

highlights of 2015 was the refugee crisis that has taken the world by storm. The worst humanitarian crisis of the year has roiled this country, causing doubt and confusion for leaders across the nation.

The failure of the President's administration to stand behind its so called "red lines" that were imposed upon the Assad regime during the years of the Syrian Civil War quickly allowed the cruel Syrian dictator to gain comfort as he continued carrying out his brutal atrocities against innocent civilians. Our shortcomings undoubtedly contributed to the refugee crisis. Although our influence in the region did not lead to the instability of the nation, as the strongest and leading democratic nation of the world, we needed—but failed—to take required actions and stand ground by the promising words that we first declared, thus unfortunately giving Bashar Al-Assad a leeway.

Eventually, conflicting messages faced our country. As Russia began to heavily intervene in the troubling Arab nation, our country began to scramble for a settled negotiation. In the mean time, lives were still being lost, homes were still being destroyed, and futures were still being gambled with. Yet, there remained a big elephant questioning his stance in the room: what shall be done with the millions of citizens-turned-refugees who had no where else to go? Thus, the issue of whether or not to accept Syrian refugees swiftly took America by storm. History began to repeat itself as state governors sought to ban refugees from their lands, striking a similar response to that of Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration, when, in the time of World War II, refused to let Jewish refugees in America. It was evident that we needed to take measures to help the lives of those who were forced to flee from Syria to foreign lands with nothing left, while at the same time, to not risk minimizing our national security.

Logistics aside, it is clear that the Syrian refugee crisis has been a sad burden that, as a leading nation, we needed to face head-on. Failure to unite and stand strong with any decisions that we as a nation decide upon unfortunately leads to a disruption of tranquility. We must unite as a country and come to decisive actions in our future international encounters.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 14, I was unavoidably detained. As a result, I missed three recorded votes:

On rollcall Number 113, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 121. As a strong supporter, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall Number 112, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 175. As a cosponsor, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall Number 111, passage of S. 2426, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

CONGRATULATING ALEC HAGAN FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Alec Hagan for his first place win in the 2016 Class 4, 138 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Alec and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Eureka High School and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Alec for a job well done.

HONORING RON JIBSON

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ron Jibson who, on April 12, 2016, will be honored as the 37th "Giant in our City." This award honors those individuals with exceptional and distinguished service and extraordinary professional achievement. Ron is an incredibly deserving recipient.

Ron's contributions to the Utah business community have been transformative, and his work to solve important issues has transformed our state. Ron currently serves as President and CEO of Questar Corporation, a natural gas and energy company. Not only is Ron an industry leader, he has contributed countless hours of service to our community. He currently serves as a trustee for Utah State University and serves on the boards of the Utah Symphony/Opera and the Women's Leadership Institute. Countless Utahns have, and continue to be, impacted by Ron's work.

I am honored to recognize Ron Jibson as a true "giant" in Utah's community today. I thank him for his commitment to bettering Utah, and his influence in effecting change.

IN RECOGNITION OF BILL BURKE, RECIPIENT OF THE GREATER PITTSBURGH FRIENDLY SONS OF SAINT PATRICK SWINGLE AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Burke, who on March 17, 2016 will receive the Swingle Award from the Greater Pittsburgh Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick. For nearly three decades, Bill's dedication and service to the community has produced many ambitious pupils and hardworking students.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and son of William P. Burke and Nora Barrett Burke, Bill is married to the former Maripat Seitzinger of

Scranton. They have four children: William, Jack, Peter, and Maeve.

Bill is a graduate of Scranton Preparatory School, the University of Scranton, and the University of Notre Dame. He has been employed as a history teacher at Scranton Prep since 1990. In recognition of his contributions in teaching, he received The Rochelle Olifson Teacher of Impact Award from the University of Southern California, the Rose Kelly Award from the University of Scranton, and has been a finalist for the Disney Teacher of the Year. He has also served Scranton Prep as Director of Admissions and Assistant Director of the Richmond Summer Service Program.

Under Bill's direction, the Scranton Prep cross-country team has won four PIAA State championships and twelve PIAA District II Championships. In his sixteen years at the helm of both cross-country and track, Prep has produced 18 all-state athletes and three state champions, and three athletes have garnered regional and national honors.

As an all-state performer himself, Bill was elected to Scranton Prep's Athletic Honor Roll. He is also a member of the University of Scranton's Wall of Fame, and was elected to the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame, North Eastern Pennsylvania Division, in 2008. Bill was included in the Scranton Times Tribune's Top 25 Coaches of All Time list in 2005.

Bill is a member of the John F. Kennedy Council Number 372 Knights of Columbus, Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick, and the AOH Wolf Tone Division Pittston. He has been a coaching instructor for Special Olympics. He is a founding member of the Diocese of Scranton Cross-Country League and is on the staff of the North Pocono football team as the speed and conditioning coach. He is currently the cross-country coach at the University of Scranton.

It is an honor to recognize Bill for all of his community contributions, and I congratulate him for receiving the Swingle Award. I am grateful for his efforts to develop young people into leaders.

WHAT MAKES THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN CONGRESS SO CHALLENGING?

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Ann Johnson attends Kempner High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: In your opinion, what makes the political process in Congress so challenging?