and our communities come one step closer to true equality. I am proud to have worked with you to achieve this goal. There is more work to be done, and I look forward to serving as your ally in the years ahead.

The Osceola County Commission and the Osceola County Clerk of Courts Armando Ramirez also deserve thanks for their efforts. When county clerks in Florida were advised that they would face arrest if they issued same-sex licenses, Commissioner Grieb and I called on State Attorney Jeff Ashton to promise that he would not prosecute clerks for doing so. Thankfully, he agreed. Following my letter urging the County Commission to ensure that same-sex marriages could take place in Osceola County immediately, the Commission and the Clerk worked together to issue licenses and conduct ceremonies as soon as legally possible.

I also want to acknowledge the Floridians who fought for marriage equality but never lived to see this dream become reality. For those who called for marriage equality when others said it was impossible; those who had the audacity to believe in equality when many could not; and those who paved the way for this historical achievement but never experienced it for themselves. This is their legacy. May their memory serve as an inspiration for the next generation of Floridians striving to achieve a more equal and just world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to celebrate this enormous accomplishment and honor the Floridians who made this happen.

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COMMENDATION OF DR. TIMOTHY SNYDER

**HON. MARCY KAPTUR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 8, 2015*

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise as co-chair of the Congressional Polish Caucus to announce that this week in Washington, at an historic ceremony to be held today at the Polish Embassy, Thursday, January 8, pre-eminent American scholar and historian Dr. Timothy Snyder will be awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland by Minister of Foreign Affairs Grzegorz Schetyna on behalf of the nation of Poland.

We in Ohio are celebrating this occasion because we know the global significance of Dr. Snyder's work. His scholarship allows liberty's flag to fly higher. An Ohioan by birth, Dr. Snyder—now Bird White Housum Professor of History at Yale University—has been documenting the complicated, epic history of what he terms "The Bloodlands," the 20th century history of Europe between Hitler and Stalin. With the opening of the Soviet archives after the fall of the Soviet Union, Dr. Snyder has led a team of incredible scholars from many nations in piecing together the complex, and often under reported history, of what happened to people in Europe before, during, and after World Wars I and II.

He places the historical and political complexities that led to World War II in a broad, contextual framework unparalleled by other efforts. He factually documents the suffering that innocent people from various nations endured in places that still today have seriously inadequate archival memory of what occurred. Dr. Snyder, in my opinion, is one of the most indefatigable and profound scholars of our time.

As author of the bill that created the World War II Memorial here in our nation's Capital—which has now been visited by over 42 million people—it is clear to me the American people through their own families understand the magnitude of what was at stake. But as Dr. Snyder rightly points out, "America's soldiers never reached far enough east. He states, "American and British forces liberated German concentration camps such as Belsen and Dachau. But the western Allies liberated none of the important death facilities . . . the Red Army liberated Auschwitz, and it liberated the sites of Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzen, Chelmno, Majdanek. American and British forces reached none of the bloodlands and saw none of the major killing sites." Even America was shielded from the bloody truth of tyranny's grip on the continent of Europe.

The people of Poland even more fully comprehend the betrayal and suffering that their Slavic ancestors endured in Poland and Sovietized Ukraine. The Jewish people of the world know too what happened there and why the struggle for Israel's existence continues to this day. The people of Belarus, Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and adjoining nations know too. With the systematic ethnic slaughter that occurred, Dr. Snyder's masterful work pays homage to all victims, in the most complete and objective presentation I have read. Yet, still more scholarly work needs to occur.

This past August, the people of Poland commemorated the memory of the Warsaw Uprising. Those brave Poles honored at that national remembrance lived and died by the motto "Freedom Means Never Surrender." Poland never surrendered. Her capital was leveled. And the martyrdom of Poles—fully twenty percent of the people of that nation—humbles us mortals who stand in awe of their valor against insurmountable odds. What distinguishes Snyder's work is its comprehensiveness and depth in paying tribute to the fallen across that entire war torn region.

We will fly a flag over the U.S. Capitol honoring the work of American scholar Dr. Timothy Snyder and his legion of dedicated scholars. I have come to respect Dr. Snyder's work because his scholarship helped me reach my own epiphany and conclusion about why it has taken the world so long to appreciate what the people of Poland suffered during that gruesome period. Nearly all of the educated and academic leaders of Poland were annihilated at Katyn in 1940, when over 23,000 were rounded up and summarily shot by Stalin's NKVD, the Soviet secret police. There simply was almost no Polish memory left able to record and relate. It has taken new generations of those able to probe the carnage to enlighten the pages of memory.

So, please let me express sincere gratitude to the government of Poland for bestowing this great honor on a native son of Ohio who has gone on to serve the cause of historical truth. As a history major myself from my own alma mater—the great University of Wisconsin—I