until her passing in 2005. Attorneys Robert Groszek and Alexander Fiedotjew serve as the co-chairs. Alexander has volunteered with the Clinic since the start along with Zygmunt ''Ziggy'' Sokolnicki.

Mr. Speaker, as the representative of a large portion of Polish constituents, I applaud Amicus Poloniae for their tireless work and dedication to the thousands of people in need. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing and congratulating Amicus Poloniae on a successful past quarter-century.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RATIBU JACOCKS SHADIDI

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ratibu Jacocks Shadidi, who passed away on December 10, 2015 at the age of 72.

Ratibu was an active member of the community who provided great service to the residents of the Inland Empire through his compassionate nature and commitment to promote the welfare of others. His service to the public began at an early age when he joined the United States Army in 1961. Later, upon moving to Riverside in the 1970s, he worked as a Field Representative for California State Senator Ruben Ayala and helped many in the community receive assistance from state agencies. He then operated a local firm and became known for publishing a directory of enterprises operated by women and minorities, which is distributed throughout California to promote small businesses.

A man of faith, Ratibu taught Sunday school at the Temple Missionary Baptist Church in San Bernardino. He is credited with inspiring several of his peers to become spiritual leaders and was known for seeing things in people that they couldn't see in themselves. Ratibu also is known in the community for forming the Inland Area Kwanzaa Group, and had hosted the annual Kwanzaa Karamu for more than two decades. In 2007, he published a memoir in which he describes how his belief system helped guide him through difficult times in his life.

For his contributions to the community and for his many other achievements, I would like to honor Ratibu Jacocks Shadidi and his family. While Ratibu will truly be missed by residents of the Inland Empire, his legacy will continue through all of those that knew him. He is survived by his wife of 34 years, former-California State Assemblywoman Wilmer Amina Carter, and their three daughters.

RECOGNIZING AARON PEARSON, RETIRED OFFICER OF THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT, FOR BEING INJURED IN THE LINE OF DUTY PROTECTING THE SPRINGFIELD COMMUNITY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Aaron Pearson, retired officer of the Springfield Police Department, for his dedication to protecting the Springfield community as well as his courage and perseverance after being injured in the line of duty.

On January 26, 2015, Officer Pearson was struck below the left eye with one of several rounds fired at him while responding to a request for backup. As a result of his injuries, doctors predicted that Aaron would likely never walk or talk again, but he never gave up. Aaron persevered through months of difficult rehab and less than five months later he made enough progress to throw the first pitch at the Springfield Cardinals game. His actions have shown an incredible example of courage in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. This November, he was awarded the Springfield Police Department Purple Heart for enduring this adversity.

Officer Pearson served his community with passion throughout his time with the Springfield Police Department. Before his retirement, Aaron's accomplishments exemplified this and those who worked with him in the line of duty had great respect for his professionalism.

Mr. Speaker, Aaron Pearson has worked tirelessly to protect his community and better those around him; I extend to him my deepest appreciation for his courage and dedication to ensuring the safety of the Springfield community. His efforts have not only contributed greatly the Springfield community, but have made me proud to serve the people of Missouri's seventh Congressional District.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEMA HELP AND EDUCATION FOR LOCAL PARTNERS ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the FEMA Help and Education for Local Partners Act (FEMA HELP Act). The bill addresses concerns raised by states and local governments about the lack of comprehensive information about the various federal assistance programs available during and in the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster. The bill creates a federal multi-agency team, led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to provide coordinated assistance to state, local, tribal, and territorial leaders in implementing a comprehensive approach to recovery and utilizing the full range of federal resources across agencies and programs.

The number and costs of federally declared disasters has been on the rise over the last 30 years. For example, total damages from 1972's Hurricane Agnes were $2.1 billion, 1999's Hurricane Floyd caused $6 billion in damage, while Hurricane Sandy resulted in $65 billion in total damage. With the multiple disaster assistance programs offered by federal agencies in the aftermath of a disaster, the federal government needs to work together with state, local, tribal, and territorial leaders to provide the right types of aid on time to meet critical needs. At a recent Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management roundtable, a state representative suggested that the federal government provide a ''menu of resources'' so that state, local, tribal, and territorial leaders and their residents can look for government resources in one place.

To address the current lack of coordination, the FEMA HELP Act is designed to require federal agencies to work together in a collaborative manner with state, local, tribal, and territorial leaders and provide them with guidance on federal assistance programs. To accomplish this aim, the bill directs FEMA to convene and manage multi-agency federal teams to work with and provide coordinated assistance to state, local, tribal, and territorial leaders in implementing a comprehensive approach to recovery and utilizing the full range of federal funding resources across agencies and programs. The bill also requires FEMA's coordinating officers be trained in the range of applicable funding programs. The multi-agency federal team would include FEMA, the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Defense, and the Army Corps of Engineers. The bill also directs FEMA to create a clear and consistent set of guidelines and criteria for making and communicating decisions on funding eligibility and requirements. To retain institutional knowledge, the bill requires federal teams to minimize staff transitions and ensure there is adequate information transfer when staff transitions occur.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 644, TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 11, 2015

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to raise my opposition to H.R. 644 the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.

In August, China devalued the renmibi by 4.4 percent which caused a drastic drop in the U.S. stock market. Currency manipulation has real life consequences and affects U.S. jobs and our economy. When China devalues their currency, U.S. exports rise in price and our workers and consumers suffer.

Considering the implications of currency manipulation, it is baffling that this bill does not have any Currency CVD provisions but instead inserts legally insignificant terms that are unenforceable. Rather than focus on protecting the American economy and jobs, Republicans have used H.R. 644 to weaken CVD provisions, eliminate text which prohibits imports made by forced or child labor and to insert partisan language to limit future discussions on climate change.

What started as a strong bill with wide bipartisan support has degenerated into a weak bill that does not shield our economy from the machinations of foreign governments. And for that Mr. Speaker, I must oppose this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH AND PHYLLIS SHIELDS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kenneth and Phyllis Shields of Farragut, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary. They were married in 1950.

Kenneth and Phyllis' lifelong commitment to each other and their children truly embodies our Iowa values. It is families like the Shields' that make me proud to represent our great state.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 65th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

TRIBUTE TO RUSSELL L. JACKSON

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Russell L. Jackson, Jr. for his many years of service to Anderson Township.

Russ Jackson has a long history of public service to Anderson Township, making invaluable contributions to its economic development throughout the last 20 years.

With over 37 years of business experience in the transportation industry, including leadership as a CEO and small business owner, Russ's input on the Anderson Township Board of Trustees has been invaluable. For five elected terms, Russ has used his business acumen to help steer Anderson Township towards economic success.

Due in part to Russ's leadership, Anderson Township has experienced sustained economic growth. More and more families are choosing to call Anderson Township home and more businesses are deciding to conduct their business in the township.

As admirable as the service Russ has provided to his community is the attitude with which he has served. Russ has worked tirelessly to improve Anderson Township over the years, devoted to the big picture and listening to the people he serves without exception.

I am grateful to have a fellow citizen in southwest Ohio as committed to service and progress as Russ Jackson is. Congratulations, Russ, on your 20 years of public service, and I wish you the best in all future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING CAREPAYMENT AND BEACON HEALTH SYSTEM

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Beacon Health System in my district for their collaboration with CarePayment.

Beacon Health System continues to look for new, innovative ways to care for their patients.

They have partnered with CarePayment to provide a financing service that allows patients to spread out the payment of medical bills.

Oftentimes, patients face sticker shock when they discover what their out-of-pocket medical expenses will ultimately cost.

Some plans with high deductibles force patients to pay $6,000 for an individual plan, or $12,000 for a family plan before their health insurance kicks in to cover medical bills.

In order to provide more financial relief to patients in my district, Beacon Health and CarePayment are now providing a patient-friendly, financing program.

Everyone is eligible, regardless of income or employment status, and participating in this program has no impact on the patient's credit score.

The constituents I serve are concerned with rising medical costs.

In fact, many of them face difficult decisions when it comes to prioritizing their healthcare.

I am grateful for partnerships like the one between Beacon Health and CarePayment for providing patient driven solutions to Hoosiers.

I will keep working on bipartisan reforms to move in this direction.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4188, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015.

H.R. 4188 authorizes the United States Coast Guard, a critical component of the Department of Homeland Security, through fiscal year 2017 at $8.7 billion per year. The bill includes provisions aimed at improving Coast Guard mission effectiveness, modernizing the Service's aging vessels and other assets, and reforming U.S. maritime transportation laws.

Since our Nation's earliest years, the Coast Guard has kept our ports and waterways secure, protected our shores and coastal communities, and responded to disasters and other emergencies. As Ranking Member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I recognize and thank the men and women of the Coast Guard for their work, particularly their efforts at fulfilling the Coast Guard's critical homeland security missions. I am pleased to support legislation that reauthorizes the Coast Guard to ensure that it is positioned to effectively execute its eleven vital statutory homeland security and non-homeland security missions.

Modernizing the Coast Guard's aircraft, vessels, and other technology is critical to its operations. H.R. 4188 includes provisions that seek to improve the Service's acquisition process and improve the quality of assets delivered. The bill also requires the Department of Homeland Security to develop and present to Congress a strategic plan for the Coast Guard's long-term acquisition and manpower needs. This requirement will go a long way to enhancing both the DHS and Congress' understanding and prioritization of Coast Guard capability needs.

In addition, H.R. 4188 directs the Coast Guard to have a new manpower requirements plan that assesses all projected mission requirements for the next four fiscal years; the number of personnel available currently and projected; capability gaps caused by a lack of available personnel; and the steps the Coast Guard will take to address these gaps. In carrying out this requirement, it is important that the Coast Guard take into account the need to foster greater diversity at all levels of the organization. Consistently deploying broad recruitment efforts can only strengthen the Coast Guard.

Congress must continue to ensure these brave men and women have the necessary authorities and resources to accomplish all that they do on behalf of our Nation. H.R. 4188 is a good step in that direction, and I congratulate my colleagues in moving this important legislation forward.

CONGRATULATING ANDREW MEKELBURG

HON. JOHN KLINE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Andrew Mekelburg, Vice President of Government Affairs, upon his upcoming retirement after more than 36 years with Verizon and its preceding companies.

Andy began his career with Bell Atlantic and the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of D.C. Originally from Needham, Massachusetts, Andy came to Washington to attend Georgetown University, where he majored in accounting and earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. He also earned a Master of Science in Special Studies of Telecommunications Policy from George Washington University.

At the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone (C&P) Company he supervised a team processing telephone bill payments. Andy next served as a Supervisor and then Manager in Corporate Accounting before becoming a Manager of External Affairs, State Regulatory, Financial and Accounting Matters at Bell Atlantic, the parent company of C&P.

From 1991 to 1992, Andy was a Brookings Institution Congressional Fellow assigned to serve in then-Congressman Amory "Amo" Houghton's (NY) office. During his fellowship, Andy founded a coalition of community leaders and worked with them to develop and implement economic development activities, including the Western New York Tourism Coalition, throughout the congressional district. He also initiated and founded HealthNet, one of the first Telemedicine networks in the nation, which was comprised of twelve rural and urban hospitals and a number of technology companies that worked together to use telecommunications technologies to solve health care challenges.

After his fellowship concluded, Andy served as Director of Infrastructure Initiatives for Bell Atlantic. In that capacity, he worked with the General Services Administration, the Vice President's National Performance Review, and the City of Hagerstown, Maryland, to establish the first Federal Telecommuting Center in the Washington area. He also continued to initiate