

come for our star to shine, alongside the others, on the Flag of the United States of America.

GOVERNMENT OPPRESSION OF PATRIOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, early last year, I spoke with businesswoman Catherine Engelbrecht, also founder of True the Vote and King Street Patriots in Houston, Texas. True the Vote is a nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to train poll workers to uphold voter integrity at the polls, because, despite what many say, voter fraud is rampant in America. King Street Patriots is a group of liberty-minded, patriotic individuals in Houston who meet weekly to discuss what's going on here in Washington.

Catherine told me that both of these groups and her family had not only been harassed by liberal progressive groups but also by the Federal Government. It all began when Catherine applied for nonprofit status in 2010 for True the Vote and King Street Patriots. So began the tidal wave of government inquiries and harassment.

In a recent interview, Catherine said this:

We applied for nonprofit status in 2010. Since that time, the IRS has run us through a gauntlet of analysts and hundreds of questions over and over and over again. They've requested to see each and every tweet I've ever tweeted and each and every Facebook post I've ever posted. They've asked to know every place I've ever spoken since our inception, and to whom, and everywhere I intend to speak in the future.

We have learned that the IRS has even asked these groups, Mr. Speaker, for donor lists.

Mr. Speaker, this level of detail goes well beyond the business of the IRS, and it didn't stop there. The Federal Government's snooping included six visits by the FBI, as well as multiple unannounced visits from OSHA and, yes, even the ATF. Mr. Speaker, you may remember the ATF. Those are the ones responsible for smuggling guns into Mexico. How ironic it is they want to audit American citizens but lose track of guns where they were supposedly sent to the drug cartels.

In any event, in addition to True the Vote, Catherine and her husband were also personally audited. Keep in mind Catherine and her husband have owned a small family business for 20 years and have never been audited by the IRS until all of this. Why now? It seems very coincidental.

I asked that question when I submitted a FOIA request on behalf of True the Vote and King Street Patriots to FBI, OSHA and the ATF asking if they were under criminal investigation. The reply from these agencies was that none of these individuals were under criminal investigation. Well, if they're not, why are they being treated

like criminals? Just because they question government.

Mr. Speaker, Catherine is not alone. The IRS has admitted to systematically targeting certain groups who have opposing views from the administration. According to USA Today, between February 2010 and May 2012, only one Tea Party group was granted tax-exempt status from the IRS. But during that same 2-year period, the IRS has approved dozens of liberal and progressive groups for their tax-exempt status. Coincidence? Yeah, right.

Not only does this behavior of the IRS threaten individual freedom and violate the Constitution; I think it may be criminal. It is unlawful for any Federal agency to use its law enforcement and its investigation power as a means to harass and target certain individuals whose political views differ from any administration. It would appear that such actions are also in violation of Federal law and the equal protection and due process protections guaranteed in the Constitution.

Private citizens should not be punished for questioning government. This is America, not a Third World dictatorship or the Soviet Union.

□ 1050

This type of government oppression and political opposition is disturbing. I've written Attorney General Eric Holder to request him to direct the U.S. Office of Special Counsel to investigate any potential violation of the Hatch Act that may have occurred by IRS employees. I've also asked Attorney General Holder to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate all of this.

No government should be requiring citizens to furnish their schedules, donor lists, personal communications or political beliefs to any government agency. No government agency—whether it's the IRS, the FBI, the ATF, or OSHA—should be used as a tool to suppress those who are considered “opposition groups” and dare to question our government.

The IRS is abusing its power to tax by harassing and punishing those who have been “taxed enough already.”

And that's just the way it is.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS OF FORMER MEMBERS PROGRAM

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings during the former Members program be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and that all Members and former Members who spoke during the proceedings have the privilege of revising and extending their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The following proceedings were held before the House convened for morning-hour debate:

UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS 2013 ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

The meeting was called to order by the Honorable Barbara Kennelly, vice president of Former Members of Congress Association, at 8:05 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Lord God of history, and our salvation, when former Members return to Congress it must be similar to any American opening the Bible or their holy book at random. By doing so, people of the Book read between the lines, see the story of America, and rejoice.

Congress, too, holds old and familiar stories, strong exhortations, repeated corrections, and consoling confirmation of hopes that speak anew of love, patriotism, and light. Looking at Congress once again, these former Members, still Your stewards, hear the praise of Psalms, the lament of Job, and are strengthened by the sentiments of Gideon as well as Paul, the commands of Moses and the prayers of Jesus.

As the Good Book binds people into community, You tie together the years of Congress and make of them a prophetic voice that reverences the past, speaks to the present, and holds promise for the future.

May all former Members be rewarded for their contributions to this constitutional Republic and continue to work and pray that the goodness and justice of this beloved country be proclaimed to the nations.

Quicken life, promise, and fortitude in all here gathered that we may bring joy to the present age and long for eternal happiness, calling upon Your holy name, now and forever.

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Hon. Barbara Kennelly led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Ms. KENNELLY. The Honorable STENY HOYER will now address us.

Mr. HOYER. “Address us” overstates what I'm going to do, but I'm always so pleased to be with all of you. And I was kidding on saying that.

I want to tell you frankly, on the Republican side, you guys look so much better than you did when we served together, and we want all of you back on our side of the aisle. We're voting to reelect you.

But I am so pleased to be here with all of you. I had the opportunity to say just a few words yesterday, but I particularly wanted to be here, and I don't

see my Republican Speaker here. I think some of you know that story. Ray LaHood was presiding, and it was the nineties, '95, early '95, and I went up to Ray. We had about—I forget exactly—199 Members at that point in time. I went to Ray and I said, "Ray, if you can get 20 votes, I will get 199, and we'll elect Bob Michel Speaker." But we didn't do that, as you noticed historically.

But I fondly recall with you the days when we really did sit down and work together on a lot of things in a positive way and get things done for our country. We're not doing that as well this time, as you know. Ray would tell you that, working in the administration, but I particularly wanted to be here this morning.

I don't see Bob here. Is Bob coming?

Ms. MORELLA. He is coming.

Mr. HOYER. Okay. Well, he is not here.

I'm a huge fan of Bob Michel's, but I'm also a huge fan of Ray LaHood's, and I know you're honoring Ray today, and I want to join with you in honoring him. Not only did he serve as a staffer in the House of Representatives, upholding what we're not upholding as much today, the integrity and the self-respect of all the Members here, to some degree denigrating this institution and Members—I lament that.

But Ray LaHood, as a staffer and as a Member of Congress and as a member of the President's Cabinet, has done some extraordinary work.

Ray, I want to congratulate you and thank you for all the positive roles you have played in moving this country forward. We're going to miss you from the Cabinet, but we don't expect to miss you from our lives, as so many here see. I want to wish you the very best.

Jack tells me he's now the president of a community college in New York. I said, "Well, are you watching what we're doing?" He said, "Not much." That's why he's got such a happy look on his face—hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.

Some of you were here when I came to the Congress in 1981, and some came with me. I came 5 months after you did, Dennis, and just a few months before Barbara came to the Congress.

So I want to say on behalf of all the leadership—hopefully on both sides of the aisle—I know that's the case.

And remember, I'm not going to drag my leg, but do you remember John Rousselot? Does that name ring a bell with you? Well, when I came to the Congress, John Rousselot probably was the Member that I had the most negative feelings about: John Birch Society, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Into about a year, I got to really think, John Rousselot is not a bad guy at all.

I don't recall whether you recall, but he used to smile at all of us as if to say, Okay, I've come over to your side and now I'm really gonna give it to you. And he did it with such a twinkle in his eye and such a positive. Jim

Blanchard—Governor Blanchard, Ambassador Blanchard, all things Blanchard—is shaking his head. But that was a lesson to me, as it should be a lesson for all of us, to take people not on which side of the aisle they're on, not which side of the liberal-conservative range they may fall, not on some simplified newspaper story that you read, but on, as King said, the content of their character.

I think the more that we get to know one another, the more we understand why this body really does over the long term work. The only way you can get here is be elected by your neighbors, and they do pretty well. They're not perfect, we're not perfect, but they do pretty well, and they elect some really fine people Representatives of their districts.

The trick is for all of us to come together and work together. Your efforts here, I think, help in that regard. So, welcome back, and I look forward to seeing you, not just when the former Members come back. I see Connie all the time and Bev all the time, my colleagues from Maryland. And I saw Jim the other day, and we had a good talk. But come back, visit; and if I can help in any way, I want to do it, just as I will want those who succeed me after I leave to do the same.

So, Ray, congratulations to you. Thank you very much. And, to all of you, thank you for all you have done through the years, and thanks for remembering and coming back and helping our institution be all that it can be. Thank you very much.

Ms. KENNELLY. Thank you, Leader.

And now I would like to present the Honorable Connie Morella, president of the Former Members Association.

Ms. MORELLA. First of all, I want to thank, on behalf of all of us, STENY HOYER for launching us this morning for this 43rd annual meeting that we had. STENY never really saw an aisle. He saw issues and compromise, and that's what we—the brothers and sisters who have been here—would like to see continued.

So, thank you, Barbara. It is always a distinct privilege to be back in this revered Chamber, and we appreciate the opportunity today to present our annual report of the United States Association of Former Members of Congress.

I'm going to be joined by some of our colleagues in reporting the activities and projects of our organization, but, first of all, I would like to ask the Clerk to call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll of the former Members of Congress, as follows:

Mr. Alexander of Arkansas
Mr. Buechner of Missouri
Mr. Bustamante of Texas
Ms. Byron of Maryland
Mr. Carr of Michigan
Mr. Clement of Tennessee
Mr. Coyne of Pennsylvania
Mr. DiGuardi of New York
Mr. Edwards of Oklahoma
Mr. Ewing of Illinois

Mr. Frost of Texas
Mr. Gordon of Tennessee
Mr. Hertel of Michigan
Mr. Hughes of New Jersey
Mr. Johnson of Georgia
Mr. Kennedy of Minnesota
Ms. Kennelly of Connecticut
Mr. LaHood of Illinois
Mr. Michel of Illinois
Mr. Moore of Kansas
Ms. Morella of Maryland
Mr. Quinn of New York
Mr. Sarasin of Connecticut
Mr. Tanner of Tennessee
Mr. Turner of Texas
Mr. Walsh of New York
Mr. Wamp of Tennessee
Mr. Zeff of New Hampshire
Mr. Spratt of South Carolina
Mr. Largent of Oklahoma
Mr. Blanchard of Michigan
Mr. Hochbrueckner of New York
Mr. Pressler of South Dakota
Mr. Slattery of Kansas

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you all for joining us today. Our association, as you know, was chartered by Congress, and one requirement of that charter is for us to report once a year to Congress about our activities. Today, therefore, is our opportunity to demonstrate to Congress that creating us over 40 years ago wasn't such a bad idea.

Before my colleagues and I describe our activities of the past 12 months, I want to focus on the second purpose of our meeting here this morning, and that is to bestow our association's highest honor on a former Member of Congress whose public service inspires us and who deserves our recognition. When you look at Ray LaHood's public service, you understand quickly why he was a unanimous choice and an easy choice for our board to make.

Ray LaHood has spent his entire professional life in service to either his community or to the country, or to both. He was a junior high school teacher, he was a member of the Illinois State Legislature, a congressional chief of staff, a Member of Congress, and now a member of President Obama's Cabinet. In Congress, he served on the Transportation Committee and on the Appropriations Committee. During his many years in Congress, Ray LaHood's approach to legislating was characterized by decency, reason, civility, and respect. He was a Member more interested in solutions and debate than politicking and scoring wins.

It is that credibility and integrity that made it easy for President Obama to appoint him to his Cabinet regardless of party label. We are so pleased that we can recognize his exemplary dedication via our Distinguished Service Award.

The inscription on the award reads:

The 2013 Distinguished Service Award is presented by the United States Association of Former Members of Congress to Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

Ray LaHood's devotion to public service has taken many forms and has guided his entire professional life, whether as a teacher, a congressional staff member, a Representative, or a member of the President's Cabinet. In all these roles, he always put country

above party and solutions above politics. He was the arbitrator when a divisive debate required sensible leadership. He would find common ground when compromise seemed unattainable. Whether as a Member of Congress or as a member of the Cabinet, Ray LaHood has distinguished himself as a dedicated and exemplary public servant, and his former colleagues from both sides of the aisle salute him.

Washington, DC, May 15, 2013.

That is the inscription.

I am reminded of a statement from Shakespeare: "the force of his own merit makes his way," and he has worked hard and deserves the recognition we are about to give him.

Later on in our program, we expect that a former leader, Bob Michel, will be coming here to say something about Ray LaHood, whom he loved and felt was sort of a mentor, and they're good friends, but he hasn't arrived yet. I do want to commence with giving the award, and then later, when Bob comes, we will recognize him at whatever point in the program.

So I am going to ask Secretary Ray LaHood to join me here at the dais and accept our association's 2013 Distinguished Service Award.

Secretary LaHood, we have also a booklet for you, which is here under this award, which I read word for word. The booklet includes letters sent by former Members and friends for you, saying how great you are. So, when you need that inspiration, you can just open the book and read those words. It is a great honor to present this to you, Ray. Congratulations to you.

Mr. LAHOOD. Thank you very much, Connie, and to the former Members.

Thank you so much to the association for this great honor that you do to me, and I know that, when you honor one former Member, we honor all Members. I am grateful to the association for all of the work that you do and for all of the encouragement that you give to people on college campuses, to young people, through the programs that you carry out year in and year out, and for the fact that the association continues to represent former Members and represent what is good about having served here.

I want to say a special word of thanks to my former Illinois colleague, Tom Ewing, for being here. Tom's district and my district were joined together, and we used to fly to Chicago and ride together, and he would give me a ride kind of near my district, and we worked together on some very important issues.

I also want to thank two of the people who I came to Congress with in the election of 1994—Zach Wamp from Tennessee and Steve Largent from Oklahoma. As you can imagine, when our class came, there were 73 Republicans and 13 Democrats, I believe, and the most famous in our class, God rest his soul, was Sonny Bono. We all thought that we were pretty important. You come with a Hall of Famer like Largent and others who were in our class, but every camera focused on

Sonny. When we went out for our photo and when we were around, we all thought we were pretty important until Sonny showed up, and the media kind of gravitated towards Sonny. While in our first year here, Steve was actually inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. Yes, he was a great football player out in Seattle. So I am grateful for the two of them coming and representing our class.

I also want to say a word about NICK RAHALL, whom I thought maybe I saw here. He might have walked in. He and I worked on some Lebanon issues together.

Let me just say quickly that this bipartisan thing comes very naturally to me. The district that I represented was 20 counties in central Illinois. Nine of those counties were represented by Abraham Lincoln for one term in this House. So it comes naturally.

One of my predecessors was Everett Dirksen, who went over to serve in the Senate, who became minority leader, and who helped Lyndon Johnson pass the civil rights bill. We're going to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the civil rights bill. Tom Pegrum is writing a book about that, and he did a lot of research on Everett Dirksen. Some of you remember Dirksen. He was a fellow from central Illinois who did work with Johnson in so many ways to pass major legislation right after Johnson had been elected in 1964.

Then of course, Bob Michel, whom I served with as his chief of staff, was renownedly known for his bipartisanship. During the time that President Reagan served in the White House for 8 years, he got a lot of credit for doing a lot of major legislation; but what people forget is that Bob Michel was the leader for the Republican Party, which was the minority party then, but he was able to reach across and get some Democratic votes in order to get Reagan's agenda passed.

So this idea of bipartisanship, it's in the water in central Illinois. It comes very naturally. It really does. When I came here, I came with people like Steve and Zach and others. Some of our class ran on the idea of turning this place upside down and reform and all of that, and we came here after the Republicans had been 40 years out in the wilderness as the majority party. I came here, really, to use the House of Representatives as a way to solve the country's problems and to solve the issues and problems in central Illinois. I didn't come here to necessarily turn the place upside down. I thought the House was a place where you could really solve problems, but it only could be done if there were some compromise involved in what we did. That's the way that we tried to operate, and I think it's a good lesson for people to look at. The House really can be a place where you solve the Nation's problems and issues in your own districts, and that's the way I always looked at it.

I was very proud of the fact that I co-chaired four bipartisan retreats. We

started out with David Skaggs and then with Charlie Stenholm. Our first bipartisan retreat included over 200 Members, over 100 spouses, and over 150 kids. That's the first time that a congressional kid got to meet another congressional kid or that a spouse got to meet a spouse, and those friendships have lasted well beyond Congress.

My friend Jack Quinn, who is here, he and I were not in the same class, but we became friends, and we had friends on both sides of the aisle.

Look, I'm speaking to the choir here. You all know, and that's why you're here—you believe in the House; you believe in this organization; you believe that this is a place where you can have debates. But the bottom line is no problem gets solved—no issue ever gets resolved—unless it's done with compromise, unless it's done in a bipartisan way.

You can't name an issue, big or small, that was ever solved unless it was bipartisanship. Not one of us in this House, not one of the 435 gets their own way, not one of us.

Big things get done when people work together, and big legislation gets passed when people work together. That's the only way. That's the formula. I don't care what anybody says. If you look back on the storied history of this House any time that you served here, any issue that you dealt with where you could have a spirited debate, people could give great speeches. In the end, it was when people came together across the aisle that things got done, when big issues got solved. And it's true today.

During the time that I've had this privilege that President Obama gave me, we've been able to pass a transportation bill and an FAA bill in a bipartisan way. We've been able to do some things, but always in a bipartisan way, always with compromise. There is no other way under this system that we have. So to all of you that are gathered here and honoring me, we honor all of you. We honor this association.

Come on, Mr. Leader. Come on up here.

I know Connie probably wants to introduce him.

They've already said a whole bunch of nice things about me, Mr. Leader. Come on. Come on up here.

Let's hear it for our former leader.

Ms. MORELLA. I don't need to introduce this gentleman. You all know him. But I do want to say that he does exemplify what Ray LaHood has said about bipartisanship and drinking the waters of central Illinois.

The bipartisan spirit in which Bob Michel is held was recently exemplified at a 90th birthday party held for him. At that birthday party, the Democrats came in, the Republicans came in, and all the former leaders came in. It was a wonderful opportunity to see how this man is so respected and what he exemplifies.

As we've already given the tribute, it's up to you now to say something. He gave a great speech.

Mr. LaHOOD. Say a word or two.

Mr. MICHEL. Good morning, everybody. Sorry I'm tardy. I thought we started at 9 o'clock, and I went downstairs in the Speaker's dining room there and I thought there would be a few of you for coffee or something. So I apologize for my very tardy entrance.

Have we got the cart before the horse here or something? Something is backward anyway. But I thank you folks.

You may or may not remember that Ray got his start out in Illinois with former Congressman Tom Railsback. Some of you older folks will remember Tom. He was in my local office there, and then during my tenure as leader, in the last 10 years of that leadership role, I had Ray serve as my chief of staff. And I tell you, he kept me out of all trouble. He knew right from wrong, and he knew this institution. He loved to see Members of both sides. I think we talked about that a number of times, to get to know everybody on your side for sure, but don't be afraid to cross that aisle and get to know personally as many of the Democratic Members as you possibly can. He did a marvelous job doing that.

So it was kind of natural when I left and retired, he ran for my seat and won handily, and during his 14 years of service was on the Transportation Committee and the Appropriations Committee. I thought one of the things that Ray wanted to get done, if he possibly could—he always sought a Democrat or two to join him—was having retreats for the newer Members to get to know one another personally and feel comfortable in dealing with them. That was the way, at least with any measure of success that I might have enjoyed—it came by the fact that you loved to visit with the Members on the other side of the aisle whenever it was possible. Ray did that to the nth degree.

But most important I think for me is that he's got a great moral compass and he knows right from wrong. I tell you, that's guided him during his public service time. Those of you who have served, any number of times there are things that come up in the office once in a while where you're thinking, Well, I'm not altogether sure about this. It may be good; it may not. Ray always knew the right choice to make. That made me feel comfortable. And if I enjoyed any measure of success as leader, boy, I owe so much to this guy.

I think that's what the President saw in Ray when he decided, after he was elected, that he was going to have a couple of Republicans serve in his administration. Of course, Bob Gates was Secretary of Defense, and then he picked Ray to be his Secretary of Transportation. And with Ray's experience and again that ability to be very sociable and likeable, he was a great success and was a good ambassador for the President in that position.

I think if we look back over that period of 4 years, that Bob Gates and Hillary Clinton, yes, were very popular and well-known, and, boy, I tell you,

ranking right under them had to be Ray LaHood in his tenure as Secretary of Transportation.

He is a guy that really pushed safety. This idea of texting and talking while you're driving, boy, he made the case with the American public out there, and with some of those shady bus operators, when they were running into trouble, you know, Ray stepped right up there to bat. So I think it's just a wonderful thing that our organization would, by tradition, name someone of our former group to receive some special honor and recognition. Whoever makes the decision in the group these days, I personally thank you so much because he is my dear friend, and I don't think we could have made a better choice than Ray. Congratulations to you.

And since I got things backward, I was going to read the citation as I concluded. But obviously—

Mr. LaHOOD. Connie read it.

Mr. MICHEL. Oh, she did? Thank you.

Again, he prompted me correctly.

But in conclusion, thanks everybody. It's nice to see so many of you here.

Mr. LaHOOD. You obviously realize why Bob Michel was able to serve for 38 years. He's just a phenomenal human being. He's loved.

We had a 90th birthday party in our hometown of Peoria a couple of weeks ago, and over 300 people came to Bob's 90th birthday party. This is after he had left office for more than a decade. They came because of his service and the respect that they have for him, and we had a great day in Peoria honoring Bob Michel.

Again, in honoring Ray LaHood, we honor all of you and we honor the association.

Thank you all for what you've done to make this institution the great institution that it continues to be, and hopefully the few words that we said about how things really work and how to get things done will resonate a little bit through the hallways here for a moment or two. I know it won't be much more than a moment, but maybe somebody will pick it up.

Thank you to the association. I'm deeply honored. And I thank all of those who came this morning. God bless everybody.

Ms. MORELLA. That was a nice beginning of our annual meeting.

I'm now privileged to report to Congress about the activities of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress since our last meeting in July of 2012.

Our association is bipartisan. You've heard that over and over again, and you know that as you see the people who are here and listen to the words that have been spoken. It was chartered by Congress in 1983, and the purpose of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress is to promote public service and strengthen democracy abroad and in the United States. About 600 former Senators and Rep-

resentatives belong to the association. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents are united in this organization in their desire to teach about Congress and the importance of representative democracy. We're proud to have been chartered by Congress, and we receive no funding from Congress. All the activities, which we're about to describe, are financed by our membership dues, programs, specific grants and sponsors, or via our fundraising dinner.

Our finances are sound, our projects are fully funded, and our most recent audit by an outside accountant came back with a clean bill of financial health. Not bad, aye?

It's been a very successful, active, rewarding year. We have continued our work serving as a liaison between the current Congress and legislatures overseas. We have created partnerships with highly respected institutions in the area of democracy building and election monitoring. We have developed new projects. We are expanding others. And we, again, sent dozens of bipartisan teams of former Members of Congress to teach about public service and representative democracy at universities and high schools, both in the United States and abroad.

When this organization was created over 40 years ago, the former Members who founded our association envisioned this organization to take the lead in teaching about Congress and encouraging public service. They were hoping that former Members could inspire the next generation of America's leaders. Well, over the years we have created a number of programs, most importantly the Congress to Campus program, to do just that.

We continue to work with our great partner, the Stennis Center for Public Service Leadership. We thank them for their invaluable assistance in administering the Congress to Campus program.

I now yield to a former president of our association, Jack Buechner of Missouri, who, along with Matt McHugh of New York, cochairs this great program. So, Jack, if you would briefly tell us something about it.

Mr. BUECHNER. Thank you, Connie.

I welcome this opportunity to report on this outstanding program. As most of you know, the Congress to Campus program is the flagship operation of the former Members. It's a domestic program, and it also is an international program. It energizes and engages former Members from all over to come and join bipartisan teams of former Members. We go to colleges, universities, and even high schools across this country, and as I said, around the world, to educate the next generation of leaders about the value of public service.

Students benefit from the personal interaction with our association members, whose knowledge, experience, and accessibility are unique teaching tools. During each visit, our bipartisan teams lead classes, meet one on one with students and faculty, speak to campus

media, participate in campus and community forums, and interact with local citizenry. Institutions are encouraged to market the visit to the entire campus community, not just to those students majoring in political science, history, or government. Over the course of 2½ days, hundreds of students from all areas of academic studies are exposed to the former Members' message of public service and civility. The Congress to Campus program has always interviewed and surveyed the former Members and the campus contact to determine how the visit was so our program can continually improve.

This spring semester, the students are being surveyed both before and after the visit. That way, we can provide a way to determine the impact of the program on the students. By gathering this information, the Congress to Campus program can make a clear evaluation on what aspects of the program have the greatest effect, as well as provide tangible data to help find further funding for the program.

This program has also made a number of international visits this academic year, including two visits to the United Kingdom, one trip to Turkey, and one to Canada. Domestically, we had an extremely busy fall semester, coinciding with the elections. We had 13 visits across the country. The 2012 to 2013 academic year included visits to the United States Naval Academy, Palm Beach State College, Suffolk University, Pepperdine University School of Law, Boston University, Penn State, and the McGovern Center for Public Service at the University of South Dakota.

More than 30 former Members participated during this academic year, and I want to thank each of you who donated your time—pro bono—to this vital program. I also want to encourage our newest former Members and those who have not yet had the opportunity to consider doing so to encourage a friend from across the aisle to join you. It's an excellent opportunity to continue your public service after Congress.

You can also make a pledge to connect us with a host school, for example your alma mater, a college in your old district, or the university that your children or grandchildren are attending. Our staff will then follow-up with you to make the arrangements. Sharon Witiw runs the program and has all the information you will need.

As was mentioned earlier, we have continued our excellent partnership with the Stennis Center for Public Service Leadership in the administration of this program. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Brother Rogers of the Stennis Center for his fine work. Our staffs work very closely together to make this program such a success.

As I briefly mentioned, the Congress to Campus program has an international outreach. On average, we send two delegations per year to the United Kingdom for one week, with dozens of

universities and hundreds of British students studying foreign policy and the United States. Let me tell you, as a former Republican Member of Congress, during the height of the Iraq war, it was quite a challenge dealing with our continental friends. And now with the advent of "House of Cards," U.S. version, and I might add the campaign with Will Ferrell, there are a lot of interesting questions coming from students about what it is we do and how we do it. Our former Members actually become quasi-ambassadors on behalf of the United States. They really get to engage with these students.

Recently, we also sent former delegation Members on Congress to Campus visits to Turkey. And just last month, former Members Jim Kolbe, Martin Lancaster, Lincoln Davis, and Ben Chandler spent 10 days visiting universities all over Turkey. This great project was made possible via a partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Federation of Turkic-American Associations, and we thank them very much for putting an extremely productive and, I might add, busy program together.

Just a heads-up to my colleagues: former Member participation in these overseas trips is based on how actively you participate in the not-as-glamorous domestic programs.

Since our last annual meeting, we have also continued our relationship with the People to People programs. That's an organization that provides hands-on learning opportunities for elementary, middle school, and high school students visiting Washington, D.C. On each visit, former Members meet and speak with students about the importance of public service—again pro bono—their personal experiences in Congress, and the value of character and leadership. In the spring of 2013, two speaking engagements were held in congressional panel format. The events take place on the Hill, and not only feature a former Member as a speaker, but also Hill staffers and interns. This gives students the opportunity to learn what it really is like to be in the Congress and work in the Congress. People to People visits are often in the middle of the business day, and we are grateful to those former Members who take time out of their busy schedules to connect with students touring our Nation's capital. It is greatly appreciated by them and by the association.

Finally, I want to say how grateful we are to all of those who have made this Congress to Campus program such a success in the 36 years it has been in existence. We want to strongly encourage you, our friends and colleagues here, to participate in the program, either by making a visit to a school or by recommending a school to the program. As you know, democracy can prosper only if its citizens are both informed and engaged. As former legislators, we have a particular opportunity and responsibility to encourage such involvement. This program is one of our association's best ways to give

back to our community and our Nation.

Thank you very much.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you, Jack. You're right, it's a great way for us to share our experiences and enthusiasm with the younger group coming into leadership.

Also, we thank Matt McHugh, your colleague, for the great job you've done with the program.

As you may recall, friends, from our last report to Congress, the association has put some energy and focus into this question of bipartisanship and civility in our political discourse. We are furthering this important work via the Common Ground Project. The purpose of the Common Ground Project is to involve citizens in a dialogue about the issues of the day, have a vigorous debate that's both partisan and productive, and benefit from the experience of respecting a different point of view.

Some of our existing undertakings already fit very nicely with this objective, for example, the Congress to Campus program that Jack Buechner just reported. And to give you more background about the Common Ground Project, I invite my colleague from Oklahoma, former Member Mickey Edwards, to share a report.

Thank you, Mickey.

Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you, Connie.

Now, Pete wrote this talk, and so I want to ad lib a little bit and say that, well, first of all, because it mentions my book, and I didn't put that in there.

But I had the opportunity very recently to give a speech at Bradley University, and I was so proud to start out my talk by saying how honored I was to be in the home of Bob Michel and Ray LaHood. And it just meant so much to me to be able to share that with them.

One quick comment to pick up on what Steny had said. One of the things I mentioned in my book is that every place you go to hear a speech, there's a lectern, except in this place, where there's a separate lectern for Republicans and Democrats. So I would paraphrase Ronald Reagan about tearing down this wall. Let's have one lectern, instead of dividing us into separate teams.

Everything we do at the Former Members Association is done in a bipartisan manner. Our leadership is comprised equally of Republicans and Democrats, our delegations are led by bipartisan teams of former Members of Congress, and our projects involve both Republicans and Democrats equally. We truly are a bipartisan organization where Members from across the political aisle come together for a common purpose.

We have found that, for a number of reasons, this type of bipartisan interaction has become more and more difficult for current Members, which is a great concern, I know, to every one of us. After we leave the Chamber today, we will participate in a full-day conference hosted by Senator John

Breaux, where we'll attempt to analyze some of the factors that go into today's dysfunctional political discourse.

This development has many causes, some of which are beyond the control of today's Members. Our association, therefore, has created the Common Ground Project, with the purpose of finding ways in which Democrats and Republicans can work together.

We decided to put some thought and effort into a structured program that could serve to foster a more civil and productive political discourse in this country. We hope to reconnect America's voters with their political process and encourage a respectful and productive debate on the many issues that we face.

Mostly, we achieve this outreach by working together with some of the many reputable and like-minded organizations across the country that are putting their energy and resources into this important topic. One such organization is the Concord Coalition, and we've had a number of events where former Members come together with either the public or with a university student audience to work our way through the Concord Coalition's excellent budget simulation.

Another example is our collaboration with the National Institute for Civil Discourse in Arizona. Together, our two organizations connected a bipartisan group of former Members with a bipartisan group of current Members to have a dialogue about what some of the causes might be that have led to a less civil and, therefore, less productive political climate.

We discussed the role of the media, the influence of campaign fundraising, the realities of our primaries. This was a very good discussion, and our goal is to continue this type of interaction, while expanding the number of participating Members. The next step in the partnership with the Institute for Civil Discourse is to identify congressional committees where there may be an opportunity for across-the-aisle collaboration and interaction. I think we call that getting back to the regular order.⁺

And our most prominent example of how the Common Ground Project can reconnect citizens with Congress is our partnership with the National Archives. This is now our third year of putting programming together at the Archives, where we invite a large audience to discuss with a bipartisan group of former Members the issues of the day.

We had such an event right after the November election to look at the role of money and the role of media in the elections. We had another one at the National Archives in the spring, based on my own book, "The Parties Versus the People," where we talked about the hold that party politics has on our system of government; and we're hosting one tonight examining the interaction between Congress and the White House.

We can learn a lot from each other, and that is certainly what the Common

Ground Project is all about. So on behalf of the organization, I invite my colleagues to become an active participant in this important dialogue, and I hope we will continue to have many opportunities to reengage the public when it comes to their representative government.

Thank you.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you, Mickey. We very much value your participation.

And by the way, it's a great book, very provocative. I really thought you highlighted some of the very important aspects of what's going on in today's politics and what we need to do about it or think about. And I'm saying that without any cut in royalties.

But a great example of how powerful and productive bipartisanship can be is our annual Congressional Charity Golf Classic. It's chaired by our immediate past president, Dennis Hertel, and by fellow board member, Ken Kramer of Colorado.

I'm now going to yield the floor to Dennis Hertel of Michigan to give us a brief report about the Charity Golf Classic, which has been so successful.

Dennis.

Mr. HERTEL. I want to thank Madam President Connie for all that you're doing for the organization.

And I want to talk about the golf tournament, but the first thing I want to reassure everybody about this tournament is you don't have to be Tiger Woods to play. And I'm probably the best example of somebody who's not really a golfer participating all these years in this tournament.

It goes back 35 years. Remember, we used to play out at Andrews Air Force Base. And Bob Michel, our great leader, I remember when Bob Michel beat us on this floor in 1981, and we still all liked him on this side of the aisle. Bob Michel and Tip O'Neill were there for our tournament; and it was a very quiet tournament, a private tournament at Andrews Air Force base.

And then, because they changed the rules here in the House, and all the rest, to attract current Members, but mostly, as our other endeavors to do something for others, we established this charitable tournament 6 years ago to help the wounded warriors.

And with Zach Wamp and others, we used to meet in Zach's office, as co-chair. We got more active Members, current Members to play. And this year we've got over 20 current Members signed up. Our problem, our former Members: we only have a handful, so we really need more of you to participate in this to go forward.

It's going to be July 22 at the Army-Navy Country Club, so we've gone up as far as where we're playing the tournament. And they've just redone the entire club, and it's fantastic. The courses are new, and the clubhouse is brand new. It really is beautiful.

During each of our past tournaments, we've had dozens of current and former Members from both sides of the aisle

come together, and they have met with dozens of wounded warriors, many of whom give ball-striking demonstrations or play in our foursomes, and they're just tremendous young people.

They have even had double amputees included in their numbers who hit further and straighter than a lot of our Members, certainly much better than I. And it's an incredibly humbling, rewarding, and memorable experience to spend a day in the presence of these inspiring men and women.

Last year we had two outstanding current Member honorary chairs: Joe Baca of California and ANDER CRENSHAW of Florida. And I want to thank them, as well as Ken Kramer, our association's cochair, for all they've done to make our tournament such a success.

I want to thank Joe Baca, who didn't return for the 113th Congress, for how much he did as far as his energy in getting Members to play and to go forward with our tournament.

Now we have Congressman MIKE MCINTYRE of North Carolina as our Democratic cochair, who's just been tremendous in being a fusion to get current Members to play.

And we're so fortunate to have JIMMY DUNCAN from Tennessee, who a lot of us served with in the Congress, to be our Republican cochair. There's just no better invaluable supporter than JIMMY DUNCAN getting current Members to play.

I want to thank our sponsors for their generous contributions, and particular thanks to DSUSA and the PGA for being such steadfast and important partners. And PGA wants to take it up another level and get more professionals to play with us and to participate and to become a greater sponsor.

It's really an honor for us to help our Nation's heroes in this small way. Again, the next tournament is July 22. This tournament can only be successful if our Members, both current and former, give it their time and attention. Please let us know if you can play. We would really like to see you July 22.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you, Dennis.

Ms. KENNELLY. The Chair recognizes the distinguished Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Good morning. Tanner is giving me this look like, Hey, it's just BOEHNER. Leave him alone.

Let me say on behalf of all of my colleagues, welcome. Thank you for your years of service here in this institution. Let me congratulate Ray LaHood on being this year's Distinguished Service Award winner. I'm not sure I would have given it to him, but you all did. Just teasing.

But, listen, I'm trying to keep this institution focused on a couple of simple things. One is growing the economy. You all know the economy is not growing the way it should be. It's not creating jobs as fast as it should be, and wages aren't going up as quickly.

And so there's a lot of things that I think we need to continue to do to get our economy going again. But having said that, there are always other things that crop up around here.

You're all familiar with Benghazi, and now the Justice Department's investigation of the Associated Press, and then the IRS of all things. So in spite of trying to keep the institution focused on what the American people are most interested in, we end up also having to do our other responsibility, which is providing oversight of the executive branch, and we will do that.

In addition to that, I continue to believe and continue to work to make this a more open and fairer process for all the Members. If you look over the last couple of years, the minority has gotten more than its fair share of amendments. If committee chairs and others can't defend their product, it's not up to me to protect them. So I'm a big believer that people ought to have their shot. I think my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would agree that I've been more than fair in terms of what comes to the floor and how it's to be considered.

So, opening up the process, I believe, is very important because the more open process there is on the floor, the more work that the committees have to do to reach across the aisle and build bipartisan support for whatever proposal they have. Over time, I think this will break down some of the scar tissue that's built up over the years around here and be good for the institution.

So, I'm just here to say good morning and it's nice to see all of you.

Spratt, how are you? You're looking good. Don't have more hair than last time I saw you, though.

But really, it's nice to see all of you, and welcome back. Thank you.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for sharing those words with us, particularly understanding the number of issues that are appearing before you, the little things that you mention.

I also wanted to thank Dennis for what he's done, too, with the golf tournament and for his leadership. We're honored that we, as an association, can play a small role in the rehabilitation of these amazing men and women who are the wounded warriors.

So as we continue, in addition to the domestic programs we have just described, our association also has a very active and far-reaching international focus. We conduct programs that are focused on Europe and Asia, and we bring current Members of Congress together with their peers in legislatures overseas.

Ms. KENNELLY. The Chair recognizes our leader, NANCY PELOSI.

Ms. MORELLA. This is an abundance of riches, isn't it?

Ms. PELOSI. Thank you, Madam Chair. I certainly did not want to take the floor from our distinguished colleague, Connie Morella. It's so wonder-

ful to see you. Maybe good news for you, I've lost my voice. I know it will be good news for the Speaker, but we'll see later in the day.

I join him in welcoming you back to the Capitol. I hope it is always a source of joy to you to set foot on this floor, this place our Founders decided was the marketplace of ideas, where we would compete in the marketplace of ideas and find common ground to go forth. Your legacy is an important one to us. As I look around and see all of you, I see contributions that you have made over the years that we still benefit from.

It's an honor to be here with Bob Michel. I think he enjoyed the job of minority leader more than I do. What do you think, Bob? What do you think? We were all there to celebrate his birthday recently. It was a bipartisan fiesta, wasn't it? That was just a couple months ago we celebrated a landmark birthday. Happy birthday again.

But all of you, I heard what the Speaker said about this openness on the floor, and I thought that was really good news, because we've been trying to get a budget to the floor for a very long time but without much success to allow our budget to come to the floor. So I'm going to take the words that I just heard to CHRIS VAN HOLLEN and tell him that happy days are here again and that our amendment will be made in order in the Rules Committee.

Martin, Governor, Bob, all of you, we all are on a first-name basis. Last night, rightfully all of you honored the distinguished Secretary, Mr. LaHood. He has done a remarkable, remarkable job. We couldn't be prouder of him as a legislator and as a Secretary in the Cabinet even if he had been a Democrat. He's just absolutely wonderful. We love him, and he brings bipartisanship to all of what we do. And that's really what is, I think, not to get to a partisan place, Madam Chair, but is on the ballot in the next election: bipartisanship. It's something that is the most popular concept in politics. People would vote for that in overwhelming numbers; and hopefully, in this election, whatever the outcome is, bipartisanship will prevail.

I always say to people that you can win an election, that's up to the public, but the idea has to prevail, and that is what we're striving to do here. That's what we hope the election will impact. It already did have an impact in the last election with immigration. All of a sudden, it became an issue near and dear to the hearts of so many more people in the Congress who never had an interest in it before, because when the people spoke in such a big way, especially Hispanics, it became a priority for many more people in the Congress.

So, again, when all of you were here, we worked in a very, very civil and respectful way. We hope that we can return to that. But that doesn't diminish the contribution that you made in so many ways regarding the substance, the values, and the ethics that make our country so great.

So it really is a joy to see each and every one of you. I hope your lives are very happy. You certainly look well. There seems to be a good life after Congress, but it brings us such pride to see so many of you come back to continue this bonding. Thank you. It's an honor to see you.

Madam Speaker, how does it feel up there? It feels good, huh? It feels good. Welcome, Barbara. Thank you all very much for being here.

Ms. MORELLA. We are very honored that our minority leader chose to join us again to greet us as well as the Speaker of the House and STENY HOYER.

So let's continue on with our program. We were talking about programs that focus on Europe and Asia and bringing current Members of Congress together with their peers and legislatures overseas, which actually helps in terms of what we discussed with people knowing each other and therefore finding it easier to work together noting that they have common objectives.

We work with the Department of State to talk about representative democracy with audiences overseas. We partner with former parliamentarians from other countries for democracy-strengthening initiatives. This is a very active outreach to emerging democracies. My colleague from Texas, Martin Frost, instituted the so-called Frost-Solomon Task Force when he was in Congress, and many of the legislative-strengthening projects that we conduct are actually modeled on his good work.

It is now a pleasure to yield the floor to our friend from Texas, Martin Frost.

Mr. FROST. Thank you, Connie. Since we have to be off the floor at 9:30, I'm going to truncate these remarks a little bit.

A number of years ago, we created the International Election Monitors Institute under the leadership of then-president Jack Buechner. It is a joint project of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress, the Association of Former Members of the European Parliament, and the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians. In addition to conducting multiple workshops for former legislators to train them for election-monitoring missions, this group sent delegations to monitor elections in places such as Morocco, Ukraine, and—our most ambitious undertaking—Iraq. The original intent of the International Election Monitors Institute was to train former legislators and prepare them for the task of observing an election. We have since broadened and expanded this to focus and are now incorporated as the Global Democracy Institute, again in partnership with our colleagues from Ottawa and Brussels. Former legislators from all political walks of life can be a tremendous asset to these organizations that seek to strengthen democracy across the globe.

In addition to that, this organization has undertaken a number of trips. I

had the privilege, along with Connie and some other people in this room, to take part in an exchange in China last year. This was one of a series of those. I know that we're going to be doing that again. I encourage you to take part in these. They are educational. For some reason, the people in China think that former Members of Congress still have some influence, so they treat us very well. It is interesting to learn about the evolution of their particular democratic process. It's slow, but I think it's important that we continue to show interest. I think it's very helpful for our country.

We have participated in a variety of projects in Turkey and in the United Kingdom, as well as in Nigeria. I just think that when you're asked as a former Member to take part in one of these trips, try and find some time to do it. You will find that you have a lot to offer to emerging democracies to talk about how our system works. I think it's very good for us as a country and an association that we continue this work.

Connie, you've got a couple of other speakers. I'm going to yield back the balance of my time and again thank you for what you've done for the association.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you.

I am now going to yield time to my colleague from Maryland, Beverly Byron, to report on some of the other activities of the association.

Ms. BYRON. Thank you, Connie. Let me thank Martin for his interest in furthering the U.S. Association of Former Members in the world.

Another important international undertaking which involves the Former Members is our new Middle East fellowship program. Now in its third year, it brings young professionals from the Middle East and from North Africa to Washington for a 1-month immersion program. It is chaired by former Members Scott Klug and Larry LaRocco, and I want to thank them for their leadership in this program.

In the spring of 2009, the Former Members began a partnership with Legacy International, a Virginia-based NGO, which has been in existence for 30 years, for the Middle East Legislative Fellows Program. Initiated by the Department of State and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the LFP hosted young professionals from Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia this spring. Previous delegations have included young professionals from Kuwait, Morocco, and Oman. Our guests are in the D.C. area for a month-long fellowship working in congressional offices and NGOs.

The program is designed to promote a positive relationship between the U.S. and the gulf states, which, in light of the Arab Spring, is now more vital than ever. The fellows—candidates with strong leadership skills who represent the top talent in their fields in their countries—have an opportunity to gain practical experience and direct

interaction with the U.S. Government and its officials. This is an invaluable opportunity on both sides. For one who has hosted a dinner each year for a number of the individuals, they are very, very sharp, they're bright, they're articulate; and we will be looking to them in the future to be leaders of their country.

Our association connects the fellows with former Members who work together. The former Members act as a kind of mentor of the young men and young women through one-on-one meetings, roundtable discussions, and by attending program discussions and events. The former Members have a great opportunity to expand their understanding of where we are.

In an exciting extension to the LFP, at the conclusion of each program, a team of former Members completes the exchange by then leading a delegation to the region to conduct workshops and gain firsthand experience of that area. The goal of this program is to seek a better understanding between the cultures and establish an avenue of dialogue between nations. LFP is an unprecedented opportunity to augment a constructive political and cultural discourse between the U.S. and the Middle East. I am pleased that our association is part of this new, vital program; and every time has been a wonderful opportunity to meet with the young people that come.

Thank you.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you, Bev, for your leadership and your active involvement in this great program. As a former Ambassador, I am acutely aware of the power of personal interaction and people making a difference to bridge the cultural divide. This is, indeed, a great program for our association.

Not all of our programs focus exclusively on former Members, as you may already have discerned. As was mentioned earlier, we have a number of projects that benefit from former-Member leadership but involve primarily current Members and their peers overseas. We call these programs Congressional Study Groups, and our focus is on Germany, Turkey, Japan, and Europe as a whole. To give you more background about the Congressional Study Groups, I invite former Member Bart Gordon of Tennessee to the dais.

Bart, maybe you will give us a synopsis.

Mr. GORDON. Thank you, Connie, for those kind words, but, more importantly, thank you for the grace that you show as you lead us. You continue to be our ambassador to the world.

Ms. MORELLA. You're so political, Bart.

Mr. GORDON. No, no. You know that's true. We all know that's true here.

Let me first say, as I look around and see everyone, many of you I spent all of my 26 years with, and some a part of that. It's sort of a kaleidoscope of

memories that just wash over you. I think almost every one of us sat down together somewhere on the floor and talked about business or what was going on at home. Fortunately, Jim Walsh and I are next-door neighbors in our offices. I'm glad to see my Tennesseans again. We don't get to see each other enough, but it's like we were just here and again like that conversation just continues. This is, I think, one more real benefit of the association, and I'm glad to have a chance to join that.

Pete, many thanks to you for assembling the really excellent staff that you have. They have just a little bitty office, but they really churn out lots and lots of good work. A part of that good work is the Congressional Study Groups.

We have Congressional Study Groups on Germany, Japan, Turkey, and Europe, the flagship international programs of the Former Members of Congress. The study groups are independent, bipartisan legislative exchanges for current Members of Congress and their senior staff and serve as educational forums and invaluable tools for international dialogue with the goal of creating better understanding and cooperation between the United States and its most important strategic and economic allies.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and remains one of the largest and most active parliamentary exchange programs between the United States Congress and the legislative branch of another country.

With your permission, Madam President, I'm going to ask that the remainder of my remarks be made part of the Record—since we're supposed to be out of here at 9:30—and just say that these are very good programs.

Our world is becoming smaller. We do need allies around the world. And I think by making parliamentarians of other countries and the United States come together, it really is forming great ties that will benefit us.

The other thing, I don't think you can be around here and not be a bit of a junky—political junky, that is. These programs are for the active Members, but there are a number of programs here in the United States and Washington that allow parliamentarians and others to come together and discuss the issues of the day, which I think that you will find very interesting and I hope that you will have a chance to participate in those.

It gives me great pleasure to report on the work of The Congressional Study Groups on Germany, Japan, Turkey and Europe, the flagship international programs of FMC. The Study Groups are independent, bipartisan legislative exchanges for current Members of Congress and their senior staff and serve as educational forums and invaluable tools for international dialogue with the goal of creating better understanding and cooperation between the United States and its most important strategic and economic partners.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and remains one of the largest and most active parliamentary exchange programs between the U.S. Congress and the legislative branch of another country. In the 113th Congress, Representative TIM RYAN of Ohio and Representative CHARLIE DENT of Pennsylvania lead the Study Group on Germany in the House, following on two successful years of service by Representative PHIL GINGREY of Georgia and Representative RUSS CARNAHAN of Missouri. In the Senate, Senator JEFF SESSIONS of Alabama and Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire serve as Co-Chairs.

The Study Group's programming consists of periodic roundtable discussions on Capitol Hill for Members of Congress featuring visiting dignitaries from Germany or U.S. government officials. In addition, Annual Seminars are conducted abroad and at home, as well as Study Tours geared toward senior Congressional staff. This year, the 30th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar brought together a record nine Members of Congress with their counterparts in Berlin and Munich for in-depth, substantive discussions, including a meeting with Chancellor Angela Merkel.

This 30th anniversary of the Seminar was particularly special as FMC awarded its first ever International Statesmanship Award to Hans-Ulrich Klose, Chair of the Bundestag's U.S.-German Parliamentary Friendship Group, "for his longstanding service to strengthening the U.S.-German relationship and in appreciation of his leadership championing The Congressional Study Group on Germany." Thank you again, Mr. Klose.

A few highlights from the Study Group's domestic programming include: a German parliamentarian at the start of discussions for a transatlantic free trade agreement last June; the Vice-Chancellor of Germany; a roundtable with international journalists providing a unique analysis of the November 2012 elections; the Editor-in-Chief of leading European broadcaster ZDF; and the State Secretary from the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.

Since its establishment, The Congressional Study Group on Germany has received financial support from The German Marshall Fund of the United States, and we are grateful to Craig Kennedy and Maia Comeau. The Association also receives additional funding from a group of organizations making up the Study Group's Business Advisory Council. The Study Group's current Business Advisory Council members are Airbus Americas, Allianz, BASF, Daimler, Deutsche Telekom, DHL Americas, Eli Lilly and Company, Fresenius, Lufthansa, RGIT, and Volkswagen.

Also celebrating a milestone anniversary is the Association's Congressional Study Group on Japan, founded in 1993. In the House of Representatives, Congressman JIM McDERMOTT of Washington and Congresswoman SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO of West Virginia continue to serve as Co-Chairs in the 113th Congress. In the Senate, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI of Alaska serves as the Republican Co-Chair, and Senator MAZIE HIRONO of Hawaii—the first Japanese immigrant to serve in the Senate. The Study Group would also like to extend special acknowledgement to its Honorary Co-Chairs, former Speakers Dennis Hastert and Tom Foley, who remain active in our programming.

Since its inception, The Congressional Study Group on Japan has been funded by the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, and the Association would like to extend a special thanks to the Paige Cottingham-Streater and Margaret Mihori.

This year, the Study Group also launched a strategic partnership with the Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA. Thanks to the support of President Junko Chano, Director Takahiro Nanri, and Senior Fellow Daniel Bob, The Congressional Study Group of Japan has undergone significant revitalization.

The Congressional Study Group on Japan is also grateful for the support of the Japanese business community here in Washington, DC, represented by the Study Group's Business Advisory Council. The nine companies of the 2013 Council are The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Japan Railways-JR Central, Hitachi, Honda, Marubeni, Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Sojitz, and Toyota Motor North America.

With this expanded and diversified funding base, the Study Group has been able to increase both the quality and quantity of its programming. Already in the 113th Congress, the Study Group has convened eight events, with plans for many more. Featured speakers have included a senior counselor to the new Prime Minister; Ambassador Demetrios Marantis, then Deputy U.S. Trade Representative; a delegation from the American Chamber of Commerce of Japan; and the Chairman of the Japanese Diet's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The Congressional Study Group on Japan was also honored to convene a roundtable discussion at the home of Ambassador Sasae earlier this year. Seventeen current Members of Congress participated—including 8 freshman Members—which constitutes the largest delegation from Congress to the Embassy in recent memory, and shows promise for the future strategic U.S.-Japan alliance.

The Congressional Study Group on Turkey was founded in 2005, supported by generous grants from TEPAV, the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey. Since the Arab Spring, there has been increasing interest in bilateral relations with one of our strongest allies in an often unstable region.

In the 113th Congress, Representative ED WHITFIELD (R-KY) and Representative GERALD CONNOLLY (D-VA) continue leading the Study Group, and I am happy to share that the past Co-Chairs, VIRGINIA FOXX of North Carolina and STEVE COHEN of Tennessee, also remain active.

Similar to our other Study Groups, Turkey's programming consists of periodic roundtable discussions on Capitol Hill for Members of Congress featuring visiting dignitaries from Turkey, U.S. government officials and other experts. A recent highlight from this year was our roundtable discussion with the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator for EU Accession. The Study Group also convened programs on the "Southern Energy Corridor" and Secretary Kerry's first official visit to Turkey.

Additionally, last month, Former Members Jim Kolbe of Arizona, Martin Lancaster of North Carolina, Lincoln Davis of Tennessee, and Ben Chandler of Kentucky travelled to Turkey with FMC's "Congress to Campus" program to meet with Turkish high school and university students to discuss the U.S. presidential system, federalism, and the U.S. political process, as well as reforming the Turkish

Constitution. FMC is grateful to The Mid-Atlantic Federation for Turkic-American Associations who helped to organize and fund the trip.

The Congressional Study Group on Turkey looks forward to organizing a Study Tour for Members of Congress to Turkey in the coming programming year.

At the end of 2011, the Association established the Congressional Study Group on Europe, which serves as an outreach to the broader transatlantic relationship. Programming focuses not just on Brussels and the European Union, but capitals throughout Europe.

Together, Representative JEFF FORTENBERRY of Nebraska and Representative PETER WELCH of Vermont chair the Study Group in the 113th Congress. These gentlemen follow the successful leadership of the inaugural co-chairs, now-former Congressman Ben Chandler of Kentucky and Representative CHARLIE DENT of Pennsylvania, who has joined the leadership of The Congressional Study Group on Germany.

The Study Group continues to work closely with European-focused caucuses and embassies to provide Capitol Hill programming. Program highlights from the past year include a Senior Fellow of the European Council on Foreign Relations, discussing Franco-German relations; a delegation from the EU Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, led by the Committee Chairwoman; and Ambassador Miriam Sapiro, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, who addressed the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership just days after it was announced at the State of the Union.

Finally, this year marks the second year of the Association's Diplomatic Advisory Council. Initially envisioned as a sister program to The Congressional Study Group on Europe, the Diplomatic Advisory Council now has nearly 25 Ambassadors who advise and participate in all of our programming. Their interest and commitment to multilateral dialogue is a valued addition to The Congressional Study Groups.

As former Members of Congress, we are proud to bring the important services provided The Congressional Study Groups to our colleagues still in office and are proud to play an active role in our continued international outreach.

Ms. MORELLA. I want you to know he has a very extensive report to give on the congressional study groups because they've been very, very active. And they involve current Members of Congress. So you current Members of Congress who may be watching, please link up with the congressional study groups and you'll have some great opportunities to continue to work overseas.

I appreciate his abbreviating his report in deference to the time.

Right now I just want to mention to you—and again, I'm going to be very brief—that we have the Statesmanship Award Dinner. This is one of our major ways of raising money. So to tell you something about that as part of our overall number of activities is our colleague, Jim Walsh.

Mr. WALSH. Thank you, Connie. Good morning, everyone. I'm pleased to tell you this is the last report of the morning prior to our election, which I

suspect will go very swiftly and without controversy.

I'd like to thank Connie for her gracious leadership. I'd also like to thank Lou Frey for the remarkable job that he does organizing us and keeping the ducks in a row as we work on this fundraiser, which is really key to our success every year.

On March 19, the association was proud to host its 16th annual Statesmanship Award Dinner, with almost 500 guests in attendance. For the 16th dinner, we decided to continue the very successful expansion we initiated last year. In addition to our traditional Statesmanship Award, we created two additional award categories: the Civic Statesmanship Award and the Corporate Statesmanship Award.

We continued to present the dinner under the theme of "A Salute to Service," and all four of our honorees very clearly fit into that category of outstanding public service. The focal point of the evening was the presentation of the Statesmanship Award, which recognizes a former or current Member of Congress for their devotion to public service. We were very pleased to recognize the leadership throughout their careers of Senator Sam Nunn and Senator Dick Lugar as our Statesmanship Honorees for their outstanding political careers, service to our country, and bipartisan accomplishments that have made the world a safer place.

The Civic Statesmanship Award honors a person or a nonprofit for having made significant improvement to our society. The 2013 recipient was award-winning actor Gary Sinise and the Gary Sinise Foundation. Mr. Sinise does so much to help wounded warriors and first responders, and we were very pleased to honor him at the dinner.

The Corporate Statesmanship Award recognizes outstanding corporate citizenship, and we chose Margery Kraus, founder and chief executive officer of APCO Worldwide. Not only has she established a culture of corporate philanthropy with APCO, but she is also one of the driving forces behind the Close Up Foundation—which many of you dealt with when you served here—which brings youngsters from across the country to D.C. to learn about their government.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Colbert I. King, who was our master of ceremonies and did a fantastic job for the event and lent wonderful grace to the event.

The evening is a wonderful way to showcase our association and recognize outstanding public service. In addition, the dinner is our financial lifeline. All the programs you've heard about are self-financed by your association. Not a single taxpayer dollar is appropriated for this organization and for the many projects that we conduct. Therefore, success of the fundraising dinner translates directly into success for the association.

The evening is a lot of fun, and it's also of great importance to the organi-

zation. I hope that all former Members currently in attendance can be counted upon when Lou Frey picks up the phone next summer and gives you a call to help recruit you for our dinner. Thank you very much.

Ms. MORELLA. Thank you, Jim.

All the programs that we have described of course require both leadership and staff to implement, and I want to say openly and very enthusiastically our association is blessed to have top people in both categories.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our board of directors—30 former Members divided equally between parties—for their advice and their counsel. We really appreciate it.

The membership is going to vote on new board members in just a moment. You might notice that this year's slate is larger than in past years. That's because at our most recent board meeting we voted to increase the number of directors so that we have open slots available for newer former Members.

Also, I would be remiss if I didn't thank the other members of the association's executive committee: our vice president, Barbara Kennelly, who eventually will be president. You notice we'll have two women, president and vice president, et cetera. Just a point of observation.

Our vice president, Barbara Kennelly; our treasurer, Jim Walsh; our secretary, Bill Delahunt; our past president, Dennis Hertel, who has given me a lot of advice and counsel through the year—you've all made the association a stronger and better organization than it's ever been. Thank you all.

Now, to administer these programs, it takes a staff of dedicated and enthusiastic professionals. I've often felt, to paraphrase the 23rd Psalm: my rod and my staff, they comfort me and prepare the papers for me in the presence of my constituents. And boy, this staff has really done that—small staff, a lot of work.

Rachel Haas has joined our association as office manager just 6 months ago. Already we can't imagine what we ever did without her. Just stand. We're not going to have applause for everybody. Hold your applause. I just want them to stand.

Andrew Shoenig, who is our international programs officer, does such a terrific job implementing all the Capitol Hill events that you've heard about. He started as an intern and has now been with us full-time for over a year.

Sharon Witiw, she is our member services manager. She takes exceptionally good care of our 600 association members and all their various requests, needs, and inquiries. She is also in charge of the Congress to Campus program.

We have Meltem Ercan, who is our international programs manager, with particular focus on the wonderful Turkey program that you've heard about and will read about. She served for many years as the head of protocol at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara.

Sabine Schleidt is our international programs director. She oversees all the current Member programs, which is so impressive and important. I'm very impressed with the kind of work that she has done in her outreach. In less than 2 years, she has created two international outreaches that are already a big success: the Congressional Study Group on Europe; and the Diplomatic Advisory Group, which has about 25 to 30 Ambassadors from the region who are part of it.

Peter Weichlein is the chief executive officer, 14 years with the Association, 10 years in top positions, and he works so darn hard.

So I'd like you to give a round of applause to the staff. But before you do that, I want to add somebody else who is such a great communications expert, Dava Guerin. She has taken on the role of our communications director. She tells our story, connects us with the media, all at a ridiculously low rate.

I want to thank Dava, and I want to thank all the staff.

Now will you give them a round of applause. I wish we had more time for me to tell you more about what they do, but you will get to know them as you get more involved with the association.

Now, every year at our annual meeting, we ask the membership to elect new officers and board members. In the past we've done so in a separate business meeting of the membership, but it occurred to us that there is no better place for holding a vote than the Chamber of the House of Representatives. I therefore now read you the names of the candidates for officers and board members. They're all running unopposed. I would have never known what that was like ever, but I do now. I therefore ask for a simple "yea" or "nay" as I present to you the list of candidates as a slate. I'm going to do it quickly because, again, in the interest of time.

For the association's board of directors, the candidates are:

Russ Carnahan of Missouri
Bob Carr of Michigan
Bob Clement of Tennessee
Jim Courter of New Jersey
Lou Frey of Florida
Bart Gordon of Tennessee
Dennis Hertel of Michigan
Jim Jones of Oklahoma
Scott Klug of Wisconsin
Ron Sarasin of Connecticut
Olympia Snowe of Maine
Cliff Stearns of Florida
Steve LaTourette of Ohio.

All in favor of these 13 former Members to our board of directors please say "yea." All opposed? Hearing no objection, the slate has been elected by the membership.

Next, we will elect our executive committee. Barbara Kennelly, Dennis Hertel, and I are finishing the first year of our 2-year term and are therefore not up for election. The candidates for a 1-year term on our executive committee are Jim Walsh of New York for treasurer and Bill Delahunt of Massachusetts for secretary. All in favor of

electing these two former Members to a 1-year term on our executive committee, please say "yea." All opposed? Hearing no opposition, the slate has been elected by the membership. Thank you.

It is my sad duty to inform the Congress of those former and current Members who have passed away since our last report. I ask all of you, including the visitors in the gallery, to rise as I read the names; and at the end of the list, we will pay our respect to their memory with a moment of silence. We honor these men and women for their service to our country. They are:

Jack Brooks of Texas
Cardiss Collins of Illinois
David Cornwell of Indiana
John Durkin of New Hampshire
Mervyn Dymally of California
Joseph Early of Massachusetts
Bob Edgar of Pennsylvania
Robert Gammage of Texas
Sam Gibbons of Florida
James Grover of New York
Daniel Inouye of Hawaii
Ed Koch of New York
Peter N. Kyros of Maine
George McGovern of South Dakota
David O'Brien Martin of New York
Charlie Rose of North Carolina
William Royer of California
Warren B. Rudman of New Hampshire
Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania
Sam Steiger of Arizona
Donald Tewes of Wisconsin
Richard Tonry of Louisiana
Charlie Wilson of Ohio

We will have a moment of silence.

Thank you.

It's sad to have lost those Members, but they live on in our memory and love.

That concludes the 43rd report to Congress by the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress. We thank the Congress, the Speaker, and the minority leader for giving us the opportunity to return to this revered Chamber and to report on our association's activities. We look forward to another active and productive year.

Thank you.

Ms. KENNELLY. The Chair terminates the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing this day upon the Members of the people's House. May their labors be graced by Your gifts of wisdom, patience, and charity, that truth and righteousness might prevail in all of their proceedings.

We take special note this day, May 15, National Peace Officers Memorial

Day, of the 123 peace officers who have died this past year in the line of duty. We ask that You grant them eternal rest for having paid the ultimate price in protecting us.

Give their families consolation in mourning their loss. May they be assured that we, as a nation, hold them in our hearts and understand that we will always be indebted to them.

May all that is done within the people's House this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VEASEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

WHITE HOUSE ASSAULTS FREEDOM OF PRESS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the expansion of Big Government is a threat to the American people. According to Politico, the administration:

had obtained records that listed incoming and outgoing calls and the duration of these calls for work and personal phone numbers of AP reporters and phone lines for AP offices in New York; Hartford, Connecticut; and Washington, as well as the main number for AP reporters in the House of Representatives press gallery. The government seized records—which listed incoming and outgoing calls and the call's length—for more than 20 separate lines assigned to the AP and its reporters.

The American people are losing their trust in the White House. The recent admissions reveal that the President and his administration will do whatever it takes to extend power, including violating First Amendment rights. Even the media is at risk of Big Government intrusion. Over the coming weeks, it's my hope that this is thor-

oughly investigated and those responsible will be held accountable.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to denounce the proposed cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP, in the House farm bill.

Last week, I had the opportunity to witness a mother feeding her two children and giving them a jump-start because of SNAP, and then a young lawyer came and talked to us about being able to make an investment in this country because she was assisted.

I'm from Ohio, and in Ohio, SNAP reaches 16 percent of the State's population. Eighty-four percent of the households receiving SNAP have incomes below the poverty line. SNAP has helped to lift about 4.7 million Americans above the poverty line in 2011, including 2.1 million children.

For many of the poorest Americans, SNAP is the only form of income assistance they have. Mr. Speaker, we must protect our most at-risk children and families in this Nation. Let's save SNAP.

REPEAL OBAMACARE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, what was ObamaCare's central claim? The Affordable Care Act, as it was termed by President Obama, was supposed to make health care more affordable for the American people. Many who believed that claim, however, now have buyer's remorse.

ObamaCare was to help save families \$2,500 on their health care premiums. But that's not true. Family premiums have increased \$3,000 since 2008.

Even workers who make \$25,000 a year will pay more for health care because of ObamaCare. Young people struggling to pay off debt and find careers in this jobless economy could see their health premiums rise by as much as 189 percent.

In spite of lofty promises, health insurance costs are higher. More than 30 studies have found ObamaCare will make health care premiums less affordable by the time it's fully implemented.

Promises for affordable health care have delivered a true train wreck to the American people. It's time to repeal ObamaCare and all of its broken promises once and for all.