

which recognizes individuals and families whose cumulative giving to the American Red Cross exceeds one million dollars. She also served as a disaster relief volunteer with the New York City Chapter, which serves my district.

I rise on behalf of my Congressional colleagues, the Hon. Bonnie McElveen-Hunter, the Chairman of the American Red Cross, and, the entire Board of Governors, Gail J. McGovern, President and CEO and all the staff and volunteers of the Red Cross to thank Ms. Kaplan for her extraordinary service as a member of the Board of Governors.

March might be American Red Cross Month in America. But the first week of April will be a week to honor and celebrate Ann Kaplan's contributions to strengthen the organization as it strives to better serve this great Nation.

HONORING MERCER MIDDLE SCHOOL'S WINTER FOOD DRIVE

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mercer Middle School in Aldie, Virginia, which recently finished a winter food drive.

As a result of this, Mercer students were able to donate 600 pounds of food to Loudoun Interfaith Relief, the largest food pantry in Loudoun County. I sincerely appreciate their efforts to address the serious challenge of hunger in our community.

As hard as it may be for some to believe, families are going hungry in Fairfax and Loudoun counties in northern Virginia. I have been meeting with the local food banks and pantries on a regular basis for the past several years and they all tell me demand is at an all-time high. In fact, families who used to regularly donate to some food pantries are now coming to receive food. One local pantry actually closed for several days last fall because its shelves were bare.

On March 23, I attended a wonderful event at Mercer where the students presented the food donations to Loudoun Interfaith Relief. I was impressed by their hard work and their service to their community. This service project could not have been possible without the support of Principal John Duellman and PTA President Karen Goodwin.

I congratulate all the students, teachers and parents who participated in Mercer Middle School's winter food drive.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF LARRY LAVENDAR

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress are only as effective as the loyal staff members who serve them. Our staff professionals are public servants every bit as much as those of us who have been elected. Motivated to work for the common good, they perform their jobs without fanfare and frequently stay on the job late nights and week-

ends to help develop solutions to the challenges facing our people and country. This House could not function without these highly talented and dedicated individuals, and it has been my privilege to have had one of the best at my side in Larry Lavender. As he departs from my office after many years of loyal service, I want to publicly recognize and thank Larry for his wise counsel, frank advice, and friendship. When Larry agreed to be my Chief of Staff when I was first elected to the House, he brought experience as a businessman and top administrator in the city government of my native Birmingham, Alabama. He shared my ethic that the purpose of our office was to provide the people of Alabama with the highest level of representation. From the start, Larry demonstrated a unique talent to assemble the best staff team to achieve goals. When I was selected to serve as Ranking Member and then Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, there would be no one better suited to serve as my staff director. Larry's policy, management, and leadership skills helped us to navigate the challenges of the deepest financial crisis to occur in the United States since the Great Depression. During those historic times, his sole intent was to work to find the right answers to solve the unprecedented issues facing our financial sector and nation. Under highly uncertain and stressful conditions, he consistently supplied wise and reasoned counsel. Everyone who has met Larry has been impressed by management ability, policy and political acumen, strong belief in principle, and above all his modesty and integrity. Just as important to Larry, he is a devoted husband, father, and Marine. His children Rachel and Jacob are rightfully proud of him, and we know that his lovely wife Kathryn and young son Harrison Clay have brought a special new joy to his life at home. For being a trusted and valued adviser to both experienced and new House Members, a mentor to countless staffers, and a loyal friend to me, it is with appreciation and gratitude that I take this opportunity to permanently commemorate Larry Lavender's service to the people of Alabama and America.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in 1987, Congress declared March to serve as "Women's History Month," in efforts to acknowledge the important role women have played in shaping America. In honor of this occasion, I would like to recognize the leadership of County Councilwoman Joyce Dickerson, my good friend, who has proudly been serving the constituents of the Second District in Richland County, South Carolina, since January 2005. Councilwoman Dickerson is committed to creating economic development opportunities and growing relationships between constituents and elected leaders in South Carolina. As President-elect of the National Foundation for Women Legislators and the incoming Chair, I commend Joyce Dickerson for her efforts to empower elected women in South Carolina and across this great Nation.

A TRIBUTE TO DIANE GIN, 29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR—2012

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year during the month of March, we pay special tribute to the accomplishments made by our Nation's most distinguished women.

I stand today to pay tribute to Diane Gin of Monterey Park, California. Not only has Diane raised an incredible and successful extended family, she has also dedicated her life to improving the lives of the families around her. Diane grew up in Los Angeles, and attended California State University, Los Angeles, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Child Development. Since then, she has amassed an astounding thirty-five years of experience in the classroom, and is currently a 4th grade teacher in the City of South Gate at State Street Elementary School.

Ms. Gin has proven herself to be a leader outside of her own classroom, exemplifying a true dedication to improving the lives of our youth. She has served as President of the Mark Keppel High School PTSA, and President of the Alhambra PTA Council for the Alhambra Unified School District, and continues to serve the PTA Council as chair of the scholarship committee, although she has no children presently attending school. In addition, Diane has served as the parent coordinator for the Orange County Dance Association.

Today, Ms. Gin serves as President of the United Methodist Women at the Monterey Park Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church. She has chaired the Staff Parish Relations Committee and educational program, and currently teaches a Friday night youth group and Sunday school. Diane is also the Past President of the United Methodist Women of the Pasadena District, and has served on the Staff Parish Relations Committee for the District Superintendent of the Pasadena District.

Diane continues to reach out to our youth, serving as a Girl Scout troop leader for 25 years, where she currently sits on the Gold Award Review Committee, which interviews applicants for the Gold Award.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Diane Gin, for her exceptional service to the community and to our Nation's children.

TO EXPAND THE DEFINITION OF HOMELESS FOR VETERANS

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, no veteran should ever experience homelessness. I don't have to tell anyone in this body that this, unfortunately, is not the case. According to a point-in-time

study, on one January night in 2009 an estimated 75,609 veterans experienced homelessness and veterans are vastly over-represented in the homeless population in America. The Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a number of programs to assist homeless veterans and, while more can be done, it's important to make sure that all homeless veterans can access the programs designed to help them.

In order to qualify for benefits available to homeless veterans through the VA, an individual must meet the definition of "homeless" codified as part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. In 2009, the HEARTH Act expanded the definition of homeless to reflect our present reality and include individuals in transitional housing, persons living in motels and persons who would imminently lose their housing. A change was also made to the McKinney-Vento Act to expand the definition of homeless to include individuals fleeing a situation of domestic violence or some other life-threatening condition. This change, however, is not currently reflected in the definition of "homeless veteran."

That is why I am introducing this legislation, which will correct and expand the definition of "homeless veteran" to include veterans who are fleeing situations of domestic violence. This small change will allow those veterans who find the courage and the means to leave their abusers the chance to access the benefits that should be available to all homeless veterans.

By passing this bill, we will ensure that this especially vulnerable population of veterans has the chance to access benefits the Department of Veterans Affairs already provides. This bill is one small step to ensuring every homeless veteran can access the benefits they deserve.

HONORING MS. MARIA TRAVIERSO

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Ms. Maria Traverso, a professional bilingual journalist serving the South Florida community.

Ms. Traverso graduated from the University of Costa Rica with a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and Public Relations. She furthered her education by learning English at Florida National College and Miami-Dade Community College. Ms. Traverso began her journalism career as a reporter for La Republica newspaper in Costa Rica in 1980. However, her talents were truly recognized when she became Editor-in-Chief of El Diario, a community newspaper based in Miami. Her passion and commitment to journalism is clearly evident, and admirable.

Ms. Traverso most recently served as Senior Editor and Copy Editor of the Sun-Sentinel, a position she held for many years. Her thorough reports on various topics ranging from immigration policy to Hispanic culture have informed countless English and Spanish speaking individuals in South Florida. During her tenure, she received various awards and recognitions including first place in Community

Story Writing for the Spanish Language Division in the Florida Society of News Editors 2010 Competition.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Ms. Maria Traverso for her continued service to the South Florida community and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JOHN V. SULLIVAN, HOUSE PARLIAMENTARIAN, UPON HIS RETIREMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate House Parliamentarian John V. Sullivan on his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives. John, who was appointed House Parliamentarian by former Speaker Dennis Hastert on May 31, 2004, will retire at the end of this month after serving 25 years in the parliamentarian's office. John became only the fourth parliamentarian to serve in the House since the office was established in 1928.

John Sullivan is one of the most exceptional parliamentarians I have had the pleasure to serve with during my 35 years in Congress. John has always handled himself with the utmost professionalism and has always held himself to the highest standard. There is no sharper mind or greater expert on parliamentary procedure than John Sullivan. Members on both sides of the aisle have relied on his expertise and extensive knowledge of the legislative process. I echo the Speaker and Minority Leader's comments that his retirement is "a loss for the people's House."

Over the years, I have seen a steady and disturbing decline in the civility and comity in the House of Representatives. There have been more heated exchanges and political bickering on the House floor in recent years than I care to remember. However, through it all, John has been able to navigate the House through some difficult times and has reminded all of us that we should respect our colleagues and the rules of this great institution. His steady leadership, intellect and nonpartisan decision making has made it possible for this body to continue to function despite the political rancor.

Throughout my life, I've tried to emulate those for whom I have great respect. John Sullivan is one of those people that I will always admire and respect. Not only am I a better legislator, but I am also a better person for having known John Sullivan. I wish John the best in his retirement and thank him for his years of service to this great body and to our Nation.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2779 AND H.R. 2682

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to discuss two bills that this Chamber passed earlier

this week, H.R. 2779, a bill to exempt inter-affiliate swaps from certain regulatory requirements put in place by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, and H.R. 2682, the Business Risk Mitigation and Price Stabilization Act.

The stated intent of these bills seems simple enough—to make supposedly necessary exemptions and clarifications to the Dodd-Frank Act. However, Americans for Financial Reform, a coalition of over 250 unions, consumer groups, think-tanks, and others have raised some serious concerns about the negative consequences these changes could have on the implementation of the law, and also question whether these changes are even necessary.

Certainly it is appropriate for Congress to revisit laws that have been passed, and to conduct oversight of the work of regulators. However, Congress has asked the Commodities Futures Trading Commission and Securities and Exchange Commission to do a complicated job monitoring a big and complex market.

How big and how complex? According to The Economist, the world's gross domestic product totals approximately \$65 trillion. The total value of the global trade in derivatives is estimated to be 10 times larger than that—over \$600 billion. Warren Buffett has even stated that derivatives are "financial weapons of mass destruction, carrying dangers that, while now latent, are potentially lethal." Unfortunately, as the spectacular collapse of AIG made clear, we know that he was right.

The Dodd-Frank Act was passed to reign in the abuses that caused the financial crisis, and to establish clear rules of the road to help prevent another crisis from ever happening. I believe, as Americans for Financial Reform point out, that the law provides regulators with the flexibility to address the issues that H.R. 2779 and H.R. 2682 seek to address without changing the statute. We need to let them get on with the job they've been asked to do.

Therefore, I opposed passage of these measures.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LEADERSHIP OF LEWISVILLE FIRE CAPTAIN TERRY WILCOX

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a brave and dedicated leader, Lewisville Fire Department Captain Terry Wilcox. Captain Wilcox has spent his entire career of almost 38 years serving in the Lewisville Fire Department, protecting and promoting the safety of the citizens of the City of Lewisville.

Captain Wilcox is a highly respected member of both the community and the Fire Department. A lifelong resident of Lewisville, he graduated high school in May 1974 and joined the Fire Department in September of the same year to give back to the community that raised him. As a testament to his hard work and leadership, on May 1, 1985 he was promoted to Captain, a rank he has held for almost 27 years.

Captain Wilcox is married to Charlotte Wilcox, who also gives back to the community