

as chair. He was a Rotarian, serving one term as president. He chaired the United Way of Greater Toledo campaign, was a member and president of the Ohio Historical Society Board and member of the Hayes Presidential Center. He served a decade as trustee, campaign chair, and president of the Fort Meigs Historical Society and was president of the Torch Club.

In all things: family, work, and community, Dr. Richard Ruppert gave all. He leaves a legacy few could match. His brilliance, humor, grace, kindness and insatiable curiosity and love of life were true gifts. He and his wife Libby have been a team unmatched, a gift that keeps giving to us all—our community, advanced medicines, academic excellence, friends and colleagues, loyalty to community, persevering leadership. Dr. Richard Ruppert made a difference for humanity and we are eternally grateful for his life and service to America.

HONORING THE EU FOR RECEIVING THE 2012 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, December 10, 2012, Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjørn Jagland presented European Leaders with the Nobel Peace Prize. The European Union (EU) received the distinguished award for its promotion of peace and human rights. Since the end of World War II, Europe has seen six decades without wars, turning a continent historically known for conflicts into a continent of peace.

Since the formation of the European Union's initial organizations, there has not been a single hostile incident between the member states now known as the European Union. While there has been violence and war on the edges of the EU, such as the Balkan Wars, these did not happen between EU members, and now with the goal of full EU membership the nations of the Balkans are beginning to look forward to the future.

Membership in the EU requires a nation to have a fully operating democratic government, protection of civil liberties for a broad variety of minorities, recognition of private property and a fully functioning free enterprise economy. EU membership is a demand for democracy and free enterprise which brings peace and security to every country that has joined. The growth from six western European countries to an organization of 27 member states that represent over 500 million people with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$17.6 trillion is a transatlantic accomplishment worth noting for generations to come. The U.S. can take pride in the support and cooperation it has provided the EU over the years, with both our economies representing 54% of world GDP and is responsible for 14 million "on shored" jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr. Speaker, peace is not simply an era without war, but a common goal we share and are committed to maintaining. Both our constituencies are faced with terrorism, climate change, and recovering economies. These problems know not of party lines or of national

borders. We are encouraged by the EU's achievements as a community of nations that have overcome so much in the pursuit of peace. Where there was war, now is peace. As we continue to work closer with our allies in the EU, I am confident that where there is now peace, peace shall remain.

Both the EU and the U.S. face a recovering economy. Towards that end, we are encouraged to hear of preliminary discussions regarding a comprehensive trade agreement with the EU and the impact it will have on jobs and economic growth for our economies. While the reduction of spending by nations is required, our efforts should also support a special emphasis on job creation. With the EU and the U.S. as the largest trade partners for each other, reduction in tariff and non-tariff barriers will help facilitate a job creating environment providing hope for the citizens we represent.

HONORING ASSISTANT SECRETARY RUSSLYNN ALI

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank a tireless advocate for all of America's children, Russlynn Ali, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education. Ms. Ali has recently transitioned from the Department into a new role and I would like to take the opportunity to share with this body the impressive accomplishments of the Office for Civil Rights under her leadership.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Ms. Ali for all that she has done to see the Equity and Excellence Commission draft a final report. I am confident that this document will provide a useful framework for policymakers, advocates and families at every level to create a more equitable and excellent system of public education that draws on the skills and talents of every American child. The Commission's success is because of the hard work of Russlynn Ali.

While revitalizing an underutilized federal office, Ms. Ali has led the Office for Civil Rights in an impressive direction, supporting states, school districts and schools in providing the equal access to education every child deserves. During her tenure, the Office launched over 100 compliance reviews many of which addressed first-of-their-kind issues and all of which were innovative in their comprehensiveness, scope, and approach. They entered into hundreds of robust resolution agreements that, with aggressive monitoring, will truly eradicate discrimination at its roots. They revamped technical assistance—conducting an average of 315 activities a year over the last four years, up from about 185 in 2008. They released 10 comprehensive Dear Colleagues and guidance documents, all dealing with urgent issues, and revamped them to include detailed application sections—guidances that advocates, superintendents and college presidents have referred to as "landmark" and "historic." The Office for Civil Rights made the opportunity gap data come alive with the transformed Civil Rights Data Collection. Now the CRDC site gets about 9,900 visits every month.

I ask this body to join me in thanking Russlynn Ali for all that she has done for America's young people and wishing her well on her next endeavor.

A TRIBUTE TO MICHIGAN STATE REPRESENTATIVE PAUL OPSOMMER

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to State Representative Paul E. Opsommer in recognition of his faithful service as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives. His fulfillment of three terms as State Representative concludes the most recent phase of what has been a remarkable career in public service, and he leaves behind a dedicated legacy in Lansing.

Before being elected to the 93rd district of Michigan in 2006, Paul had a career in business and local government. He served as Director and later Vice President of Action Management Corporation in Flint, and prior to that as a City Councilman and Mayor of DeWitt. His extensive experience serving on local government agencies and boards, including the DeWitt Schools Strategic Planning Board and the DeWitt Downtown Development Association, among others, also gave him a wide-ranging knowledge of issues important to the region.

In the Michigan House, Paul served on the Energy and Technology, Regulatory Reform, Insurance, and Health Policy Committees, and most recently as Chairman of the Transportation Committee and Associate Speaker Pro Tempore. As a legislator, Paul was dedicated to the passage of sound public policy, and his insights and experience brought a fresh perspective to the House.

Paul is an esteemed Michigan citizen and it is with great pride that I dedicate these remarks to his life and career. I wish him and his family the best as he closes this chapter of his life and begins his next endeavor.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE MICHIGAN LOTTERY'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark an important milestone in the history of the Michigan Lottery as it celebrates its 40th Anniversary. Over the last four decades the Michigan Lottery has been focused on fulfilling its mission to supplement state education programs through lottery revenues and provide Michigan residents and visitors with fun and entertaining games of chance, while doing so with a commitment to total integrity.

Since November 1972, when the Lottery offered its first game, a 50-cent green game ticket with weekly drawings, the Lottery has generated over \$50 billion in sales. In 1981, Governor Milliken took an important step to help Michigan residents further realize the

economic benefit of the Lottery to our State by signing Public Act 40 into law, which dedicated Lottery revenues to the Michigan School Aid Fund. Since that time, the Michigan Lottery has implemented many new innovative programs and games to offer Michigan residents a great gaming experience, for which it was just recognized with an award for Best New Instant Game by the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries.

Today the results of the Michigan Lottery's success are evident in the many ways its programs have benefitted the State. Specifically, over the duration of its existence, the Lottery has awarded over \$26.8 billion in prizes to Lottery participants. In addition, it has donated \$17.3 billion to the School Aid Fund over its lifespan. Local merchants have also benefitted with \$3.2 billion in retail commissions. When the merchant commissions are combined with the awards given to participants and schools, it is clear the Lottery has been a significant contributor to stimulating the State economy.

As a former Commissioner of the Michigan Lottery, this milestone is one that I view with a personal point of pride. While serving as Lottery Commissioner, I was pleased to implement a new innovative game, Club Keno, which spurred growth by offering participants the chance to play a fun, fast and action-oriented game that could yield up to a \$100,000 prize off just a single \$1 bet. Thanks to the success of Club Keno and many other Lottery programs, I was honored to oversee record contributions to the School Aid Fund during my time as Lottery Commissioner.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the tremendous contributions that the Michigan Lottery has made to the State of Michigan over the last 40 years. I congratulate the current Commissioner, Mr. M. Scott Bowen, on overseeing the Lottery's continued success and support of public education in Michigan.

TRIBUTE TO ALICE VARNADO HARDEN

SPEECH OF

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding individual who has served the citizens of the great State of Mississippi for nearly half a century. Mrs. Alice Varnado Harden was an outstanding teacher, a profound leader and a truly inspiring individual. Senator Harden's unwavering passion for enriching the lives of others and remarkable character and integrity is worthy of recognition by this honorable body, inasmuch as her governing presence will be sorely missed throughout this nation.

Mississippi Senator Alice Varnado Harden was born on April 17, 1948 in Pike County, Mississippi to John Oatis Varnado and Lula Robinson Varnado. She was the third of nine children who grew up in the Washington Addition community of Jackson, Mississippi. A woman of humble beginnings, Senator Harden exhibited extraordinarily strong leadership skills, academic talents and teaching abilities that would later lend to her phenomenal performance as the first African American female to be elected to the Mississippi Senate.

Senator Harden's zeal for education blossomed during her years at Jim Hill High School and Jackson State University. At Jackson State University she earned her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Health and Wellness. Upon graduating from Jackson State University, Senator Harden began a noteworthy career as a teacher at Calloway High School in the Jackson Public School District where she quickly gained the respect and admiration of her students, colleagues and administrative supervisors.

Recognizing that public schools in Mississippi were failing to deliver on its promise to adequately prepare its students for the challenges and demands of an ever changing world, Senator Harden gradually redefined her passion for educating from being purely a lecturer to being an advocate for quality public education. As president of the Mississippi Association of Educators, Senator Harden, despite the threat of incarceration by the courts, called for a strike in 1985 to fight for salary increases for the state's teachers. The voice for hundreds of teachers and thousands of children, Senator Harden's steadfast commitment to effectuate change from the front to the back of the classroom, was victorious. Her steadfast commitment to the pursuit of change in how Mississippi honored its educators led to a statewide pay increase for teachers.

Mrs. Harden's roles as an activist propelled her into the realm of politics. In 1988, She was elected to represent Mississippi's 28th Senate District, filling a seat vacated by civil rights activist State Senator Henry Kersey. During her 24 years of service as a Senator, Mrs. Harden served as chair of both the Education and the Universities and Colleges Committees. She also served on the Appropriations Committee, Corrections Committee, the Fees, Salaries and Administration Committee, the Housing Committee, and the Interstate and Federal Cooperation Committee.

Across Mississippi Senator Harden was known as a champion not only for public education, but also as a giant for human and civil rights. She was a staunch supporter and defender of legislation protecting workers' and immigrant rights and was successful in enacting laws that required the presence of certified translators in all Mississippi courts. Her efforts in the Senate also resulted in pay raises and free healthcare for state employees. One of her most notable victories during her leadership of the Senate's Elections Committee was the passage of Mississippi's Motor Voter Act. This bill empowered citizens throughout the State of Mississippi with greater accessibility to the election polls.

Senator Alice Harden's professional associations, achievements and awards are numerous and impressive. They speak volumes with regards to her service and vision for Mississippi communities. Senator Harden was a lifetime active member of St. James Missionary Baptist Church, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, the Women's Political Network, the National Council of Negro Women, the League of Women Voters and a life member of the NAACP. Additionally, she was a member of NOBEL Women, the National Conference of State Legislators, and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and chaired the Southern Legislative Conference's Education Committee and the Mississippi Advisory Council to the United States Civil Rights Commission. She also represented

Mississippi on the Education Commission of the States.

In striving for academic excellence, Senator Harden pursued her doctorate in Educational Administration at The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, until her health began to fail. Senator Harden served her state and community faithfully until her death on Thursday, December 6, 2012.

Ms. Harden was married for 37 years to Dennis Lambert Harden. Dennis and their son Sachem brought the greatest and most abundant joy and love to her life. She was often heard talking long hours about Dennis' undying love and his support for every facet and every endeavor that enriched both their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting and paying tribute to the outstanding life, achievements and legacy of Mississippi State Senator Alice Varnado Harden. Her passion for public education, human and civil right and voter empowerment is laudable and worthy of recognition by the United States Congress. She will be celebrated forever as one of Mississippi's greatest leaders.

SEQUESTRATION AND THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the potential damage that sequestration could cause to vital efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay is our nation's largest estuary, with a 64,000 square mile watershed that crosses six states and the District of Columbia and is home to 17 million people and over 3,600 species of animals and plants. In 2004, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Finance Panel estimated the economic value of the Bay at over \$1 trillion annually.

This vast resource presents unique challenges—the health of the Bay has been threatened by nutrient runoff, population growth and development, overfishing, and even natural factors like rain and snowfall. For nearly thirty years, the Federal government has been a partner in Bay restoration through the Chesapeake Bay Program, an innovative regional partnership that fosters collaboration among the multiple state and local governments, agencies, and advisory groups in the watershed.

In 2009, the President, with the support of those of us in the Bay states, signed an Executive Order to accelerate Bay clean-up by improving targets and coordinating resources. It's an ambitious plan, and states and localities are working hard on implementation. But they cannot do it alone. The federal government must be an active partner, providing financial support and technical assistance.

For example, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund finances capital projects for wastewater treatment upgrades and helps local governments manage stormwater projects, curbing runoff pollution into the Bay. In Maryland, it will cost over \$2 billion between 2010 and 2017 to make the necessary stormwater improvements to meet its pollution reduction targets. Sequestration would cut nearly \$196 million from the Clean Water and Safe Drinking