

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote numbers 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "no" on roll call vote numbers 95, 96, 97, 98, and 101.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote numbers 92, 93, 94, 99, and 100.

RECOGNIZING MS. DIXIE WHITMAN'S WORK FOR THE MILITARY WORKING DOG TEAM SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak in honor of Dixie Whitman. The organization she cofounded, Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc., supports American military working canines and their handlers.

Ms. Whitman started the organization ten years ago in her garage, back when it was only a group of a few neighbors and friends in Georgia. Under Ms. Whitman's leadership and through her tireless work the non-profit has expanded to eight more states. All of the workers are volunteers who are united in the common good of serving both human and canine soldiers. Since the founding in 2006, MWDTSA has sent over 3,500 care packages to currently deployed Military Working Dog teams. These packages contain everything from dog treats and boots for the dogs to DVDs for the handlers.

Mr. Speaker, Dixie had to step down from the organization that she poured her heart and soul into this year but she will continue to be the heartbeat of the Military Working Dog Team Support Association. On behalf of the Sixth District of Georgia, I would like to thank Ms. Whitman for supporting and being a voice for human and canine soldiers alike.

SOFIA AHMED WINS CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sofia Ahmed of Katy, TX for winning a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Award for 2015.

Sofia is currently a student at the University of Texas—San Antonio. Through her CLS scholarship, she was hosted in Beijing, China, where she became proficient in Advanced level Chinese. CLS recipients, like Sofia, are sent abroad to study the language and the culture of the region they are hosted in. These prestigious scholarships are funded by the

State Department through their Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Critical Language Scholarship program aims to spread diversity and critical language skills to all of its awardees. We are proud of Sofia for all of her hard work, and congratulate her on her scholarship.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Sofia for winning the Critical Language Scholarship Award. Keep up the great work.

HUNGER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MCGOVERN for the tireless work he does every day for hungry families and children.

I rise as Chair of the Democratic Whip's Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, which Congressman MCGOVERN is also a member of and I want to thank him for that and for our SNAP challenge almost 3 years ago. That was truly an eye opener and so important to make sure we stop any cuts from this critical program.

Mr. Speaker, persistent hunger is truly a stain on our nation.

Fourteen percent of households in America—that's nearly one in seven—are food insecure.

These are people, who despite working full time, simply don't earn enough to feed their families. For these families, putting food on the table is a constant struggle.

It is truly a disgrace that in the richest and most powerful nation, that this many families are going hungry every day.

And this burden is hard on children. More than 15.3 million American children are living in food-insecure households today. Let me say that again: more than 15 million kids are at risk of going to bed hungry—every night.

And hunger is far from color blind. We know that communities of color are disproportionately affected by hunger. For example in 2014:

One in four African American households and

One in five Latino families were food insecure.

And for rural families, food insecurity is coupled with other barriers including lack of access to transportation and limited job opportunities. More than 17% of rural households—that's 3.3 million households—are food insecure.

We know that hunger is a problem that affects people in every zip code. It is endemic in our counties, rural communities, urban streets and suburban neighborhoods.

I've seen its impact in my community, Alameda County, where one in five residents have turned to our local food bank for help. These families are forced to make impossible choices to feed their children. Many must decide between food and medicine, food and school clothes, or food and paying the electric bill.

One Alameda County mother, Claire, said "My kids need milk, but we can't afford it. So, I buy condensed milk and water it down."

This is the tragic reality of millions of families in our country. And this epidemic of hun-

ger is the direct result of persistent poverty and continued cuts to vital safety net programs.

As a young mother, I struggled to keep food on the table for my two little boys. Food stamps, or SNAP as we call it now, was a bridge over troubled water for my family. Thanks to this safety net, I was able to get my degree, start a small business, and eventually be elected to Congress.

Surely we should be providing these benefits for all families?

Programs like SNAP, housing vouchers, Head Start, Medicaid and Pell Grants help families lift themselves out of poverty and were critical to President Johnson's War on Poverty.

And SNAP—which is our nation's first line of defense against hunger—is also a critical tool in the fight against poverty. In 2015, it kept nearly 5 million Americans—including 2.2 million children—out of poverty in 2014.

We should be strengthening these programs instead of cutting them.

Mr. Speaker, we need real solutions to these very real problems. My legislation, the Half in Ten Act (H.R. 258), would develop a national strategy to cut poverty in half over the next decade. That's more than 23 million Americans lifted out of poverty and into the middle class in just the next 10 years.

We must recognize that addressing food insecurity in America is a critical first step in this ongoing war on poverty. We can do this, and we can do so much more.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE HOLDING

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 99, I would have voted "Nay" on roll call vote No. 99, on the Huffman Amendment to H.R. 2406, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, on February 26, 2016. I missed the vote due to being unavoidably detained.

GRAZIA ITALIAN KITCHEN HAS THE "BEST BITES"

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pearland Restaurant, Grazia Italian Kitchen, for winning both Reserve Grand Champion in the People's Choice Award category and the Rookie Award at the "Rodeo Uncorked! Roundup and Best Bites Competition" at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Grazia's Chef, Steve Haug, former chef at Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse, created a dish that pleased not only the judges, but 5,500 guests as well. The Houston Rodeo's Best Bites Competition this year consisted of 102 competing restaurants at the NRG Center on February 21, and sold-out due to its overwhelming attendance. The Best