

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY  
OF PORTAGE, MICHIGAN

**HON. FRED UPTON**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 13, 2013*

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the City of Portage, Michigan—A Natural Place to Move.

On February 18, 1963, residents of Portage Township voted 3,762 to 2,315 in favor of becoming a city. On December 31, 1963, the City of Portage was formally incorporated. From just over 20,000 residents in 1963, Portage is now home to over 46,000. Historically, Portage grew as a crossroads for traders in the 19th century and benefitted from fertile farmland and abundant natural resources.

Today, Portage is a vibrant community with affordable, safe housing in well-maintained neighborhoods; hundreds of successful commercial and industrial businesses; and is the retail crossroads of southwest Michigan. This strong, diverse community is family-focused and proudly boasts over 2,000 acres of park and recreational space, 56 miles of bikeways, three nature preserves and seven lakes that connect its citizens and visitors to each other and the natural world.

The City of Portage is a robust community that excels with an accredited public safety department, low tax rate, accredited senior citizen center, comprehensive and efficient city services, diverse employment opportunities, an excellent public school system, award-winning district library and world-class healthcare that together facilitate an economic climate that allows Portage residents to thrive. Quite simply, it is a great place to live, work, and play.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the City of Portage and applaud the city on its 50th anniversary. A momentous milestone for a remarkable community.

HONORING ADAM E. COCKRIEL

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 13, 2013*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Adam E. Cockriel. Adam 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 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Adam has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Adam 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, Adam has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

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

BELLAIRE HIGH SCHOOL YOUNG  
REPUBLICANS

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 13, 2013*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last November, we once again witnessed a remarkably low turn-out among this nation's youth. Sadly, the majority of the youngest demographic group, our nation's future, Republican and Democrat alike, failed to take part in the democratic process. I met a group of young high school students trying to buck that trend.

The Bellaire High School Young Republicans, led by Michelle Knesbach, Jennifer Knesbach, and Michael Scheinthal, push to create a spirit of activism at their high school, in the city of Houston, and around the state of Texas. At the age of fourteen, these three students began working on local campaigns, block walking on weekends and helping fundraise on school nights. Soon after, the three started the High School Republicans of Texas, an official auxiliary of the state party which focuses on giving a voice to those too young to vote, and encourages activism among their schoolmates. Through voter registration drives and get out the vote campaigns in their community, the Bellaire High School Republicans engage young people in the political process, making a difference on Election Day.

I met this group at a dinner I spoke at and was impressed by their initiative. I was invited to speak at their school, and when I walked into the building, taking me back to the days of too much homework and pop quizzes, I was surprised that around 300 students came to the event during their lunch break. We had a discussion, about Hamas, about drug cartels, about policy and bipartisanship, topics that I often find bore people twice their age; yet they were intrigued. An age group, often overlooked, often deemed to not care, was just as fascinated, cared just as much, about these vital topics as anyone. The Bellaire Young Republicans and the High School Republicans of Texas are changing the status quo by inspiring their classmates to avoid being a part of another disappointing statistic.

Campaign events of the future will be full of young faces. Students too young to vote learn that they can make a difference, impact their state, and impact their country. Further merit should be credited to the Bellaire Young Republicans as they fight for ideas that are widely rejected by their peers as they work to end the "youth involvement drought" slowly eroding the Republican Party and the Conservative Movement. Looking into the young crowd, I knew there was hope for my party and for my country.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF  
GEORGE WASHINGTON

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 13, 2013*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to reintroduce legislation that would reestablish the

legal public holiday for Washington's Birthday from the third Monday of February to the actual date of George Washington's birth on February 22.

I have long admired President Washington and have found inspiration in public service from studying his life. Unfortunately, I have found that students today have a dearth of knowledge about our nation's beginnings and the man from Virginia who led the colonies to form the union known as the United States of America.

In 2011, two-time Pulitzer Prize winning history author David McCullough observed, "We're raising young people who are, by and large, historically illiterate." How can we adequately explain the importance of George Washington to our children when we do not even take time to recognize his actual birthday? We must reestablish Washington's Birthday on the 22nd to honor his legacy and in doing so call upon schools across the nation to focus on Washington as the soldier, legislator and president who shepherded our young nation through war, political turmoil, rebellion and expansion as no other single individual was capable of doing.

I believe Congress has unwittingly contributed to this lack of historical understanding by relegating Washington's Birthday to the third Monday of February to take advantage of a three-day weekend. We need to change the focus from celebrating sales at the mall to celebrating the significance of President Washington's birth to the birth of our nation.

There is a reason the birthday of President George Washington is the only legal federal holiday observed for a president of the United States. He is called the "father of our country" because he is without compare in our nation's history.

Washington's Birthday has been celebrated since the final days of the Revolutionary War. French and American troops paraded through Newport, Rhode Island, in 1781 and celebrations were held in Richmond, Virginia, in 1782. Organized by French General Rochambeau and others who knew him personally, these celebrations drew special attention to the bravery, courage, leadership and perseverance of the Revolutionary War hero.

From the beginning of our country, the importance of this day has been recognized. As President James Buchanan said in 1860, ". . . when the birthday of Washington shall be forgotten, liberty will have perished from the earth." In response, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed legislation in 1879 that made Washington's Birthday a holiday for District federal workers. The holiday was extended to all federal workers in 1885.

This legislation I reintroduce today is not without precedent. In 1975, Congress amended the Uniform Monday Holiday Act and President Gerald R. Ford signed legislation into law returning the annual observance of Veterans Day from the fourth Monday in November to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978.

The Uniform Holiday Bill signed in 1968 and effective in 1971 was intended to ensure three-day weekends for federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Columbus Day. Originally called Armistice Day to mark the signing of an Armistice on the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month in 1918 that ended World War

l, the date of November 11 holds historic and patriotic significance as a day of thanks and remembrance for all veterans. The law change brought widespread public protest and 46 states refused to recognize any day other than November 11 to honor the sacrifice made first by World War I veterans and subsequently by all veterans.

The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day as a celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Likewise, we need to restore the observance of Washington's Birthday to February 22 to preserve the date of his birth for history and to focus attention on his life of service and duty to his country. Even George Washington's home state of Virginia, where he was born and raised, which he served in elected office, where he accepted General Cornwallis' surrender, and where he is buried, celebrates Washington's Birthday in accordance with the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. I believe all school children in every state should dedicate February 22 each year to learning about our greatest leader, foremost patriot, first president and the only six-star general in the nation's history.

Posterity has shown that the traditions he started, including civilian control of the military and presidential term limits, have distinguished our government from so many failed countries born in revolution from the colonial powers of the 18th century. President Washington exemplifies the best that America and Americans have to offer the world; principled leadership, personal bravery, a sense of duty and public service, patriotism, recognition of our unique role in world history, and a reverence for his Creator. His enduring service deserves to be remembered on his actual birthday.

My legislation is supported by George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. Executive Director Jim Rees said, "The holiday was far more meaningful when it revolved around George Washington, and schools were able to focus on his sterling example of character and leadership."

I am extremely pleased that David McCullough supports my legislation as well. His letter, copied below, says "Celebrating George Washington's Birthday on February 22 is a simple, solid, self-evident statement of respect for one of the greatest of all Americans, for his whole founding generation, and for so much that we owe them."

The legislation is also supported by other prominent authors and scholars that have published extensive works on Washington's life. Scholar and history professor Gordon Wood stated "I agree wholeheartedly that Washington's Birthday ought to be separated from the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. He is unique as a president and founder." In addition, my legislation is supported by noted Washington historian Ron Chernow, historians Peter Henriques and Richard Brookhiser and history professors from the University of Georgia, LaSalle University, James Madison University and Brandeis University.

Mr. Speaker, it is only right that we hold February 22 as a date of reverence to commemorate the unique person without whom the tide of American history may well have

taken a different turn. I urge my colleagues to join in cosponsoring this legislation to forever honor President George Washington's Birthday.

JANUARY 19, 2012.

DEAR MR. WOLF: The place of George Washington in the American story, his all-important example of courage and integrity in leadership, can hardly be overstated and must never be taken lightly.

Nor should we celebrate his birthday on any day but February 22, any more than we would wish to move July 4 about to suit some convenience of the moment.

How can it reasonably be argued otherwise?

Celebrating George Washington's birthday on February 22 is a simple, solid, self-evident statement of respect for one of the greatest of all Americans, for his whole founding generation, and for so much that we owe them.

Sincerely,

DAVID MCCULLOUGH.

WE MUST TAKE STRONG ACTION  
ON CLIMATE CHANGE

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2013

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, John F. Kennedy said, "When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is comprised of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity." Those words ring true with regard to perhaps the greatest crisis facing our world: climate change. We face imminent and continuing danger, but we also have an opportunity to change course and leave behind a better planet for future generations.

Global warming is happening. The ten hottest years on earth since 1880 have all occurred since 1997. According to the New York Times, 2012 was the hottest year ever in the continental United States, a full degree hotter (in terms of average temperature) than the previous record. More than 60 percent of the country, including much of the Midwest, experienced severe drought. Wildfires spread throughout areas of the western United States, and severe storms ravaged the east coast.

We face serious danger. Over the next few centuries, sea levels could rise an average of 12 feet, swallowing coastal areas in the U.S. and around the world. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, drought and famine could lead to decreased water availability, increased starvation, and new instability in many regions of the world—particularly Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

This crisis presents an opportunity. This Congress has a unique ability to take leadership in addressing what is a planetary problem for us right now. We can act now, or we can let our opportunity pass by. The choice should be clear.

I support a comprehensive approach to climate change. I was a strong proponent for the American Clean Energy and Security Act, which passed the House in 2009. That legislation would have introduced a renewable energy standard, subsidized important research and development of clean technologies and energy efficiency, and created a cap and trade system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It would have had a significant impact in curb-

ing the warming of our planet, and I believe it should be the model for action taken in the current congress.

As a member of the Environment and the Economy subcommittee and of the Waxman-Whitehouse climate change task force, I will continue to push for comprehensive and immediate action. I promise to collaborate with anyone from either side of the aisle to work toward constructive and meaningful solutions. We must act together to forge a legislative solution to this crisis while we can still do something about it.

The time is now. This is our moment—all of us—Republicans and Democrats. We must act to preserve and protect the planet for our children and grandchildren, and for their children and grandchildren. We cannot afford to be on the wrong side of history.

HONORING CHASE LEE BEELER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Chase Lee Beeler. Chase 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 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Chase has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Chase 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, Chase has led his troop in various positions including Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, has earned the rank of Foxman in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and is a Brotherhood Member in the Order of the Arrow. Chase has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Chase designed and constructed six benches out of recycled telephone poles and installed a flag pole for Hillcrest Transitional Housing in Kansas City, Missouri.

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

HONORING LTC WILLIAM ANTON

HON. JOSEPH J. HECK

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2013

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to recognize the exemplary service and outstanding achievements of LTC William Anton, a member of the Army Ranger Hall of Fame and a resident of southern Nevada.

LTC Anton was recently awarded the prestigious Knowlton Award—an honor recognizing significant contributions in the field of Army intelligence—by our nation's Military Intelligence Corps.

After serving with distinction in Vietnam, service which earned him a 2009 induction