

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the University of Maine at Farmington as they celebrate their sesquicentennial.

CELEBRATING TAIWAN'S  
NATIONAL DAY

**HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 102nd National Day of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Also known as "Double Ten Day," this important anniversary marks a special occasion for the good people of Taiwan.

Taiwan is a modern-day success story that exemplifies the prosperity and opportunity that comes from a strong commitment to the rule of law, democracy, and human rights. I know that the people of Taiwan are rightfully proud of these achievements, and I will stand with them to preserve the free and open society that exists there. Indeed, Taiwan has come a long way in a short time. This is why it is more important than ever to strengthen the United States' relationship with Taiwan.

The U.S.-Taiwan relationship is the cornerstone of American foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region. Earlier this year, I led the successful bipartisan effort to end over four decades of isolation for Taiwan at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), because safety in international air travel should not be held hostage to geopolitics. I commend the President for signing this important legislation into law, and I am even more excited that as a direct result of our efforts in Congress, Taiwan has finally been invited to participate in ICAO this year. It is the first time since 1971 that this has happened.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. enjoys a very positive and productive economic relationship with Taiwan. It comes as no surprise that Taiwan is America's 11th largest trading partner. In fact, in my home State of California, the two-way trade with Taiwan is even more significant, particularly with so many Taiwanese visitors travelling to the U.S. under the Visa Waiver Program. Given the importance of our trading relationship, I urge the Administration to quickly finish the ongoing U.S.-Taiwan Trade and Investment Framework Agreement negotiations and move on to a broader, more comprehensive Bilateral Investment Agreement with Taiwan.

As we join with the people of Taiwan in celebration of Double Ten Day, it is important to remember that the bond between the U.S. and Taiwan remains vibrant and strong. As a longtime friend of Taiwan, I know that Taiwan's national day is a very special occasion for Taiwanese people living all over the world. So, as we mark the 102nd National Day of Taiwan, let us salute the strong friendship between the U.S. and Taiwan, and let us recognize the shared strengths that make this relationship one of the most important.

HONORING THE BRANFORD  
ITALIAN-AMERICAN CLUB ON  
THE OCCASION OF THEIR 75TH  
ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the Branford community in extending my heartfelt congratulations to the Branford Italian-American Club as they gather in celebration of their 75th Anniversary. This is a remarkable milestone for this community treasure!

Today, as the Club members and their families gather to commemorate their 75th Anniversary, they also celebrate the many invaluable contributions the Club has made to our community. People across the country struggle to create a sense of community, a sense of belonging. Growing up in an Italian-American neighborhood, I know the feeling of heritage and kinship that organizations like the Branford Italian-American Club provide. Like so many others, the Club has played an important role in forging strong bonds of friendship throughout the community.

The Branford Italian-American Club's strength lies in the participation and commitment of its members. Over the seventy-five years, the Club's membership has worked hard to preserve and protect the rich history of our ancestors. Whether it through the Bocce League, Dart Club, the Club Cruise, or their participation in such local events as the Branford Festival, the activities offered through the Club allow families to connect with each other—celebrating our shared history and traditions. That sense of heritage and culture is the special gift that the Club gives to their members, our community, and future generations.

Our communities would not be the same without the efforts of volunteers like you whose energy, compassion, and concern touches people's lives every day. Throughout its history, a commitment to community service has been at the center of the Branford Italian-American Club's mission. Its members have volunteered for countless community efforts, volunteering as mentors for children in the local school system, and adopting families in need during the holiday season.

Today, as they gather to celebrate the past 75 years, the members of the Branford Italian-American Club can be proud of the many ways in which they have helped to shape our community. I am proud to have this opportunity to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to the Club's leadership and its members for all of their outstanding efforts to improve the quality of life for others and to make our community a better place. I am also honored to stand today to congratulate them on this very special anniversary and wish them a the best for many more years of success.

CONGRATULATING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR WILLIAM T. BISSETTE, JR. FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE U.S. ARMY AND AS GARRISON COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR AT FORT MCCOY, WISCONSIN

**HON. RON KIND**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished service of Command Sergeant Major William T. Bissonette, whose tenure as Garrison Command Sergeant Major at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, concludes October 10, 2013. CSM Bissonette's official retirement from the U.S. Army Reserves is January 31, 2014.

CSM Bissonette's 32 years of dedicated service in the U.S. Army is noteworthy in every respect. CSM Bissonette assumed his duties at Fort McCoy on June 26, 2009. Immediately prior to this assignment he served as the command sergeant major of the 378th Military Intelligence Battalion (Battlefield Surveillance Brigade).

CSM Bissonette, a native of Massena, N.Y., entered active duty March 16, 1982 and attended one-station unit training at Fort Benning, Ga., where he became an infantry anti-armor specialist. His overseas assignments include the Republic of Korea, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Republic of Iraq. His stateside assignments include tours at Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fort Rucker, Ala.; Fort Bliss, Texas; the Pentagon; Fort McPherson, Ga.; and Fort Sheridan, Ill.

CSM Bissonette has served in a variety of duty positions to include anti-armor specialist, machine gunner, weapons team leader, drill sergeant, recruiter, training and evaluation noncommissioned officer (NCO), unit training NCO, advanced NCO Course instructor, first sergeant, operations NCO, operations sergeant major, G7 sergeant major.

He has attended various military schools including the Air Assault School, Drill Sergeant School, Recruiting School, Master Fitness Trainer Course, Battle Focused Instructor Trainer Course, Emergency Preparedness Course, Force Integration Course, First Sergeant Course, Sergeants Major Course, Command Sergeants Major Course, and Garrison Command Sergeants Major Course. He holds an associate degree from Central Texas College.

CSM Bissonette has committed his life to serving our country and has received many deserving awards and decorations, including the Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Korea Defense Service Medal, Expert Infantry Badge, Air Assault Badge, Joint Staff Identification Badge, Army Staff Identification Badge, Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, Basic Recruiter Badge with two Gold Stars, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, and the Army Superior Unit Award, as well as various campaign and service medals.

It has been an honor for me to serve as U.S. Representative for Wisconsin's Third Congressional District during CSM Bissonette's tenure at Fort McCoy. During his

service at Fort McCoy, CSM Bissonette helped transform this vital national training center into one of the Army's best and most effective of the seven active Army Power Projection Platforms. I know his leadership will be greatly missed at the base and surrounding communities, but I am thankful for his leadership and contributions to ensuring that Fort McCoy remains a shining star in the nation's military training infrastructure.

On behalf of my constituents in Wisconsin and a grateful nation, I would like to thank and commend CSM Bissonette for his years of dedicated service in the U.S. Army and in particular as Garrison Command Sergeant Major at Fort McCoy. My best wishes to him, his wife Katherine and their children Michael and Samantha.

IN RECOGNITION OF MALALA  
YOUSAFZAI

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Malala Yousafzai. On October 9, 2012—one year ago today—Malala was the target of an assassination attempt by the Taliban because she chose to speak out against their efforts to ban girls from school in her Swat Valley neighborhood of Pakistan. Since then, Malala has emerged as a leading voice for underprivileged children, especially girls, in the fight for global education equality.

Along with former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the “A World at School” movement, Malala will work to raise \$500 million over the next three years to provide education to the 300,000 Syrian school-aged children living in Lebanon. In addition to this and winning an International Children's Peace Prize for her overall efforts, Malala was recently honored at the opening dedication of Europe's largest public library. In a recent address given at the UN, she reiterated her mission, “They thought that the bullets would silence us, but they failed . . . and then, out of that silence, came thousands of voices.”

For many, Malala Yousafzai, is a symbol of resilience and courage in her fight for global education equality. Please join me in supporting Malala and her efforts on the anniversary of the Taliban's heinous failed assassination attempt. I proudly acknowledge and encourage her to continue her efforts for education equality.

HONORING MYERS FLOWER SHOP  
AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR  
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join the Branford community and the Myers family as they celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Myers Flower Shop—a remarkable milestone for this community institution.

Charles Myers had a unique passion for flowers. Following his studies at Yale University, he dedicated himself to the establishment of a premier flower shop, opening his first location at 936 Chapel Street in New Haven, Connecticut in 1913. In 1940 the shop moved to 28 Whitney Avenue and just seven years later, Charles, while doing what he loved best, suffered a fatal heart attack at the shop. His wife, who had been a long-time assistant at the shop, stepped in to fill the breach until 1950 when his son, Allan, returned home and took over the operation of the family business. Following Alan's passing in 1959, his wife, Sue took up the reins until the third generation of the Myers family, their son Chuck and his wife, Elsie, assumed the leadership role in 1971. Despite the many changes, the business flourished and a new branch was opened in Branford and then another in Guilford. Though the New Haven and Guilford shops have since closed, the Branford shop continues to be a staple of Branford's merchant center at its location at 1008 Main Street. Today, grand-daughters Lee-Ellen and Elsie run the store with the same strong sense of hard-work and passion that was the trademark of Charles Myers.

As it was recently described by one of his grand-daughters, when Myers celebrated its grand-opening, life expectancy was about forty-seven years, few doctors went to college, most babies were born at home, and the speed limit was set at 15 mph to prevent Model T cars from spooking horses. So many things have changed over the course of its one hundred year history, but the one constant has been the company's commitment to outstanding customer service. Lee-Ellen and Elsie remain committed to ensuring that the legacy of their grandfather thrives—bringing flowers from all over the world to its customers, offering great quality and excellent service to every client, and doing whatever they can to make the lives of others just a little bit brighter.

In a recent article about the centennial celebration, Albert Canosa wrote: “Every industry has its legacies. The Kennedys are synonymous with politics. The Fords are the kings of automobiles. And here in Branford, Connecticut, the legacy of Charles Myers is associated with flowers.” Myers Flower Shop is a community treasure—a classic example of the American entrepreneurial spirit and the very essence of what we so often describe as the American Dream. I am proud to rise today to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Lee-Ellen, Elsie, and the entire Myers family as they mark this centennial celebration and wish them all the best for continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, Monday night I meant to vote against H.J. Res 77. This Resolution was just the latest bill to come to the floor as part of the Republicans' foolish strategy. Funding the federal government one program or agency at a time is a reckless approach, and one I strongly oppose.

To be clear, I support full funding for the Food and Drug Administration along with the

entire federal government. Ensuring our food, medications, and medical devices are safe is important. Halting these critical activities is already impacting our communities and the effects will only continue as long as Republicans refuse to bring a clean Continuing Resolution to the floor.

It is time to end this manufactured shutdown, get our federal workers back on the job, and fund every federal program and agency at once.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 35TH AN-  
NIVERSARY OF PARATRANSIT,  
INC.

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 9, 2013*

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Paratransit, Inc. as they celebrate their 35th anniversary. As staff, passengers, and supporters of this vital transportation life-line gather to celebrate, I ask all my colleagues to join me in recognizing them for their invaluable service to the Sacramento region.

For the past thirty-five years, Paratransit has served countless individuals with disabilities and the elderly by offering door-to-door transportation services, allowing them the mobility to lead quality lives. Since its inception in 1978, Paratransit, a private nonprofit corporation, has been innovative in providing a public transportation system with fully accessible options, as well as working with other local nonprofit agencies, assisting them in delivering much needed client-focused transportation. In 1981, Paratransit became the first designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agencies in the State of California. In 1992 with the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, The Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT) and Paratransit partnered to implement the law in the most effective and efficient method to provide service to those with disabilities. That same year, the Community Transportation Association of America named Paratransit, Inc. as Transit System of the Year.

Paratransit's diverse services include a mobility training program that provides assistance to people to learn how to ride RT's buses and light rail cars, giving them independence to work, visit senior centers, go shopping or to doctor appointments, and visit friends and relatives. In 2012, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments honored Paratransit as the Regional Organization of the Year. Their successful Wheels to Work employment program, partners with Women's Empowerment, The Sacramento County Department of Human Services, The Sacramento Housing Alliance, Sacramento Steps Forward, and The California Department of Rehabilitation to help people get employment by providing low-income individuals with job counseling, interview preparation and other services. Also in 2012, Paratransit received the Innovative Transportation Program from the Women's Transportation Seminar for their forward thinking efforts.

Paratransit's maintenance division services its fleet of 150 vehicles, as well as the fleets of 20 other agencies, to ensure safe and reliable public transportation options. It also repairs accessibility equipment, such as lifts and