

adults in Central Florida and throughout the state. The Professional Opportunities Program for Students, Inc. (POPS) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization founded by Florida State Senator Gary Siplin in February, 2001.

Senator Siplin had a dream to provide summer job opportunities to high school students in his community and he began that dream with five students. As the need for jobs increased, the graduation rate of students in the community began decreasing. Senator Siplin realized he needed to do more for these young people.

In 2008, POPS received a grant from the Department of Education to provide a year-round program that included mentorship, life skills workshops, community service, and paid internships to 200 students in Orlando, Florida. By 2010, POPS had grown to serve over 400 students and six additional cities: Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Pahokee/Belle Glade, St. Petersburg, Bartow/Lake Wales, and Ft. Lauderdale.

The mission of POPS is to provide personal and professional development for teenagers who face social, economic or environmental barriers that may impact the quality of their lives. POPS' work is rooted in collaboration among students, parents, schools, and community and business leaders.

The primary goal of the POPS program is to motivate diverse at-risk students to complete their high school education and prepare them for future success. POPS strives to reduce some of the at-risk factors through mentoring, counseling, character education, money management, and workforce development training. To achieve these goals, POPS focuses on assisting students in the completion of high school, motivating them to pursue an advanced education and obtain gainful employment.

The POPS program helps monitor demonstrable gains in academic achievement as well as increased attendance and graduation rates. POPS staff and mentors work to help achieve reduction in disciplinary actions and dropout rates and to increase engagement of students in education, cultural, and career experiences.

Through mentor relationships, improved parental involvement, and on-the-job-training and career exploration, the POPS program helps prepare students for college and entry into the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to recognize Florida State Senator Gary Siplin and the POPS program for their invaluable contributions to Florida's youth.

RECOGNIZING AUDREY DECKINGA

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Audrey Deckinga on her retirement from Texas Child Protective Services. Over her 39 years of service to the Lone Star State, she has shown an unwavering commitment to the well-being of our most vulnerable citizens.

Audrey started her journey in the field of child welfare over 30 years ago as a foster parent. After beginning her professional career in CPS as a caseworker in Williamson County

in 1988, she rose through the ranks over the next 25 years to become the leader of a CPS statewide program with over 8,000 staff. She has served as Assistant Commissioner since 2009 and has impacted the child welfare arena on both state and national levels.

Under Audrey's advocacy and leadership, more children are served safely without a removal from their own homes. Adoptions have increased by more than 100%. After exiting the system, children are less likely to have a subsequent incident of abuse or neglect or to reenter state custody. These achievements bring to life the words of Fred Rogers, one of our nation's great champions for children, who said, "Justice is taking care of those who aren't able to take care of themselves."

Her work to do right for children doesn't stop at the end of the work day. Audrey remains involved in numerous state and national child welfare groups where she has developed a reputation as a forward-thinking supporter of policies that make a lasting difference in the lives of children.

Retirement is to be celebrated and enjoyed. It is not the end of a career, but rather the beginning of a new adventure. I commend Audrey Deckinga for her work improving the lives of families in Texas. I wish her only the best in the years ahead.

THANKING EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS FOR THEIR SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the House of Representatives to pay tribute to eight outstanding and long-term employees of the Office of the Sergeant at Arms who will be retiring in the upcoming months:

John Boardman—Chamber Security Division staff.

Geraldine Cassidy—House Garages and Parking Security Division Staff.

Dennis Engel—House Garages and Parking Security Division Staff.

Karen Forriest—Identification Services Division staff.

Nicarsia Mayes—Chamber Security Division staff.

Linda Shealy—Emergency Management Division, Executive Assistant.

Bill Sims—Director of Chamber Security.

Lee Trolan—Emergency Management Division, Director, Continuity Planning.

Taken as a group, these exceptional public servants have served the House of Representatives and the federal government for a combined total of 242 years. I know we are deeply grateful to each of them for their many years of hard work, diligence, and sacrifice to this institution.

Taken individually, each has held positions of trust and responsibility within the Office of the Sergeant at Arms. From the Floor of the House, to the House Office Building garages, to the Identification Office, and Emergency Planning, their commitment to the Congress is second to none. Their institutional knowledge and skills, honed through years of hard work

and dedication, will be sorely missed by their colleagues, as well as by Members and staff alike. Every single one of them has much to be proud of as they reflect on long and distinguished careers.

Please join me in commending the outstanding service of John Boardman, Geraldine Cassidy, Dennis Engel, Karen Forriest, Nicarsia Mayes, Linda Shealy, Bill Sims, and Lee Trolan to the Congress of the United States and congratulating each on their retirement. On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives we wish each of you well in all of your future endeavors.

CELEBRATING KEOGH HEALTH CONNECTION'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating Keogh Health Connection's Tenth Anniversary. This milestone represents a decade of excellence in connecting Arizona's uninsured population with affordable health care.

Keogh Health Connection was established in 2003, inspired by the passion for service held by its founders, Karlene and Kevin Keogh. This couple recognized that the available healthcare resources can only help those in need when people know how to access them. Through working with families and individuals on a case by case basis, and making referrals to an increasing number of partner organizations, this non-profit has shown tremendous growth over the past decade. It has served over 200,000 residents of Maricopa County, a number of which are in my district.

By taking action to fill a critical need in its community, Keogh Health Connection is truly commendable. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this organization and its staff on reaching 10 years of service, and in wishing them many more successful years to come.

IN MEMORIAM: FRANCES XAVIER SOLOMON, II

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands—and all the Pacific territories—lost a friend in August. Mr. Francis Xavier Solomon, II, veteran and public servant, passed away.

Mr. Solomon's service to our country ranged from his tour of combat in Vietnam to his career with the Department of the Interior. There, he helped develop telecommunications infrastructure in the islands and the financial management systems our young governments needed.

In his last 13 years he worked as a consultant to the Prior Service Retirement Trust Fund, which provides a pension to former employees of the U.S. Government in Micronesia.

Mr. Solomon is remembered by my constituents as “a true public servant in the finest sense of the term,” and “a humble person who possessed extraordinary talent and accomplished great things.”

Francis Xavier Solomon leaves behind a beloved wife of 29 years, Millie, and several children and stepchildren. And he leaves behind a legacy throughout our island communities, for which we will always be indebted.

REMEMBRANCE OF JOSEPH
CAMPBELL THOMAS

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks today in remembrance of Joseph Campbell Thomas, a lifelong resident of western Roanoke County, Virginia who passed away at the age of 91.

Joe was born on March 25, 1922, and grew up on his family farm during the Great Depression. He helped raise crops and livestock, worked in his family's tomato canning factory, and graduated from Andrew Lewis High School in 1939. While attending Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Joe was a member of the Regimental Command of the Corps of Cadets, the Scabbard and Blade and the VPI German Club. After graduating, Joe joined the United States Army Air Corps, and served our country as a pilot flying the Lockheed P-38 Lightning.

After some time working for American Bridge and General Motors, Joe joined his brothers Frank and Lewis to found Thomas Bros. excavating contractors. Their hard work paid off, and Thomas Bros. eventually grew into a premier company with important projects like Lewis Gale Hospital, Carilion Hospital, Salem Memorial Stadium, Valley View Mall, Tanglewood Mall, and others.

Outside of work, though, Joe was a lifelong member of Salem's First United Methodist Church and an avid golfer. He gave back to the community by serving on numerous boards and organizations including the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, the Roanoke County School Board, the Richfield Retirement Community Board of Directors, Lewis Gale Medical Foundation, Salem Rotary Club, the Salem YMCA, and others. He was a regular fixture at his alma mater over the years, rarely missing a Virginia Tech football or basketball game. He served as Chairman of the Virginia Tech Second Century Campaign, the Virginia Tech Athletic Fund, and the Hackin' Hokies. He also was awarded the Virginia Tech Distinguished Alumni Award in 1993 for his contributions to industrial engineering.

Joe was preceded in death by his wife, Susan Leftwich Thomas; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Brown Thomas; brothers Frank Brown Thomas Jr. and Lewis Preston Thomas; and sister, Mary Louise Thomas Crain. He is survived by daughter Julia Thomas Arthur and her husband Michael; son Joseph Campbell Thomas Jr. and his wife Leigh; five grandchildren; nieces and nephews; and other loving members of his family.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Joe's family and loved ones. His love for his family and neighbors and his contributions to our

community will always be remembered and cherished in Salem and throughout the Roanoke Valley.

THE IRANIANS ARE FEELING THE
PINCH

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the old Israeli saying goes, “What you don't see with your eyes, don't invent with your mouth.”

Iran and six world powers, including the United States, are meeting in Geneva to negotiate over Iran's nuclear weapons program. The U.S. must be clear and unequivocal: There will be no reductions in sanctions without verified steps to show that Tehran is abandoning, not just freezing, its nuclear weapons program.

Sanctions are what have brought Iran to the table to talk in the first place. In 2012, the Islamic Republic's net exports of petroleum dropped to their lowest level since 1990. Its GDP has dropped for the first time in 20 years. The Iranian Central Bank acknowledged an annual inflation rate of 45 percent in late July 2013; many economists believe it is more likely in the 50–70 percent range.

In short, the Iranians are feeling the pinch. The sanctions are working.

But getting the Iranians to the negotiating table is not good enough.

If we reduce sanctions now, we give up one of our main sources of leverage for the negotiations. Why stop what is working before we even start talking? Tehran wants to ease the sanctions to a tolerable enough level so that it can continue developing nuclear weapons without pain to its economy.

If we ease sanctions now, Iran will doubt our resolve, continue to run out the clock, and develop nuclear weapons knowing that there will be no serious consequences.

If the U.S. caves in at this critical time, other countries around the world will likely follow its lead and ease their own sanctions. In short, we would be right back to where we were in 2004: Iran marching toward a dangerous nuclear weapons program with no significant sanctions in place. Only this time, it would be much worse. Tehran has continually blocked international inspectors from seeing its nuclear facilities because it has something to hide.

Iran is closer than ever before to crossing the threshold and developing a nuclear weapon. Iran's stockpile of medium-enriched uranium has nearly doubled in a year, and its number of centrifuges has expanded from 12,000 in 2012 to 19,000 today.

Iran could produce enough weapons-grade uranium to build a nuclear bomb in as little as a month, a recent report by the Institute for Science and International Security states. It goes on to say that if Iran built a covert enrichment plant with the specific purpose of enriching uranium as quickly as possible, with current Iranian technology it could produce enough material for a nuclear bomb in a week. Backing off from sanctions now should not be an option. We simply do not have time.

If we want diplomacy to succeed, we shouldn't be talking about reducing sanctions but rather ratcheting them up. My colleagues

and I in the House of Representatives passed an additional sanctions bill in July that would inflict even more pain on the Iranian regime. These new sanctions would go after more sectors of the Iranian economy and more individuals in the Iranian government. The U.S. Senate should ignore the president's objections and pass these sanctions immediately. If peace is to carry the day, we cannot start backing down now.

Nobody wants war with Iran. We should not give up the one peaceful tool that has finally impacted the Iranian regime enough to change its cost-benefit analysis. It would be foolish and dangerous to reduce sanctions without Iran proving that it is dismantling its nuclear weapons program. And that's just the way it is.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF HELEN
MOSS

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Helen Moss, who passed from this life on Saturday, November 9, 2013. Helen Moss was an indefatigable and socially minded community leader on many fronts. The living partnership she and her husband, Richard, formed were constant forces for community betterment across the Cleveland region.

Dedicated to success and committed to the pursuit of innovative research, Helen created the Helen Moss Cancer Research Foundation in 2000. The purpose of the foundation is to encourage and support education in Integrative Medicine and Comprehensive Cancer Care in Northeastern Ohio. She chose to turn her final heroic struggle into continuing good for her community: in 2012, she helped to establish the Parker Hannifin/Helen Moss Cancer Research Foundation Professorship in Integrative Oncology at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine.

In addition to her support of health research, Helen played an active role in the local community. She was elected as a councilwoman for the Village of Bratenahl in 2001. Additionally, she was selected to be the President of the Ohio Ballet in Akron in 1982 and was appointed to the Ohio Arts Council in 1986. An elegant woman, strong, and vitally engaged citizen, she held a precious appreciation for beauty—in the arts, in the built environment, in literature and music. Helen was inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame in 2009.

Helen Moss leaves to cherish her life and legacy her husband Richard Fleischman, their four children, grandchildren and extended family and friends. We join them in honoring the life and service of an exceptional woman.

HONOR TRANSGENDER DAY OF
REMEMBRANCE

HON. RUSH HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, today is Transgender Day of Remembrance. On this