

Tommy is currently in the fifth grade at North Stonington Elementary School, which is located in North Stonington, Connecticut.

In celebration of Black History Month, I sponsored a creative writing contest for all third through eighth grade students within the Second District. As we know, Black History Month is a time to reflect on the struggles and triumphs of our nation's past. The lessons learned during this month continue to serve as the stepping stones of our nation's future. Tommy's essay eloquently embraces this belief.

Tommy's essay shows a remarkable enthusiasm for learning that is inspiring to all. He creatively discusses Rosa Parks and Wael Ghonim, describing how one defiant act has the power to affect an entire nation. For this, his essay was among the winners selected.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on official business and missed rollcall vote No. 263. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote No. 263.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF MS. TERI O'CONNOR

### HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Teri O'Connor, the recipient of the 2011 Women of Distinction Award presented by the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore. Ms. O'Connor has demonstrated unwavering commitment to serving the people of Monmouth County. Ms. O'Connor's devotion is undoubtedly deserving of this body's recognition.

Ms. O'Connor is currently the County Administrator for Monmouth County and manages the day-to-day operations of 60 county departments comprised of over 3,000 employees. Her responsibilities include supervising, directing and managing all county administrative departments, divisions and offices. She is also responsible for carrying out the policies and directives of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. In addition to her duties as County Administrator, Ms. O'Connor admirably serves as Administrator and Freeholder Representative to the Emergency Management Homeland Security Working Group since 2002. She has also supervised the County Insurance Office for 13 years. Ms. O'Connor is currently Freeholder Liaison to the Freehold Center Partnership as well as County Representative to Freehold's Downtown Planning & Design Committee. Through her personal, professional and community achievements, Ms. O'Connor embodies the mission of the Girl Scouts to help young girls build courage, confidence and character.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in leading this body in congratulating Ms. O'Connor for receiving the prestigious Women of Distinction

Award, presented by the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore. Her steadfast dedication is an example of what hard work and determination can accomplish.

#### APPLAUDING SUSAN G. KOMEN FOR THE CURE®

### HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, understanding the basics regarding risk factors, diagnosis, and treatment of breast cancer, has made a positive continuous journey towards better management and victory over the disease. The American Cancer Society in 2010 estimated that among U.S. women there would be more than 207,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer and nearly 40,000 breast cancer deaths.

However, despite the alarming numbers, there remains hope for a cure of this disease. Because of the efforts of Nancy G. Brinker who lost her sister to the fight of breast cancer, Ms. Brinker has done everything in her power to fulfill her promise of ending breast cancer forever. And, I am proud that the Susan G. Komen for the Cure®, is headquartered in my District, the 30th Congressional District of Texas.

Beyond leading the charge of eradicating breast cancer for women in the United States, Susan G. Komen for the Cure® remains the premier global leader at the forefront of the breast cancer movement since their 1982 inception. Komen has significantly contributed to the advancement of breast cancer research, education, advocacy, health services and social support programs in the United States and through partnerships in more than 50 countries as sustained by more than 100,000 volunteers who work in a network of 124 affiliates worldwide. Further, the organization is attributed to investing more than \$1.9 billion to the fight for breast cancer for women. I applaud the Susan G. Komen for the Cure® for their accomplishments, dedication, and commitment to unparalleled breast cancer advocacy efforts. As global citizens, by educating women about the available predictive screening and preventive care, we can successfully help our women, mothers, sisters and daughters to live longer, healthier lives.

#### A MAN OF GRACE

### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

A  
A man  
A man of grace  
Our Lord, upon this place  
Had so placed  
As a true reflection of His face  
All in this temple of democracy's faith  
This shrine our forefathers had so embraced  
For America was founded on such faith  
For no other experiment has since been  
raised

For Father Dan, you were a pioneer  
As America's first Catholic chaplain so here  
To spread the word, upon each morning  
heard

To council and to inspire, lifting hearts higher

All for our Nation's leaders, you never tired  
As an instrument of our Lord's heart  
Oh how you fine faith, has so done its part  
To bring a Congress through storms and dark  
All but with, the light of your fine heart  
And our Lord's word, casting out the dark  
And we will miss your kind warm face  
And your inspiring call to God, on each new day

And your warm heart, filled with such grace  
Forever, in our hearts you shall hold a place  
For your blessings bestowed upon us all  
Answering our Lord's call, call to faith  
For such people, Heaven so holds a place  
For such men of grace

In honor of father Dan Coughlin, and all of the hearts you have touched over the years  
... bless you—Albert Carey Caswell.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE ACCESS TO REHABILITATION ACT OF 2011

### HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2011 which Representative JAMES GERLACH and I are introducing today. This important bill repeals the monetary caps that limit beneficiary access to medically necessary outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services. Senators BEN CARDIN and SUSAN COLLINS are introducing this legislation in the Senate.

To remove all uncertainty for Medicare beneficiaries about being able to receive the appropriate therapy, the bipartisan Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2011 creates a stable payment environment so that health professionals can focus on providing quality health care. Rehabilitation services provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists are essential to assisting individuals reach their highest functional level possible and the monetary caps are inconsistent with this objective.

A March 2008 Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, study provided evidence that enforcement of the monetary caps could cause Medicare beneficiaries harm since it may require them to delay necessary medical care, force others to assume higher out-of-pocket costs, and disrupt the continuum of care for many seniors and individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the study demonstrated that the sickest patients who suffered from Parkinson's disease or who have multiple medical problems were most likely to exceed the monetary caps.

Since inclusion of the caps in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, both Democratic and Republican Congresses and Administrations have interceded to prevent their implementation and enforcement citing the negative impact the caps would have on elderly patients' access to necessary services. Most recently, Congress extended through 2011 the existing medical exceptions process that gives the

Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to allow patients to exceed the monetary caps if deemed medically necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to continue ensuring that Americans have access to the highest quality physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology services by supporting this legislation.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE IMPROVING ACCESS TO MEDICARE COVERAGE ACT

#### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 14, 2011*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing legislation to improve a component of our Medicare program that has left many without coverage of needed services and guaranteed benefits. My legislation, the Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act, will allow time spent on hospital observation status to count towards a three-day qualifying hospital stay requirement for skilled nursing care services. Under current regulations established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), only those that have received an inpatient designation and have a hospital stay of at least three days, qualify for Medicare coverage of skilled nursing care. Those on observation status, which is often indistinguishable from inpatient care, are excluded from this coverage because of an outdated and unfair CMS policy.

Our systems of care have changed, and so should our Medicare policies. This point has been reiterated in cases heard by administrative law judges involving Medicare coverage of skilled care and observation status designations. Many of these cases have supported the notion that Medicare should cover skilled nursing care, regardless if the patient's qualifying hospital stay is as an inpatient or on observation status. While administrative law judges have often supported patients in these cases, the CMS policy creates a system with arbitrary winners and losers, based on access to legal appeals. My legislation will fix this broken system.

The Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act will count time spent in hospital observation status towards the three-day hospital stay requirement for skilled nursing care. My bill will also establish a 90-day appeals period following passage for those that have been denied coverage after January 1, 2011 due to this CMS policy. The appeals process will allow those that have a qualifying hospital stay—either as an inpatient or on observation status—after January 1, 2011 to be eligible for skilled nursing care. While I believe that the legislative text clarifies that the appeals process is available to any Medicare beneficiary that has been denied coverage after January 1, 2011 due to this policy, there should be no doubt as to my congressional intent. It is my intent that any individual, regardless of whether an initial appeals process has expired, can appeal during the 90-day window following passage so long as their hospital stay and subsequent denial of skilled care occurred after January 1, 2011.

I also want to thank the Center for Medicare Advocacy for bringing to light the impact of

this broken policy. I look forward to working with the Center and the other organizations that have expressed their support of this legislation to bring resolution to this issue that has negatively impacted many of my constituents, and patients and families across the country, for far too long.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JOHN A. SMITH

#### HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 14, 2011*

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a leader in San Diego's veterans' community, and a treasured member of the San Diego family.

Mr. Smith was buried today in Miramar National Cemetery. My thoughts are with his family and friends as they mourn the loss of this honorable and dedicated man.

Mr. Smith joined the Army in 1966 and served as a medic with the 1st Air Cavalry Division in Vietnam. He was wounded three times while serving and was medically retired as a disabled veteran in 1972.

Following his time in military service, Mr. Smith became committed to honoring and advocating for veterans. His involvement with the Veterans Village of San Diego, and its annual Stand Down event to provide services to homeless veterans, exemplify his personal dedication to helping veterans experience an improved quality of life.

Through his active membership with the United Veterans Council, U.S. Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), American Legion, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Vietnam Veterans of America, and other organizations helping veterans, Mr. Smith touched many lives. He was also a special representative for the California Department of Veterans Affairs. His admirable reputation in San Diego is known far and wide in the veteran community. In 2004, Mr. Smith was honored as the San Diego County Veteran of the Year.

Mr. Smith's sense of integrity, dedication to service, and commitment to his community should serve as examples to us all. He will be missed.

#### RECOGNIZING AND HONORING GREATER KALAMAZOO ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

#### HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 14, 2011*

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure I rise today to recognize and honor the Greater Kalamazoo Association of REALTORS. For 100 years, this organization and its members have proudly served the people of southwest Michigan, while setting the bar for excellence within the real estate industry.

What began a century ago as a group of 29 individuals with the common purpose of promoting real estate in Kalamazoo, Michigan, the Greater Kalamazoo Association of REALTORS has grown to an organization with hundreds of members representing over 100 real estate firms.

Since 1911, the Greater Kalamazoo Association of REALTORS has been a leader in real estate, all the while maintaining the same professional and ethical standards upon which it was founded. From creating the first exchange of real estate listings in the State of Michigan to helping usher new industry technologies, Kalamazoo realtors represent the best in their field.

As we know, any organization or body is only as strong as the sum of its members. I would like to thank all of the members of the Greater Kalamazoo Association of REALTORS for their longstanding commitment to local economic growth as well as their work to improve housing standards and home financing, and promote private property rights and commonsense, pro-growth policies. They are truly leaders in putting Michigan back on track.

#### HONORING THE COMBAT SERVICE OF CORPORAL COLBEY YAZZIE

#### HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 14, 2011*

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of our country's wounded warriors.

Corporal Colbey Yazzie, a resident of Kayenta, Arizona and a 2007 graduate of Monument Valley High School, volunteered to serve our nation and joined the elite ranks of the United States Marine Corps just after high school graduation. We have spoken to Corporal Yazzie's father, Henry, who we know could not be more proud of his son. Corporal Yazzie is also a member of the Navajo Nation, a tribe that has provided our country with brave warriors year after year for decades. For this sacrifice, I stand here and pay our respects as a nation and I ask for a moment of prayer.

Today I want to specifically honor Corporal Colbey Yazzie. Corporal Colbey Yazzie was deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. He was assigned to the Marine Corps Combat Engineers. Corporal Yazzie was seriously wounded while supporting combat operations while engaged in a dismounted marine force patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He detonated a push plate improvised explosive device while on this combat patrol, and the resulting explosion severed his right leg above the knee.

Just shortly before Corporal Colbey Yazzie was injured, author Bing West travelled with Corporal Yazzie's unit, and described the high level of professionalism, determination and bravery these Marines demonstrated day in and day out. I truly wished everyone in America understood the sacrifice, bravery and diligence our Marines embody. The article is called "With the Warriors: Patrol Base Fires, Sangin District, Helmand Province, Afghanistan" and was published in the March 7th edition of the National Review. Let me excerpt some of what Mr. West wrote about Corporal Yazzie and his unit, again, shortly before Corporal Yazzie was injured:

The view from this platoon outpost in southern Afghanistan is unobstructed, both visually and strategically. On all sides stretch flat, bare, winter farmlands dotted with walled compounds. The strategy is aggressive patrolling to kill and drive out the