

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SALUTING THE SERVICE OF
MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM
STREETER, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I am honored to present Major General William Streeter, U.S. Army, Retired, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. His lifetime of dedication to his beloved Army and Nation speaks to his patriotism, moral character, and devotion to others.

His superb service to the Army and his nation exemplifies what it means to commit his life to his country. Former commander of Fort Cavazos' legendary 1st Cavalry Division—one of the most decorated combat divisions in the U.S. Army—MG Streeter ensured First Team maintained its storied reputation as one of the world's elite fighting forces. He was honored with numerous high-ranking awards like the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, and two Bronze Stars, along with the admiration of his peers and those he led during his decades in the service.

Since his retirement from active duty in 1993, MG Streeter has continued his dedication to the betterment of our country and community through service, active involvement, and support of civic organizations. He devotes his energies toward several charities including the Kiwanis Club, Veterans and Homeowners' Associations, and his local church, never forgetting the importance of living a full life for others.

MG Streeter's life tells the story of a man unafraid to contribute both his time and energies to the defense of our nation as well as a multitude of organizations that rely on volunteerism and social engagement to make good communities great. He is a most deserving recipient of a Congressional Veterans Commendation.

TRILLIAN HOLT

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Trillian Holt for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Trillian has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Trillian, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Trillian's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Trillian Holt on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF THE
TRENTON BRANCH OF GIRL
FRIENDS INCORPORATED

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Trenton Branch of Girl Friends Incorporated on their 60th Year of serving the Capital City.

Girl Friends Incorporated is one of the oldest social organizations of African American women in the United States.

For nearly 100 years, the Girl Friends have exemplified Dignity, Service, Graciousness and Conviviality, performing civic services in 48 locations throughout the country.

Through their charitable giving, Girl Friends Inc. has supported the United Negro College Fund, the Children's Defense Fund, the Flint Water Crisis, and student scholarships.

I thank Girl Friends for serving the people of the Greater Trenton area with dignity and selflessness for over 60 years.

CONCERNS ABOUT H.R. 5378, THE
LOWER COSTS, MORE TRANSPARENCY ACT

HON. VAL T. HOYLE

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I voted in favor of H.R. 5378, the Lower Costs, More Transparency Act, which passed the House with a bipartisan vote of 320–71.

I strongly support several provisions in H.R. 5378, which would take important steps to create a more transparent and affordable healthcare system. For example, this legislation requires hospitals to make public all their standard charges for items and services, and it requires insurers to make public their negotiated in-network provider rates for all items and services.

H.R. 5378 also requires pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to provide detailed information on prescription drug costs and increases access to affordable generic drugs. The legislation also extends funding for critical public health programs, including community health centers and the National Health Service Corps (NHSC).

However, H.R. 5378 isn't perfect. It includes site-neutral provisions that raise concerns about potential harm to essential hospitals and hospital outpatient departments (HOPDs), particularly in rural and underserved areas like those in Oregon's Fourth Congressional Dis-

trict. Safety-net hospitals already face increased financial pressure due to inflation and the COVID-19 pandemic, and divesting funding or cutting payments at this time could negatively impact these entities and the crucial services they provide.

There were also procedural issues with this bill. By fast-tracking this legislation without regular order, including not allowing for amendments to improve the bill, H.R. 5378 didn't receive the congressional debate nor input that it should have. These aspects of the legislative process are not mere procedural formalities but are essential components of responsible governance and good-faith policymaking.

Transparency, a central theme of this legislation, should extend beyond policy goals to the legislative process itself. As Congress continues efforts to improve our healthcare system, I urge my colleagues in the Senate and in congressional leadership to improve this legislation to ensure there are no unintended consequences, including ensuring the legislation does not impede access to healthcare where it is needed most.

DESIGNATE NIGERIA A COUNTRY
OF PARTICULAR CONCERN
UNDER THE IRFA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following letter, drafted by respected experts—including former members of Congress—in the field of religious freedom, and sent to members on Capitol Hill today, underscoring the dire state of religious freedom in Nigeria, and calling for that country to be designated a Country of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. Their stark appraisal of the situation, and the immediate threat to the lives of thousands of Nigerians, merits immediate action by the Biden Administration.

DECEMBER 12, 2023.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: As religious freedom advocates and proponents, and leaders of grassroots organizations with millions of American members, we appeal to you to urgently respond to the Department of State's failure to adequately address egregious, systematic, and ongoing religious persecution in Nigeria, as required by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) of 1998.

We specifically urge Nigeria's designation as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) under the IRFA and the appointment of a special envoy for Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region. Additionally, we urge you to support and cosponsor the bi-partisan legislation authored by Rep. Chris Smith and Rep. Henry Cuellar House Resolution 82, which calls for the State Department to carry out these two steps.

A staggering 90 percent of all the Christians killed for their faith worldwide last

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

year were killed in Nigeria, according to Open Doors, an increase from the 80 percent it reported in 2021. Over 5,000 Nigerian Christians are reported to have been killed for their faith in 2022.

Most of this slaughter is now carried out by militants within the Fulani Muslim herder population, who have been allowed to act largely with impunity. While some Muslims have also been killed by the same forces, the Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa found that, from October 2019 to September 2022, Christians in Nigeria were 7.6 times more likely to be killed and 6 times more likely to be abducted than Muslims by terrorist and militia groups, when taking into account their population's proportions in Nigeria's states.

Catholic priests, evangelical pastors, and Methodist bishops have been special targets of kidnapping by Fulani and unidentified gunmen, typically shouting "Allahu Akbar." The pontifical organization, Aid to the Church in Need, reports that, since early 2022 alone, 100 Nigerian Catholic priests have been kidnapped and not yet freed, 20 of whom were murdered, with many of these attacks occurring on church grounds. Nigerian media also reports the kidnapping of two imams from their mosques in 2022. Since 2009, some 17,000 churches have been burned and attacked, while many of them—such as St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Ondo State that was attacked on Pentecost Sunday last year—were filled with worshippers. We are not aware of a single case that has been prosecuted.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom reports that in "northcentral Nigeria, ethnonationalists fighting to promote Fulani interests target Christian civilians based on ethnoreligious identity." In recommending CPC designation, it concludes that the Nigerian Government has "routinely failed to investigate these attacks and prosecute those responsible, demonstrating a problematic level of apathy on the part of state officials."

In addition, terror groups such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province have attacked and killed thousands of Christians and Muslims who reject their dictates. Unknown numbers of Christian girls and women have been kidnapped into sexual slavery. Boko Haram kidnapped over 200 schoolgirls in 2014 in Chibok, Borno State, half of whom remain captive and are pressured to convert to Islam, while Leah Sharibu remains enslaved following a terrorist raid of her school in Dapchi, Yobe State, in 2018.

Lawlessness has resulted in millions of internally displaced Nigerians and hundreds of thousands of refugees. Just this year, in Nigeria's north central Benue State, whose population is overwhelmingly Christian, nearly two million farming families were displaced by Fulani militants. Some of them were then hunted down in their places of refuge and brutally hacked to death. Catholic Bishop Wilfred Anagbe of Benue's Makurdi diocese recently shared video documentation of the aftermath of one such attack with numerous Members of Congress.

Authorities also engage directly in religious persecution by enforcing Islamic blasphemy laws that have resulted in recent death sentences for Sufi musician Yahaya Sharif-Aminu and two Muslim clerics, and "religious insult" laws that led to a 24-year sentence for Nigeria's Humanist Association head, Mubarak Bala. Moreover, these laws have been accompanied by a routine grant of impunity for extrajudicial attacks against their perceived violators. Last year, there was the unprosecuted mob killing of student Deborah Emmanuel Yakubu after she was accused of blasphemy and the unprosecuted

serious death threats against the Sultan of Sokoto, Sokoto's Catholic bishop, and Rhoda Jatau, a Christian woman, all three of whom were targeted for expressing disapproval of Yakubu's murder.

IRFA requires frank assessments in the face of such grave religious freedom violations. The Secretary of State should acknowledge that Nigeria has "engaged in or tolerated" severe religious freedom violations, the statutory criteria warranting CPC designation. This is particularly important since the United States is a major partner of Nigeria, having given it over \$1 billion in foreign aid in 2022, alone.

As Africa's most populous country and its largest economy, Nigeria wields significant influence in Sub-Saharan Africa. By allowing religious persecution to proliferate within its borders, Nigeria is compounding already heightened regional insecurity. Both American interests and the International Religious Freedom Act require a response. We view the passage of the bi-partisan House Resolution 82 as an essential first step.

Sincerely,

David Curry President and CEO, Global Christian Relief; Governor Sam Brownback, Former Ambassador for International Religious Freedom Co-Chair, International Religious Freedom Summit; Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett, President, Lantos Foundation for Human Rights & Justice Co-Chair, International Religious Freedom Summit;

Nina Shea, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for Religious Freedom, Hudson Institute; Kristen Waggoner, President and CEO, Alliance Defending Freedom; Tony Perkins, Chairman, Family Research Council; Leonard Leo, Former Chair, US Commission on International Religious Freedom.

F. Brent Leatherwood, President, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission Southern Baptist Convention; Congressman Frank Wolf, Former Member of Congress 1981–2015, Retired; George Weigel, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Ethics and Public Policy Center; Mary Ann Glendon, Former U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, Learned Hand Professor of Law, emerita Harvard University; Eric Patterson, President, Religious Freedom Institute; Jane Adolphe, Founder & Executive Director, International Catholic Jurists Forum; Jeff King, President, International Christian Concern (ICC).

The Rt. Rev. Julian Dobbs, Diocesan Bishop The Anglican Diocese of the Living Word Anglican Church in North America; Timothy R. Head, Executive Director, Faith and Freedom Coalition; Dr. Randel Everett, President, 21Wilberforce; Stephen S. Enada, Executive President, International Committee on Nigeria; Faith McDonnell, Director, Katartismos Global; John Stonestreet, President, Colson Center for Christian Worldview.

Kelly Monroe Kullberg, Director, American Association of Evangelicals (AAE); Robert Nicholson, President and Founder Philos Project; Amanda Bowman, Chair, The Catholic Herald Institute; Gregory H. Stanton, Founding President, Genocide Watch; Kathryn Jean Lopez, Senior Fellow, National Review Institute; Alejandro Chafuén, Founder, International Freedom Educational Foundation; Mark Tooley, President, Institute on Religion and Democracy; Dede Laugesen, Executive Director, Save the Persecuted Christians; Richard Ghazal, In Defense of Christians.

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF TEMPLE, TX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT AND CEO ROD HENRY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to celebrate Temple, TX Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Rod Henry as he embarks on his richly deserved retirement after decades of devoted public service. He leaves behind a rich legacy of accomplishment and will remain an example of excellence for all who follow.

With integrity, honesty, and transparency, Rod has served 10 years as the President and CEO of the Temple Chamber of Commerce. Under his leadership, the Chamber has enhanced the success of members, provided opportunities for business owners, leaders, and their employees to learn and grow, and has served as a thoughtful and effective voice for the business community.

With his infectious "can do" spirit, Rod lives his life in service to others. Over his 46-year career, he has devoted his talents and energies to numerous community and professional organizations that make the world a better place and make cities like Temple great places to call home.

While Rod isn't tired of the privilege of public service, he knows that everything has its season. But stepping away from the Chamber won't give him much idle time as looks forward to watching Temple's continued growth and spending time with his beloved wife Benita and their family.

Retirement marks not the end of a career, but the beginning of a great adventure. As Rod Henry embarks on this new chapter in life, I thank him for his exceptional work, remain grateful for our friendship, and wish him the very best.

MONSERRAT DIAZ GARCIA

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Monserrat Diaz Garcia for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Monserrat has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Monserrat, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Monserrat's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Monserrat Diaz Garcia on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

CONGRATULATING HACIENDA-LA PUENTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the principals, teachers, board members, staff, students, and families of Glen A. Wilson High School, Mesa Robles School, Los Molinos Elementary, and Wedgeworth Elementary in the Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District (HLPUSD), which all received the prestigious National Blue Ribbon Award this year from the U.S. Department of Education.

In particular, I want to commend the more than 450 students at these four distinguished schools who live in La Puente, Valinda, and West Puente Valley in California's 31st Congressional District: Wilson (197); Mesa Robles (137); Los Molinos (64); and Wedgeworth (55). I also extend my congratulations to Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jimenez, Board of Education President Christine H. Salazar, and the entire district, whose distinguished schools have made a profound and lasting impact on the lives of the students and families in the community.

Each year, the Department of Education recognizes the academic excellence and success in closing achievement and opportunity gaps of a select few elementary, middle, and high schools across the nation through the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. The Blue Ribbon designation process is highly selective, with only 33 schools across the State of California and 353 nationally, receiving a 2023 Blue Ribbon designation.

On behalf of my constituents in California's 31st Congressional District, I want to proudly congratulate and thank everyone who has helped make these four Hacienda-La Puente schools the exemplary institutions that they are today.

HONORING JANET AARON

HON. BRANDON WILLIAMS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. WILLIAMS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to honor Janet Aaron, Supervisor of the Town of Skaneateles, as she marks 40 years of service to her community.

Ms. Aaron's municipal career began in 1983 when she served at the Village of Skaneateles as a part-time clerk. In 1988 she became Deputy Town Clerk for the Town of Skaneateles, serving under Juanita Newell. Ms. Aaron was elected Skaneateles Town Clerk in 1994 and served successfully in this position until 2017. During her tenure as Town Clerk, Ms. Aaron obtained \$59,000 in grants for the Town Records Management Program, became a Certified Municipal Clerk, served as President of the Onondaga County Town Clerk's Association, and also served as the District Director of the New York State Town Clerks Association. As Town Clerk, Ms. Aaron worked with 7 town supervisors, several town councilors and

a number of board and committee members. In 2017, Ms. Aaron was elected Skaneateles Town Supervisor, starting her first term in 2018.

In her career as Supervisor, Ms. Aaron has a host of achievements to her credit. Some of the many accomplishments realized under her leadership include upgrades to Austin Park, repair of the Soldiers and Sailors monument at Lakeview Cemetery, updates to the Mandana Boat Launch, establishment of the Town of Skaneateles Facebook Page, updates to the Comprehensive Plan, and new signage and branding throughout the Town. In addition, Ms. Aaron helped organize the Skaneateles Watershed Municipal Partnership, formed a Hamlet Committee, and oversaw the refinancing of the joint fire department bond with the Village of Skaneateles saving over \$100,000 over the life of the bond. Always focused on the needs of residents, Ms. Aaron lobbied Spectrum to provide internet to parts of Skaneateles's rural community and oversaw the purchase of town streetlights and conversion to LED, saving the lighting district over \$30,000 per year. Ms. Aaron worked tirelessly to continue services during COVID-19 by developing protocols, providing protection for employees and residents that included remotely connecting employees to the office so they could work during the pandemic to meet the needs of residents. As a dedicated advocate of the town, Ms. Aaron helped to acquire grant funding for Smart Cities security cameras, hamlet planning, shared services, and most recently the water district, securing \$4.4 million, the largest grant the community has ever received.

Ms. Aaron is a third-generation member of the Skaneateles community. Her grandparents owned Pine Grove Dairy which provided door to door milk delivery in both the village and town. Ms. Aaron graduated from Skaneateles Central School and then attended Cayuga Community College earning her degree in Business Administration. She was married to the love of her life for 40 years until his passing in 2012. Her family includes a son, stepdaughter and 4 grandchildren. In addition to her work for the village and town, Ms. Aaron has dedicated many hours to volunteer work with various organizations including the Skaneateles Historical Society.

Janet Aaron's love for her community is evident in her decades of municipal and volunteer service. On behalf of New York's 22nd Congressional District, I offer my sincere appreciation and congratulations on the occasion of her retirement.

HONORING GENESIS HOUSE FOR 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today I celebrate Genesis House, which for the past 30 years has provided meaningful opportunities and hope for people living with mental health challenges in Livingston County, Michigan.

Founded in 1998 in Howell, Genesis House is a program of Livingston County Community Mental Health and part of the evidence-based Clubhouse International model designed to im-

prove the lives of those who participate by providing social support, education, and employment. One of more than 300 such clubhouses worldwide, Genesis House is so much more than a physical gathering space; it's a place members can call home. At Genesis House, people navigating life with mental illness can learn, grow, and develop the individual skills they need to increase their independence and continue their recovery. In this model, Clubhouse members and staff work together to carry out daily duties, with staff mainly serving as coaches, cheerleaders, and talent scouts, pouring their faith into those who may not yet believe in themselves.

In addition to providing a place for meaningful social and recreational opportunities for hundreds of members, over the past 30 years Genesis House has partnered with dozens of local employers and organizations to help members find and retain gainful employment.

It's a powerful vision of social and economic inclusion, and one that I had the chance to see firsthand when I visited Genesis House in 2019 at its Fowlerville location. There, as members answered phones, prepared meals, and tidied the facility, I heard how much the Clubhouse meant to them. I saw what a restorative atmosphere it was, and that it was clearly a community of people dedicated to walking alongside one another on the path to a better life, no matter how long it takes or how difficult it is.

Recently, Genesis House returned to its Howell roots and took over a larger, brighter space with the capacity to serve even more members. The new location, where sunlight pours in through floor-to-ceiling windows, is a powerful metaphor for the light that Genesis House shines in the community, and the glow of resilience of its members. As we mark 30 years of success for Genesis House, I salute all those who have supported this organization along the way, by fundraising, volunteering, and helping to spread the word about the organization and break the stigma around mental illness. I pay tribute to the members and the staff for the hard work they do each day to make this house a home. Long may Genesis House, a beacon of hope for so many, continue to shine in Howell and beyond.

MICHELLE DAVILA ROJAS

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michelle Davila Rojas for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Michelle has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Michelle, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Michelle's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Oberon Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Michelle Davila Rojas on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

HONORING THE CAREER OF DR.
ELEZ BIBERAJ

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. Elez Biberaj, who is retiring after 43 years of service in the news organization Voice of America (VOA).

Voice of America's mission and commitment to the highest journalistic standards have been the central focus of Dr. Biberaj's professional journey. Throughout his career, he's done his very best to uphold the values that have made VOA one of the world's most preeminent and most trusted journalistic organizations. He's had the privilege of serving in various roles, from being a radio broadcaster in the Albanian Service (1980–1982), to Senior Writer/Editor specializing in Soviet and East European Affairs in USIA's Press Division (1982–1986), Chief of the Albanian Service (1986–2004), Managing Editor of the Eurasia Division (2004–2005), and since 2005, Director of the Eurasia Division. He also served as VOA's Acting Director from June to December 2020.

Through Voice of America, Dr. Biberaj witnessed and covered consequential world events. Dr. Biberaj covered the Cold War to the collapse of communism, the rise of democracy in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Balkan wars, the integration of East European nations into Euro-Atlantic institutions, Russia's shift towards an authoritarian regime, and more recently, Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. He is honored and privileged to have worked alongside so many remarkable colleagues as he advanced the noble mission of delivering accurate and objective news and information to global audiences, telling America's compelling story, and championing its democratic values.

Dr. Biberaj accelerated the Eurasia Division's shift in Voice of America toward engaging digital audiences and harnessing the power of mobile and social platforms. He also worked closely with his counterparts at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to create the Current Time network, the first joint VOA/RFE/RL programming brand in the history of U.S. international broadcasting, launched to provide fact-based alternatives to Russian-language disinformation.

Dr. Biberaj's commitment to the fundamental ethos of promoting freedom, democracy and providing independent fact-based reporting serves as a source of hope and a shining beacon of truth for millions of people around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Elez Biberaj on his long-standing career as a leader in journalism.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF MR. JOHN MCKENZIE

HON. MARK POCAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize my constituent, Mr. John McKenzie, a Wisconsin business owner who plays a sig-

nificant role in the revitalization of Dane County through his generous philanthropy.

Mr. John McKenzie, through his highly successful family business, consistently gives back to his community by maintaining improving, and reinvesting in properties throughout Dane County.

Beyond his obligation to his business, Mr. McKenzie spent years working with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County because of a heartfelt desire to improve the lives of young people, especially those belonging to underrepresented communities.

Mr. McKenzie partnered the Madison Area Builders Association with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County to introduce opportunities and careers in the skilled trades to young people looking to better their lives.

This great idea gained momentum and not long after, with the help of Mr. McKenzie, the National Association of Home Builders and the national Boys and Girls Clubs created their own partnership, extending new opportunities to millions of kids across our Nation.

Mr. McKenzie not only sought to shrink the racial and gender wealth gap, but also to mentor kids on how to save, invest, and build for the next generation. On July 15, 2023, with \$30.4 million dollars' worth of investments and donations, Mr. McKenzie opened the McKenzie Regional Workforce Center, a place where kids of all ages can participate in career introductory programming.

Mr. John McKenzie demonstrates that business-driven organizations and organizations with a social focus can form partnerships that benefit the entirety of their respective communities. For that, I commend him, and I join his friends, family, and colleagues in offering him best wishes and continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVE
ABDALLAH

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Dearborn Heights Council Chairman Dave Abdallah. Since he was first elected to serve the people of Dearborn Heights in 2015, Mr. Abdallah has been a tireless advocate for every corner of the city.

Before he ever considered a career in public service, Dave Abdallah was an already well-known community member. Mr. Abdallah immigrated to Michigan from Lebanon at the age of ten and started school speaking no English. He worked hard at school and pursued studies in finance before he made his career in real estate, a natural fit for his outgoing and gregarious personality. In addition to his successful real estate career, Mr. Abdallah became involved with numerous community organizations, including Bint Jebel Cultural Center, and Michigan's Commission of Middle Eastern Affairs, which spurred his interest in elected public service.

In his eight years serving as a member of Dearborn Heights' City Council, Mr. Abdallah has strived to give back to the community and make lives better. He has sought to uplift the voices and concerns of the residents he serves and he has worked to strengthen economic development within Dearborn Heights

by attracting businesses to the area. When he isn't helping residents, he is cheering for our Detroit Lions every chance he gets.

Please join me in recognizing Dave Abdallah for his outstanding commitment and service to the people of Dearborn Heights in Michigan's 12th District Strong.

JONATHAN LORANCE

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jonathan Lorange for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Jonathan has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Jonathan, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Jonathan's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Jonathan Lorange on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

RECOGNIZING DOCTORS
MAHENDER AND JAYALAKSHMI
PAMPATI

HON. MORGAN MCGARVEY

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two remarkable physicians, a husband and wife, Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati, in recognition of their retirement from the healthcare field after nearly 33 years of dedicated service to the people of Eastern Kentucky.

Drs. Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati moved to Hazard, Kentucky in 1990 with a goal of providing high quality care to the underserved communities of Eastern Kentucky. Through their respective careers and the life they built together in Hazard, they became part of the fabric of the community. They raised three kids, Ashwin, Rudra, and Shivani, in Hazard, participating in the local Parent Teacher Association and engaging with their patients beyond their medical practices. For decades, both doctors centered their careers on providing quality care and service to their community.

Dr. Mahender Pampati, born in Hyderabad, India, son of Dr. Kishen and Mrs. Suwarna Pampati, started and grew a radiology practice upon arrival to Hazard. With his partner Dr. Ashok Patel, he built a radiology practice, Hazard Radiology Associates, that served the entire Appalachian Regional Hospital System in addition to Mountain Comprehensive Health Care. Mahender was the first specialty trained neuroradiologist in Eastern Kentucky and facilitated the installation of state-of-the-art CT and MRI equipment for more specialized care.

Mahender also brought the first mobile mammography and MRI services to Eastern Kentucky to ensure all patients had access to adequate imaging and screening services.

Dr. Jayalakshmi Pampati, born in Chennai, India, daughter of Mr. G.C. Krishnamoorthy and Mrs. G.Y. Thilakam, led a successful and patient forward career as the region's only rheumatologist. As one of few female physicians of her generation, she continuously broke barriers throughout her career, from medical school to her practice. She started her own rheumatology practice in Hazard, Kentucky shortly after moving there. Jayalakshmi was the only rheumatologist within a 60-mile radius for her entire career, serving a significant portion of Eastern Kentucky. Jayalakshmi diagnosed and treated several debilitating autoimmune diseases for the first time in the region and treated many of these patients for many decades. Jayalakshmi treated all patients, both insured and uninsured, guaranteeing all patients would be treated and advised on the most cost-effective and quality treatment plan.

Together they broke many firsts. Most significantly, they opened the first after hours clinic in the region in 1996, the Mountain After Hours Clinic (MAHC). MAHC provided a range of care, from primary care services to pediatrics to mental healthcare services. This groundbreaking clinic brought access to healthcare for the many patients who were unable to take off work to receive care during the workday and accepted patients whether they were insured or not.

Dr. Mahender Pampati received his medical degree from Magadh Medical College in 1979, and completed his radiology residency at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan in 1987 with a fellowship in neuroradiology from Stony Brook University in New York. Dr. Jayalakshmi Pampati received her medical degree from Madras Medical College in 1981, and completed her residency in internal medicine at Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, New York in 1988 with a fellowship in rheumatology from Stony Brook University in New York.

Dr. Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati have dedicated their lives and careers to providing specialized, quality, accessible, and affordable healthcare to the people of Eastern Kentucky, and their work has critically improved the healthcare landscape in an under-resourced and underserved part of our state. Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati will continue to be stewards of public service through their work with community organizations in Kentucky, the Bluegrass Indo American Civic Society and the Bharatiya Temple and Cultural Center. What a wonderful vocation for a truly special couple. I know their patients, fellow healthcare workers, and colleagues in Eastern Kentucky will miss their service. I wish them all the best in retirement and hope they enjoy time with their children, daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren. I ask that my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in thanking Dr. Jayalakshmi and Mahender Pampati for their lifelong commitment to serving Kentucky families and communities in need and congratulating them on their well-deserved retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on December 11, 2023, I was unable to be in attendance for votes on the House floor due to official Congressional travel. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on rollcall No. 707, YEA on rollcall No. 708, and YEA on rollcall No. 709.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NEIL T. FREEMAN

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Neil Thomas Freeman, an Army Veteran and resident of Tilton, New Hampshire, who passed away in November. Neil was a beloved husband, son, and brother, who proudly dedicated his life to public service both in the United States Army and as a civilian federal employee.

Born in Somerville, MA, Neil enlisted in the United States Army shortly after graduating from high school in 1984. Following his military service, Neil was a proud member of the DAV, VFW, and AMVETS. Neil continued to serve his country as a civil servant for over 30 years, working for the United States Postal Service, Veterans Affairs, and United States Customs and Immigration. Most recently, he was a Congressional Liaison in the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service's Manchester Field Office.

Neil was known by his coworkers, friends, and family for being incredibly selfless, patient, and kind. He will be fondly remembered by the communities he touched and those he loved for years to come. His legacy of service, connection, and family will continue to inspire others.

On behalf of the constituents of New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I share my condolences with the Freeman family, including Neil's loving wife, Lisa his son, Cole, and his many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends. I would once again like to extend my condolences to the Freeman family and wish them all the very best in this time of grieving.

JAMES DURAN

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize James Duran for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

James has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like James, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them

for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to James's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate James Duran on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP SEDGWICK DANIELS

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise once again with a heavy heart to extend my condolences to the family and community mourning the passing of the esteemed Bishop Sedgwick Daniels. Bishop Daniels passed away on November 12, 2023, at the age of 64. Having been friends with Bishop Daniels and his family for decades, I personally admired and appreciated his unwavering commitment to both congregation and the greater community.

Bishop Daniels was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin into the loving union of John and Kathleen Daniels. He was not only a spiritual leader but also an authentic advocate for empowerment, leaving an indelible mark on the Milwaukee area, both physically and spiritually. His dedication to fostering positive change extended beyond the confines of the Church, impacting our community, and reaching global proportions.

As the Pastor and Establishmentarian of the Holy Redeemer Church of God in Christ (COGIC), Bishop Daniels played a pivotal role in our region's spiritual and community development. His visional leadership transformed Holy Redeemer COGIC into a thriving institution, addressing educational and social service needs with a multi-million-dollar impact.

His commitment to youth success manifested through the establishment of educational institutions like Holy Redeemer Christian Academy, Young Coggs William Preparatory Academy, and Katherine T. Daniels University Preparatory Academy. Initiatives such as Trained Pulpit and Trained Pew underscored his dedication to shaping the future of the Milwaukee community.

In 2001, Bishop Daniels was appointed Bishop by Bishop Gilbert E. Patterson and the COGIC General Board, a recognition of his exceptional spiritual leadership. Overseeing the growth of his jurisdiction from 39 congregations to more than 100 churches in Wisconsin and northern Illinois, Bishop Daniels became a beacon of inspiration in steering the spiritual course of the Church. His passing marks the end of an era, and we collectively grieve the loss of a visionary leader and spiritual guide. His leadership was impactful, and his absence will be deeply felt in the community.

Mr. Speaker, Bishop Sedgwick Daniels was a revered member of Milwaukee, the 4th Congressional District, and the entire State of Wisconsin. I commend and sincerely appreciate his contributions as a public servant and am honored to pay tribute to the late Bishop Sedgwick Daniels.

REMEMBERING ISIDORO, SHIRLEY,
AND JEFFREY GREENBLUM

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of several members of the Greenblum family of South Texas. Over the past 14 months, South Texas lost three members of this beloved family, all who made a deep impact on our community. Isidoro Irving Greenblum, Shirley Jean Katz Greenblum, and Jeffrey Lee Greenblum will all be greatly missed.

Isidoro Irving "Pancho" Greenblum lived life by one of his favorite dichos—"Que mala hiebra nunca muere"—"A tough weed always survives." He was born in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, and later raised in Laredo, Texas, and he was proud to be a citizen of "Los Dos Laredos." He worked for his family's successful furniture business in Nuevo Laredo while also serving as a member of the International Bank of Commerce's Board of Director for 40 years. His command of both Spanish and English and his tendency to treat everyone he met like family made him an invaluable member of the board, and he traveled extensively to Mexico and throughout Texas to form relationships with customers.

Shirley Jeannne Katz Greenblum was known for the warmth she radiated in everything she did and was dedicated to her family and community. As the mother of four sons, she undoubtedly had her hands full, but she built a home that was nurturing and open to all, with her children having fond memories of their mother hosting their friends for refreshments almost daily.

Shirley and Isidoro were loving life partners, sharing 72 years of marriage after meeting while in school at the University of Texas. Together in Laredo, they raised their sons, Jeff, Gary, Brad, and Robbie. They were also proud and adoring grandparents and great-grandparents.

Shirley and Isidoro shared a passion for charity and volunteering. Isidoro was the Founding Board Member and served as the first President of the Laredo Area Community Foundation, with the goal of making local charitable giving easy. He served on the board of several other charitable organizations, including for the Jewish community he was dedicated to, and created a scholarship at his high school alma mater for immigrant students attending college. Although Shirley was born and raised in Dallas, she made Laredo her home and gave back to the community through several organizations like the Laredo Art League, the Laredo Children's Museum, and more.

Jeffrey Lee Greenblum, known as Jeff, was a proud son and brother, and a proud father himself to his son William "Billy" Greenblum. He graduated from his parents' alma mater and went on to get a law degree from Southern Methodist University. Jeff found success in both business and public service, serving as a senior executive for an oil and gas company, a mining company, and a natural resource consultancy and serving his country during the George H.W. Bush Administration at the Departments of Energy and Commerce.

Isidoro, Shirley, and Jeff leave behind a lasting legacy in South Texas, and the love

they had for each other, and their family will never be forgotten.

HONORING LISA GOODMAN

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Minneapolis's longest serving City Council Member, Lisa Goodman. Throughout her tenure, Ms. Goodman has been dedicated to improving the lives of those who call Ward 7 home—her constituents in the Bryn Mawr, Cedar-Isles-Dean, East Isles, Elliot Park, Kenwood, Loring Park, Lowry Hill, and Steven's Square-Loring Heights neighborhoods, as well as parts of downtown.

Prior to being elected to the City Council in 1997, Ms. Goodman was the Executive Director of Minnesota NARAL where she was a champion of reproductive freedom and women's rights. Since taking office, she has invested in our community by supporting her constituents through driving development and fighting for her strongly held beliefs.

Of her seven terms in office, one of Council Member Goodman's lasting legacies will be her commitment to growing the arts and entertainment district along Minneapolis's Hennepin Avenue. She was instrumental in supporting the stabilization of the Orpheum Theater, the State and Pantages Theaters, and the Cowles Center for Dance & Performing Arts. She also helped move forward the design and construction of the Downtown Library and promoted sidewalk cafes and food trucks.

During Ms. Goodman's 25 years on the City Council, the residential population of downtown more than doubled and she has played an important role in the development of an affordable housing trust fund, which has invested more than \$250 million in the community and has garnered over \$1 billion in public financing.

To address access to food for downtown residents, Ms. Goodman helped bring two Lunds & Byerly's grocery stores to her Ward and more recently Whole Foods and Trader Joe's. She was also an early champion for improved environmental sustainability, advocating for the addition of green roofs at Target Center and City Hall.

In her career spanning four decades, Ms. Goodman prioritized building long-lasting relationships with policymakers of the Minnesota Legislature and her constituents through monthly "Lunch with Lisa" events, neighborhood meetings, ice cream socials, and community gatherings. The strength of her convictions has served her well over the years. She has been a strong advocate for her community and we are grateful for her years of public service.

VALERIA HOLGUIN

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Valeria Holguin for earning the

Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Valeria has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Valeria, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Valeria's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Valeria Holguin on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, December 11, 2023, I was not able to be recorded on Roll Call Numbers 707, 708, and 709.

Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 707; YEA on Roll Call No. 708; and YEA on Roll Call No. 709.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes on Monday, December 11, 2023.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 707; YEA on Roll Call No. 708; and YEA on Roll Call No. 709.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, on Monday December 11, 2023, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote on three roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on Roll Call No. 707, YES on Roll Call No. 708, and YES on Roll Call No. 709.

CORINNE JAMES BOWDEN

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Corinne James Bowden for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Corinne has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Corinne, who strive to make the most of their education develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them

for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Corinne's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Warren Tech North and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Corinne James Bowden on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE ENERGIZING AMERICAN SHIPBUILDING ACT OF 2023

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today I re-introduce the "Energizing American Shipbuilding Act" with U.S. Senator ROGER F. WICKER (R-MS). I thank U.S. Senator ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr. (D-PA) and Congressmen ROBERT J. WITTMAN (R-VA) and BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK (R-PA) for their support as the original cosponsors.

Our bipartisan bill would help to recapitalize America's domestic shipbuilding and maritime industries by requiring that increasing percentages of exported liquefied natural gas (LNG) and crude oil be transported on U.S.-built, flagged, and crewed vessels. In total, our bill would require that 15 percent of total seaborne LNG exports by 2045 and 10 percent of total seaborne crude oil exports by 2037 be on U.S. vessels. This would result in the construction of more than 40 American ships: approximately 28 LNG carriers by 2045 and 12 oil tankers by 2037. This will support thousands of new, well-paying jobs in American shipyards, vessel component manufacturers, and across the U.S. maritime industry.

As President Vladimir Putin's unconscionable invasion of Ukraine has shown, continental Europe's overreliance on imported Russian oil and gas is both untenable and dangerous. While I support the global transition away from fossil fuels to fight the climate crisis, I also support increasing American energy exports to Europe to replace Russian imports in the near term. Unless Congress acts, all U.S. seaborne LNG and crude oil exports will be on foreign-flagged vessels, operated by foreign crews.

In 1995, Congress required that crude oil exported from Alaska's North Slope be transported on U.S.-flagged vessels to preserve the tanker fleet essential to our national defense. The "Energizing American Shipbuilding Act" would implement a similar requirement. The vessels built under our bill would be available to meet the U.S. military's sealift and supply needs around the globe.

I am deeply troubled that our military, namely the Defense Logistics Agency, relies on foreign-owned oil tankers including state-owned enterprises closely linked to the Chinese government. Our bipartisan bill also counters other export countries' similar requirements including the Russian-flagged vessel requirement for arctic oil and natural gas exports announced by the Kremlin in December 2018.

The United States was a net crude oil exporter in 2022 and is projected to become the top LNG exporting nation in the coming years. Exports of these two strategic national as-

sets—LNG and crude oil—should be on American vessels, which is exactly what our bill would require. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members of the House to cosponsor the "Energizing American Shipbuilding Act."

RECOGNIZING THE WASHINGTON REGIONAL ALCOHOL PROGRAM LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) and to congratulate the recipients of the 26th Annual Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention.

Founded in 1982, WRAP is an award-winning, public-private coalition formed to fight drunk driving, drugged driving, and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region. Through educational and innovative public outreach programs, WRAP is credited with keeping local alcohol-related death rates consistently below the national average. Its programs educate students and the general public on the dangers of alcohol and drugs, particularly driving while under the influence. Through the WRAP Holiday SoberRide program, individuals who are impaired can request a free cab ride home. Since SoberRide was launched in 1991, 80,047 safe rides have been provided in the Washington Metropolitan area, preventing potential accidents and deaths.

Since 1997, WRAP has sponsored an annual Law Enforcement Awards Ceremony to honor local law enforcement professionals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in the fight against drunk driving. It is my honor to include in the RECORD the names of the 2023 Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention recipients:

Officer Zachary Anderson: City of Alexandria Police Department

Corporal Steven Yanda: Arlington County Police Department

Officer Ashley Kumar: Arlington County Police Department

Officer Zackery Lauw: City of Falls Church Police Department

PFC Maurice Anderson: City of Fairfax Police Department

PFC Brian Castello: Fairfax County Police Department

PFC Bryce Cooper: Town of Herndon Police Department

Deputy First Class Tyler Giles: Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Corporal Anthony Wallace: Maryland State Police

Officer Jeremy Brady: Metropolitan Police Department (Washington, DC)

Corporal Joshua Morris: Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department

Sergeant Patrick Keep: Montgomery County Department of Police

PFC Juan Rodriguez: Prince George's County Police Department

Officer Godson Vondee: Prince William County Police Department

Officer Aram Karapetyan: United States Capitol Police

Officer Kevin Brennan: United States Park Police

Trooper Jordan Corvin: Virginia State Police

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the recipients of the Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence and in recognizing WRAP for its 41 years of public service.

I commend the staff of WRAP under the leadership of President and CEO Kurt Erickson and Board Chairman Patrick Burke for their tireless dedication to eradicating underage drinking and drunk or drugged driving. Their efforts combined with the support of partner organizations and law enforcement agencies have saved lives and are deserving of our highest praise and gratitude.

SALUTING THE SERVICE OF SERGEANT YESENIA MERCADO, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Sergeant Yesenia Mercado, U.S. Army, Retired, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. Her patriotism, citizenship, and commitment to excellence reflect the very best of Texas.

During SGT Mercado's service in the Army, she went above and beyond to serve her country. She completed the demanding training in elite specialties and served multiple tours in Iraq, earning numerous commendations including the Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism—Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, and Overseas Service Ribbon.

The end of SGT Mercado's military service didn't bring about the end of her dedication to others. She commits her free time to a host of activities, ranging from helping those less fortunate, supporting families impacted by natural disasters, and contributing to our brave first responders. She stays active in local business development and her work has brought millions of dollars to Central Texas. These efforts speak to the character of devoted public servant unafraid to contribute her energies to the betterment of her fellow citizens.

I commend SGT Mercado's dedication to her community and Nation. I join her colleagues, family, and friends in honoring her career, saluting her commitment to public service, and celebrating her outstanding achievements.

FIDEL FLORES

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Fidel Flores for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Fidel has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along

the way. Students like Fidel, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Fidel's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Fidel Flores on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my vote for H.R. 5378—Lower Costs, More Transparency Act. I have long supported the critical medical and social services that community health centers provide and fully support their funding. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on rollcall No. 708.

TRIBUTE TO DAN BERGER

HON. PATRICK T. McHENRY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize B. Dan Berger as he prepares to step down from his role at the President/CEO of the National Association of Federally-Insured Credit Unions (NAFCU) at the end of the year.

Dan first joined NAFCU in 2006 and helped the association become a strong advocate for credit unions in Washington. I have had the pleasure of working with Dan on several issues before the Financial Services Committee during that time.

Dan became the President/CEO of NAFCU in 2013. In a decade under his leadership, NAFCU has grown its membership by nearly 50 percent, while increasing assets and revenue. His final act for NAFCU will be leading it into a merger with the Credit Union National Association (CUNA) to create a new voice for credit unions—America's Credit Unions.

Dan earned a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Science degree in economics from The Florida State University. He is a member of The Economic Club of Washington, DC, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100, and was an adjunct professor at The George Washington University in the communications department. He also serves as Vice Chair of the conservation group Bonefish and Tarpon Trust and formerly served as Chair of The Florida State University Alumni Association.

I know the credit union community will miss Dan as he heads back to Florida to spend more time with his wife Aimee and daughter Shelby. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dan Berger and wishing him the best of luck with whatever comes next.

TRIBUTE TO ETHEL HAMILTON KELLY

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a doting wife, devoted mother, and darling matriarch to many on her 104th birthday. Mrs. Ethel Hamilton Kelly of Charleston, South Carolina, will celebrate this milestone surrounded by family and friends on December 16, 2023. We joyfully celebrate her longevity.

Ethel Hamilton was born in 1919 in Colleton County, South Carolina, and was raised along with six siblings. She was joined in holy matrimony to Isiah Kelly, and together they had ten children. While Isiah worked various jobs, Ethel remained home to care for her large family. She instilled in all her children the importance of kindness and the ability to respectfully resolve disagreements with others. In addition to caring for her own children, Ethel regularly fed other children that frequented her home.

Ethel and Isiah raised all their children to be faithful servants of God. The Ten Commandments guide Ethel's life, and she believes adhering to them is of principal importance.

As Ms. Hamilton Kelly celebrates her 104th birthday, she remains in good health and retains her sharp mind. She continues to follow current events and votes in nearly every election. Her eight surviving children, twenty-two grandchildren, two sisters, and numerous other relatives will join her to celebrate this momentous occasion.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in celebrating the remarkable life of Ethel Hamilton Kelly. She continues to display her boundless maternal love to her family and others every day. We congratulate her on a life well lived and wish her continued good health and happiness in the days to come.

HENRY THOMPSON

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Henry Thompson for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Henry has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Henry, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Henry's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Three Creeks K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Henry Thompson on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING MAYOR MARK SENTER'S SERVICE TO PLYMOUTH, INDIANA

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate Mayor Mark Senter, who is completing his tenure of dedicated service to Plymouth, Indiana at the end of this month.

Currently serving in his fourth term, Mayor Senter has advanced solutions that have made Plymouth a better place to live, work, and raise a family. In particular, Mark can and should be proud of his work in helping create downtown Plymouth's River Park Square, which hosts the popular "Mayor's Month of Music" event every August.

Prior to becoming Mayor, Mark served as a trooper and detective with the Indiana State Police for 28 years. Mark's service on the thin blue line has given him valuable firsthand knowledge of the public safety issues our communities face as well as the brave sacrifices law enforcement officers make in the line of duty every single day.

As he prepares to step down as Mayor, spend more time with his family, and write the next chapter of his life, I am proud to congratulate Mark on a distinguished career and a job well done. The Plymouth community and all of Marshall County is unquestionably better off thanks to this good man with a servant's heart.

I join Hoosiers throughout Indiana's Second Congressional District in expressing our gratitude to Mayor Mark Senter for his service and in wishing him, his wife Leanne, and their family all the very best going forward.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I had to miss yesterday's vote series due to my attendance at an unscheduled meeting. During that time, I was unable to make roll call votes No. 707, No. 708 and No. 709. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: YEA on Roll Call No. 707, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 3224—Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023; YEA on Roll Call No. 708, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 5378—Lower Costs, More Transparency Act; and YEA on Roll Call No. 709, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 6503—Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2023, Part II.

RECOGNIZING NHDOT WORKERS FOR SAVING DROWNING MAN

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of 12 New Hampshire individuals

for their recent act of bravery in the Town of Alton. When a man's jet ski began to sink into the frigid November waters of Lake Winnepesaukee, seven New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) employees and five Top Notch Tree Service employees stepped in to save the man from drowning. I commend the NHDOT workers and the Top Notch Tree Team, as well as the EMS response crew, for their efforts to rescue the man and provide him with needed care.

While removing an old dock from the Alton shoreline, the team of good samaritans heard screams and cries for help from the water. As soon as the workers discovered that a man on a jet ski was sinking deeper into the lake, they jumped into action. Some rescuers ran to Sandy Point Beach Resort to secure a kayak and canoe to row to the man, others called 911 and urged him to continue swimming. When the kayaker reached the sinking jet ski, the drowning man latched onto the rescuer's kayak and was paddled to shore. Although the man was initially unresponsive when brought to shore, hard-working EMS personnel quickly revived him.

The NHDOT and Top Notch Tree teams' quick and effective response to the situation is a result of their empathy, brilliance, and sound judgment. By acting quickly and delegating responsibilities, the rescuers were able to reach the man and save him before it was too late. I commend these individuals for demonstrating a calculated and successful save in a difficult situation.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I want to thank these selfless and courageous individuals. Let their courage and heroism serve as an example for us all.

TRIBUTE TO GABRIEL LEE SHAW,
JR.

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Gabriel (Gabe) Lee Shaw, Jr., a dedicated individual, a family-oriented man, a lifelong learner, and one of my dearest friends. I fondly referred to him as my "brother-in-love," it saddens me to say that Gabe passed peacefully on Thursday, December 7, 2023, with his beloved wife of 41 years, Shirley Ellis, District Director of Wisconsin's 4th Congressional District by his side. The breadth of Gabe's accomplishments far exceeds his 78 years.

Gabe was born in Osceola, Arkansas, into the loving union of Gabriel Lee Shaw and Mary Hall Shaw. Gabe's life began as the first son among eight children, including five daughters and three sons. Graduating from North Division High School in 1963, he embarked on a path of hard work and continuous learning, which led him to proudly join the United States Air Force at the age of 17 the same year.

His dedication was evident as he graduated from the U.S. Air Force Explosive Ordinance

Disposal School at Eglin AFB in Florida. Gabe's military service was exceptional, marked by holding one of the highest security clearances during the Vietnam era, concluding with an honorable discharge in 1968. Gabe's work ethic and commitment to detail became a hallmark of his character. He often declared, "you cannot talk work done," demonstrating his resolve to address and solve any challenge thrown his way. Following his military service, his pursuit of knowledge persisted, leading him to enroll in both UW-Platteville and UW-Milwaukee with a focus on mathematics. His passion for cars propelled him to become an Automotive Service Excellence Certified technician.

Known for his love of challenges, Gabe accomplished the remarkable feat of passing all eight comprehensive exams required for the Automotive Excellence certificate on his first attempt, maintaining this certification for an impressive 15 years. He later attended Milwaukee Area Technical College and became a certified Air Conditioning and Heating Specialist. Gabe retired from Miller Brewing Company in 2005 after 30 years of service. His illustrious 30-year tenure at Miller Brewing Company showcased his dedication and loyalty.

Gabe, son of a carpenter, had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge that extended to various subjects, including taxes, carpentry, electrical work, masonry, and heating/cooling. This extensive expertise paved the way for his successful career, culminating in becoming a licensed Real Estate Broker in 1977. With a wealth of knowledge, Gabe thrived as a property owner. His ability to repair and maintain properties enabled him to support his family and community. He bailed out countless people with home and auto repairs operating as a contractor under the telling banner of GOOD AND FAIR.

Gabe's four daughters, son and grandchildren all benefited from his talent, intelligence, love, and generosity. In the weeks before his death, Gabe shared with me a message to all our progeny. "Don't make excuses, if you work hard, look forward and not backwards you can accomplish anything with just an average aptitude." Gabe shared his life with his beloved wife, business partner and best friend, Shirley A. Ellis, who for over 41 years supported each other in health and sickness, exemplifying a dynamic and supportive partnership.

Gabe's role as a great provider extended beyond his immediate family, as he generously shared his wisdom with mentees, especially young men, offering valuable insights into the trade.

Personally, Gabriel supported me during some of the most challenging times of my life. My brother-in-love was a comforting resource for me as an 18-year-old new parent, as a candidate without a dime to donate to my own campaign, as a "handy" friend who rescued me time and time again as a new homeowner of an old house.

Mr. Speaker, Gabriel Lee Shaw, Jr., was a cherished member of Milwaukee, the 4th Congressional District, and the entire State of Wisconsin. He is an example of how patriotism, hard work, lifelong learning, and kindness can create a fulfilling life,

I will always treasure his personal impact on me, and I rise to honor the late Gabriel L. Shaw, Jr.

HONORING ANDREW JOHNSON

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Minneapolis City Council Member Andrew Johnson for his hard work and dedication to public service over the past decade. Over the years, Mr. Johnson has been applauded for his community engagement and commitment to small businesses and affordable housing. I had the pleasure of working for Mr. Johnson from 2013 to 2015 as his campaign manager and then Senior Policy Aide.

Council Member Johnson was first elected to office in 2013 and, at the time, was the youngest member on the Council. For three terms, he has proudly served the constituents of Ward 12, which includes the neighborhoods of Cooper, Ericsson, Hiawatha, Howe, Keewaydin, Minnehaha, Morris Park, and Standish, in the southeastern corner of Minneapolis. During his tenure, Mr. Johnson served as the chair of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, Intergovernmental Relations Committee, and the Information Technology Subcommittee.

Over the past ten years, Council Member Johnson has participated in nearly 400 community meetings with his constituents. As a devoted advocate for housing, he worked on the creation of hundreds of housing units within Ward 12. Mr. Johnson also led the City in creating its first new public-housing project in more than a decade. He has been a champion for transit throughout his tenure, working on ordinances to ensure that sidewalks were clear of ice for residents, pushing for funding for street repairs, and advocating for more lanes and safety precautions for bikers. He worked to ensure that all constituents, whether they walked, biked, drove, or used public transit had access to safe transportation.

Council Member Johnson has had an impressive track record of serving his community. Key accomplishments that I want to recognize include the creation of the Small Business Office and Business Portal to serve local small business owners. He also authored the ordinance that allowed gender-neutral single-stall restrooms, led the efforts to rewrite the Animal Care and Control Ordinances to improve the quality of life for animals in shelters and was a co-founding member of the Transgender Equity Council. Last, but certainly not least, Mr. Johnson was also the lead sponsor of an ordinance that granted paid sick leave to over 100,000 constituents.

No problem has ever been too big or too small for City Council Member Johnson. Although his time as a city council member is coming to an end, the legacy of his work for our community and the City of Minneapolis will never be forgotten. He will truly be missed at City Hall and by his constituents.

QUENTIN BANKS

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Quentin Banks for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Quentin has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Quentin, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Quentin's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Oberon Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Quentin Banks on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

**RECOGNIZING KAREN CLEVELAND
FOR HER SERVICE TO LEADERSHIP FAIRFAX**

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Karen Cleveland on an inspired career in community service. Earlier this year, Karen announced she would be transitioning from her role as President & CEO of Leadership Fairfax (LFI), which is Northern Virginia's premier leadership development organization.

Karen has become a pillar of our community during her eight-year tenure with LFI, so I am

pleased to report this is not so much a retirement as a turning of the page to her next chapter. I've had the pleasure of knowing and collaborating with Karen for the past three decades, starting with my service on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Since 1988, LFI has dedicated itself to shaping the future leaders of tomorrow. The dedication of LFI to this endeavor is one that I know well; a number of my staff from my time as Providence District Supervisor and later as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors are LFI alumni.

I know firsthand the value that LFI adds to both the graduates and the organizations to which they return. When you walk into a crowded room it's easy to spot the graduates of LFI—they just stand out!

Karen has been an invaluable resource to leaders in both the public and private sectors, serving as a facilitator, mentor, partner, and friend to us through her work on multiple community initiatives.

In addition to her role with LFI, Karen has made important contributions to our community as the first executive director of the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, inaugural chair of the Reston YMCA Board of Directors, and executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia. She also previously served on the Wolf Trap Foundation Board of Directors, supporting the only national park dedicated to presenting the performing art.

On behalf of our grateful community, I wish Karen, her husband, Jim, and their family all the best as she embarks on her next chapter.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in expressing our appreciation for Karen Cleveland's commitment to helping our community reflect the LFI motto to lead, unite, and thrive.

**SALUTING THE SERVICE OF
STAFF SERGEANT WILLIE A.
CURTIS, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED**

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Staff Sergeant Willie A. Curtis, U.S. Army, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. His excellent service to both the Army and his local community is a shining example of citizenship and commitment to duty.

During SSG Curtis's 20+ years of service to the United States Army, he went above and beyond to serve his country. Due to his extensive period serving our country, he earned many awards such as the Army Commendation Medal, an Army Achievement Medal, and a National Defense Service Medal, among other medals, decorations, and badges.

Upon retirement, SSG Curtis settled in Taylor, Texas. An eternal optimist, he has an enormous heart and an endless capacity to contribute his time, energy, and resources to assist local students, the homeless, and first responders. Whether it's organizing public music events or celebrating the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., SSG Curtis is renowned as a man unafraid to do the hard work to do good for his neighbors.

When I reflect on SSG Curtis' life of service over the years, I am reminded of the teachings of Christ when he taught, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." To SSG Curtis, these are not mere words but a summons by which to live a fulfilling life. He is a fitting recipient of a Congressional Veteran Commendation.