

(OH), Andrew Young (GA), and our two distinguished members still serving this institution—Representatives JOHN CONYERS, JR. (MI) and CHARLES B. RANGEL (NY).

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 40th Anniversary of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and the 1976 Class of the Congressional Black Caucus and recognizing their tremendous contributions to our nation.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL
MARRIAGE WEEK

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and recognize that this is National Marriage Week. The sacred vows that a man and woman exchange as a part of the sacrament of marriage have been part of our culture from the very beginning of humanity. It's an institution that, over the centuries, has proven to be the best for raising a family, and creating self-sufficient and well-balanced children.

However, this week as we celebrate National Marriage Week, I remain deeply concerned that this sacred institution is suffering in our country. More than half of all marriages in the United States end in divorce. Fewer couples are choosing to marry. And there are still large numbers of women having children out of wedlock.

More than half of all babies born to women under the age of 30 are now born outside of marriage. Fifty years ago, that number was around 5 percent. While the culture we live in today is no doubt responsible for much of this shift, the government could be doing more to help this situation. Our laws do not encourage marriage, but in many cases, they also discourage marriage by imposing tax penalties on those who would like to marry.

So, as we recognize the importance of marriage, I believe that it's time that Congress remove the government-imposed financial barriers—which is often called the marriage tax penalty—that too often make marriage a second choice for these couples.

I am blessed to have been married to my wife, Caroline, for almost 22 years. Our partnership is one of the great joys of my life.

I am proud to recognize National Marriage Week and the institution of marriage here in the United States as well as around the world.

HONORING GEORGE PRESCOTT
BUSH AND JOSÉ ANTONIO
MEADE KURIBREÑA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Texas Land Commissioner George Prescott Bush and Mexican Secretary of Social Development José Antonio Meade Kuribreña, who have been recognized as the 2016 Señor Internacional Award recipients by LULAC Council 12 in Laredo, Texas. For over

30 years, LULAC Council 12 has recognized Latinos on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border for their service to the community and exceptional individual achievements.

George P. Bush currently serves as the Texas Land Commissioner, a post in which he continues the public service legacy of the Bush family. Commissioner Bush was born in Houston, Texas, to former Florida Governor Jeb Bush and Columba Garnica Gallo. After graduating from Rice University, Commissioner Bush worked as a public school teacher in Miami. He then went on to earn a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas Law School. After attending law school, he co-founded a private equity firm, Pennybacker Capital LLC, and later founded an energy consulting firm, St. Augustine Partners.

In 2007, Commissioner Bush joined the Naval Reserve and in 2010, he courageously served an eight-month tour of duty as an officer in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. In 2014, he was elected Texas Land Commissioner, beginning his political career. Commissioner Bush prides himself on supporting our veterans, increasing funds for public education, and providing a path for the U.S. to become energy-independent.

Secretary José Antonio Meade was born in Mexico City, Mexico, and is an economist, lawyer, diplomat, and currently serves as Mexico's Secretary of Social Development. He received his degree in Economics from the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, one of Mexico's preeminent institutions of higher learning. He continued his education at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, where he studied law and also received his PhD in Economics from Yale University. He served as a professor at ITAM and Yale University. He has received recognition for his research on Economic Analysis of the Law and has also been given the National Tlacaehel Award.

Throughout his illustrious career, Secretary Meade has served his country in several important posts such as: Chief Executive Officer of the National Bank for Rural Credit, Chief Executive Officer of Financiera Rural, Secretary of Energy, Secretary of Finance and Public Credit, and Secretary of Foreign Relations.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize Commissioner George Prescott Bush and Secretary José Antonio Meade Kuribreña.

HONORING RALPH VERSCHOOR

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the birthday of Mr. Ralph Verschoor, who will be ninety-five years old on February 20, 2016.

In 1926, Ralph was born in Hot Springs, Arkansas. In 1930, he moved to Colorado with his family. His father then decided to move away from the cold and snowy Colorado area and ventured to Ceres, California.

On May 3, 1944, Ralph's life was forever changed when he was drafted into the U.S. Army where he served in the 503rd Airborne. He completed 16 weeks of basic training at

Fort Bragg in North Carolina before he was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia where he underwent parachute training. Despite being injured on his first jump he continued with the training and successfully received his wings.

Before long, Ralph was sent to Fort Ord and then San Francisco, where he boarded a ship on a 31 day voyage to New Guinea. After departing New Guinea, Ralph travelled to the Philippines. There, in March 1946 on the Beach of Negros Island, he experienced combat for the first time. Ralph spent his time as a rifleman, but due to unfortunate circumstances, his weapon malfunctioned. He was stuck with this weapon until the 1st Scout was wounded and they were able to trade weapons. At this point Ralph became 1st Scout and spent six weeks leading his troops into the jungle. Requested by his Captain to become a combat medic, Ralph was tasked with giving first aid to his wounded comrades. He witnessed many traumatizing events in his line of duty that he will never forget.

The war ended in the summer of 1945. Ralph, as a combat medic, was asked to travel to Hiroshima, Japan to study radiation burns. After a six month stay, he was sent to Sendai, Japan to join a medical team aiding in the treatment of those exposed to communicable diseases. Upon returning from the war in 1946, Ralph made his way back home to California, settling in Escalon, where he has resided for the last 70 years. Ralph was elected to the Escalon City Council in 1957, and later served as Mayor.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Ralph Verschoor for his 95th birthday and outstanding contributions to the community of Escalon as well as our country.

RECOGNIZING MEAGAN WARREN,
FOUNDER OF BOOKS FOR BED-
TIME, FROM BEXLEY, OHIO

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 2016

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of the Third Congressional District of Ohio, I am pleased to commend Meagan Warren for being recognized by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards as "Ohio's Top Youth Volunteer" in 2016.

A seventh-grade student at Bexley Middle School in my district, Meagan has always been an avid reader.

For Meagan, who learned to read when she was two years old, it is hard to imagine not having a book within arm's reach, especially at bedtime.

Unfortunately, many children her age do not have the same fortune.

One night, while reading in bed, Meagan thought about other children her age that had no books to read.

She committed herself to doing something about it.

Meagan's late-night inspiration spurred her into action and, with the help of her family, she founded Books for Bedtime, a nonprofit organization that has collected more than 14,000 books from neighbors and local businesses for low-income children since 2014.

Books for Bedtime's mission is simple: to distribute books to low-income children and to