

home from overseas we need to support programs such as Troops for Teachers that successfully transition them from the military back into civilian life.

I have seen firsthand the success of this program by visiting teachers in my district who returned from service and used the program's stipend to help pay for teaching certification classes and exams. This amendment is a win-win for our veterans and our students.

I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this bipartisan amendment.

HONORING THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON ITS 93RD ANNI- VERSARY OF "REPUBLIC DAY"

HON. DAN BOREN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. BOREN. Mr. Speaker, Speaker, as the co-chairman of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the Republic of Azerbaijan as it celebrates its 93rd Republic Day on May 28, 2011. Later this year, Azerbaijan will also celebrate the 20th anniversary of its freedom from the Soviet Union and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States. These events both represent important milestones in Azerbaijan's history.

Azerbaijan has progressed over twenty years to become a key ally to the United States in a strategically important region. Azerbaijan is located between Russia and Iran in the geopolitically dynamic region between Europe and Asia. It is a secular democracy with a predominantly Muslim population that has been home to vibrant Christian and Jewish communities for over a millennium.

Azerbaijan continues to offer multi-faceted support for U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan, in part by providing medical services for injured Afghans and training for Afghan Security Forces. As highlighted by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Azerbaijan plays a key role in supporting the Northern Distribution Network, which provides passage for Coalition supplies bound for Afghanistan. Finally, Azerbaijan provides vital support to U.S. nonproliferation efforts.

In addition to supporting U.S. security interests in the region, Azerbaijan serves a paramount role in supplying the United States and Europe with oil and gas. It is the only secular Muslim country that maintains close ties with Israel, supplying roughly a quarter of Israel's oil.

Again, as the co-chairman of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, it is my pleasure to honor the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of its 93rd Republic Day. For my colleagues who are interested in supporting Azerbaijan, I encourage them to consider joining the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, which works to strengthen and grow the valuable partnership between the United States and Azerbaijan.

30 YEARS OF DEDICATED WORK BY THE GREAT SWAMP WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA) located in Morris County, New Jersey, which is celebrating 30 years of successful natural resource protection in the Great Swamp Wildlife Refuge.

Thousands of years ago, the melting waters of large retreating glaciers formed a massive glacial lake called Glacial Lake Passaic. Over the years, the lake drained to leave wetlands, which form a part of the Great Swamp in New Jersey. This federally-protected land is home to a large variety of plants, animals, and humans, as well as several federally-designated threatened species.

After the creation of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in 1964, a small group of citizens became concerned with protecting and improving water resources in the ten municipalities that bordered the Great Swamp. In 1981, this grass-roots group created the GSWA in order to protect the land and water in these towns. Through its efforts, the organization has acquired fifty-three acres of property in the area surrounding the Refuge, while working to preserve local streams and maintain local water quality.

The GSWA has grown from its roots to include 2,200 members in over 40 New Jersey municipalities. Today, the organization continues to protect environmentally sensitive land through land acquisition and promoting the strengthening of environmental regulations in New Jersey. With the support of its staff, trustees, and many valuable volunteers, the Association helped develop the first-ever water quality standards for the Great Swamp Watershed, which aid scientists, policy makers and local officials in protecting water resources from further degradation and in restoring those resources that have been harmed. Although the GSWA's work is centered primarily within the towns directly served by the Great Swamp Watershed, the results of its persistence extend to the more than one million people in Northern New Jersey who obtain their drinking water from the Passaic River.

In addition, the GSWA fosters environmental awareness and provides environmental education for children and adults throughout the state. Over 1,500 students have benefitted from its three-dimensional watershed model that illustrates how individual and group actions affect water quality in the local area. The organization invites teachers to participate in programs that show them how to use their own school grounds as areas for environmental education. The GSWA also offers several family programs within the watershed that introduce area residents to the natural history in their own backyards. In providing these programs, the GSWA teaches communities of the ecological value of the Great Swamp watershed, as well as the importance of restoring the property and protecting it from land development.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Great Swamp Watershed Association for its 30 years of

dedicated work on behalf of the great State of New Jersey.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZA- TION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 25, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1540) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Chair, today, I rise on behalf of all of West Virginia's National Guard and proudly support the Miller/Rahall amendment based on my legislation, the Guardians of Freedom Act of 2011—a bill to elevate the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to a position on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The body politic of the National Guard—nearly a half-million strong supports this amendment, as does the National Guard Coalition, composed of Adjutants General Association, the National Guard Association, and Enlisted Association of the National Guard.

The National Guard is one of our Nation's longest-standing institutions, empowered by Congress and providing to the States a highly trained and well-equipped force to protect life and property. Over the course of its nearly four-hundred year history, the National Guard has remained a dual State-Federal force, providing security on the home front and fighting threats to our Nation and our freedoms all over the globe.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 brought about historic empowerment changes for the National Guard, elevating the Chief of the National Guard to the rank of four-star general and providing the Chief a stronger voice inside the Pentagon. This year, the 2012 Defense Authorization bill also adds a vice-chief to assist with the increasing responsibilities of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. But we must do more in giving the Chief a seat at the negotiating table.

As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau would have responsibility and authority to advocate and coordinate the Guard's war fighting support and force provider mission with its homeland security and support missions to ensure the Guard has the resources to perform its multiple missions and fulfill its Constitutional role to our States.

Madam Chair, from the battlefield to the home fields, our National Guard—America's patriots—exemplifies sacrifice and commitment to duty.

West Virginians volunteer for the National Guard at nearly double the national rate. The West Virginia National Guard has 38 units and activities stationed in 22 counties throughout West Virginia, and currently has units deployed in military operations around the world.

The American people owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our nearly 500,000 men and women members of the National Guard in

service to these great United States. These extraordinary individuals maintain the Guard's multi-mission role—providing nearly 33 percent of America's combat power globally. Yet, simultaneously and with great skill, from approximately 3,400 community-based armories they serve their fellow citizens in defense of our homeland, and in support to States and local civil authorities and emergency response needs.

Now more than ever, this Nation is relying upon the Guard to wage combat on foreign soil, straining our resources here on the home front to respond to domestic disasters and the Guard's traditional duties. The training, equipping, and deployment of the Guard, and their budget, ought to be matters decided with input from the National Guard Chief at the highest levels of the military echelon. Now more than ever, the Guard needs a seat at the head table.

HONORING RABBI JUDITH S.
LEWIS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, Rabbi Judith S. Lewis became the rabbi of Riverdale Temple in the summer of 2006, after having served for 14 years as the Senior Rabbi of Temple Israel of the City of New York. She began her tenure at Temple Israel as the Director of Education for six years.

In 2005 she earned an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, where she was ordained in 1980. She was part of the first generation of women rabbis, ordained at a time when there were fewer than a dozen women in the Reform rabbinate. Her undergraduate degree was in Philosophy, from Oberlin College in Ohio.

Rabbi Lewis was born and raised in Rochester, New York where her extended family participated in congregations of every denomination. A favored childhood recollection is the successive observance of Jewish holidays at each congregation. Once services ended at her family's Reform synagogue, they would often go to join her grandparents in their Conservative congregation, and finally join aunts and uncles at the Orthodox synagogue to finish the celebration of the holiday.

Rabbi Lewis says she has enjoyed directing the religious school this year calling the students are among the most delightful young people she has ever met. Jewish education has been a life-long passion for her and she has the rare ability to inculcate her students with that passion and enthusiasm.

Rabbi Lewis is being honored at the Riverdale Temple's Annual Student Scholarship breakfast. I join with the Temple in honoring this wonderful teacher as she completes her 30th year in the rabbinate, and thank her for her many contributions to the Temple, its students, and the community.

CONGRATULATING MAYOR
RICHARD M. DALEY

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Chicago's "idea a minute" Mayor Richard M. Daley. On September 7, 2010, Mayor Daley announced that after his 22 years in office, he would not seek re-election. But during those 22 years, Chicagoans were privileged to be served by a man with such vision, passion, and inimitable love for our city.

Mayor Daley not only improved the quality of life in Chicago, but also made it one of the most environmentally friendly cities in the world. He did so by encouraging businesses to use green technology and helping companies save money by becoming more sensitive to the environment. Mayor Daley directed the planting of thousands of trees, the building of green roofs, and construction of nearly one-hundred square miles of landscaped medians. Mayor Daley also built and improved infrastructure, such as the 1996 revamp of State Street and the 2002 rebuilding of Wacker Drive.

Many new tourist attractions were overseen by Mayor Daley during his time in office, as he was committed to ensuring Chicago remained a world-class city. In 1998, the Museum Campus opened to the public. The campus formed an uninterrupted, pedestrian-friendly green space for Chicago's three natural science museums. Later, in 2004, he unveiled Millennium Park. Continuing Chicago's tradition of sculpture and architecture, the park includes Anish Kapoor's "Cloud Gate", also known as "The Bean," an interactive multimedia fountain of faces created by Jaume Plensa, and a beautiful garden designed by Kathryn Gustafson. Mayor Daley also played an instrumental role in the renovation and transformation of Navy Pier into Chicago's most popular tourist attraction.

Along with beautifying the City, Mayor Daley made Chicago a safer place for our children and families. From creating the City's first community policing programs to installing safety cameras outside schools to working closely with Mayors Against Illegal Guns, Mayor Daley has made fighting neighborhood crime and education a priority. He has improved the performance of Chicago's public schools by enhancing school safety and creating after-school and early childhood education programs. Because of Mayor Daley's focus on education, fewer students are dropping out of school and more are moving on to higher education.

Our city's outgoing mayor was also a good friend to the LGBT community and a national trailblazer for equality, because it was the right thing to do. He formed an LGBT Advisory Council for the city, and Chicago remains the only city in the country to recognize the civic contributions of the LGBT community in an annual ceremony recognizing our LGBT Hall of Fame, into which Mayor Daley was inducted in 2006.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Mayor Richard M. Daley, 45th mayor of the City of Chicago. I commend him for his 22 years of service on the fifth floor and through-

out the neighborhoods that make our home the best city in the world. He leaves a legacy of service and passion for preserving and improving the city we all know and love, Chicago. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for everything. I wish you, Maggie, and your entire family nothing but the best.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL G. GRIMM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 344, I was unavoidably detained and the amendment was gavelled closed before I could cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

THANKING AL POWERS FOR HIS
SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. DANIEL E. LUNGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement on June 2nd 2011, we rise to thank Mr. Al Powers for his more than twenty-nine years of distinguished service to the United States House of Representatives.

Al began his career with the House working in the office of Representative Bob Whittaker as an Office Assistant, and when the Member retired, he was the office Press Assistant. Time spent handling press issues led to the idea for the House Enterprise Facsimile Service which he was instrumental in helping to develop when he joined House Information Resources (HIR) in the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (Office of the CAO) as a Systems Engineer. This service is currently used by the House. Al was also instrumental in the inception of many services that are critical to the House today—including the current E-mail system.

Al's knowledge, experience, dedication and consistently outstanding performance in his daily tasks has set a fine example in providing superior customer service and has earned the respect of his co-workers.

On behalf of the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Al Powers for his many years of dedication, outstanding contributions and service to the United States House of Representatives.

We wish him many wonderful years in fulfilling his retirement dreams.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I missed the vote on Campbell amendment #54 to H.R. 1540, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012. Had I voted, I would have voted "no" on the amendment.