

in August 1994. During his last assignment, while serving as the Commander of the United States Army Readiness Group, at Patrick Air Force Base, he also served as the Department of Defense Coordinating Officer responsible for coordination of all disaster response and recovery missions assigned to the Department of Defense in wildfires in Georgia and in Hurricane Andrew in south Florida. He also served as the manager of the Disaster Field Office in Albany, Georgia, during the floods of 1994.

Bob served as the Director of Brevard County Emergency Management from April 1997 until his death on January 11, 2012. I applaud his commitment to our community, military and the future of our Armed Services.

Former Governor Lawton Chiles appointed Lay to the Governor's Wildfire Response and Mitigation Review Committee following wildfires in 1998, and he represented the Central Florida Region as Emergency Management Co-Chair for Central Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force since 1999. He served on the Regional Local Emergency Planning Committee and on the Joint Toxic Hazard Control Team representing the public surrounding Kennedy Space Center and Canaveral Air Force Station. He was instrumental in establishing unity of effort as a regionalization of resources within the Central Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force area.

Lay was recognized by the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association as the Emergency Management Professional of the Year for 2003 and received a Distinguished Service Award from the National Hurricane Conference in 2004 for outstanding leadership in response to hurricanes Charlie, Frances and Jeanne.

Bob was the President of Ascension Lutheran Church's Congregational Council and served on the Board of Directors of the Community Services Council and the Eastern Florida Maritime Area Security Committee, as well as representing Emergency Management on FEMA's National Advisory Council.

Bob is survived by his wife, Patti, two sons, a daughter and three grandchildren. This is a sudden and tragic loss for our community. Bob was a great guy, a true leader and someone who we all relied on to get us through the hurricanes, storms and other devastating events. He was calm in a crisis, cool under pressure and there was not a challenge Bob wasn't ready to face. Bob embodied the true meaning of public service.

"Bob has been an absolute rock for many, many years," said Brevard County Sheriff Jack Parker.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends that knew and loved him.

I am honored to rise in support of Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret) Bob Lay's service to our nation, and I am proud of his commitment to the cause of liberty, freedom and public service.

HONORING EDUCATOR AND VIETNAM VETERAN FELIX EUGENE GARRETT III

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 13, 2012*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of

Mr. Felix Eugene Garrett III, a loving husband and devoted father. Mr. Garrett was a talented individual who bravely served our country and, as an educator, worked for years improving the minds and lives of his students.

In service to his country, Mr. Garrett completed a tour of duty in Vietnam before being assigned to Air Force bases in various regions of the world. In 1975, Mr. Garrett retired after honorably and faithfully serving for more than 20 years in the defense of our Nation.

Consistent with his selfless character and devotion to public service, Mr. Garrett went on to become assistant principal at Elgin High School. Mr. Garrett quickly moved up the ranks to ultimately retire as a school administrator from the Temple Independent School District in 1993, leaving behind a legacy of helping children of all backgrounds and ages.

Mr. Garrett's personal life was just as rich as his professional life. Mr. Garrett enjoyed a wide range of hobbies, including hunting, community service, and cherishing his membership in Mensa, the largest and oldest high-IQ society in the world.

Mr. Garrett was a proud University of Texas fan, and traveled far and wide to support the Longhorns during a number of their most notable victories. Mr. Garrett was also proud to see his daughter, Machree Garrett Gibson, become the first African American female president of Texas Exes, the University of Texas' Alumni Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to hear of Mr. Garrett's passing, although it is my hope that his family may take solace in the fact that he lived a long and fulfilling life. He will be remembered for his dedication to his family, his community, and his unwavering service to his country.

#### HONORING OFIELD DUKES

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 13, 2012*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Ofield Dukes, an African American pioneer in the field of public relations, and a longtime influential champion of civil rights.

Before Ofield Dukes founded Ofield Dukes and Associates, he served as deputy director for public affairs for the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and Plans for Progress as well as deputy director for public affairs in the Lyndon B. Johnson Administration. He was a communications consultant for every Democratic presidential campaign since 1972. His work was instrumental in establishing the Congressional Black Caucus and in creating the national holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Born in Rutledge, Alabama in 1932 and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Dukes served in the Korean War as a member of the United States Army. He earned a degree in journalism from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. After graduation, he spent several years crafting his skills at WCHB radio as the news director until and then got his break at the Michigan Chronicle, where he won several National Newspaper Publishers Association awards. His accomplishments caught the attention of President Lyndon B. Johnson, who

tapped Dukes to become deputy director of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and Plans for Progress, and a year later he became deputy director of public affairs. In 1969, Dukes started his own public relations firm in Washington, DC, Ofield Dukes and Associates. His first client was Motown Records, and he went on to represent multinational companies such as AT&T, Sony Music Entertainment, and RJR Nabisco. During this period, Dukes was a key figure in establishing the Congressional Black Caucus, including organizing the first Congressional Black Caucus Dinner in 1971. In the 1980s, Dukes joined forces with Stevie Wonder in organizing a march in Washington for a national holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.. He founded the Black Public Relations Society of Washington, DC., giving black public relations professionals a place to meet and cultivate ideas. Dukes was known to say, "Public relations is synonymous with human communication." In a publication of the African American Public Relations Collective, he said, "Even Jesus Christ was involved in communications. He had the disciples as advance persons and John the Baptist was sort of a PR agent." He said that public relations is more than just promoting an event or just engaging in an outpouring of publicity.

In addition to his stellar career, Ofield Dukes was an educator who gave selflessly of his time and talent. He was an adjunct professor at Howard University and later American University for nearly three decades.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in honoring Ofield Dukes not only for his accomplishments in public relations but for his service to our Nation.

#### THE LEGACY OF BISHOP L.M. MITCHELL

**HON. PHIL GINGREY**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 13, 2012*

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the Civil Rights exhibit, "The Road to Freedom," honors the legacy of Bishop L.M. Mitchell and the leadership exemplified by great faith and courage.

As a successful entrepreneur himself, he exposed black entrepreneurship to Rome, Georgia. He taught practical principles to the church, inspiring the followers to open a pathway for some type of business of their own.

Lattace Mack Mitchell was born December 18, 1872, in South Carolina, the son of a former slave. He joined the Fire Baptize Church in his early teens, and organized his first church on October 23, 1912, in a shoe shop with three members. He attended Gammon Theological Seminary in South Carolina, and due to the depression, he had lived in New Hampshire and New York before moving to Atlanta, Georgia. He came to Atlanta in May 1919, and organized the Overcoming Church of God. He placed a tent on the corner of Ira and Bass Street in Atlanta, and preached night and day without fear or favor. From this, the Overcoming Church of God was organized and grew throughout the Southeast and Northeast parts of the United States.

He was led to Rome, Georgia, in 1921. The most memorable anecdote was a racial incident—as told by Bishop Mitchell—that when

he and his partners came from Atlanta to Rome for the first time and attempted to go South on Broad Street, somewhere between Sixth Avenue and the Cotton Block, he was followed by a police car. While approaching the Etowah River Bridge, he was stopped by a white officer from the Rome City Police and asked where he was going. As a native of Atlanta, he had been put in jail many times for speaking out on injustices, and when the officer spoke to him, he proceeded getting out of his car; showing no fear. He was a black man driving a 1921 Black Cadillac. He was 6'6" and he wore a size 15 shoe. He pointed ahead and looking down on him, he told the officer, "Do you see that bridge? I'm going to cross that bridge, but I don't know what the condition of it will be, when I return." He was letting the officer know that he was not afraid of whatever might happen to him. He knew it was a possibility that the bridge might be impassable when he needed to cross back over. Yet he had no fear in addressing a white officer during a segregated time in a small rural town in 1921. Bishop Mitchell said the officer looked up and told him to get back into his car and proceed across the bridge.

He continued coming to Rome and became a resident. He found a handful of saints worshipping under the leadership of Mother Ricks. He began preaching, day and night, at 200 Nixon Avenue. At that time, the church was in financial trouble. He helped the church get out of debt, and afterwards, it was completely renovated. The church was named New Hope.

Bishop Mitchell was an entrepreneur, investing in rental property throughout the Rome community. He understood the disadvantages of being a black businessman in the South, but that did not stop him from reaching his goals. No matter what the opposition, the success of the church can be attributed to the zeal and honesty of the man who is credited with founding the New Hope Overcoming Church in Rome, Georgia. He lived at 500 Wilson Avenue and served as leader of the Church of God for forty-six years, until his death in 1966. He was the first to be buried in the Shadyside Memorial Gardens, a cemetery located in South Rome. He was highly respected by his peers, who gave honorable remarks at his funeral services: Rev. J.L. Vaughn (Lovejoy Baptist Church), Rev. Clarence Tuggle (Thankful Baptist Church), Rev. G.P. Bowman (Mt. Calvary Baptist Church) and Rev. J.W. Baxter (Solomon Temple).

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IN HONOR OF CHARLES ROUSE,  
VIETNAM VETERAN AND RECIPIENT  
OF THE SILVER STAR AND  
BRONZE STAR

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### HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 13, 2012*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Specialist Four Charles Rouse, a courageous and gallant American veteran. Not only

did he risk his life to defend America's ideals in Vietnam, but he served with such heroism that he was awarded two of the most distinguished military honors one can receive, the Silver Star and the Bronze Star. Mr. Rouse's patriotism and allegiance to his country are nothing short of astounding, and we all owe our livelihoods to individuals like him who make similar sacrifices and bold choices every day.

Like so many others who were drafted to serve in Vietnam, Mr. Rouse had the task of carrying out necessary missions and protecting the lives of his fellow soldiers. Mr. Rouse not only performed those responsibilities with utmost dedication, he chose to go above and beyond the call of duty. The Silver and Bronze Stars are only given to those few individuals who exhibit extraordinary valor and courage in the face of the enemy. To receive even one of them is an extremely high honor. Mr. Rouse was one of those very few who received not only one of these prestigious awards, but both of them. We are so fortunate and so proud that he wore a U.S. uniform.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Rouse's unfaltering love for this country and its people is truly remarkable and should not go unrecognized. To his family and friends whom he holds dear, you certainly do not have to be told of his magnificent character. While serving his country, Mr. Rouse exhibited the extraordinary courage that is required to do what most of us cannot even imagine. It is for these reasons that we honor him today and why his legacy will live on forever.