

in 2008. Councilwoman Sheedy also helped upgrade the bridges and streetlights throughout her district, which were in clear need of repair.

Councilwoman Sheedy represented the City of Sacramento well, serving on the boards of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, the Sacramento Regional Solid Waste Authority, the Sacramento Metropolitan Cable Television Commission and the Sacramento Public Library Authority. As she dedicated her energy to the betterment of the people of Sacramento, Councilwoman Sheedy leaves the City Council with a high level of energy and large possibilities for the continued revitalization of District 2.

Mr. Speaker, as Councilwoman Sandy Sheedy's husband Ted, family, friends and colleagues gather to commemorate her for her service to the people of Sacramento, I ask all my colleagues to join me in saluting this dedicated public servant for helping make Sacramento a better place for families to live and prosper.

#### OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

#### HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$16,369,548,799,604.93. We've added \$5,742,671,750,691.85 to our debt in nearly 4 years. This is \$5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

#### IN HONOR OF PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY RESTORATION VOLUNTEER

#### HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the forty-five volunteers who have dedicated their time to commemorating the 71st anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack.

These volunteers have been working tirelessly throughout the year to prepare for the Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony held in December in Camden, New Jersey aboard the USS *New Jersey*.

The volunteers who have helped prepare the USS *New Jersey* for this historically-significant event are a necessary element in the production of the ceremony honoring those who were present that fateful day.

Their selfless hard work and devotion to honoring the 71st anniversary of Pearl Harbor should not go unnoticed. I join the citizens of Southern New Jersey, members of our military, as well as friends and family in congratulating these volunteers for a job well done.

#### HONORING WALT EKARD

#### HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the retirement of Walter F. Ekard, the Chief Administrative Officer for the County of San Diego. As the chief executive for the fifth largest county in the United States, Mr. Ekard manages a workforce of over 16,000 employees and an annual budget of \$5 billion.

Mr. Ekard was appointed to this position by the five-member Board of Supervisors on May 4, 1999. He previously served as the Assistant Chief Administrative Officer and was the Boards' "first and only choice" for the job because of his experience and strong leadership skills.

Since he began working for the County in 1996, Mr. Ekard has been a part of its dramatic transformation, including a creation of a structurally-balance budget and the implementation of a general management system. Working closely with the Board and the County's executive team, Mr. Ekard works to institute private business management practices throughout the County, stressing customer service, fiscal accountability and teamwork. He has overseen the successful implementation of the innovative information technology outsourcing project that begun in late 1998 and is currently working to prepare San Diego County government to manage with significantly less revenue due to the State of California's budget crisis and funding cuts anticipated as a result.

Mr. Ekard brings a unique combination of qualifications and experience to this post. In fact, he served as my Chief of Staff during my time at the Board of Supervisors. He also worked as a senior policy advisor to former County Supervisor Paul Fordem (1981–1984). He also managed the Rancho Santa Fe Association from 1987 to 1996, transforming this 70-year-old organization into a smooth-running, productive and powerful regional influence. During his tenure with the Association, he worked in a capacity much like a city manager, developing linkages between the Association and other community organizations, created a long-term strategic plan to secure needed support from local and regional government agencies, and reduced administrative staff while streamlining the budget process and privatizing certain Association functions.

A native of San Diego County, Mr. Ekard received his Bachelor of Arts degree from San Diego State University and a Allis Doctor degree from the University of San Diego, School of Law. He is a member of the State Bar of California and has served on a number of community boards and commissions. He and his wife, Pam, reside in El Cajon with their family.

I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing the professional achievements of Mr. Walt Ekard. Without question, the community of San Diego has been made better by his contributions and are worthy of recognition by the House of Representatives today.

RECOGNIZING COMMODORE WILLIAM C. VOGEL, JR. FOR HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO METROPOLITAN DETROIT COMMUNITY

#### HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor William C. Vogel, Jr. on the occasion of his installation as Commodore of the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club during its 84th Annual Commodore's Ball. Serving as the club's face to the community and monitor of its policies both present and future, the position of commodore is an esteemed office befitting an individual like Mr. Vogel.

Bill has long been an active member of the Club, serving on its executive board for many years, including multiple terms as the Club's Vice Commodore. Under his leadership, the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club has continued on a path of success and prosperity. Its membership has grown and it has undertaken projects to expand and improve both its facilities and the Grosse Pointe Harbor, one of Michigan's most precious treasures.

Outside of his involvement in the Grosse Point Yacht Club, Bill has been steadfastly engaged in the support of groups and issues that have historically made the Grosse Pointes a thriving group of communities. Through his support as a member and past director of the Detroit Goodfellows, he has taken the initiative to provide Detroit youth with educational scholarships and other necessities which have enhanced their quality of life. Bill has also been instrumental to the Lakeshore District of the Boy Scouts of America, serving as Chair of the Friends of the Scouts Campaign.

Bill's passion for his community is mirrored in his dedication to his profession. With over thirty years of accomplishments in the field of engineering, he has earned the respect and admiration of his peers and coworkers. During his tenure with General Motors as a systems analyst, project planner and marketing planner, Bill received both the Chairman's Award and the GM North American Special Achievement Award. At EDS, he was honored with the prestigious Inner Circle Award, Circle of Excellence, and Diamond Club recognitions for his achievements as Client Delivery Executive and Solutions Delivery Executive. He also received recognition from Wayne State University's College of Engineering in 2006, earning their Outstanding Engineering Alumni Award for Industry Achievement. Finally, in August of 2012, Bill retired from his post as director of EDS's OnStar account for General Motors, leaving behind a legacy of hard work and success. He currently serves on the Board of Visitors for both Wayne State and Western Michigan Universities' Colleges of Engineering.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to recognize William C. Vogel, Jr. on the occasion of his installation as Commodore of the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club. I join with Bill's wife of 37 years, Susan, as well as his children, William III, Joseph, Elizabeth, and Michael in congratulating him on this joyful occasion.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. RON BARBER**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, due to my surgery and recuperation during the week of November 26 through December 2, 2012, I missed five recorded votes during that week. I would like to indicate how I would have voted had I been present for these votes.

On rollcall No. 609, H.R. 5997, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, I would have voted "yea" to authorize the use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding to allow for the local use of these funds to enhance emergency medical preparedness programs such as medical surge capacity and preventing the spread of mass disease. This legislation will help ensure that we have the medical tools and resources needed to protect the public.

On rollcall No. 610, H.R. 915, the *Jaime Zapata Border Enforcement Security Task Force Act*, I would have voted "yea" to establish within Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) a Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST) program to foster coordinated efforts among federal, state and local border and law enforcement officials to protect cities and communities from crime along our borders. Southern Arizonans are in the direct path of the most serious drug cartel smuggling activity of any region in the nation and are heavily and disproportionately affected by criminal activities along the border. The BEST program will help to improve the safety and security of my constituents.

On rollcall No. 611, H. Res. 821, a rule to provide for consideration of H.R. 6429, the STEM Jobs Act of 2012, I would have voted "nay" and opposed consideration of the legislation in its current form without amendment.

On rollcall No. 612, a Motion to Recommit H.R. 6429, the STEM Jobs Act of 2012, I would have voted "yea" to amend the bill to strike the provision that eliminates the Diversity Visa program that makes visas available to people from countries that have low rates of immigration to the United States.

On rollcall No. 613, H.R. 6429, the STEM Jobs Act of 2012, I would have voted "yea" to create a STEM Visa program under which foreign students that earn advanced degrees in the high-demand fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) at American universities could remain in our country to work in those fields. The program would provide 55,000 such visas annually. I regret that the legislation takes away the Diversity Visa program in order to add 55,000 visas for STEM graduates. However, finding qualified candidates to fill these positions is a very serious issue in my district, which is home to many high tech companies. These companies are too often unable to find qualified American candidates to work in this industry that is so essential to the growth of our local economy. While my first priority is supporting STEM education and jobs for American students and workers, allowing foreign STEM graduates to work in the U.S. in jobs for which American workers cannot be found will contribute to our economy and global competitiveness.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE COMPASSION OF THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN

**HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Taiwanese government who has so generously donated \$1.3 million to the Superstorm Sandy relief effort. The donation will be divided between the State Governments of New Jersey and New York, the City of New York, as well as the United Way International and Habitat for Humanity International. Although the media coverage and national attention on Superstorm Sandy has subsided in the wake of new stories, the impact of the storm continues to be felt by New York and New Jersey citizens. I am moved by this tremendous act of solidarity from our friends thousands of miles away, and I would like to officially recognize this gesture in hopes that the consideration and empathy displayed by the Taiwanese may serve as a reminder to others that this plight is still ongoing. On behalf of the 1st district of New Jersey, the State of New Jersey, and the American people I would like to extend sincere thanks to the Taiwanese people for this act of kindness.

## HONORING DIANN JACOX

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Diann Jacox, the superintendent of the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, who has announced her decision to retire.

Ms. Jacox is retiring from the National Park Service after 35 years of outstanding service to our country. According to the National Park Service, Ms. Jacox began her career as a historian in the Philadelphia regional office. She was later appointed regional cultural compliance coordinator for 32 parks in the mid-Atlantic area where she worked to incorporate historic preservation requirements with the National Park Service design and construction plans. Ms. Jacox also served as the chief historian of Philadelphia's Independence National Historical Park and manager of Washington DC's Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site. In 2004, Ms. Jacox became the founding superintendent of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park in Middletown, Virginia.

I had the privilege of working with Ms. Jacox to create Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park in her capacity as founding superintendent. The park would not have been possible without her leadership and steady hand. Last month the park celebrated its 10-year anniversary.

I want to commend Diann for her tireless years of service and her dedication to historic preservation. I wish her all the best as she returns to Philadelphia in her retirement.

HONORING THE COUNTY OF SOLANO

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I along with Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. MIKE THOMPSON of California invite our colleagues to join us in honoring the County of Solano, California, for its 2012 designation by America's Promise Alliance as one of the "100 Best Communities for Young People."

Selected from 320 applicants across all 50 States in a competitive process, Solano County is the only California community to receive this designation six consecutive times. Over 75 local partners contributed to this most recent application, including community and faith-based organizations, city and county agencies, educational institutions, businesses and service groups serving children, as well as many young individuals.

This application exhibits the outstanding collaboration that has brought repeated recognition to Solano County. Programs involved include the YIPPEE Foundation's Teen Mentoring and Job-Training programs, Lawrence Hall of Science Inventor's Lab, Solano Transportation Authority's "Safe Routes to School," Solano County Court's Teen Interns, Dixon Teen Center, Benicia Library's Teen Librarian, Vacaville Youth Roundtable, Rio Vista Care/Family Resource Center, each of which resulted in strong support for Solano County's children and youth. Furthermore, Solano's school districts and community leaders continue to actively work to raise graduation rates with innovative approaches to tutoring, mentoring, recreation and health activities, as well as volunteer opportunities for youth.

Young people in Solano County have worked hard to achieve academic and personal excellence, and the community has provided them an opportunity to do so. Programs including the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets at Armijo, Jesse Bethel, and Vanden High Schools, the Eagle Scout program, and Solano County 4-H deserve recognition for facilitating thousands of hours of community service. We also recognize our students' determination to reach the regional and statewide Academic Decathlons as well as the effort put forth by each of the volunteers participating in tutoring and mentoring programs at the Matt Garcia Center, The Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues to join with us in recognizing the Solano County Department of Child Support Services, which served as the lead agency for the 2012 application and extend our sincere congratulations to each of the organizations, agencies and individuals involved who have worked tirelessly on behalf of Solano's children and youth.

IN RECOGNITION OF SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCILMAN ROB FONG

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 3, 2012*

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Sacramento City Councilman