

Mr. Allen has been an outstanding citizen and patriot throughout his life. Much of his energy has been directed through the noble organization of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, which has played an important role in the history of this nation since its founding. Many influential Americans have been members of the Masons, including Presidents, Members of Congress, Justices, and Governors, and their ranks have included scientists, engineers, doctors, lawyers, entertainers, clergy, entrepreneurs, businessmen, and pioneers—basically all walks of life.

In October of 2009 Mr. Allen was honored with The Grand Cross by the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite. This is the highest individual honor that The Supreme Council bestows. It is a rare honorary degree that is bestowed on Thirty-third Degree Masons, and is awarded only for the most exceptional and extraordinary services. Mr. Allen is one of those exceptional Masons, a man who, in the words of the philosopher Jeremy Benson, sought "the greatest good for the greatest number."

It is a privilege to pay tribute to such an honorable and devoted citizen in the Fourth Congressional District of Texas, and I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognition of this great American, Fred Allen.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$12,639,779,478,641.89.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$2,001,353,732,348.09 so far this Congress.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

SERGEANT CANDICE BRIESE

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Sergeant Candice Briese on the occasion of her retirement from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and to recognize her contributions to the community for over three decades.

Sergeant Briese is a native of Galt, Missouri, but a lifelong resident of southern California. She has been a committed public servant with a professional career worthy of mention. Her extensive achievements and experience in law enforcement and security established her as a leader in community safety. Sergeant Briese served as a Deputy Sheriff in the Sybil Brand Institute, Lakewood Sheriff's Station, and Employee Support Services. As a Deputy Sheriff, she devoted her time and ef-

fort to ensuring safety in prisons, enforcing the law, and helping her department members through counseling and peer support.

Sergeant Briese has been a model public servant who always rises to meet challenges and never allows an obstacle to stop her in her efforts to improve the community. She served as a sergeant in the Men's Central Jail and in the notorious Twin Towers Correctional Facility. She has served with great dedication in various courts in Long Beach, Los Angeles, Inglewood, and Van Nuys.

While Sergeant Briese was serving at the Lakewood Sheriff's Station, she received a commendation from Sheriff Sherman Block for her heroic actions that saved the lives of five infants. She is known not only for her professionalism on the job, but also for her generous and compassionate nature. She was the leading force behind efforts to teach inmates how to read in the Biscailuz Recovery Center.

In addition to being a hardworking law enforcement officer, Sergeant Briese is also a wife and the mother of three successful children. I know that her husband, Glenn Jorritsma, and her children, Beu Alan Briese, Cara Bethanie Briese, and Ted Dustin Briese, are proud of her service.

I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Sergeant Candice Briese, for her distinguished service and outstanding commitment to our society.

CHARLIE WILSON

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I'd like to recognize a former Member of Congress who represented the 2nd Congressional District of Texas which I represent. While the 2nd Congressional District has changed in shape over the years, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a unique Texan who served his constituents and country well during his 24 years in the House of Representatives.

Charlie Wilson served 12 terms (1973–1997) in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was well known for his personality as big as Texas and is perhaps best known for his work to covertly direct billions of U.S. dollars in arms to Afghan rebels who were fighting the Soviets through his position on the House Appropriations Committee.

One of my favorite stories about Charlie Wilson is the story when as a young boy of 13 and living in Trinity, Texas, his dog Teddy got into the neighbor's yard. The neighbor, city official Charles Hazard, retaliated by mixing crushed glass into the dog's food. The dog died from internal bleeding. In response, Charlie decided to run for office against him in the next election. Charlie won by driving 96 voters from poor neighborhoods to the polls. Before they left the car, Charlie told them what Mr. Hazard had done to his dog Teddy. Charlie Wilson won that race by a margin of only 16 votes. This election started his political career.

Perhaps this event explains why he always fought for the underdog later in life. His efforts of aiding Afghans rebels with appropriate weaponry and machinery and in advocating for humanitarian aid were successful in help-

ing to defeat the Soviet Union and in bringing the Cold War to a close. He was also a tireless advocate for Texas in Washington, DC and helped bring business and industry to his district and State.

Charlie Wilson passed on February 10, 2010 in Lufkin, Texas, from a cardiopulmonary arrest. We are grateful for his service in the second congressional district of Texas and for his tireless efforts to advance freedom in Afghanistan and throughout the world. His death is a loss to Texas, and to our Nation.

HONORING MR. DAVID HOPKINS

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Mr. David Hopkins, recipient of the Harford County Agricultural Pioneer Award. Hopkins owns and operates a local produce stand, providing Harford Countians with fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Hopkins, a third generation farmer, was introduced to the direct-to-consumer produce business in the 1970s, when he and his brother worked for a local produce stand. In the 1980s when that stand closed, the Hopkins family began to sell produce from their farm. With the determination of Hopkins, his family produce stand flourished and the Hopkins family was able to build a pavilion to house the stand. In 2004, the produce stand was so successful they were able to sell the dairy cows.

In 2009, Hopkins assisted with Harford County's "Buy Local" campaign by allowing the Division of Agriculture to have its logo and slogan painted on the side of his barn. Hopkins continues to operate his stand with the help of his family, including his brother Daniel and son Aaron, who is continuing the family's farming legacy by studying Agriculture at the University of Delaware.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor Mr. David Hopkins, Harford County's Agricultural Pioneer of the year. The achievements of Mr. Hopkins produce stand should be a model to local businesses within Harford County.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. A.J. O'NEILL'S COMMITMENT TO AMERICA'S BIG 3 AUTOMAKERS, THEIR EMPLOYEES, AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY SUPPORT

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. A.J. O'Neill, a Berkley native and Royal Oak resident, for his community activism dedicated to highlighting the importance of our domestic automotive manufacturing industry to our economy and communities. As a Member of Congress it is both my privilege and honor to recognize Mr. O'Neill, today as he prepares to hold the 2nd Annual "Assembly Line Concert" at his café to support our

American Big 3 Automakers and their employees.

On April 1st of 2007, Mr. O'Neill opened his café in downtown Ferndale. From day one, Mr. O'Neill made a commitment to his community to do what he could to make Southeast Michigan a better place.

In late fall of 2008, during the Auto crisis, Mr. O'Neill started the "I Pledge America" campaign. The pledge is simple, "I promise America that, on my honor, when I buy a new vehicle, it will be a Detroit-born, Big Three (Ford, GM or Chrysler) automobile." I am proud to count myself among the over ten thousand signatories to this pledge.

After seeing the success of the "I Pledge America" campaign, Mr. O'Neill was inspired to do more. Starting on March 20th, 2009, and continuing 24 hours a day 7 days a week until April 1st, 2009, Mr. O'Neill hosted the first annual "Assembly Line Concert." The concert was a 288 hour marathon, featuring over 300 bands performing in honor and support of the domestic auto industry, with proceeds donated to the families of laid off auto workers. Due to the incredible success and length of this concert, Mr. O'Neill established a new Guinness World Record for the "longest continuous music concert by multiple artists."

Today represents the start of a new chapter in Mr. O'Neill's story as he hosts the "Second Annual Assembly Line Concert." This concert will exhibit 312 hours of continuous music performed by well over 300 bands and musical artists. Mr. O'Neill is poised to break his own Guinness record for the longest continuous music concert, with proceeds once again going to the families of struggling auto workers in Southeast Michigan.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Mr. A.J. O'Neill's dedication to the domestic auto industry, its tens of thousands of employees and retirees and the communities of Southeast Michigan as we work to rebuild and revitalize Michigan together.

CONGRATULATING DAVID KENNEY

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mr. David Kenney. Recently, both David and his business, Westrux International Inc., were awarded the International Circle of Excellence Award for 2009.

Awarded by Navistar, Inc., the Circle of Excellence is given to dealerships that achieve the highest level of performance in terms of operating and financial standards, market representation, and, most importantly, customer satisfaction. It is the highest honor that an International dealer can receive from Navistar.

David's business, Westrux International, Inc., consists of six dealer locations employing 213 people. Westrux International, Inc., has

now earned the Circle of Excellence Award a total of 13 times. David's dealership is also a multi-year winner of the IdealGold Award for Excellence, awarded to "IdealLease affiliates dedicated to success in the lease and rental industry."

These awards are a testament to Dave's reputation as a leader in the trucking industry through many years of hard work in the industry and service to his community. His leadership in the trucking industry is evident by his serving as chairman of the International Dealer Council and has also chaired the Parts Dealer Advisory Board. In his community, he is a member of a leadership coaching group, Vistage International. Additionally, Dave sits on St. Mary's College of California's School of Economics and Business Administration Advisory Board. Dave is also a devoted husband to his wife Jill, and father to four children.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating David Kenney for his accomplishments, his record of success, and his many contributions to his community, the State of California, and our nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, on Friday, March 12, 2010, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. I request that the RECORD show that had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 109 (on passage of H.R. 3650), "yes" on rollcall vote No. 110 (on approving the journal), and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 111 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4506, as amended).

CONGRATULATING ED KYRISH

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mr. Ed Kyrish. Recently, both Ed and his business, Texas Truck Centers of Houston, Ltd., were awarded the International Circle of Excellence Award for 2009.

Awarded by Navistar, Inc., the Circle of Excellence is given to dealerships that achieve the highest level of performance in terms of operating and financial standards, market representation, and, most importantly, customer satisfaction. It is the highest honor that an International dealer can receive from Navistar.

Family owned and operated since 1988, Texas Truck Centers of Houston, Ltd., is one of the premier truck dealerships in the country. Ed's business employs 264 people at five

dealer locations. In January of 2010, Ed and the International Truck community celebrated his 60th year of service to International. Ed and Texas Truck Centers have earned the Circle of Excellence Award 13 times.

The many awards that Ed and Texas Truck Centers earn are a testament to his reputation as a leader in the trucking industry. Ed serves as a member of the Parts Advisory Board of International's dealer organization. Ed has also been awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from International. Additionally, Ed has been recognized as an ADT Dealer of the Year.

Ed is also dedicated to his community. He co-founded the Richland Youth Organization's Girl's Softball League, served as softball league and Little League manager, and served as a leader with the Boy Scouts of America. Ed also is a devoted member of his school board and its fundraising committee, is a supporter of its Adopt A Family initiative, and is the chairman of his church board.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Ed Kyrish for his accomplishments, his record of success, and his many contributions to his community.

CONGRATULATING BLAINE ROBERTS

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mr. Blaine Roberts. Recently, both Blaine and his business, Roberts Truck Center, were awarded the International Circle of Excellence Award for 2009.

Awarded by Navistar, Inc., the Circle of Excellence is given to dealerships that achieve the highest level of performance in terms of operating and financial standards, market representation, and, most importantly, customer satisfaction. It is the highest honor that an International dealer can receive from Navistar.

Roberts Truck Center has grown into one of the premier truck dealerships in the Southwest. Blaine manages 8 of the 13 dealer locations that are part of the Roberts Truck Center family business, owned by Blaine and his brother Blair. The Roberts Truck Center employs 467 people and has earned the Circle of Excellence Award a total of 26 times.

Blaine has earned this recognition and accomplishment through years of hard work and being a dedicated servant of his community. He is committed to his industry and serves on a number of industry groups and boards including the International Dealer Development and Systems Board.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Blaine for his accomplishments, his record of success, and his many contributions to his community.