

arrogance back in the dressing room . . . She offered no-nonsense criticism to her students but tried not to trample their ego.”

Niska’s dramatic talents earned her a reputation as a singing-actress. Ms. Niska appeared regularly with some of the great conductors of her time, including Pierre Boulez, Eric Leinsdorf, and Andre Kostelanetz. She received national recognition when she debuted at the opening of the Metropolitan Opera National Company in 1965. Followed by her debut, she was engaged by the New York City Opera and commanded dozens of roles. In all she sang 29 leading roles with the company—the most of any singer in its history.

Ms. Niska gave her last professional performance in 1996, in Santa Fe, performing arias of Mozart with the Música de Cámara Orchestra conducted by her husband, the famous violinist and renowned conductor, William Mullen. The couple established Music One, a predecessor to Performance Santa Fe, a performing arts center. Maralin Niska was loved by all and will be sorely missed by her husband, students, the greater communities of Los Angeles and Santa Fe, and by opera lovers all over the world.

RARE PEDIATRIC PRIORITY
REVIEW VOUCHER PROGRAM

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2016

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my hope that the House of Representatives will reauthorize the Rare Pediatric Priority Review Voucher (PRV) Program before its expiration deadline of September 30, 2016. I urge my colleagues to consider and pass H.R. 1537, the Advancing Hope Act of 2015 which I introduced with Representative MICHAEL MCCAUL (TX-10) and would permanently reauthorize the Rare Pediatric PRV Program.

The Creating Hope Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in 2012 as part of the PDUFA reauthorization, expanded the cost-neutral Food and Drug Administration (FDA) priority review voucher (PRV) program, allowing pharmaceutical companies to expedite FDA review of more profitable drugs in return for developing treatments for rare diseases. The Creating Hope Act was reauthorized for Fiscal Year 2016 through the budget agreement passed at the end of last year, but is scheduled to expire soon. The Butterfield-McCaul bill would reauthorize the program, clear the way for more treatments to reach the people that need them most, and clarify the scope of the program to include diseases like Sickle Cell Anemia.

There are many pediatric disease spaces where treatments are woefully inadequate or nonexistent, and the Advancing Hope Act of 2015 would help encourage the private sector to help find solutions. An example of a condition that could benefit from the reauthorization of the Rare Pediatric PRV Program is Alternating Hemiplegia of Childhood, known as AHC, which leads to life-threatening temporary paralysis in approximately three hundred children nationwide. Duke Children’s Hospital and Health Center, located in North Carolina’s First Congressional District, assists North Caro-

linian children Matthew Wuchich, Madison Pino, and Marley Pino, manage their conditions. However, they often have to travel long distances for care or be pulled out of school, and there is no cure in sight.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to reauthorize the Rare Pediatric PRV Program before the program expires in September. Congress must do all it can to encourage the development of cures for children like Matthew, Madison, and Marley.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2016

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 454, on the Gosar amendment on H.R. 5538, I am not recorded because I was representing constituents on business outside of Washington, D.C. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WEST-
PORT RIVER WATERSHED ALLI-
ANCE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Westport River Watershed Alliance on the occasion of its 40th anniversary.

The Watershed Alliance, originally created to protest a septic-composting lagoon project on the Upper East Branch of the Westport River, was established by a small group of 14 concerned Westport residents. What started as a single protest in 1976 has grown to a membership of over 1,500 families and 4,800 volunteers that work on numerous conservation projects from running the longest water quality monitoring program in Massachusetts to planting over 20,000 beach grass seedlings in the past decade to stabilize eroded areas of the Town Beach dune system in the Commonwealth.

The Watershed Alliance has successfully given voice to the natural resource concerns of the Westport River. It has become a leader in environmental preservation efforts in the region and represents the best of the Westport community. The Watershed Alliance has, over the years, worked with state legislators to remove granite blocks out from underneath a bridge that restricted flow to the Upper East Branch part of the river, it has hosted over 28 River Day festivals, has planted 6 rain gardens at the Westport Middle School which were used to capture and treat over 60% of the storm water that flowed previously unchecked into the water, and it is working with the Town of Westport and MA Estuaries Project to come up with alternatives to expensive sewer treatments to help solve the nitrogen pollution problem in an efficient and affordable manner.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Westport River Watershed Alliance’s four decade commitment to protecting the Westport River.

I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the service and commitment of the members of the Westport River Watershed Alliance.

CONSCIENCE PROTECTION ACT OF
2016

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 13, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to S. 304, the so-called “Conscience Protection Act.”

This bill would open the door for employers and companies to discriminate against women based on their reproductive health choices. And it puts the personal beliefs of any employer or healthcare provider above the health and safety of women.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are using the pretext of religious liberty to violate the fundamental human rights of women.

This bill is another in a long line of Republican attempts to limit women’s access to safe, legal abortion—like the Weldon and Hyde amendments.

Let me be clear: no employer or politician has the right to interfere with a woman’s personal healthcare choices. These decisions belong to women—not politicians or bosses.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is dangerous.

Instead of addressing the serious issues facing American families—like combatting Zika, addressing gun violence, or creating jobs—my colleagues have chosen to put partisan politics over healthcare access.

This is just shameful.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on this outrageous attack on women’s health.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT
COLONEL DENNIS SCHMIDT

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge my constituent Dennis Schmidt from Fairfax Station, Virginia, a former Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army and lifelong dedicated public servant. Mr. Schmidt devoted twenty-one years of his life to the United States Army, including assignments and deployments during the Vietnam War. After he completed his military service, his dedication to public service did not stop.

Between 1989 and 1993, Mr. Schmidt worked for the Army Research Laboratory in the Army Material Command, during which he helped develop technology over multiple fields such as weapons systems, medical equipment, and protection tools. This research has helped save American lives, and gives our soldiers an edge in the performance of their duties to our country. From 1994 to 1998, Mr. Schmidt refocused his talents as acting Science and Technology Advisor to the Director for Force Development, where he evaluated and managed the Army’s annual research programs budget. Through such