

Centreville, Virginia, on the occasion of his retirement at the end of February after 38 years of public service with the Internal Revenue Service.

Throughout his tenure with the IRS, Mr. Falcone provided an example of model leadership through his work in both tax administration and later in support operations. He served in various roles such as Director of Facilities and Operations, Director of Real Estate and Facilities Management, IRS Human Capital Officer, and the first acting Chief of Mission Assurance. During his career, Mr. Falcone assisted with many successful initiatives, including the reorganization of the IRS following the passage of the Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998. He also played a role in establishing the Mission Assurance organization following the September 11th terrorist attacks. That effort instituted new safeguards for the tax administration and assured the safety of its employees, facilities, and information systems. In addition, Mr. Falcone assisted in reducing the size of the IRS' real estate portfolio to realize operation efficiencies.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Mr. Falcone for his lifelong service to our constituents. His distinguished career and accomplishments serve as a reminder of the great value of public service to our country, and I congratulate him on his retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. MARY  
ELLEN WEBER

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 7, 2012*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman, Dr. Mary Ellen Weber. She is a veteran Astronaut, an instrument-rated pilot, a world-class skydiver, and Vice President of Government Affairs and Policy at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

As a NASA Astronaut for ten years, Dr. Weber inspired and awed our nation by completing two Space Shuttle flights, 297 earth orbits, and traveling 7.8 million miles. Among the youngest Astronauts ever to venture into space, she served as a pioneer for space exploration by flying aboard the Atlantis on mission STS-101. The mission was a critical early construction project for the International Space Station, in which she spent over eighteen days in space. She helped launch \$200 million communications satellite into Earth orbit when she flew aboard Discovery in 1995 on mission STS-70. After holding prestigious positions relaying reports to NASA's highest directors, she was awarded the NASA Exceptional Service Medal.

Not only is she a veteran in space, but she is an avid skydiver and pilot. She shares a world record for the largest freefall formation with 300 skydivers. She has logged over 4,000 skydives, and received twelve silver and bronze medals from the U.S. National Skydiving Championships. In addition, she is an instrument-rated pilot with over 600 hours in NASA's jet aircraft.

Dr. Weber was destined to share her knowledge of science. She received an M.B.A. from Southern Methodist University, a Ph.D. in

physical chemistry from the University of California at Berkeley, and a B.S. in chemical engineering from Purdue University. She published eight scientific papers and received one patent. In 2003, she became Vice President of Government Affairs and Policy at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. UT Southwestern Medical Center is one highest acclaimed medical school, research, and hospital complex in Dallas, Texas.

I was sworn in as a Member of Congress in 2003 and that is how I met Dr. Weber in her role with UT Southwestern Medical Center. With her support and leadership, we were able to create a Health Care Fellowship between my office and UT Southwestern Medical Center. This successful program has provided what has become a very well regarded opportunity for Medical Doctors to have a front row seat in Congress to participate in the health care policy process. We have also partnered with UT Southwestern Medical Center on several joint events on their campus in Dallas. The Fellowship and events could not have been successfully executed without the guidance provided by Dr. Weber and the leadership at UT Southwestern.

On February 8, 2012, Dr. Weber will be leaving UT Southwestern after nine years in government affairs. Her contribution to the NASA's space program and UT Southwestern Medical Center has been unprecedented and her departure will soon leave a void in many hearts. It is my great privilege to recognize Dr. Mary Ellen Weber for the ingenuity and commitment she has shown to the people of UT Southwestern, NASA, and our Nation.

TO EXTEND THE PAY LIMITATION  
FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS  
AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

SPEECH OF

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 1, 2012*

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I don't think there is anyone in this country who supports increasing pay for Members of Congress. I certainly don't, which is why I voted in favor of H.R. 3835 on Wednesday. Throughout my tenure in this body, I have continually voted to cut, freeze, and otherwise limit pay for Members. With so many folks across Virginia's First District and the nation struggling to feed their families or find a job, Congress has got to lead by example and show that it is serious about tackling this country's economic woes in a responsible manner.

An important part of being responsible, however, is the ability to be fair, and I fear that H.R. 3835 sets an unfair precedent by targeting a particular group of public servants who are already tasked to do so much for their country: federal employees. Government workers have been under a pay freeze since December of 2010, and this legislation would extend that freeze through 2013. These hard-working patriots serve our nation on a daily basis, whether it be keeping our skies safe for travelers with the FAA or supporting our troops on the front lines of the war on terror with the CIA. From the lowest GS-1 to the highest GS-15, the federal workforce is full of dedicated and committed citizens who exem-

plify patriotism in everything they do. There is no question that changing the unsustainable trajectory of this nation will take sacrifice from us all, but continually singling out federal employees is an ineffective and unjustified response to the nation's fiscal struggles.

Although I have serious concerns with the federal employee pay freeze, I ultimately voted for this legislation because Congress must lead by example and freeze our own pay first. I would like to remind my colleagues that long after we are all gone, federal employees will continue to selflessly serve this nation, as they have since its inception. Repeatedly singling them out is no way to thank them for their dedicated contributions. I am hopeful that future deficit reduction efforts in this body will focus on more realistic methods of savings that truly address the drivers of our debt so that we can foster an environment of job creation and prosperity in this country.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF OFFICER STEVEN DION GREEN, SR.

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 7, 2012*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the service of a fallen hero, Officer Steven Green of the Mobile, Alabama Police Department, who recently gave his life in the line of duty.

On February 3, 2012, Officer Green, age 36, was fatally wounded while transporting a robbery suspect. Mobile feels the deep pain of the loss of this young, dedicated protector of the peace. His untimely death has deeply saddened our community and even moved others from around the nation to add their many voices to the long list of those offering condolences to his family.

Officer Green dutifully served the Mobile Police Department and the people of Mobile since May 2010. He was stationed to the Department in the First Precinct and was on assignment in the Fifth Precinct at the time of his death.

A native of Mobile, Officer Green was a graduate of Blount High School where he distinguished himself as an outstanding athlete and member of the Varsity Football team. After high school, he contributed his considerable athletic talents and love of sports to the service of young people by coaching Little League Football.

Mr. Speaker, there is a special calling for those who would lay down their lives to guarantee the safety of others. Those who answer this call to serve with courage and conviction often don't seek the limelight or reward . . . they do what they do because they know it is right. Officer Steven Green was just such a person.

Officer Green is survived by a very large and loving family, including his dear wife, Valerie, and their lovely children, Jasmine, Tariyah, and Steven, Jr.

On behalf of the people of Mobile and South Alabama, I offer my deepest condolences to each of them and to all of Officer Green's many family, friends and fellow officers. You will never be far from our hearts as we all reflect upon the devoted service of Officer Green. May God bless you all.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL  
MARRIAGE WEEK**HON. J. RANDY FORBES**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 7, 2012*

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of National Marriage Week, which is observed each year from February 7th to 14th. During National Marriage Week, organizations and individuals across America collaborate on programs designed to strengthen marriages, reduce the divorce rate, and acknowledge the institution of marriage as a vital factor in promoting family and community stability. Although it is important that we devote ourselves to strengthening our marriages each day of the year, National Marriage Week provides an important opportunity for us collectively to pause and reflect on the crucial role that marriage plays as the foundation of a strong and healthy society. In so doing, it is my hope that we will be inspired to work even harder to protect this sacred institution.

Marriage is ordained by God and provides innumerable benefits to spouses and their children. Studies suggest that married men and women experience greater financial stability, longer life spans, and a decreased risk of depression—particularly among married mothers. Children in married families also reap a host of benefits, including increased physical health, lower rates of alcohol and substance abuse, and a reduced risk of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

I remain committed to the conviction that traditional marriage is worth protecting. The data demonstrates what many of us have long known: marriage between a man and a woman is one of the cornerstones of strength of our country, and is the foundation of families across America. I encourage you to join me in celebrating National Marriage Week by renewing your dedication to your spouse, and considering ways in which you can strengthen your commitment and devotion each day.

NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS  
AWARENESS DAY**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 7, 2012*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, today is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and I rise to highlight the struggle of the African American community against this terrible disease. The theme for this year is "I am My Brother's/Sister's Keeper: Fight HIV/AIDS". HIV is a crisis in the Black Community and has been for thirty years.

African Americans are disproportionately affected by this disease. According to the CDC, an estimated 1 in 16 black men and 1 in 32 black women will be diagnosed with HIV infection at some point in their lifetimes; and an African American woman is 15 times more likely to be living with HIV than a white woman of the same age. The CDC also notes that in 2007, HIV was the ninth leading cause of death for all blacks and the third leading cause of death for black women and black men aged 35–44.

Today, the New York Health Department announced that new HIV data shows a 41% drop in deaths among black persons living with HIV/AIDS in New York between 2001 and 2010. Though this is promising new information, the black community is still disproportionately affected by this disease. More than 107,000 New Yorkers are living with HIV, but thousands more don't know they're infected. New York City's AIDS case rate is almost 3 times the U.S. national average. Brooklyn alone has the highest population of any borough in New York City and has one of the highest HIV infection rates among Black and Latina women in the country. According to a Brooklyn based research institution, in 2008 nearly 30% of people living with HIV/AIDS in New York City, who died, were Brooklyn residents.

African Americans are more likely to be diagnosed late in the course of HIV infection, less likely to be connected with care and less likely to be prescribed the necessary preventative and life preserving anti-retroviral medications. Blacks are also most likely to die from HIV-related causes.

These are sobering statistics, but they offer us the opportunity to spread awareness and take action to provide the community with the help they need. The Affordable Care Act, which I fully supported, is a fantastic opportunity to provide assistance to African Americans as well as others suffering from this disease. It stops providers from denying coverage to HIV positive children and adults as well as providing increased access to Medicaid and other prescription assistance programs. However, until this act is fully implemented, we must work hard and work together to educate and provide access to care for those who need it most.

We cannot let the black community continue to bear the most severe burden of all racial groups. We must stand together to support the community and take action against the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. We must ensure our youth receive comprehensive education about the disease to help prevent infections in future generations. Until we put an end to AIDS, we must remain united to achieve the common goal of prevention and treatment for all.

## HONORING MR. RICHARD L. COTTA

**HON. JEFF DENHAM**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 7, 2012*

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Mr. Richard L. Cotta on his retirement from the California Dairies, Inc., and to thank him for his dedication to the agriculture community.

Since 2007, Richard L. Cotta held the title of President and CEO of California Dairies, Inc. (CDI). He spent his entire career in the dairy industry in virtually all aspects of the dairy business—from the dairy farm to genetics, to dairy processing and dairy politics.

Cotta's career at CDI began in 1993, when he joined San Joaquin Valley Dairymen—a dairy processing and marketing cooperative—as its General Manager.

In 1999, San Joaquin Valley Dairymen merged with Danish Creamery and California Milk Producers to form CDI. Cotta was named

Senior Vice President of Producer Affairs and Government Relations at CDI, a role he held until he was named CEO in 2007. Under his leadership, CDI profits reached record levels.

From 1984 to 1993, Cotta served as the CEO of Western United Dairymen, the largest producer trade association in the state. From 1980 to 1984, he was the CEO of United Dairymen of California, a producer trade organization, until it merged to form Western United Dairymen.

Cotta testified before the U.S. Congress and the California Legislature on behalf of the dairy industry. At the request of the Secretary of Agriculture, he participated in world trade missions to open the U.S. dairy market overseas.

Previously, he worked as a sire analyst for American Breeders Service, a classifier for the Holstein Association of America and a principle in Genetics, Inc. For several years, he was a dairy consultant with many successful dairies on feeding, breeding and management systems.

Cotta graduated with honors from California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, with a degree in Dairy Husbandry. He currently owns and operates Cotta Farms and is a partner in Terra Bella Farms, both almond farming operations.

Cotta currently sits on the following boards—U.C. Davis Deans Advisory Council, California State University Chancellors Agriculture Advisory Council, Sacred Heart School Foundation, and the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. In addition, he sits on the Globalization Operating Committee for the U.S. Dairy Export Council.

Past board seats include—California Creamery Operators Association (Chairman), Dairy Cares Board (Chairman) California Dairy Research Foundation, U.S. Dairy Export Council, National Holstein Foundation, DairyAmerica (Chairman) and Challenge Dairy Products.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in commending Richard L. Cotta for his hard work in the California Dairy Industry and in congratulating him upon his retirement from the California Dairies, Inc.

NEW YORK CITY NATURAL GAS  
SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 6, 2012*

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of the "New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act" (H.R. 2606). This bipartisan legislation will authorize the Secretary of Interior to allow the construction and operation of natural gas pipeline facilities in the New York portion of the Gateway National Recreation Area.

My southeastern Queens district includes part of the Gateway National Recreation Area near Kennedy Airport, including the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. I have long supported efforts to improve the environment in and around Gateway as well as to enhance Gateway's facilities.

I join with Congressman GRIMM and Congressman TURNER in thanking Resources Chairman HASTINGS, Ranking Member MARKEY, Subcommittee Chair BISHOP and Ranking