

I extend my deepest congratulations to Taylor Norman for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

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 \$19,218,673,186,359.42. We've added \$8,591,796,137,446.34 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.

IN TRIBUTE TO REVEREND TONGBER S. VANG

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to Reverend Tongber S. Vang who passed away on February 21, 2016 at the age of 51. Tongber S. Vang was born in Sanau, Laos and was the eldest of 7 children. Tongber Vang immigrated to the United States at the age of 12, after living in refugee camps of Thailand with his family for a number of years. He lived first in Little Rock, Arkansas and eventually moved to Milwaukee and lived with his grandmother, Mao Xiong. He graduated from Milwaukee's West Division High School and attended Milwaukee Area Technical College with the intention of following a career in dentistry.

Tongber met Pa at Hmong New Year Celebration; he knew immediately she was the woman he would marry. He was touched by Pa's Christian faith and she encouraged his growth with Christ that led him to the ministry. On July 4, 1986, Tongber and Pa were married, and immersed themselves in the ministry, teaching Sunday school for children at Northwest Baptist Church. After Pa graduated from high school in 1988, they both attended and graduated from Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal, Missouri. After graduation, Tongber and Pa moved to Louisville, KY where they both attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. They studied during the week but their weekends included a 6-hour commute to and from Lansing, MI to perform church outreach to the Hmong community and coordinate a children's Sunday school ministry.

Pastor Tongber moved his family back to Milwaukee in 1997 and accepted a position working for AmeriCorps, Vista Program at the Milwaukee Public Schools. He engaged Hmong parents and students at both South Division and Washington High Schools. In the fall of 1997, Pastor Tongber made the decision to accept the offer to pastor his home church, the Hmong First Baptist Church.

Pastor Tongber led his congregation with incredible grace, love, and passion for the word of God. However, his deepest passion was caring and praying with and over members of the church. He led a successful capital campaign which resulted in the construction of the current church building. The church was his second family; he believed with true conviction that if families were okay, the church would be okay, as would the community and the world. Pastor Tongber devoted countless hours to support church ministries and ensuring goals were met. In 2010, he led a mission trip to Nan, Thailand.

Pastor Tongber is survived by his beloved wife Pa, their three wonderful sons—Solomon, Josiah, and Joseph, a loving daughter-in-law—Joann, and a cheerful 13-month-old granddaughter Charity Siabzoo, and a yet-to-be-born granddaughter named Genessa Hnub Tshiab.

While Pastor Tongber's time on earth was short, guided fully by his faith in God, he served his family, church and his community selflessly. I was proud to call him a friend and was inspired by his good works. Mr. Speaker, this is why I rise to pay tribute to Tongber S. Vang, a true asset to the 4th Congressional District.

ORAN BAZEL JR.

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Oran Bazel Jr. for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Oran Bazel Jr. is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Oran Bazel Jr. is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Oran Bazel Jr. for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DR. RUTH ELLEN WASEM ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2016

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Ruth Ellen Wasem, a Specialist in Immigration Policy, will be retiring from the Congressional Research Service (CRS) at the end of this month. Dr. Wasem came to CRS in 1987 as an Analyst in Social Legislation, where she worked on

teenage pregnancy, youth policy, homelessness, and immigration policy. She eventually moved full-time into immigration policy, where she became a recognized and leading expert in the field. Dr. Wasem is a graduate of the University of Michigan, where she received a Ph.D. and M.A. in History. She completed her undergraduate degree at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. Dr. Wasem was raised in Cadiz, Ohio.

Throughout her time at CRS, Dr. Wasem provided substantial legislative support to Members and Congressional staff who often turned to her for analysis, brainstorming, and consultation on various aspects of immigration and social welfare policy. Her work in these areas included assisting Congress with interpretations of current and proposed law, explaining agency operations, analyzing data, developing and analyzing legislative options, and comparing legislative proposals at various stages of the process. Dr. Wasem's work was used by Congress in hearings, legislative development, markups, and preconference negotiations.

Dr. Wasem's extensive knowledge in immigration policy and her keen ability to frame and analyze issues of paramount concern to Congress often made her a prominent point of contact for Congressional staff. Her encyclopedic knowledge of immigration law and policy was on display during the past decade when Congress attempted to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation. Dr. Wasem provided an innovative view of the major categories of immigration issues and the key elements involved in reforming the nation's immigration system.

Dr. Wasem wrote numerous analytic and concise reports for Congress—well over 300 during her tenure at CRS. Dr. Wasem also contributed to the House Ways and Means Committee's Green Book. Her contribution to the Green Book consisted of high-level statistical analysis on nonimmigrant eligibility for public benefits.

Dr. Wasem was routinely chosen to moderate the immigration panels of CRS' biennial Legislative Issues and Procedures seminar for new Members in Williamsburg, Virginia. She also testified before Congressional committees numerous times throughout her tenure at CRS providing testimony on issues ranging from asylum to unauthorized migration to immigration and social policy data.

One of Dr. Wasem's most important contributions to CRS' work for Congress has been her leadership of the analysts, lawyers and information professionals who support Congressional consideration of immigration-related policy issues. As CRS' Immigration Team Leader, Dr. Wasem has been a mentor to her team members, as well as to Congressional staff. She unfailingly displayed great generosity and selflessness in devoting her time and energy to the issues of the day.

The Congressional Research Service has given Dr. Wasem a number of outstanding commendations and special achievement awards for legislative analysis in the areas of immigration policy, Haitian relief, health care reform, homeland security, temporary foreign workers, and welfare reform.

Dr. Wasem recently spent a year as a Kluge Staff Fellow at the Library of Congress where