

An outspoken politician at times, Ron had many admirers and critics. Regardless of party affiliation, there was no denying that Ron was genuine, and that he would certainly act in a fair manner. He was led by Christian values and his love for the Lorain community. These values served him well, establishing Ron as a public servant of the highest order.

Ron is survived by his wife of 55 years, Dorthea, and six of his children, having been preceded in death by a daughter and his parents.

We offer them our prayers and hope that they find comfort in the wonderful memories of our dear friend, Ron, who will be remembered with affection and gratitude for his probing intellect, kind heart, and utter dedication to advancing Lorain as a community, its people and its institutions.

RECOGNIZING JOAN M. FLANAGAN
ON HER RETIREMENT FROM U.S.
CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION
SERVICES

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 5, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the remarkable Joan M. Flanagan on the occasion of her retirement after more than thirty years of accomplished and distinguished service with what was the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and is now United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Ms. Flanagan entered on duty on November 24, 1985 as a Mail and File Clerk in the Records unit at the INS Office then located at the Buffalo Federal Court House on Court Street. In June of 1987, she joined the Investigations Unit of INS as the Anti-Smuggling/Vehicle Seizure clerk where she participated in a pilot program to track data pertaining to vehicle seizures into the automated seizure/forfeiture system. That system was expanded when the data was entered into the Operation Activities Special Information System (OASIS) and rolled out to all Ports of Entry proving to be a very useful tool for the inspection program.

In January of 1990, Joan Flanagan joined the Information/FOIA-PA Unit (Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act), as an Information Officer for Buffalo. At that time, the Buffalo Information Officers also staffed INS Information offices in Rochester and Syracuse several days a week.

In October 2002, Ms. Flanagan was promoted to Supervisory Information Officer. She was the leader of the Information employees of INS who answered sometimes extremely complicated questions from the public who appeared at the office in person. The Information Officers also answered phone inquiries, and reviewed and responded to those who had written letters to INS.

In 2004 she served as a core member and subject matter expert in the area of Immigration Information on the Government's Team known as the "Most Efficient Organization Team" during a Competitive Sourcing competition relating to all IIOs positions nationwide. At that time, the IIO positions nationwide were deemed commercial in the "Fair Inventory" and were placed in A-76 competition to

allow private companies to compete for these positions. The Team goal was to prepare the most cost effective proposal that would allow the IIOs to remain as federal employees.

As the subject matter expert, Ms. Flanagan conducted site visits to various offices to research and gather data to aid in the progress of new concepts. She helped streamline workloads and identify and implement the most cost effective measures during the development of the Government's competitive bid for the 1,300 IIO positions. This competition was cancelled in October 2004 prior to submission of final proposals after it was likely learned the work being done by the Information Officers was done as well as possible in terms of cost efficiency, accuracy and service to the public.

In September 2007 Joan Flanagan was promoted to District Adjudications Officer, now called Immigration Service Officer II. In this position, now as part of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service in the Department of Homeland Security, she interviewed applicants who had applied to become permanent residents of the United States and/or those who applied to become citizens of the United States through Naturalization. In January 2011 she was promoted to Supervisory Immigration Services Officer.

In June of 2013 Joan Flanagan was promoted to Chief of Staff of District 2, the Buffalo District, in USCIS which oversees USCIS field offices in Albany, New York, Hartford Connecticut and St Albans, Vermont and a sub office in Syracuse, New York.

While her dedication to country is well documented and her stellar reputation is well deserved, it is her love and loyalty to family and community that is also deserving of our deepest respect and recognition. The wife of William "Bill" Flanagan for 26 years, Joni is the very proud mother of the late Jeffrey Fuqua, Kristie (Daron) Moore, Karyn (Duane) Smith and Erin (Kyle) Kiminski. As a completely devoted grandmother to Marissa Stack, Nicholas Moore, Carolyn and Kameron Kiminski, Kaylee Reid and Madison Fuqua, there is no stopping her and Bill from cheering them all on at school programs and sporting events.

The tragic loss of her beloved son, Technical Sergeant Jeffrey Fuqua, to PTSD following more than eleven years of active service in the US Air Force, including tours of Iraq and Afghanistan, compelled her and her daughters to action. This fierce trio of warriors moved with a sense of urgency to help other veterans and their families struggling with PTSD as they brought the community together to raise awareness and funds for WNY Heroes and Horizon Health Services-Freedom Village. She recently joined with her family in unveiling a bench in memory of her son at her grandchildren's school, Notre Dame Academy in South Buffalo.

In sharing great joy as well, it is expected that Joni and Bill, a veteran and a retiree from federal service, will use this time to be together with family and visit the Magic Kingdom even more often.

From an entry level position as a GS-3 clerk, Chief of Staff Joan Flanagan rose through the ranks holding three supervisory positions. Her influence is found in significant policies and programs for USINS and USCIS, she has advised and mentored scores of other employees, and became one of the key players in the Buffalo District, a district known for many years to demonstrate the absolute high-

est standards of accomplishment, dedication, and service in the federal government to the people of the United States.

Throughout three decades of service, Joan became a reliable resource for information due to her expertise in a myriad of subjects. Joan's intelligence and compassionate personality have made her a truly valued individual and admired friend inside and outside of the office. Joan's dedication to her many positions throughout her career and incredible work ethic will leave her dearly missed.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize and congratulate Joan M. Flanagan on her extensive service and remarkable achievements in both the Immigration & Naturalization Service and the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services. We join with her colleagues and many friends in wishing Joan, her husband and family good health and happiness as she brings her extraordinary career to a close and begins a new chapter in her life.

IN RECOGNITION OF BARBARA
TAKEI

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 5, 2016

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Barbara Takei, who is being awarded the National Parks Conservation Association's Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Award for her work in the protection of the Tule Lake confinement site as a national park. As her family, friends and colleagues gather to celebrate her long list of valiant accomplishments, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this awe-inspiring individual who has served and contributed greatly to the National Park System.

Born in Sacramento, the daughter of camp internees, Ms. Takei was raised in Detroit and graduated from Howard University. She eventually became the chief financial officer of the non-profit Tule Lake Committee, an organization focused on the education and recognition of Tule Lake, one of the largest and most controversial sites where thousands of men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated and detained. Ms. Takei is being honored for spearheading the effort to prevent the construction of an intrusive fence for an airport on the Segregation Center Property, which would have disturbed visitor access to the site and its visual history. Without her longstanding and tireless leadership, the Tule Lake confinement site would likely not be a protected unit of the National Park System today.

In addition to her steadfast fight for national park protection, Ms. Takei has been active in the community for preserving the cultural history of Japanese-Americans, as well as spending the past decade researching and writing about Tule Lake's segregation history.

Mr. Speaker, as the members of the National Parks Conservation Association celebrate and recognize Ms. Barbara Takei for her accomplishments and value to the National Park System at the annual Tule Lake Pilgrimage, along with Tule Lake survivors and their families, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring this outstanding individual.