

second-generation Japanese-Americans. They faced crushing prejudice and discrimination in the United States during WWII. Many of their family members suffered internment while they were serving their country. This exceptional group has received honors and commendations of the highest level. Our nation awarded the Medal of Honor to twenty-one members of the 100th Infantry Battalion of the 442nd RCT for heroism during WWII. In 2000, the MIS received the Presidential Unit Citation, the highest possible honor for a military unit, and in 2010 the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the 442nd RCT and the 100th Inf, as well as the 6,000 graduates of the MIS. At the end of the war, General Charles Willoughby, Chief of Staff for Military Intelligence under General MacArthur, said that "The Nisei shortened the Pacific War by two years and saved possibly a million American lives and saved probably billions of dollars" during the conflict.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be paying tribute to this outstanding group of men who selflessly served our nation during World War II proving the loyalty and bravery of second generation Japanese Americans. From the 100th Infantry Brigade: Louie Hayashida, Tom Kakimoto, Richard Kawamoto, Robert Kitagi, Ky Miyamoto, William Omoto, Kaz Sugano, and Sam Sugidono. From the 442nd Regimental Combat Team: Haruo Esaki, Yoshio Fujita, Royal Manaka, Yutaka Nagasaki, Winston Nakagawa, Fred Sakasegawa, Roy Sakasegawa, and Kunio Shimamoto. From the Military Intelligence Service: George Aihara, Roy Hattori, Paul Ichuiji, Otis Kadani, Hajime Kawata, Shig Kihara, Robert Mirikitani, George Nakamura, Kei Nakamura, Toshio Nakanishi, Terry Nakanishi, Gengo Sakamoto, Setsuo Takemoto, George Tanaka, Frank Tokubo, Ben Umeda, Jiro Watanabe, and Goro Yamamoto. I know I speak for the entire House of Representatives in honoring these heroes.

#### PAYROLL TAX CUT CONFERENCE REPORT (H.R. 3630)

#### HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concerns with the recently released conference report by the Payroll Tax Cut Conference Committee. While I am pleased that enacting this conference report will stop a tax hike on middle class families by extending the Payroll Tax Cut through the end of the year, I strongly oppose pairing this must-pass provision with legislation that will slash the number of available weeks of unemployment benefits for American workers. I also find it deeply troubling that the text of legislation cutting unemployment benefits for millions of Americans only became available for public review less than 24 hours before a vote, despite the pledge by House Republicans to make bills publicly reviewable for 72 hours before a vote.

Republicans are forcing an unfair choice between tax cuts for the middle class and fully maintaining the safety net for unemployed workers. This is not a choice Congress should have to make, or that the American public

should accept, especially when House Republicans in their Pledge to America promised to "end the practice of packaging unpopular bills with 'must-pass' legislation to circumvent the will of the American people" and to "advance major legislation one issue at a time."

The long-term unemployment crisis and the need for a full extension of unemployment benefits deserve Congress's full attention. This is why I led 70 of my colleagues in writing the Chairs of the conference committee along with House and Senate Leadership to urge them to include a full extension of unemployment benefits through the end of this year. While our economy is showing signs of real recovery with 23 consecutive months of job growth, the fact remains that our nation is experiencing an unprecedented long-term unemployment crisis.

Unemployment benefits are a proven lifeline to families that they rely on to help pay for necessities such as rent, groceries, and utilities. Expansions to the unemployment insurance program enacted in the Recovery Act and subsequent legislation in 2009 and 2010 kept over 3 million Americans out of poverty in 2010, including over 900,000 children.

Unfortunately, the harm that cuts to federal unemployment benefits make to working families is amplified when states, such as Michigan, enact legislation slashing state unemployment benefits. Last year, Governor Snyder signed House Bill 4408 into law. While this legislation included a necessary technical fix to preserve Michigan's access to the federal Extended Benefits (EB) program, it paired this minor change with a harmful and misguided reduction in state unemployment benefits from 26 to 20 weeks, the lowest in the country. Not only does this cut 6 weeks of state benefits, more importantly it triggers a proportional reduction in federal benefits.

Under the Payroll Tax Cut Conference Report, this 6 week change to state benefits will result in Michigan giving up between 11 and 14 weeks of 100% federally funded benefits this year and Michigan's unemployed workers losing access to more weeks of federal benefits than any state in the nation.

Our economy is moving in the right direction and we can't afford to jeopardize middle class families' livelihoods and our recovery by risking the expiration of the Payroll Tax Cut, but we certainly cannot afford to ignore the long-term unemployment in Michigan and across the United States.

#### COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNI- VERSARY OF THE MOUNTAIN QUARRIES RAILROAD BRIDGE

#### HON. TOM MCCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Mountain Quarries Railroad Bridge near Auburn, California.

The bridge opened for business in 1912 as the longest concrete-arch bridge of its time. Its purpose was to deliver mine material across the American River Canyon to and from the mountain quarries outside of Auburn via a privately-built railroad. For three decades trains rolled over the bridge, allowing the development of the vast quartz deposits in the area

and employing thousands over the years and providing untold wealth to the community.

After the train tracks were removed for scrap metal to aid in the production of World War II materiel, the bridge continued to serve as a public crossing connecting El Dorado and Placer counties. The soundness of the bridge's design and construction allowed it to withstand multiple floods in the canyon that brought down no less than four other bridges along the American River. The Mountain Quarries Bridge was even pressed into service to replace the Highway 49 Bridge, which was destroyed when Hell Hole Dam broke in 1964, until a replacement bridge could be built.

But the Mountain Quarries Bridge has done more than serve the simple commercial purpose of transport across the river. Since 1955, the bridge has been a defining stretch in countless endurance rides and foot races. In the famed Western States Endurance Run, Mountain Quarries Bridge serves as the final landmark of the course and the transition out of the California wilderness into Auburn and the finish line. For the many adventurers, riders and runners who have used the bridge on hikes and races over the years, it serves as a monument to the trials endured in their journeys and the satisfaction and joy of their accomplishments.

Standing a few miles from the confluence of the North and Middle Forks, the Mountain Quarries Railroad Bridge is a testament to bygone times when the beneficial use of our public resources was both frequent and celebrated. Having served the many commercial and recreational purposes of the area for a century, the Mountain Quarries Railroad Bridge is a fine model for the responsible utilization of the public lands for the public's use.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to rise today and join the communities of El Dorado and Placer counties as they celebrate this auspicious occasion.

#### IN REMEMBRANCE OF MRS. MARY ZUNT

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mrs. Mary Zunt, an iconic figure to the City of Cleveland.

Mary was born on August 16, 1939 in Cleveland, Ohio, where she attended Holy Name High School. Following a brief stint in New York City, Mary returned to Cleveland, where she was instrumental in establishing WVIZ-TV in 1965. She was also behind the station's fund-raising auctions. In 1973, Mary was elected to Cleveland's City Council to represent the residents of the West Park neighborhood. She fought for consumer protections, gun safety and commercial development during her two terms on the council.

Following her career in public service, Mary went on to work in the construction industry. She oversaw projects such as renovations of the Gateway and Society Center, Bureau of Workers' Compensation, the Glass Bowl Stadium and construction of the scoreboard at Jacobs Field.

In 1994, Mary left Cleveland and moved to Nice, France to study wine for two years. She

later moved to St. Helena, California where she worked at the St. Helena Catholic Church, caring for migrant workers. She also began to focus more on her writing and was taught creative writing at Napa Valley College. Mary was a feature writer for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and contributor to Cleveland Magazine, the Napa Valley Register and the St. Helena Star and Appellation Magazine. Mary also wrote a novel, "The Politics of Annie Quinn," chronicling her experience on Cleveland's City Council.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the memory of Mrs. Mary Zunt. Her contributions to the City of Cleveland will be remembered for years to come.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MRS.  
SARA LOUISE JONES PETTIS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mrs. Sara Louise Jones Pettis. Mrs. Pettis was a respected community activist in the Fort Lauderdale area, and her commitment to civic service was admirable. She recently passed away at the age of 90, and I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest sympathies to her family and all those who knew her.

Mrs. Pettis was a resident of Fort Lauderdale, Florida for 64 years. She married Mr. Cyrus Pettis in 1941, and the couple lived in Fort Lauderdale since first moving to the area in 1947. They both understood the importance of giving back to the community. Mr. Pettis was a postal worker, and Mrs. Pettis served as a teacher's aide at multiple schools in Broward County.

Mrs. Pettis was known for her desire to improve the community. She was a lifetime member of the Parent Teacher's Association, and she volunteered at local schools, churches, and other charitable organizations. Mrs. Pettis was ultimately credited for expediting the creation of the Dillard High School Gymnasium in 1959. Her dedication to improving the lives of the people of Broward County was truly remarkable.

In 1985, the Pettis family received a very special recognition from then-First Lady Nancy Reagan. The First Lady recognized the Pettis family as a Great American Family. Over 25 members of the Pettis family were in attendance at a special White House ceremony. The award is given to families leading exemplary lives, and giving back to their communities. The Pettis family is one of only nine other families to ever receive this award.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Mrs. Pettis for her dedication to the people of Fort Lauderdale. I knew Mrs. Pettis personally, and I was saddened to hear of her passing. She had an extraordinary sense of civic duty, and I would like to extend my sympathies to not only her family and friends, but to the entire South Florida community, and all of those whose lives she touched. Mrs. Pettis will be truly missed.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL CLIFFORD GEORGE FORD

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Clifford George Ford, distinguished veteran of the United States Air Force, loyal friend, and loving father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. Cliff passed away on January 18, 2012 at the age of 81. Through his thoughtful nature, zest for life, and dedication to service, he leaves behind a wonderful legacy.

Cliff was born on April 16, 1930 in Lohrville, Iowa, and grew up on farms in Iowa and Minnesota, alongside his two brothers and two sisters. It is during his childhood that his lifelong love of nature developed. After graduating from Lake City High School at the age of 17, Cliff made the decision to serve our great Nation in the United States military. Cliff's time in the United States Air Force took him all around the world, including: Japan, Germany, England, and Taiwan. While living in Yakota Air Base, Japan, Cliff met the love of his life, Rose. The two married on February 10, 1951.

Cliff spent the majority of his life serving our country in a number of capacities while in the Air Force. Throughout his service, Cliff demonstrated courage, determination, strength, and empathy—he truly illustrated the best of what America has to offer. In 1975, Cliff retired from the United States Air Force and spent the remainder of his life in Atwater, California. Retiring in the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley afforded Cliff the opportunity to purchase an almond orchard and pursue his lifelong passion for agriculture.

Cliff's legacy will live on through his service to our Nation, his work in our Valley, and through his children: Christine, Linda, Michelle, Anita, Chuck, Valerie, Melissa, and Hilary; 14 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Perhaps what was most telling of Cliff's character was the importance he placed on family and kinship. Cliff leaves his family with many warm and cherished memories.

In a note to Cliff, his grandson wrote, "every person is an example of the people they have spent their life with." As we reflect on Cliff's life, let us aspire to lead a life like his—one filled with resolve, self-reliance, and love.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Clifford George Ford, an honorable and respected man with an unwavering commitment to his loving family and our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's independence, and the re-establishment of their independence as it is com-

memorated by the Cleveland Chapter of the Lithuanian American Community.

On February 16, 1918, the people of Lithuania declared their independence to the world as a distinct country with its own culture and traditions. The state was founded on democratic principles and declared its independence in a peaceful manner. However, Lithuania's freedom was short-lived, as the country and its people were subjected to foreign occupation and conquest by the Nazi Germany regime and the U.S.S.R. during World War II. In 1940, the Soviet Union took control of Lithuania without the people's consent. This unjust control of a free people lasted for 50 years. On March 11, 1990, upon the fall of the Soviet Union, the people of Lithuania re-established their independence, and once again, became a sovereign, free state.

The Lithuanian-American Community's Cleveland Chapter has worked to connect the people of Cleveland of Lithuanian descent and to share their rich and vibrant culture with the community. I offer my best wishes for the upcoming celebration of their heritage and their independence.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in commemorating the independence of Lithuania and, in wishing the country and its people continued freedom and success.

HONORING SUPERINTENDENT  
SANDY THORSTENSON

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Sandy Thorstenson for her leadership and dedication as Superintendent to the Whittier Union High School District.

Born and raised in Whittier, CA, Sandy has served as Superintendent of the Whittier Union High School District for 10 years. She is a graduate of Whittier High School and Whittier College with her Master's Degree in Education from California State University, Fullerton. Sandy started her 34-year career in the Whittier Union High School District as a teacher and quickly ascended to Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and ultimately Superintendent.

Under her leadership, Sandy has spearheaded Whittier Union's transformation into a high-achieving district with five comprehensive high schools serving 13,400 students from socio-economically diverse backgrounds. Sandy's "whatever it takes" attitude has ensured student achievement for all students, resulting in state and national recognition. Whittier Union High School District has demonstrated remarkable gains in student achievement at every school, becoming one of the top school districts in Los Angeles County.

Sandy is an active advocate for quality and equity in public education at the local, state, and national level as a member of many professional and community organizations. She currently serves on the California State Superintendents' Council, the Pivot Learning Partners Board and is the current President of California City Superintendents Association. She is also a member of the Soroptimist International of Whittier, Whittier College Corporate