

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE GILMER HIGH SCHOOL BUCKEYES, 2014 4-A, DIV II STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to acknowledge and congratulate the superb performance of the Gilmer High School Buckeyes as they came together as a team resulting in their winning the 2014 Texas State 4-A, Div II Football Championship. The Gilmer Buckeyes displayed great resilience and commitment throughout their season, and it is indeed an honor to bring these outstanding athletes to national attention and retention in our national record.

After the devastating, unexpected death of a beloved member of the team last year, the Buckeyes and the entire Gilmer community pledged to preserve the memory of Desmond Pollard by honoring him throughout the season. Residents of east Texas generously paid tribute to Desmond by raising funds to pay for all his funeral expenses. So much money was donated and accumulated that it not only paid for the service, but there was also enough to establish a memorial scholarship fund in Desmond's name.

The Buckeyes carried Desmond's memory onto the field with them before every game by taking his jersey to midfield for every coin toss. This honorable group of young men created and adopted "DEZign8" as the team motto to pay tribute to Desmond throughout the season by combining his name with his team jersey number, #8. The motto was based on the belief that the team was "DEZign8"-ed to be tested, and to overcome any challenges in order to emerge victorious.

When the Buckeyes began the third quarter of the state championship game, they trailed West Orange-Stark 25-7. The Buckeyes recognized the daunting task before them, but they were not about to give up. Instead, every player reached deep inside themselves, and reinvigorated their strength, skill and commitment to such an incredible level that the Buckeyes became virtually unstoppable, scoring four more touchdowns, overtaking the Mustangs, while shutting down their vaunted opponent's powerful offense, and capturing the state title with a final score of 35-25. This amazing team of caring, committed, yet crushing Buckeyes were successful in achieving their objective. They were victorious in honoring their fallen teammate with an entire season of success resulting in the State Championship in honor of Desmond. Ultimately, the Buckeyes finished the season with a perfect, undefeated record of 16-0, and the honor of finishing with the second-highest point total in a season in Texas high school football history with 950 points.

Special commendations must be offered to each member of this exceptional company of young men. The team includes: Blevin Burns,

Devin Smith, McLane Carter, DeMarco Boyd, Quinn Fluellen, Jamel Jackson, Desmond Pollard, Blake Lynch, Zac Spears, Preston Smith, Kollin Hurt, Brandon Crouch, Ryen Lawhorn, Tanner Harrison, Taylor Lofton, Desmond Jones, Cameron Bowman, Nick Smith, Cambron Granville, Kris Boyd, Kelton Collier, Christian Loyd, Chase Tate, Jamaal Wheeler, LaMarcus Morton, Freddy Curtis, Dustin Brown, Hunter Richardson, CJ Grimmert, Kade Clemens, Tristan Olivares, Juan Esquivel, Nathan Mize, Trendon Brooks, Frankie Coleman, Kaloni Moton, Caleb Gunter, Clayton Williams, Jeremy Kelly, Matthew Caldwell, Jackson Sikes, Brett Rice, Zach Jones, Jake Traylor, Caleb Ritter, Jacob Cullins, Will Harrison, Colin Hardin, Johnny Perez, Dane Jesters, Colton Hendrix, Trevor Lewis, Landry Henson, Cole Hart, Lucas Garrett, Erik Cerda, Dakota Williamson, Andrew Hollis, Cameron Tennon, Colby Gipson, Zack Troell, Zod Heath, and Stoney Fuller.

No matter how talented and committed, no team could achieve so much resulting in an undefeated season without a head coach and coaching staff of extraordinary vision and ability who could lead the Buckeyes to success, both on and off the field. Superintendent Rick Albritton, Principal Greg Watson, Head Coach and Athletic Director Jeff Traylor, Todd Barr, Robert Bero, Colton Bunn, Randall Canady, Wayne Coleman, Russell Cunningham, Tommy Edwards, Todd Fenton, Dustin Gunter, Lonnie Henry, Olan Johnson, Kerry Lane, Terrence Lovely, Max Low, Alan Metzel, Cody Robinson, Keith Tate, Kurt Traylor, Matt Turner, and Brandon Williams; along with athletic trainers Kara Kanutson and Will Bennett.

It is truly an incalculable honor to pay tribute to this sensationally astounding group of young people who became so much more than the sum total of the team's individual parts. And they magnificently represent the very best of the Gilmer community and the entire First District of Texas. Their legacy, along with the memory of their friend and cherished teammate Desmond Pollard, is now recorded in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD which will endure as long as there is a United States of America.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF CARL DJERASSI, PH.D.

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary American, Carl Djerassi, a chemist, novelist, poet and philanthropist who excelled in each of these fields. He was the child of two physicians, born in 1923 in Vienna, Austria, and he died on January 15, 2015, at his home in San Francisco, California.

Dr. Djerassi is best known as the "Father of the Pill", the birth control pill which brought

about a cultural revolution. He is less well known for his part in the development of antihistamines to treat allergies, and the synthesis of cortisone. Educated at Kenyon College and the University of Wisconsin, his first job was with the Swiss company, Ciba. From there he went to Syntex, then a small company in Mexico. He became a professor at Stanford University in 1959, and founded Zoecon, a manufacturer of non-toxic pesticides in 1968. He published over 1,200 articles and 7 monographs on chemical subjects.

Dr. Djerassi's brilliant work in chemistry was only a part of his life story. He published numerous poems, short stories, five novels and many plays. He founded the Djerassi Resident Artists Program in honor of his daughter, Pamela. He was the recipient of countless honors, including the National Medal of Science and the Wolf Prize in Chemistry. He was a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and its Institute of Medicine, and he received 32 well-earned honorary doctorates.

Dr. Djerassi was married three times, most recently to the late Diane Middlebrook, a professor of literature at Stanford University.

Dr. Djerassi leaves his son Dale, an independent filmmaker, and his grandson Alexander Maxwell Djerassi. He will be sorely missed by all who had the good fortune to know him. His life's work was a gift to humanity, and his presence made the world a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in honoring the extraordinary life of Carl Djerassi, who was a national treasure, and extend our sympathy to his family.

LIVES WELL-LIVED

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize four people from the Cromwell/McGregor area of Minnesota who just celebrated turning 100-years-old or more. In some parts of the country, this would be in passing—but for Cromwell (population 231) and McGregor (population 376) it is big news that this many legacy members of their communities have reached this significant milestone. It must be our good Minnesota water.

When you stop to think about it, to be born 100 years ago, there were no tractors to plow the fields and automobiles were just starting to be built. Before that, people walked to town or took a horse-and-buggy. Most schoolrooms were in one-room buildings with an outhouse "out back." Radio communication was just beginning and television had not yet been invented. Penicillin had not been discovered. There were not vaccinations for polio or other deadly childhood diseases. The idea of an airplane was but a dream and the thought of man landing on the moon was unfathomable.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

How exciting it must have been for them witnessing that first countdown as John Glenn was the first American about to orbit the earth.

These citizens lived through two World Wars, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

They were just coming of age when the Depression hit this country and struggled like countless others to have part of the American dream.

They persevered.

Each of them—Mary Dahlberg, Hjalmer Hutar, Allie Costello and Viola Johnson took different paths in their lives. I congratulate each of them for the contributions they brought to their families and communities. They have been lives well lived.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID P. ROE

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote yesterday because of a serious illness in my family. Had I been present, I would have voted:

Roll Call #69—YEA.

Roll Call #70—YEA.

RECOGNIZING HIGHLAND HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, each year since 1999, the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform releases a Schools to Watch list to identify high-performing schools across the country. According to the stated criteria, each school on the list is academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable.

This list is well-respected and highly exclusive. That's why I'm proud to say that Highland Hills Middle School in Floyd County, Indiana, is a new entry to the list this year. This recognition is well deserved and reflects the hard work and determination of the administration, the teachers, and especially the students of Highland Hills and the entire New Albany Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation.

As policy makers at every level of government continue to look for ways to improve our educational systems, we would all do well to look to models like Highland Hills Middle School for guidance.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I was not able to be present for the following Roll Call vote on February 10, 2015 and would like to reflect that I would have voted as follows:

Roll Call #69: YES.

Roll Call #70: YES.

HONORING DOROTHY BARNES PELOTE

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the life of the late Mrs. Dorothy Barnes Pelote who entered into eternal rest Sunday, January 18, 2015. Mrs. Pelote, often described as a "people's lawmaker", dedicated her life to public service and to her community.

As a native of Lancaster, South Carolina and graduate of Allen University, Mrs. Pelote moved to Savannah, Georgia over 50 years ago where she furthered her education at Savannah State University. In her early career, Mrs. Pelote dedicated more than 30 years of service to teaching in the Savannah Chatham County Public School System.

Mrs. Pelote served in the Georgia General Assembly as a State Representative for the 149th District from 1992 until she retired in 2002. Mrs. Pelote also served as the Eighth District Representative on the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to which she became the first of two women to ever serve on this panel.

Today, it is my privilege to recognize the life of Mrs. Dorothy Pelote. As a teacher, an instrumental leader, and a friend, Mrs. Pelote will forever be remembered.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

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 \$18,128,511,342,681.14. We've added \$7,501,634,293,768.06 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

ROSIE THE RIVETER

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize LaVonne Feichtinger Ostergaard of Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota. She was one of the thousands of women throughout America who served as a "Rosie the Riveter" during World War II when she went to work for 50 cents an hour at the Char-Gale plant in St. Cloud. She operated as a riveter building planes. Her job was riveting the fuselage and wings on the outside of the aircraft for planes designed to

carry cargo, personnel, patients and mechanized equipment and to drop cargo and troops by parachute. It was by no means a clean or quiet working environment. Mrs. Ostergaard never won any medals for her service, but I call upon all Members to remember how so many women—from small towns and big cities alike—stepped forward when they heard the call for workers to serve as riveters, buckers, sanders, welders, crane operators, bus drivers, uniform makers, bullet makers, parachute folders, clerical workers, shipyard workers, assembly line workers, Red Cross workers and more.

These women probably never imagined they would answer the call to do this kind of work, but it was a time in our nation's history when everyone needed to pull together with their motto of "We pull better if we pull together." Those who served on the home front are often unrecognized, as after the war, they quietly returned to the routine of raising children, helping on the home farm or the family business.

According to the American Rosie the Riveter Association, of which Mrs. Ostergaard is a member, they came together for one purpose—to help win the war. They built 80,000 landing craft, 100,000 tanks, 300,000 aircraft, 15,000 guns and 41,000,000,000 rounds of ammunition. It was a massive accomplishment and our nation owes these outstanding women our deepest gratitude.

IN RECOGNITION OF HOLLY SCHLESSER OF STREAMWOOD, ILLINOIS

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize one of my constituents, Holly Schlessler, and her selfless act for a child in need. This past fall Holly donated a piece of her liver to a friend's 8 month old baby, Madison Casey. Holly and Madison's mom, Tanya, are the wives of firefighters in Streamwood, Illinois. Service and sacrifice is a part of their daily lives. Madison was born with a rare genetic disorder that led to liver failure. Thanks to Holly Schlessler's selfless gift she now has real hope of growing up healthy and strong alongside her twin brother. The Schlessler and Casey families show us the importance of living through our actions.

Their story is also an important reminder about the incredible difference that organ and tissue donors can make. There is a large and heartbreaking gap between the supply and demand for lifesaving organs and tissue. Each day an average of 18 people in the United States in need of transplants die waiting. And without angels like Holly Schlessler, every 10 minutes a new person joins the national transplant waitlist.

In my home state of Illinois, Gift of Hope, which is part of the national organ and tissue donation system, is working hard to address this challenge by educating the public about the need for donors. They're making progress and experienced their second record-setting year in a row in 2014, helping make 1,024 lifesaving donations happen through the generosity of 336 organ donors and 1,912 tissue donors. I applaud the more than 5 million Illinoisans who have decided to become organ

and tissue donors and encourage other Americans to follow the example set by my neighbors.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT HYATT

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, our nation has a long history of honoring our veterans. Even today, we reserve the highest levels of respect for our fellow Americans who served our country bravely in battle. And while many of us personally know some who served in one, or perhaps, two wars, it's exceedingly rare to find an individual who wore the uniform in three separate wars. In fact, in my home state of Indiana, there are only two such veterans alive.

One of them, Robert Hyatt of Franklin, Indiana, will soon celebrate his 90th birthday. A veteran who served as a medic in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, he recently told a local news station that he'd still be serving in the military today if his health permitted. It's worth noting that along the way, his military service put his health at risk: He was shot in the leg during World War II and stabbed in Korea.

So as he and his family prepare to celebrate his 90th birthday, I wanted to take some time today to wish him well and honor his service to our country. Each of us owes a debt of gratitude to all our veterans, but especially to veterans like Robert Hyatt who answered the call of duty every chance they got.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 2 and during the first series of votes on Tuesday, February 3, 2015, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

“YES” on roll call vote No. 51, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 361;

“YES” on roll call vote No. 52, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 615;

“YES” on roll call vote No. 53, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 623;

“NO” on roll call vote No. 54, on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 70;

“NO” on roll call vote No. 55, on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 70; and

“YES” on roll call vote No. 56, on approving the Journal.

HONORING COLONEL BYRON L. DIAMOND

HON. BRAD ASHFORD

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Byron L. Diamond for his nearly 29 years of military service in the Ne-

braska Army National Guard and United States Army Reserve. Colonel Diamond was born March 30, 1967 in Belleville, Kansas. He graduated from Columbus High School in Columbus, Nebraska in 1985. Colonel Diamond enlisted as a Private on July 17, 1986 into the Nebraska Army National Guard as a member of Company C, 1/195 Armor Battalion in Fairbury, Nebraska. In order to become a commissioned officer, Colonel Diamond attended Southeast Community College in Lincoln where he received an Associate Degree of Applied Science—Finance in 1989. Colonel Diamond was then commissioned a Second Lieutenant on July 22, 1989 at the Nebraska National Guard Military Academy.

From there, he continued his education to obtain a Bachelor of Professional Studies—Business Administration/Technical Services from Bellevue University at Bellevue, Nebraska in 1992. Later on Colonel Diamond would earn a Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College in 2011. Colonel Diamond and his wife, Denise, have two daughters, Emma and Olivia and son, Alexander.

His career included traditional and full-time positions of ever increasing responsibility. Colonel Diamond's career culminated as the G4—Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics in the Nebraska Army National Guard. Colonel Diamond's significant service contributions include key assignments within the 267th (Direct Support) Maintenance Company (command), the 67th Infantry Brigade Forward Support Battalion, the 19th Theater Support Command, the 67th Area Support Group, commander 402nd Military Police Battalion, and Joint Force Headquarters—Nebraska. His key achievements include: serving as the Directorate of Installation Management for the 67th Area Support Group while deployed to Al Asad Air Base; developing plans with the 19th TSC for the defense of South Korea; and the establishment of communications infrastructure to relocate the Nebraska National Guard Headquarters to a new facility.

Colonel Diamond was promoted to his current rank December 13, 2011. Colonel Diamond distinguished himself through his extensive knowledge of logistics and mobilization operations where his mentoring and championing of logistics personnel and processes resulted in Nebraska's numerous regional and national Chief of Staff of the Army, Combined Logistics Excellence Awards. His accomplishments are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and patriotism and have brought great credit upon himself and the country. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize Colonel Byron Diamond for his years of service and sacrifice to our country.

HONORING MR. ROBERT “BOBBY” HICKMAN

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Robert “Bobby” Hickman, to recognize his lifetime of persistently fighting for social change and mentoring the youth of our community over many decades.

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, Robert was a fourth-generation St. Paulite. His father was a descendant of the founders of Pilgrim Baptist Church and his mother came from a family of educators. Robert recognized the importance of his heritage and the deep rooted community ties that were instilled in him at an early age. Hickman served as a mechanical engineer in the Air Force and returned to St. Paul in the 1960's. It was during this tumultuous time of the civil rights movement that Robert became an activist within his community. In 1968 he founded the Inner City Youth League and served as the Executive Director for the next 20 years.

Robert believed in the importance of empowering and educating youth. The Inner City Youth League taught teenagers art, black history, music, and theater. He would sponsor forums to allow African-American youth to question city officials. He even ran a public television show called “Black Voices” and trained community members in video production.

Robert often came up with creative ways to protest the powers that be in his community. When the city of St. Paul razed houses for urban renewal he created community gardens out of the vacant plots. He advocated employment programs for young African-Americans, pushed for stronger schools, and protested profiling by police. After his work with Inner City Youth he teamed up with the advocacy and social services group The City Inc. in Minneapolis which opened one of the very first alternative schools in Minnesota.

Robert was more than just an activist; he was truly a community leader. He wore many hats throughout his personal and professional life. He was a small business owner and even an occasional actor playing the role of Frederick Douglas in Minnesota's Juneteenth celebrations. He discovered Buddhism and made trips to Kenya and Ghana. Most recently he worked with the Cultural Wellness Center in Minneapolis with young men, many of whom were referred there by the criminal justice system.

Throughout Robert's life he always continued to overcome divisions between city officials and community members. He was able to overcome cultural, racial, and generational divides to unite people in finding common ground while consistently and persistently supporting the community's black youth.

Robert “Bobby” Hickman passed away on January 28, 2015 at the age of 79. His work to improve and inspire the lives of African-American youth will resonate in the hearts and minds of the community for generations to come. He viewed his life's work as a calling and there is no nobler calling than mentoring and empowering our nation's future.

H.R. 596

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 596, the latest in a series of seemingly never ending attempts by House Republicans to destroy and dismantle the Affordable Care Act. This legislation, which has no chance of becoming law, would be nothing short of catastrophic for the

millions of Americans who receive critical benefits and health care coverage under the ACA.

The Affordable Care Act is working. Individuals with pre-existing conditions are no longer unfairly kept out of the insurance marketplace. Health care premiums are growing at the slowest rate in nearly a half century. Young adults are able to remain on their parents' health coverage; families can purchase affordable health coverage on the health insurance exchanges; and seniors are receiving real help with their prescription drug costs as we eliminate the Part D donut hole.

Despite these successes, House Republicans are continuing their quixotic pursuit to undermine this law using the same old and discredited arguments they have tried in the past. Instead of outlining a replacement to the ACA, Republicans want to take away comprehensive health coverage from millions of Americans and repeal critical patient protections.

In the last year, I've had many constituents share deeply personal stories of the positive impact the ACA has had on their lives. Below is one such story from Amy and Mark Adams-Westin of St. Paul, Minnesota.

THE ACA IS WORKING FOR US

(By The Westins)

We've been married since 1995. In the spring of 1997 Amy was diagnosed with stage-two breast cancer. A month earlier, Mark had just gotten group health insurance through his employer. A year, two surgeries, 6 chemo treatments, and a full course of radiation later, Amy was finished with her treatments. It was now time to rebuild; fortunately our finances were spared the catastrophe.

We both have been musicians/composers/performers for all of our lives, with dreams of making our love our profession. After going through this life and death struggle, we decided to honor our gifts and talent and go for it. Of course this meant winding down, then giving up, Mark's day job. When we felt we had enough cushion in the bank, we made the leap.

We applied to our health insurance provider to change our group policy to a private family policy. By this time over 11 years had passed since Amy's breast cancer treatments. Our provider had no problem accepting Mark, but they refused Amy's coverage due to the previous conditions of her breast cancer (which shocked her oncologist), and fall allergies (which shocked us).

Fortunately, Amy got coverage from a Minnesota state mandated program that covered folks refused by private companies. Unfortunately, both our monthly premiums (from \$300 to \$650) and our yearly deductible (from \$300 to \$17,500) skyrocketed. And many of the preventative measures (mammograms, colonoscopies, even flu shots...) became part of our deductibles, which we had to pay out of pocket. Somehow we managed to scrape by, but it meant that we often had to choose between seeing our doctors or paying our premiums. Now let me say that we are both non-smokers. Mark does not drink and Amy has an occasional glass of wine. We are mostly vegetarian (Mark is total veg since 1973), and exercise regularly.

As musicians, a great percentage of our work is in independent, assisted living, transitional, and nursing Elder Care facilities. It is an absolute joy to see how important and healing our music can be to so many. We help turn lights on every day. For several years, we struggled from paycheck to paycheck to keep turning those lights on.

On May 1, 2013 Mark turned 62 and began to collect Social Security, which he'd been paying into for almost 50 years. That check covers our housing. In March of 2014 when the ACA took effect, our premiums and deductible were reduced into the affordable range. Also our coverage for preventative measures are now included.

Our response to Social Security and the ACA was "WHEW!" These two programs have changed our lives, along with the lives of millions of others. We can now continue to live our American dream, while bringing our music to those precious folks who need it the most.

Our health care system was broken and breaking this nation until passage of the ACA. While we weren't among the 40,000,000 plus uncovered men, women, and children, our coverage was strangling our finances.

The ACA, contrary to oft repeated myth, is in fact working and making millions of lives better. We must continue to refine the ACA and health care in America until all of the cracks that hard working folks and their children have been allowed to fall into are filled and the basic cost of healthcare is reduced to sane sustainable levels. To repeal the ACA, which has been the constant threat and "promise" of the opposition, would be to turn back the clock and recreate the void that endangered far too many lives.

Mark and Amy's story is just one of many that I have heard about how the Affordable Care Act is helping to improve Minnesotans' health and economic security. It is time for Congressional Republicans to stop refighting the battles of the past and focus on the challenges facing our communities. I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats—to enact policies that will benefit middle class families and strengthen our economy.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the *Extensions of Remarks* section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 12, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 24

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of the Interior.

SD-366

FEBRUARY 25

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) reauthorization, focusing on perspectives from owners, operators, and users of the system.

SD-406

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine regional nuclear dynamics.

SR-222

FEBRUARY 26

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Forest Service.

SD-366

MARCH 4

3:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine United States nuclear weapons policy, programs, and strategy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

MARCH 12

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To receive a closed briefing on missile defense programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SVC-217

MARCH 25

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222