

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIETNAM WAR

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, and to honor the men and women who proudly served in the United States Armed Forces during this turbulent period in history.

Our nation will never be able to fully express the heartfelt gratitude we have for our veterans. The debt that we owe them is immeasurable. Time and again, our servicemen and women have stepped forward to defend the freedoms we enjoy today.

American veterans are a cornerstone of society. Past generations helped build up this great country and did not hesitate to answer the call of duty. As we remember their selfless actions, it is my hope that citizens everywhere take time to speak with the veterans in their family and community. Thank them for their service, and ask them about their role in defending our country. Helping veterans pass on their priceless wisdom and memories to future generations is one of the best ways we can honor them today.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in commemorating this 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. Ask that my colleagues rise and join me in thanking our veterans, past and present, for the sacrifices they have made in service to the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF MRS. BERNICE COLEMAN THOMPSON

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Bernice Coleman Thompson on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Mrs. Thompson has been a trailblazer and leader in her church and local community her entire adult life. Mrs. Thompson was born in Salford, Alabama on September 24, 1933, to Daniel and Annie Coleman. At the age of 10, she moved to New York City where she would remain throughout her formative years. Mrs. Thompson earned an AAS degree in secretarial studies with an emphasis on the medical field from Brooklyn College. She also earned a B.A. in Psychology and M.S. in education with a concentration in Guidance and Counseling from Lehman College of the City University of New York.

Mrs. Thompson has been involved in her church for almost seventy years. As a child, she was guided in her faith by her former Pastor, the late Reverend W. L. Harding of St. Luke Baptist Church, in New York City. In 1955 she wed her husband, the Reverend Randolph Thompson, now Pastor Emeritus of the Victory Baptist Church. Through the years, Mrs. Thompson has served in many different capacities within the ministries of a number of churches. She is most proud, however, of her service as a Sunday School Teacher.

Mrs. Thompson has always been a trailblazer. She and her husband were actively involved in the Civil Rights movement and became leaders within the African American community in my hometown of Wilson, North Carolina. In the 1960's she was hired as one of the first African Americans to integrate and work for the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) in Miami, Florida. She was also one of the first African Americans to work at the Wilson Memorial Hospital in Wilson, North Carolina. Mrs. Thompson is the proud mother of five children and three grandchildren. As parents, she and her husband fought for integration of public schools and their two daughters were the first African American girls to integrate the Wilson, North Carolina public school system.

When Mrs. Thompson and her husband returned to New York City, she worked as a medical secretary at Columbia University's Medical School. She later worked as a high school guidance counselor at Walton and Morris High Schools in the Bronx, New York.

Through the years she has received a number of awards including Guidance Counselor of the Year at Morris High School, the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club Church Woman of the Year, and the Meritorious Service Award for assisting and supporting her husband while he was a seminary school student at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. She has also been a member of the NAACP, United Federation of Teachers and their Guidance and Counselors Chapter.

Mrs. Thompson's extraordinary life has been one of devotion and love for her family, church, and social justice. Mr. Speaker, I salute Mrs. Bernice Coleman Thompson on her 80th birthday and send her best wishes for the years to come.

THE ATTACK AT LAX AIRPORT

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my shock and dismay at the deadly shooting at Los Angeles International Airport on November 1. The gunman deliberately targeted Transportation Security Administration agents, killing Agent Gerardo I. Hernandez and wounding two other TSA agents and a high school teacher.

Mr. Hernandez was a brave and dedicated public servant. He was known for his commitment to his family and cheerful demeanor with travelers passing through his checkpoint. My thoughts and prayers are with his friends and family, especially his wife Ana and their two children.

Also in my thoughts are the over 50,000 TSA agents who work to keep our skies safe every day. They screen nearly 2 million passengers daily at 450 airports nationwide. Many agents will be facing long hours in the next few months as holiday travelers fill our airports and skies. It is their dedication that keeps us safe as we travel home for the holidays and all TSA agents should know that their efforts and sacrifices are deeply appreciated.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD FLOYD

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Donald Floyd, who has helped to improve the lives of millions of youth across our country through his outstanding efforts as Chief Executive Officer of National 4-H Council.

Although Don has served as CEO of National 4-H Council for thirteen years, he still describes himself as "a youth worker at heart." From his earliest days as Executive Director for Junior Achievement in Reading, Pennsylvania, to his current position at National 4-H Council, he has been driven by the knowledge that young people who are involved in positive youth development opportunities will create a healthier and more prosperous future for us all. Under Don's leadership, National 4-H Council adopted a new mission in the year 2000: "To advance the 4-H youth development movement to build a world in which youth and adults learn, grow and work together as catalysts for positive change." Don's commitment to see National 4-H Council fulfill that mission is evidenced through his efforts to create the "National Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century" and the creation of the first national action agenda for youth policy. Through these activities, 4-H has grown into one of the world's largest youth development organizations, serving more than seven million youth in 50 countries.

During Don's tenure, the 4-H movement has built upon the organization's history of bringing scientific development into rural areas to provide new and exciting programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education to youth. Through these programs, young people across the country have the opportunity to study alternative energy, robotics and geographic technologies in an effort to get them engaged in STEM education and careers. Don has led 4-H in reaching out to important communities of youth, including those in urban areas, youth at risk of delinquency, children of military families, Native American youth and children of incarcerated parents. He has made a particular impact globally where 4-H is increasing its focus on international communities and identifying the role young people play in addressing the issue of food security. Don is focused on empowering independent country-led 4-H programs to increase their impact on young people; encouraging their youth to be the next generation of farmers, leaders and innovators; and expanding the reach of positive youth development worldwide.

Throughout this growth, Don has maintained a commitment to the principle at the heart of 4-H: young people and adults working together to improve their communities. Through his ability to maintain the successful traditions of the past while identifying and pursuing opportunities for the future, Don has helped 4-H produce a generation of young people who are contributing citizens to their communities, their country and their world.

As Don retires as CEO of National 4-H Council, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking him on behalf of the millions of youth,

parents and volunteers whose lives have been touched by his steadfast commitment to positive youth development and his outstanding efforts as the ultimate "youth worker."

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, we need to do more to protect our environment, not less.

Last month, for the first time in six years, the House passed a water infrastructure bill. For the first time in six years, Congress authorized crucial investments in our ports and inland waterways. And for the first time in six years, we addressed flood risk management, hurricane and storm damage risk reduction, and environmental restoration.

The Water Resource Reform and Development Act will strengthen our national water transportation network to improve our competitiveness, create more jobs, and grow our economy. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it came at a cost.

This vital legislation coupled investments in our nation's aging infrastructure with the further weakening of one of this nation's most important environmental protections: The National Environmental Policy Act.

For more than four decades, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, has provided the foundation for countless improvements in our environmental laws. It gives us cleaner water, cleaner air, and a safer and healthier environment. It provides critical checks and balances on federal planning and decision making, requiring the federal government to consider environmental impacts. And it gives the public the opportunity to voice their concerns about the impact of federal actions on their health, safety, environment, and community.

This collaborative review process engages millions of Americans along with federal and state agencies, and forces the federal government to think outside the box and consider better alternatives.

Over the years, NEPA has saved money, time, and resources. It has also protected endangered species, public lands and historical sites, all while producing better projects with more public support. For example, when the Army Corps of Engineers planned to repair existing breakwaters and replace the lock gates of Chicago's harbor, NEPA revealed a better method of repairing and extending the life of the breakwaters at a fraction of the cost. NEPA has proven that it's possible to protect the environment and save the taxpayer money at the same time.

Unfortunately, misperceptions about this foundational environmental law are driving congressional attempts to chip it away. NEPA is frequently blamed as the leading cause of project delays when, in reality, lack of funding is actually to blame. We fault NEPA, when we should be blaming ourselves.

We continue to slash funding for Army Corps construction despite the American Society of Civil Engineers' D-minus rating of our nation's inland waterways. We can eliminate

project delays and protect the environment at the same time, but a more serious investment in our infrastructure is needed to do so.

Instead the WRRDA bill passed last week alters the NEPA process, weakening environmental protections at a time when they are needed the most. This WRRDA has made it more difficult for the public to comment on environmental impacts by limiting the comment period to as little as 60 or 30 days, depending on the type of project. Environmental review statements are often hundreds of pages long and full of critical scientific research.

Many critics argue this is barely enough time to read and understand a review, let alone consult experts and submit informed public comments. These new arbitrary and unreasonably short deadlines hurt community voices in speaking out against harmful projects and penalize agencies for fulfilling their responsibility to fully deliberate on important environmental issues.

Good science takes time, and the proposed changes to the environmental review process give experts little time to adequately evaluate the impacts of a project. Environmental reviews are a crucial tool for improving transportation projects and safeguarding the environment.

An informed public engagement process produces ideas, information and even solutions the government might otherwise have overlooked. Streamlining current NEPA provisions carelessly hurts our ability to make better decisions that protect our health, our homes and our environment.

Meeting our transportation needs and protecting our environment are not mutually exclusive objectives.

NEPA, Mr. Speaker, is the solution, not the problem.

THE RETIREMENT OF JEANNE STONER

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Jeanne Stoner, is retiring this month from her position as Assistant Vice Chancellor at the University of Pittsburgh, after a long and productive career at this highly respected institution. I want to take this opportunity to recognize all the outstanding work that Jeanne has done to help the University of Pittsburgh and our community throughout her career.

Jeanne was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. She earned a number of academic degrees, including a bachelor of arts degree, summa cum laude from Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa, a master of arts degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. After law school, Jeanne went to work as an associate attorney for the Pittsburgh law firm of Thomson, Rhodes and Cowie, and she's lived there ever since.

For the last 25 years, Jeanne has worked for the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Her first position was as the Director of Federal Government Relations for the UPMC Health System from 1989–1998. In 1999, she was appointed

to be the Corporate Secretary for UPMC. In January 2000, Jeanne moved from UPMC to Pitt to become the University's Director of Federal Government Relations, and she was subsequently named Assistant Vice Chancellor and Associate General Counsel. In each of these positions, Jeanne worked diligently on the University's behalf, addressing whatever issues came across her desk with dedication and professionalism.

Jeanne also served on many committees for various higher education professional organizations including the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and the Association of American Universities. In 2009, in recognition of her many contributions to higher education, Jeanne was awarded the Carolyn Cross Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities' Council on Government Affairs.

Jeanne and her husband Bill have 4 children and 7 grandchildren, and she is an active member of the St. Thomas More Parish in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.

I have known and worked with Jeanne for most of her time at Pitt and UPMC on a number of public policy and community-related issues. Consequently, I can say from personal experience what a warm, gracious, intelligent, and skilled professional she is. She always had Pittsburgh's best interests at heart. It's been a great pleasure to work with her over the years, and her retirement will put a big dent in the University's institutional memory.

I have been privileged to know Jeanne and work with her over the many years that I've served in Congress. She has applied great intelligence, energy, and dedication on behalf of both Pitt and Pittsburgh. I want to thank her for her many contributions to our community, congratulate her on the occasion of her retirement, and wish her the best as she begins the next phase of her life.

HONORING THE MARTIN GUITAR COMPANY

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, Congressman Matt Cartwright (PA–17) to honor the Martin Guitar Company in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, on the occasion of their 180th anniversary. For nearly two centuries, Martin Guitar has contributed to the musical culture of America by producing some of the finest acoustic instruments on the market.

The story of Martin Guitar's beginning is uniquely American. The company's founder, Christian Frederick Martin, Sr., was born in Markneukirchen, Saxony (now Germany) on 31 January 1796. He became an apprentice guitar maker at the age of 15, and after showing much promise in his early years, opened his own shop. After struggling to run a successful business among Europe's warring trade guilds, Martin determined to seek his fortune in the United States. In 1883, he set up a modest shop in New York City. After five years of hard work, Martin was able to sell his humble store and purchase eight acres of land in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, where the company continues to grow and thrive today.