RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF COLONEL JOHN G. BUCK, DISTRICT COMMANDER FOR THE SEATTLE DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

HON. DEREK KILMER
OF WASHINGTON
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 26 year service record of Colonel John G. Buck, District Commander for the Seattle District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and I am proud to offer my sincere congratulations on his upcoming retirement.

Col. Buck received his U.S. Army commission in 1991 from the United States Military Academy. He has served in various leadership positions throughout the United States, Europe, and the Middle East.

In 2005, he was awarded the Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal for his outstanding performance of duty. He then served as commander of the 14th Engineer Battalion at Joint Base Lewis McChord, where he effectively trained a battalion for deployment to Afghanistan. His successful training methods served as a model for other engineering units.

Throughout his career, Col. Buck has demonstrated strong dedication and leadership that has been an asset in every position he has held, exemplifying the values and ideals of the U.S. Army and the Corps of Engineers.

I have had the honor of knowing and working with Col. Buck over the past three years while he served as Commander of the Seattle District where he spearheaded the advancement of a number of key projects for the State of Washington.

During his tenure, the Seattle District successfully completed their first two favorable reports in nearly a decade. Thanks to his direction, the Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project and the Skokomish River Ecosystem Restoration Project were approved and congressionally authorized in 2016. Collectively these projects represent roughly half a billion dollars in new authority to complete over 2,000 acres of aquatic ecosystem restoration in our state. This is an enormous accomplishment.

I am also especially grateful for his hard work and dedication to resolving a difficult and complicated permitting issue and providing some much needed regulatory clarity to shellfish growers in our region. Thanks to his efforts, more people will have more economic opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to represent a man of this caliber here in our nation’s capital. I am humbled to be able to speak in recognition of his impressive career and service record today in the United States’ Congress, and I am grateful for the many contributions he has made to our country as well as the State of Washington.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize recent athletic victories within my district. I am proud to announce that the Argyle High School boy’s golf team has claimed the title of state champions this spring.

The Argyle High School boy’s golf team attained their third straight state title by thirteen strokes. The Eagles three-peat performance in the UIL Class 4A state tournament was led by Coach Brady Bell. Also of note, Luke Griggs took fifth place in individual performance at the state tournament. The team has won its local district tournament for six consecutive years, and continues to excel in this area of athletics. The team effort displayed by Argyle’s High School golf team in the state tournament demonstrates the continued success and dedication in District 26.

It is my honor to represent Argyle High School boy’s golf team in the U.S. House of Representatives. These dedicated student athletes and their coaches have represented the 26th District well, and our community looks forward to more successful seasons to come.

HON. TRENT KELLY
OF MISSISSIPPI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen soldier Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Jorge Luis Pena-Romero, Jr.

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen soldier Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Jorge Luis Pena-Romero Jr. who gave his life while in service to the United States to live the American dream and defend the freedoms we all enjoy. His service will always be remembered.

“ar my sister and his roommate didn’t last,” Melissa said. “We did.”

The article also states that SSG Pena-Romero served tours in Korea and Kosovo. He became a U.S. citizen in 2003, the same year that he was assigned to Ft. Irwin.

SSG Pena-Romero was known in the Army for being generous and compassionate. He provided personal equipment if a soldier was missing a canteen or a first aid pouch.

In his personal life, SSG Pena-Romero preferred to spend time with his family. He played soccer with his daughter, Alex. He played football with his sons, Jorge III and Adrian.

SSG Pena-Romero is survived by his wife, Melissa; parents, Jorge Sr. and Maria Pena; three children, Alexis Jorge III, and Adrian; and four siblings.

SSG Pena-Romero became a citizen of the United States to live the American dream and defend the freedoms we all enjoy. His service will always be remembered.

RECOGNIZING GREG ELLIOT FOR RECEIVING THE JOE WARNER PATIENT ADVOCACY AWARD

HON. ALEXANDER X. MOONEY
OF WEST VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly outstanding constituent in the field of health care, Greg Elliot of Charleston, West Virginia. Mr. Elliot has been selected this year as one of the recipients of the prestigious Joe Warner Patient Advocacy Award.

The National Center for Assisted Living, a branch of the American Healthcare Association (AHCA/NCAL), is the nation’s largest association of professional long term health providers. They bestow this annual award on Association members who have worked diligently to educate Members of Congress about the needs of long term care patients, and to advance quality in the long term and post-acute care community.

These members share the same passion and commitment to progressing long term and post-acute care as the late Joe Warner of Illinois-based Heritage Enterprises, for whom the award is named. All the recipients share a compassionate and caring view of our nation’s frail, elderly, and disabled.

Greg Elliot’s commitment to improving long-term care continues today as the Vice President of American Medical Facilities Management in West Virginia. Mr. Elliot is a second-generation owner of AMFM, which operates 17 long-term care, skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers throughout West Virginia.

Three of these centers are located in my congressional district including the Braxton Health Care and Rehabilitation Center in Sutton, Clay Health Care Center in I vydale and the E.A. Hawse Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Baker.
AMFM Nursing and Rehabilitation Centers employ more than 1,700 West Virginians, provides care for more than 1,100 patients, and is the largest privately held multi-facility nursing home company in West Virginia.

Greg is frequently in Washington visiting my Congressional office advocating on behalf of West Virginia. He always appreciates his ideas and insight into health care issues and I look forward to many more meetings in the future. With Greg Elliot's leadership, AMFM has received countless awards such as the Silver Achievement in Quality Award from the American Healthcare Association. He also received Administrator of the Year Award from West Virginia Health Care Association. The third-party research institute, My Inner View, has ranked AMFM facilities in the top 10 percent in the nation 46 times for customer or employee satisfaction.

Mr. Elliot is currently on the board for the Charleston Area Alliance & Chamber of Commerce, and is an At-Large Representative on the American Healthcare Association Board of Governors.

Greg Elliot has been very involved in charities throughout West Virginia. In fact, to date, the AMFM Charitable Foundation has donated more than $500,000 for charitable organizations throughout West Virginia including food pantries, local volunteer fire departments, libraries and women's shelters.

Mr. Elliot founded The AMFM Grill Team, a group of employee volunteers that band together to provide great BBQ to the AMFM centers and surrounding communities. In 2016 following the devastating flooding in our state, the team went to two flooded communities and prepared hundreds of meals for the affected residents.

Greg Elliot resides in Charleston, WV with his wife Jennifer of 16 years, his 10-year-old daughter Elizabeth and their two dogs. Greg enjoys the outdoors, cooking out, and all things electronic, especially building robots with his daughter.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Greg Elliot for his years of dedication and care to our nation's frail, elderly and disabled. His career and life accomplishments truly reflect the ideals embodied in the Joe Warner Patient Advocacy Award.

IN RECOGNITION OF 26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ATHLETIC TEAMS

HON. ANDY BARR
OF KENTUCKY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special organization, the Garden Club of Lexington as they celebrate their 100th anniversary.

The Garden Club of Lexington was formed in 1917, and in 1924, they were invited to join the Garden Club of America. For their first large civic project, members planted trees along Richmond Road. This provided an attractive and lasting entrance to the city of Lexington.

One of the major undertakings of the Garden Club of Lexington was the establishment of public gardens at Ashland, the historic home of the renowned Henry Clay. Clay represented Kentucky in the United States Senate and in the House of Representatives, where he served three terms as Speaker. Club members over the years raised funds, designed, and established beautiful garden areas at Ashland, including the Saunder Peony Garden. The award winning gardens are enjoyed by countless citizens and visitors to Central Kentucky.

The Garden Club of Lexington organizes many other civic projects designed to beautify Lexington and to provide the public with wonderful opportunities to enjoy nature. As this outstanding organization celebrates its first 100 years, I applaud them for past accomplishments and wish them a bright future.

It is my honor to recognize the Garden Club of Lexington before the United States House of Representatives.

IN RECOGNITION OF 26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ATHLETIC TEAMS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize recent athletic victories within my district. I am proud to announce that the Keller High School softball team has claimed the title of state champions this spring.

The Keller High School Indians softball team, coached by Bryan Poehler, this season earned its second consecutive UIL Class 6A state championship. Also of note, Keller's second baseman Camryn Woodall was named most valuable player of the championship game.

It is my honor to represent the Keller High School softball team in the U.S. House of Representatives. These dedicated student athletes and their coaches have represented the 26th District well, and our community looks forward to more successful seasons to come.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. JOHNSTON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize Aerojet Ordnance Tennessee (AOT) and their 81 employees in Jonesborough, Tennessee, on the delivery of their seven millionth M67 Hand Grenade body assembly in May 2017.

Awarded its first M67 Hand Grenade body assembly contract from the Joint Munitions Command at Rock Island Arsenal in 2001, when it became the sole supplier of the M67 grenade body for the U.S. and Canadian governments, AOT has been producing the M67 at a high rate. Over the past 16 years, AOT
has been producing almost 500,000 grenade body assemblies annually on average to support our warfighters.

On the occasion of this milestone, I am proud to recognize the dedicated, hardworking employees of AOT and their achievements so far. These Tennesseans are working hard to ensure our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to carry out their missions effectively, and they deserve our sincere appreciation.

RECOGNIZING THE FREEPORT BOYS TRACK AND FIELD TEAM FOR THEIR CLASS 2A STATE TITLE

HON. CHERI BUSTOS
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Freeport High School Boys Track and Field team for earning the Class 2A Illinois State Championship. The Freeport Boys Track and Field team scored 37 points and defeated over seventy other teams to win the title. Their dedication and passion for their sport meant that they were determined to win gold. As a former athlete, I understand the amount of hard work and commitment to be awarded such a title. The Freeport Track and Field team is an example of the importance of dedication and hard work, especially proud to see such young talent in our community, and to see them represent Freeport throughout the state.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate the Freeport Boys Track and Field team on their title, and I join the rest of the community in wishing them every success in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF 26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ATHLETIC TEAMS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize recent athletic victories within my district. I am proud to announce that Krum High School Softball has claimed the title of state champions this spring.

The Krum High School softball team made its first appearance in a state championship this season, led by Coach Bryan Chaney. The Krum High School softball team put forth a great effort throughout its 4A state title run. Junior pitcher and championship game MVP Krum’s Tristan Bridges, led Krum’s softball team in a narrow victory. This display of success has set a winning precedent for future teams in the 26th District of Texas.

It is my honor to represent the Krum High School in the U.S. House of Representatives. These dedicated student athletes and their coaches have represented the 26th District well, and our community looks forward to more successful seasons to come.

RUSSIAN HACKING AND THE NEED FOR TRANSPARENCY

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, governmental transparency is a cornerstone of our democracy, and the American people deserve nothing less than the full disclosure of the Trump campaign’s Russian contacts. It seems like every week, we find out more information about meetings between Russian contacts and individuals within President Trump’s inner circle. Advisors in President Trump’s White House have been forced to revise applications for security clearance because of repeated failures to report meetings with officials connected to the Kremlin.

In addition, the Trump Administration’s refusal to acknowledge the vast scope of Russian interference in the 2016 election is leaving the United States vulnerable and exposed, opening the doors for future Russian attacks against our electoral system. The CIA, the FBI, the Director of National Intelligence, the NSA, and the other intelligence agencies in the intelligence community all agree that the Russians directed the hacking of the 2016 election. It is time that the Trump Administration unequivocally denounces the Russian government’s meddling in our electoral process. The longer they delay standing up to Putin, the longer our country remains susceptible to further cyber-attacks.

The integrity of our elections is at stake. It is time for the Administration to stop pretending that the hacking did not happen, and start working to ensure that it does not happen again. Many Americans had to traverse a long, arduous path in their fight to secure the right to vote. I represent the 7th Congressional District of Alabama, the home to some of the greatest battlefields of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Movement: Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery. My constituents overcame insurmountable adversity in order to secure their right to vote. They shed blood and sacrificed their lives so that future generations would never be turned away from the ballot box or denied their sacred, constitutional right to vote. We are doing them a gross injustice if we do not take action against the Russian government’s blatant interference in our election.

The American people deserve to know the truth, and they deserve the assurance that their government is working on their behalf to remove barriers to the ballot box. We cannot afford to sacrifice the integrity of our elections, nor impugn the veracity of our intelligence community and our law enforcement agencies.

I urge the Trump Administration to accept the facts in front of them so we can begin to move forward and ensure that no foreign entity ever has the ability to attack our democracy again.

HONORING PATRICK DOWNTON, JR.

HON. SAM GRAVES
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Patrick Downton, Jr. Patrick is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 692, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Patrick has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Patrick has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Patrick has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Patrick Downton, Jr., for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF THE FALLEN SOLDIER ARMY SERGEANT (SGT) TRAVIS S. COOPER

HON. TRENT KELLY
OF MISSISSIPPI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen Mississippi soldier Army Sergeant (SGT) Travis S. Cooper who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on July 16, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SGT Cooper was killed when an improvised explosive device hit his convoy in Baghdad.

SGT Cooper was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment, 155th Brigade Combat Team headquartered in Starkville, Mississippi.

SGT Cooper, a Macon, Mississippi native, was 24 years old at the time of death. He attended Noxubee High School in Macon, Mississippi. According to his brother, Antwan Cooper, he left school a year early and took his General Educational Development (GED) test. In September 2000, he joined the National Guard.

According to the Associated Press, Governor Haley Barbour said, “Our hearts and prayers go out to the Cooper family and friends. Marsha and I honor this brave man’s service, and we deeply regret this incident.”

SGT Cooper was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Mississippi Medal of Valor, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal (Junior Rifle Marksmanship), Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

SGT Cooper’s funeral was held at Miller’s Chapel Missionary Baptist Church. He was buried at Oddfellows Cemetery in Macon, Mississippi.

SGT Cooper’s service and sacrifice will always be remembered.
SAUDI ARABIA

HON. TED POE
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Saudi Arabia is a crucial ally in the fight against terrorism. Many of the same terrorist organizations that threaten the United States also desire to overthrow the Saudi government and break our partnership.

It’s a key member of the coalition to fight ISIS, with its pilots flying alongside Americans since day one of the campaign in Syria. Last year, Riyadh adopted strict laws prohibiting fundraising for terrorism, jointly designating support networks for al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

Saudi intelligence has assisted in preventing terrorist plots targeting the U.S. In 2010 Saudi assistance helped foil an attempt by al-Qaeda to conceal bombs on a cargo plane en route to the United States. The Saudis are also battling Iranian-backed rebels in Yemen. These rebels not only threaten the Kingdom but also targeted our own warships and destabilize the Red Sea trade routes.

The current diplomatic standoff between Saudi Arabia and Qatar demonstrates that Riyadh is willing to take a stand against state sponsorship of terrorism in the region. This is all encouraging. However, the Saudis still have more to do at home to counter the sources of extremism in the region.

The battle against terrorism will ultimately have to be fought and won on the battlefield of ideas. Saudi Arabia has simply not done enough to defeat extremist ideology. The Kingdom is playing the role of both arsonist and firefighter when it comes to Islamic extremism.

Nowhere is this more evident than the textbooks Saudi Arabia produces to teach its youth. For far too long Saudi Arabia’s education curriculum has inspired the very ideology that is at the root of many terrorist organizations like ISIS and al-Qaeda.

Saudi textbooks are full of anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories, and calls to violence that have incited students both at home and across the world. This poisonous ideology has provided the groundwork for generations of radicalization and extremism.

In fact, ISIS adopted official Saudi textbooks for its schools in 2015 until the terrorist group could publish its own. Moreover, its export of hateful material through Saudi-funded schools abroad has helped spread the toxic ideology to more tolerant and open Muslim communities in countries such as Kosovo and Indonesia.

While the Kingdom has repeatedly pledged to remove extremist content from its curriculum, troubling language remains in many of the most recent editions of Saudi textbooks. In 2006 the Saudis committed to eliminate all passages that promoted hatred towards any religion by 2008.

Yet even today textbooks include content that discourages befriending “infidels,” claims the goal of Zionism is world domination, and encourages “fighting” any polytheist or infidel who refuses to submit to the supremacy of Islam. This intolerance is unacceptable and directly contributes to the widespread persecution of religion minorities that plagues the Middle East.

Another passage in a current Saudi textbook for middle school students states that “the mujahideen who are doing good deeds for the sake of Allah . . . should be given transportation, weapons, food and anything else they may need to continue their jihad.” Messages such as this undermine the Saudis own counterterrorism efforts.

By indoctrinating children into the belief that people of other faiths are inferior or are a threat to Islam, Saudi Arabia is ensuring future generations of extremists that will join the ranks of terrorist groups. This is not to ignore that some positive steps have been taken. In recent years the Kingdom has introduced passages that denounce terrorism and encourage dialogue with other faiths.

But these steps only send mixed messages to easily influenced young minds so long as the more extreme messages remain. The State Department and previous administrations have also failed to hold their Saudi counterparts to past pledges.

The State Department has even refused to publish reports that shed light on these troubling textbooks for fear of embarrassing our Saudi partners. While we appreciate Riyadh’s contribution to our overall counterterrorism efforts in the region, we must hold them accountable for their role in fuelling the very extremism we are trying to combat. It is in both our countries’ interest.

In the fight against terrorism, we all need to be on the same page. And that’s just the way it is.

HONORING MATTHEW PARR

HON. SAM GRAVES
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Matthew Parr for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew Parr for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TX-22 STUDENTS RECEIVE THE PRESIDENT’S ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. OLSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Eric Li, Toby Liu, Charles Wang, Melody Voo, Alexander Miao, Jimmy Liu and Eric Tong, all from TX-22, for receiving the Environmental Protection Agency and the White House Council on Environmental Quality’s President’s Environmental Youth Award (PEYA).

The seven students, from Pearland, Katy and Houston, were recognized for starting the organization, We Care Act, which refurbishes electronics and other items and sends them to needy children living in poverty or affected by natural disasters. So far, We Care Act has collected and reused more than 40,000 items and sent them to more than 20 countries. PEYA recognizes outstanding environmental projects by K–12 youth. Students are selected based on their initiative, creativity and applied problem-solving skills that are needed to tackle environmental problems and find solutions.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Eric L., Toby, Charles, Melody, Alexander, Jimmy and Eric T. for receiving this honorable award. We Care Act is a fantastic organization that helps those who truly need it. We’re proud of their dedication to helping others.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NEW YORK STATE TROOPER JOEL DAVIS

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Ms. STEFANIK of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of New York State Trooper Joel Davis. A Watertown native who was recently killed in the line of duty while serving his community. I extend my condolences to his family, especially his wife, Suzanne, and three children. Joel Davis lived his life in a way that was truly indicative of his North Country values. He was deeply dedicated to his family and completely invested in the well-being of his community members.

After graduating from Indian River High School, Trooper Davis attended Jefferson Community College, and eventually went on to graduate from the Black River/St. Lawrence Valley Police Academy in 2003. He worked as a Jefferson County Sheriff’s Deputy for 10 years before his service as a New York State Trooper, where he was known as a “go-to guy,” responsible for the Philadelphia, New York satellite station outside of Fort Drum. Additionally, Davis was a certified sniper with the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Emergency Response Team and was a field training officer for both the Sheriff and State Police. Davis will be fondly remembered as a fair cop who heard both sides of every situation and was always first-on-scene when it was needed. He was an honest, polite, friendly, and kind man who wanted to help the community he called home.
Joel Davis had an older brother, Josh, who is a member of the Watertown City Police Department. Josh cites his brother as one of the most important role models in his life, and the reason he chose a career in law enforcement. Though Joel was considered the more serious of the two brothers, he also loved a good joke and to laugh—he loved to dance to music and have fun.

Trooper Davis also loved sports and grew up playing every sport imaginable with his family and friends. In his spare time, he volunteered as a coach and commissioner of a youth baseball team and has had a lasting impact on the lives of the many young athletes he worked with.

This past Saturday, thousands of officers attended the services for Trooper Joel Davis. We will not forget Trooper Davis and the ultimate sacrifice he made. Our hearts mourn his loss. We remember and admire everything he was. Today we honor Joel Davis. His service and dedication will never be forgotten.

IN RECOGNITION OF ANTHONY CACOLICHO

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING
OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sincere recognition of Anthony Cacolichio and his commendable dedication in starting a wheelchair curling program at the Cape Cod Curling Club, as well as his dedication to serving wheelchair athletes.

Anthony has always been passionate about volunteering his time, money, and efforts to helping those who are differently-abled. He is a nationally-certified wheelchair trainer, has convened the Grand National Curling Committee to set aside money to assist wheelchair curlers, accompanied the United States Paralympic Team to the Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia in 2014, and will be accompanying the team again during the 2018 Games in Pyeong Chang, South Korea.

Anthony and Mary host an annual banquet in July known as the International Bonspiel. This year marks the 48th year of the banquet, and attendees will include veterans of the wheelchair curling community from South Korea, Slovakia, Canada, and the United States. Anthony’s selfless commitment to both the development of the sport of wheelchair curling and his passion for the community of Mafia curlers has touched innumerable lives in the United States and around the world. For these efforts he is being recognized this year at the Bonspiel dinner.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Anthony Cacolichio for his dedication to the sport of curling and creating an equal playing field for people of all abilities. I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking him for his work and wishing him all the best as he continues his important efforts.

HONORING NATHAN PAUL RAWSON

HON. SAM GRAVES
OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Nathan Paul Rawson. Nathan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 692, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Nathan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Nathan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Nathan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Nathan Paul Rawson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING DR. WILEY J. DOBBS

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON
OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Wiley J. Dobbs for 33 years of distinguished service educating Idahoans on the tools and potential of his retirement from his current position as Superintendent of Twin Falls School District.

Dr. Dobbs’ career as an educator is marked by a stalwart commitment to students across Idaho, particularly in Twin Falls. After serving as a high school teacher in Montpelier, Idaho, Dr. Dobbs returned to his hometown of Twin Falls to serve as an educator in both junior high schools and high schools, as well as a stint at the University of Idaho as an education instructor. After years in the classroom, Dr. Dobbs transitioned to the Twin Falls School District as Director of Operations in 2000. By 2003, he had accepted the position that would carry him to retirement: Superintendent of Twin Falls School District.

Throughout his career, Dr. Dobbs has demonstrated a superior dedication to the lives of the students and families he serves. In fact, Dr. Dobbs spent much of his career creating opportunities for students outside the classroom by volunteering as an advisor to the Congressional Award program. With his help, the city of Twin Falls has gained national recognition for the quality and quantity of students who earn their Congressional Award for an outstanding commitment to setting and achieving their goals.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank Dr. Dobbs for his service and commitment to education in Idaho. On behalf of a grateful state, I wish him well in the next chapter of his life.
Henry L. C. "Ted" Ballard Jr. was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1932. He is a graduate of Spartanburg Senior High School, Spartanburg Junior College, and attended Clemson University.

In 1954, Ted joined the U.S. Air Force as an Aviation Cadet and received his silver pilot's wings and commission the following year. In 1955, he married the love of his life, Ruth. Their son, Kevin, was born in 1959.

In June of 1966, Ted was deployed to the Korat Air Force Base in Thailand to begin flying combat missions over Vietnam. On September 26, 1966, during his 68th mission, Ted's F-105 was shot down by ground fire, forcing Ted to eject the aircraft over enemy territory just north of Hanoi. He suffered a broken leg and was captured and interned by the North Vietnamese. Ted remained as a prisoner of war for six years, spending time in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton."

Upon his release in March of 1973, Ted returned to the United States and underwent medical treatment and recovery until August of that year. He and his wife decided to finish their undergraduate degrees after his return. Ted went on to earn a master's degree and serve on the faculty of the USAF War College before retiring in 1975. He and his wife moved back to Spartanburg, South Carolina, where Ted became the instructor for the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Gaffney High School. He retired in 1997 after teaching for 22 years.

Sadly, Ted lost his son in 2009 and his wife in 2015. Upon his wife's death, Ted established the Dr. Kevin Dale Ballard 1980 Endowed Scholarship Fund at Wofford College, in South Carolina, in memory of both his brilliant son and loving wife. The scholarship will be awarded to a deserving Wofford College student studying science, technology, or medicine for the first time this fall.

On May 7, 2017, Ted was presented the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina’s highest civilian honor, by Governor Henry McMaster for his admirable service to the citizens of South Carolina.

A truly remarkable man, Ted continues to share the extraordinary story of his life, his time as a POW, and his time in the armed forces. He has made South Carolina and our nation proud.
PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CLAUDIA TENNEY
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “Nay” on Roll Call No. 395, and “Nay” on Roll Call No. 396.

SUGAR LAND NATIVE NAMED A 2017 NASA ASTRONAUT CANDIDATE

HON. PETE OLSON
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Loral O’Hara of Sugar Land, TX, a Clements High School Ranger, for being selected by NASA to join the 2017 Astronaut Candidate Class.

Currently working as a Research Engineer for the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Loral has an exceptional professional history, including working as a design engineer, mechanical technician, and as a project engineer. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Kansas and a Master of Science degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University. Loral will report for duty this August, where she will begin her two years of training as an Astronaut Candidate. Once done, she will be assigned technical duties in the Astronaut Office while she awaits a flight assignment.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Loral for being selected as a NASA Astronaut Candidate. We are very proud of her and look forward to her representing TX–22 in space.

IMPORTANT ISSUES OF THE DAY

SPEECH OF
HON. THOMAS A. GARRETT, JR.
OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, July 19, 2017

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I hadn’t intended to but I’ll begin my remarks by addressing his remarks. And I’ll do something that I rarely do and that is to quote a French historian, political scientist, and diplomat, and that is Alexis de Tocqueville, who stated, “The American Republic will endure until the day we are permanently detainted. Had I been present, I would have voted “Nay” on Roll Call No. 395, and “Nay” on Roll Call No. 396.

The hyperbolic barbs that are thrown by my colleagues across the aisle as it relates to the motives for the legislation that we carry and find out who would really be harming seniors and children, it would be those who would continue to spend until the only way to cover the tab was to turn down the very monies set aside to care for those least able to care for themselves. And so I thank Congressman SCHWEIKERT, not only for his wise remarks but also for reminding me just how much I miss being a member of the state house in the Commonwealth of Virginia, where there is actual back and forth debate on the merits of issues, where those small percent of individuals who choose to inform themselves might shape their opinion based on a discourse rather than people standing at this microphone unchecked.

Which leads me to my next point, which is also not on the subject that I originally intended to address and that is, the statement of my distinguished colleague from Maryland, Mr. RASKIN, who spoke on this floor about 45 minutes ago on a subject that’s important not just to him, and not just to me, but to America, and that is on the subject of asset forfeiture. His comments were indicative of the tone that this body has devolved into. One of the many Democrats who I admire, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who Vanity Fair described as a fervent Democrat who saw the value of working with Republicans (where is he today?), once said, “You’re entitled to your own opinions, but you’re not entitled to your own facts.” Mr. RASKIN said the Trump Administration was burdening America with a failure in its foreign policy and he cited the case of a Chinese person, a person who said he had amassed 25,000 dollars so that he could buy a building, but he was going over the speed limit so he was pulled over by police so without cause they took his money and it took 7 years according to my colleague to recoup his money and the opportunity was lost and that’s what’s wrong with Mr. Trump’s policy. Wow. And he implored listeners to please look up this case, so I did. In fact there was a man who had saved money to open up a Chinese restaurant who was going 10 miles an hour over the speed limit who was pulled over by law enforcement who had not 25 but 75,000 dollars forfeited and it took him not 7 years but 10 months to get it back and it happened in 2014 and I’m not terribly sure who was president then and I’m not terribly sure who was president then but I don’t think it was Donald Trump! So I will join my colleague in suggesting that we need asset forfeiture review and refer in this country, but please, you’re entitled to your own opinions, you’re not entitled to your own facts.

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and look at the headstones because I can promise you there’s piles of folks buried there that thought the world just couldn’t go on without them. And the band played on. The fifth district of Virginia was here before I got here and it’ll be here when I leave. I’m not here to perpetuate my own political life or any sort of power. I’m here to make sure that everything I do is pointed towards giving the posterity that will follow us, my children, SCHWEIKERT’s children, and your children, every bit as good, if not better opportunities than which we had. I believe there are two fundamentals to birth of Americanism. First, you’re entitled to opportunity. We should always strive to make that opportunity equal opportunity. But in a world where if your last name is Clinton or Trump or Obama or Bush, you probably have a better chance of getting into Harvard, we’re not there yet. But everyone, everyone is entitled to an opportunity. And everyone within the Jeffersonian Construct of Liberty, that is my freedom extends to the point where yours starts, so long that you don’t harm another, you should be free to make decisions for yourself.

Everyone is entitled to an opportunity and everyone within the Jeffersonian construct of liberty that is my freedom extends to the point where yours starts, so long as you don’t harm another you should be free to make decisions for yourself. If you wanna be the world’s best bee keeper, go be the world’s best bee keeper. If you wanna be a great stay at home dad, by golly be a great stay at home dad. If you’d like to work to cure cancer, please do. If you wanna be a member of this body and try to perpetuate opportunity for our posterity, please do. If you wanna be a member of This body and try to perpetuate your own power or your own legacy, please don’t. And so this brings me to the point of why I stand here today, I’ve been here 6 months not terribly long. Thank god, I’ve been unable to shake my citizen world view in favor a legislator world view. So as I walk into this chamber as I stand next to these women and men on both sides of the aisle I’m a little humbled. When I sit at the front of this congressional chamber that’s been worn by time by the footsteps of the likes of Kennedy, and Madison, and Monroe, and EISENHOWER and Lincoln, I’m humbled. But I would revert back to the words that ellists observed over 150 years ago, and that is we will thrive until we attempt to begin to bribe the tax payers with their own money. And at some point things become unsustainable and at some point we need to recognize that we are about freedom of individuals to venture and fail and succeed and do what the nation whose government should depend upon people, and not whose people should depend upon government. An hour and a half ago I stood on this very floor and I dropped at the clerks desk, HRS 458, house resolution 458 is a vehicle that would move to discharge past the normal process and procedures house resolution 1436, HR 1436 is a bill that was voted for by every republican member of this body in 2015 which would provide for a repeal of the broken promises that are the affordable care act. Just yesterday, in conference committee, political pandering and political gamesmanship that the American people trusted republicans more on national defense, border security, jobs in the economy, but were kinda sketchy on healthcare, right? We can read a poll but I came here to do what I think is right I came here to do what I said I would do, and this plan that I think could reasonably be called the managed healthcare bailout program, the health insurance industry profit enhancement act has failed working americans and that paradigm under which we have debated it has failed to be an honest one. But if I’m here not to enhance myself, or my legacy and if I’m here to do what I think is right, what I said I would do when I ran for office, then I need to stand up and say I wanna do when I ran for office, and that was to ensure that the decisions of Americans were left to Americans that we minimize the interference in individuals lives by the government, and that we recognize and ill paraphrase the Mr. Jefferson who was correct when he said the fruits of the working class are safest when the legislators not in session. Hm, I believe it was Roy Rogers who said that the only certain thing in life are death and taxes but death doesn’t get worse every time congress meets. And so this brings me to the point of why I stand here today, I’ve been here 6 months not terribly long. Thank god, I’ve been unable to shake my citizen world view in favor a legislator world view. So as I walk into this chamber as I stand next to these women and men on both sides of the aisle I’m a little humbled. 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paying $500 a month than its $740ish a month. That's in two years.

The average individual plan is up 147% from 2008. The average family plan is up 177%. Folks, Americans income hasn't increased at that rate. The average is up 25% in the last year and that is according to the Department of Health and Human Services report of October of 2016. That means if you were paying $2000 a year ago, you are paying $2500 now. 25% in 1 year. And candidly all the disingenuous arguments on the other side about how many people will die, if we move to a system that allows individuals choices, is not only hollow and disingenuous and beneath the dignity of this body by virtue of their disingenuity but also false. Folks, for the first time in nearly a generation mortality rate rose in 2015. U.S. life expectancy dropped from 2014 to 2015 for the first time since the 1990s. And ironically it dropped more in states that expanded Medicaid.

So, I'm not only disgusted with and sick of such harsh rhetoric, but I think it's not been proven demonstrably false. We talk about who will be kicked off their plan. According to the CBO, 10 million people have lost their employer plans. Those are the plans that if they like they can keep. And roughly 15 million of the people who are now insured, by virtue of an individual mandate, that we have forcefully compelled American citizens to purchase a good or service at the risk of forfeiture of their money or their freedom. We live in a country where you can choose in many places to buy marijuana, you can choose to bungee jump, you can choose to sky dive. Heck, in some places you can choose to visit a prostitute. But you can't choose a healthcare plan that doesn't carry coverage for mental health or for maternity. You can't do that. That's against the law.

This is about choice. I served in the United States Army as a fire support officer. And when I left the army, I made the egregious error of law school, just kidding. And when I did that, I chose not to have healthcare because as I looked at what I was able to do on a limited amount of money that my family had, and did a cost benefit analysis, and the fact that I was in relatively good shape and young, I determined that my best interests were served by not spending the money. It was a crazy, brazen risk that I think paid off, but it should certainly be in the prelude of decisions Americans are allowed to make. And right now, it's not.

I'm frustrated, but I'm fighting. A lot of people are frustrated, but they are fighting. I want to see our leadership succeed. I want to see this nation be, unequivocally, the greatest experiment in freedom that the earth has ever known. But, if we continue to try and parlay largesse and failed programs into political power, we won't, we won't. And the time to measure things based not on intentions, but results is nigh. In Oregon, they spent hundreds of millions of dollars to create a website for the Obamacare exchange that failed to enroll a single individual—and nobody was fired and nobody went to prison. I was a prosecutor for a long time. And I'll tell you that if you waste or defraud people of one hundred or two hundred or three hundred million dollars, you usually either lose your job or go to prison. But, if you're in politics in Oregon, you're rewarded because by gosh you had great intentions.

Let's judge these things not by their intentions but by their outcomes. Let's not argue about who has coverage but who has access to affordable care. Let's support revision that drives down premiums and down deductibles. And let's trumpet our victories based on who we actually helped, not who we intended to help. In stand untied with the bulk of my colleagues. I know there are some who said we'd do one thing and now do another. This is an avenue by which we might find out who they are. But I don't for a moment question the individual motives of members. I think they have an opportunity to distinguish themselves by virtue of signing on to this resolution. I ask you again if your watching at home to contact your member if you agree with what we said. And ask them if they'll come to this bar, when we're in session, and sign their name to House Resolution 458 and demonstrate their willing to do the exact same thing now, when it counts, that they did dozens and dozens of times under the previous administration when they knew that they're actions would be met with a veto pen. And I don't do this to score political points. And I don't do this to make my name bigger. I don't do this to because it feels good. I do this because we owe it to the giants who's shoulders we stand upon, to Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson and Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln and Barbara Johns and John Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, the people who gave us the opportunity to be as successful and great as we are. Don't piddle it away. Don't piddle it away. Be responsible. Be willing to say no when no is the appropriate answer. And do what's right. Mr. Speaker, with that I yield back my time and I'd ask unanimous consent that all members have five legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this special order.