

for the Black Panther Party. Reverend Johnson and others negotiated with the late Huey P. Newton and Party leaders to acquire the building as a church and an outlet to serve the needs of the community. In the early 1980s, Reverend Johnson played an integral role between African American police officers and the City of Richmond Police Department to address racial divisions within the department. Those efforts resulted in the very first Police Chaplin Program in the country. Reverend Johnson and other ministers rode with police officers to provide spiritual counseling, comfort and prayer to men and women of the force as well as victims of violence and their families. He served as a Police Chaplin for almost 20 years.

Reverend Johnson received his Bachelor of Arts in Theology from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois, and his degree in Christian Doctrine from the Divinity School of Oakland Seminary. He was a mentor to many young preachers and pastors, and worked tirelessly beyond the boundaries of his faith community by counseling and advising local civic leaders. Reverend J.L. Johnson was a very proud man who would often say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." His presence will be greatly missed throughout our community. I ask my colleagues to join with me in offering sincere condolences to his wife of 74 years, Ida Mae Johnson and to the entire Church Family of Elisabeth Missionary Baptist Church.

IN HONOR OF MICHELINE
BENEDICT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Micheline "Mickey" Benedict as she retires after 50 years of service at St. Ignatius High School as Director of Technology.

From an early age Mickey has been part of the St. Ignatius High School community. Her uncles, Fr. George Kmieck, the former Dean of Philosophy at John Carroll University, and Dr. Peter Kmieck, the St. Ignatius High School team physician, began bringing Mickey to the school at the age of two.

Mickey began her career with St. Ignatius High School in May 1961. She was hired by Fr. Pingstock and made \$1.25 per hour for clerical and typing work. In November of 1997, she was promoted to head the school's Computer Services Department by Fr. Robert Welsh. She led a team of 20 who worked to move the school into the age of modern technology. Mickey was promoted to the position of Director of Technology in May of 2000 and held the position until her retirement in December of 2011.

The St. Ignatius High School community will celebrate the career of Mickey Benedict on January 20, 2012 with a mass and school wide reception.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Mickey Benedict and congratulating her on her retirement from St. Ignatius High School following 50 years of dedicated service.

A TRIBUTE TO LOUIS RONEY

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Louis Roney, who has devoted his life both as a performing artist and in support of the arts. Throughout his career as a long-time leading operatic tenor, he has been featured in the great opera houses of Europe and North America. As a great patron of the arts in Florida, he has recently been recognized and will soon be inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame.

Mr. Roney's professional music career began after his studies at Harvard and commanded service in the U.S. Navy during WWII. Over four decades he sang leading roles throughout Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Brussels, Munich and Lisbon, as well as Italy, Canada, and of course, the United States. He was frequently engaged as a soloist all across America and Europe and appeared in numerous movies and national operatic festivals over the course of his career. Over the years he has performed as leading tenor in every major French and German opera house. His life work has been performing, teaching and supporting music.

Though he spent his whole life mingling amongst heads of state, royalty and Europe's cultural elite, he never lost a deep sense of how art can transcend power and wealth and can be appreciated and enjoyed by everyone. Mr. Roney has said that, "The artist's life is a 'giving' proposition. And if giving is more blessed than receiving, the artist is more blest than those who enjoy his art."

Returning to his home State of Florida after his European career, Mr. Roney continued to devote his life to expanding cultural opportunities for others. He founded and for 17 years led Orlando's Festival of Orchestras. He served as Distinguished Professor of Music and Artist in Residence Emeritus at the University of Central Florida. In both of these roles Mr. Roney has worked with passion and dedication to make culture and the arts accessible to as many people as possible.

Mr. Roney is well deserving of the honor and induction into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame. This recognition expresses our State's appreciation for his selfless service to the humanities and salutes a life lived with great dignity and purpose, as well as a daily sense of the high calling of the artist. He and his career have had a deep and profound impact on our community, State and Nation. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Mr. Roney for his decades of service and congratulate him on the Florida Artists Hall of Fame's recognition of his invaluable contributions.

CONGRATULATING MIKE ABRAMS

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, today, I'd like to congratulate Mike Abrams on his new position with the Iowa Hospital Association. Mike has been at the Iowa Medical Soci-

ety for 15 years, and he has been a friend and adviser to me since I came to Congress in 2007.

For years, Iowa has suffered from unfair Medicare reimbursement rates, and a flawed equation that determines payments. Within the first few months of my Congressional career, Mike was in my office helping me find solutions to that problem. It was only with Mike's help that we were able to increase payments to Iowa doctors, and take significant steps towards a reimbursement structure based on quality of care, not just quantity of care. He has been a resource to me, and he often served as my "lifeline" during late-night, high-level health care negotiations over the last few years.

Mike's knowledge and understanding of current health care issues is matched only by his terrific wit and shining personality. Iowa doctors and patients have benefited from his time at Iowa Medical Society, and he has helped me advocate for improved access to health care in Iowa. Thank you, Mike, and we wish you the best in your new endeavor.

IN HONOR OF ARMY SERGEANT
FIRST CLASS BENJAMIN WISE

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. ROSS of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated soldier and true American hero who died in service to this great country. On January 15, 2012, U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Benjamin B. Wise, who was 34 years old, died at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant First Class Wise died of injuries sustained on January 9, 2012, in Balkh Province, Afghanistan, from small arms fire.

SFC Benjamin Wise graduated from West Side Christian High School in El Dorado, Ark., in 1995 and eventually joined the United States Armed Forces in 2000, where he began a distinguished military career. At the time of his death, SFC Wise was on his fourth deployment overseas—once in Iraq and three times to Afghanistan—and was assigned to A Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

SFC Wise was an outstanding soldier and, according to his family, incredibly proud of the career he built in the Army. During his 11 years as a soldier, SFC Wise earned three Army Commendation Medals; three Army Good Conduct Medals; the National Defense Service Medal; two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars; three Iraq Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars; the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; two Noncommissioned Officers Professional Development Ribbons; the Army Service Ribbon; two Overseas Service Ribbons; the NATO Medal; the Parachutist Badge, Basic; the Combat Infantryman Badge; the Expert Infantry Badge; the Combat and Special Skill Badge, Basic Marksmanship Qual Badge; the Canadian Parachutist Badge; the Special Forces Tab; and four Overseas Service Bars.

SFC Wise was also posthumously awarded two Bronze Star Medals for his bravery in battle and a Purple Heart for giving his life in service to his country.

As a well-respected leader, SFC Wise was an outstanding soldier who served his country well and proudly wore the uniform of the United States of America. He represented the best of our Armed Forces and the best of America—giving his life to protect the freedoms we all cherish. As a husband, father, son and brother, his loss will leave an incredible void that will be impossible to fill. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Traci; his children, Kallen, Luke and Ryan; his parents, Dr. Jean and Mary Wise; his brother, Marine Corps Cpl. Matthew Wise; his sister, Mary; and, the rest of his family and friends during this very difficult time.

Unfortunately, what made SFC Wise's death even more tragic is that just two short years ago, the Wise family also lost another son in Afghanistan—Jeremy Wise, who was SFC Benjamin Wise's brother. Former Navy SEAL Special Warfare Operator First Class Jeremy Wise, age 35, was part of the CIA's security detail at an outpost near Khost, Afghanistan, when he was killed on December 30, 2009, when a terrorist detonated a bomb at the facility killing seven Americans in the attack. America has now lost two outstanding patriots in the Wise family and both Benjamin and Jeremy will be deeply missed.

The United States of America remains a strong beacon for freedom and liberty around the world because of brave, honorable and dedicated service members like SFC Benjamin Wise and his brother, Jeremy. The Wise family has endured an incredible burden and made an extraordinary sacrifice on behalf of all Americans and we are forever thankful.

Today, I ask all Members of Congress to join me as we honor the life and legacy of Army Sergeant First Class Benjamin Wise, as well as each man and woman in our Armed Forces, and all of those in harm's way supporting their efforts, who give the ultimate sacrifice in service to this great country. I also ask that we recognize the sacrifice and burdens our military families endure in support of this great country. We owe them all our eternal gratitude.

A TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL BUTLER

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Samuel Butler, the President of the Robeson County Firemen's Association, of Maxton, North Carolina, for his commitment to his community and as a dedicated man of public service. Mr. Butler proved himself to be a devoted and effective public servant, a man of great character, and a dedicated public servant. Tragically, he lost his life while protecting others on January 8, 2012. He was also a devoted father, grandfather, and dear friend, who will be dearly missed.

In addition to his service to the Evans Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department, Mr. Butler was also a proud employee of the Campbell's Soup Company for over 29 years. Driven by the spirit of service and dedication to his community and its people, he was a board member of the Robeson County Fire

College and Robeson County Honor Guard, guiding future stewards and first responders to better serve the community. In recognition of his devotion, Mr. Butler was a candidate for the Robeson County Hero Society.

Mr. Butler, a volunteer fire fighter for over 20 years, was struck and killed by a vehicle while responding to an accident. He made the ultimate sacrifice to save those in danger. His passing is a significant and tragic loss to his family, his community, and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, may we never forget the goodness, humility, service, and character that defined the life of Samuel Butler. May God continue to bless his beloved wife, Brenda, and all of his loved ones, the work he did, and the greatness that he inspired within all who knew him.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAYOR DAVID W. SMITH

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mayor David W. Smith who is retiring after serving 33 years as the Mayor of the city of Newark, California.

Mayor Smith began his career in 1967 after graduating from Michigan Technological University with a degree in Business Administration and Industrial Management. He began his career as a Plant Manager at Ethyl Corp. After working at the plant for ten years he developed an interest in public service. In 1976, he was elected to the Newark City Council. Just two years later, in 1978, he was elected Mayor of the city of Newark.

Mayor Smith is currently serving his 16th consecutive term as mayor, the most senior mayor currently serving in California. Additionally, he is also 2nd in mayoral seniority in the United States. During his service as Mayor, Smith was the Vice President of the Retail Division of Oatey Supply Chain Services from 1979 to 2006. More recently, he has served as the Executive Director of Ohlone College Foundation since 2006.

Mayor Smith's accomplishments during his tenure as Mayor are exemplary. He has displayed the highest level of public service to his citizens, and his commitment can be seen through the wide array of organizations and committees in which he was involved. He was a Trustee and Committee Chair of the United States Conference of Mayors, and was highly involved in the Arts Committee as well as the Education Committee. He was previously chair of the Alameda County Transportation Authority and the Tri-City Waste Management Authority, and was also President of the Alameda County Conference of Mayors. He is the currently the Chair of the Newark Redevelopment Agency, the Newark Disaster Council, and the Newark Community Development Advisory Committee.

Mayor Smith has received a myriad of awards for his outstanding accomplishments. He was honored as a Distinguished Alumni of Calumet High School, and an Outstanding Young Alumni of Michigan Technological University. He was selected as one of California's

Five Outstanding Young Men, and was named a Life Member of the United States Junior Chamber, a leadership and civic organization.

I join many others in saluting Mayor Smith for his commitment to excellence, thanking him for his exemplary service, and wishing him well on his retirement.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300–132, the national debt was \$4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is \$15,236,245,309,869.69. We've added \$10,434,840,134,575.41 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is \$10 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNIZING MR. BENNIE DOTSON FOR HIS DEDICATION TO SERVING OTHERS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a fine patriot and noble member of his community, Mr. Bennie Dotson. Mr. Dotson was born September 9, 1923, in Vicksburg, Mississippi. He is the younger of two children born to the late Mr. Ben and Mrs. Mary Dotson.

Mr. Dotson's early years of education began at Dunbar Elementary School in Warren County, Mississippi. He later attended Grange Hall Elementary School culminating with an eighth grade education.

At the age of 18, Mr. Dotson entered the United States Army and served in the European War. He received his basic training at Camp Shelby in Mississippi, after which, he served tours of duty in England, France, Belgium, and Germany.

After leaving the United States Army, Mr. Dotson worked at Anderson Tully Lumber Company in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he retired after 45 years of service. Mr. Dotson has continued to serve as a lay member of Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church for many years.

Mr. Dotson was happily married to his late wife of 57 years, Mrs. Lorraine Dotson, and together they raised one child, Ruby McDonald. He also has a host of nieces and nephews that love and care for him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Bennie Dotson for his dedication to our country and his commitment to serving others.