

of the successful capital purchase program as a solution.

However, if asked about my most satisfying achievement, it would be debt relief. The bipartisan agreement that emerged from Congress and the Clinton and Bush Administrations to provide debt relief to the world's poorest nations has reduced hunger, poverty and disease and lifted tens of millions of children and families from despair to hope. It is an example of what this institution is capable of doing at its finest.

As Dean of the Alabama congressional delegation, I have been honored to be part of a group of House Members and Senators that works across party lines to promote the interests of our state as a whole. Some of the projects that stand out to me are the construction of I-22 and the Northern Beltline, the creation of the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge, the location of the National Computer Forensics Center in Hoover, and especially the construction of the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo, a shrine to our veterans and their families.

One thing that Members of Congress learn quickly is that their effectiveness is greatly enhanced by a high quality staff. Over the years, I have had many talented and dedicated individuals on my personal and committee staffs. In the past on this floor, I have noted the contributions of Larry Lavender, Warren Tryon, and Gerry Cashin. While time does not permit me to name every staff member, I would like to acknowledge loyal staffers who have been with me during my final year in office: Michael Staley, Tim Johnson, Brett Quick, Philip Swartzfager, Thomas Crockett, Summer Bravo, Brooks McClendon, Katherine Runkle, and Blake Lasuzzo in my Washington office and Christian Sanford, Ethan Vice and Pam Cook in my Birmingham office. Both the institution of Congress and bureaucracy of the federal government are large and complex, and experience matters when you interact with them on behalf of your constituents.

One thing I cannot stress enough is that I would not have been able to achieve anything without the support of my family. My wife Linda is my source of comfort, inspiration, and love. We are blessed with five wonderful children—Candace, Warren, Lisa, Stuart, and Eliott—and seven delightful grandchildren—Christopher, Madeline, Olivia, Rayner, Charlotte, Braden and Lillie. With great eagerness, I look forward to having more time to spend with my beautiful family.

In conclusion, I leave with great respect as well as with an abiding fondness for this institution. A departing hope is that while we vigorously debate policy, as we elected to do, we focus on doing so with respect and civility. My father gave me the advice, "If you can't say anything nice about a person, don't say anything at all." That's not an easy thing to do in politics, but it's a good standard to aspire to. A benefit, I believe, would be an increase in public regard for this legislative body, which is vital in a society where consent comes from the governed. We should strive to make the public proud of their Congress; as Members, we should take personal pride in and honor the tradition of this essential institution.

The people of America look to us for leadership and, in turn, the nations of the world look to America for leadership. This is still President Reagan's beloved "Shining City on the Hill." My hope is that during the time the peo-

ple of Alabama have given me here, brief in the scope of our country's glorious history, I have been able to contribute in some small way to maintaining the Promise of America for our children, grandchildren, and the generations to come.

HONORING THE COURAGEOUS
SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF
STAFF SERGEANT MATTHEW R.
AMMERMAN

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute of a true American hero, Staff Sergeant Matthew R. Ammerman. Tragically, on December 3, Sergeant Ammerman was killed when his unit came under fire in the Zabul province of Afghanistan. I, along with people from across the United States, stand in eternal gratitude for the dedication, service and sacrifice of this young man.

A native of Noblesville, Indiana, Ammerman joined the Army in July 2004. He was deployed in 2006 to Iraq, where he served for 14 months. In 2009, he served as an assistant gunner, fire team leader and squad leader in Afghanistan. In 2012, he volunteered for the Special Forces and graduated in 2013 as a Special Forces communications sergeant. Sergeant Ammerman again answered the call of duty in late 2014 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

His many awards are a testament to the exceptional character of this incredibly talented and immensely brave young man. His accomplishments include the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Global War on Terror Service Medal, the Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon and NATO Medal. He also received the Special Forces Tab, the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Parachutist Badge and the Driver and Mechanic Badge.

Staff Sergeant Matthew Ammerman will forever be remembered as a man willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice to defend the freedoms that we so cherish. However, I know his wife, Emily, and his mother, Susan, will always remember him as a loving husband, and a courageous son. I join all Americans in praying for their comfort in this time of grief and the safe return of all those continuing to protect the United States abroad.

RECOGNIZING ACHIEVE HUMAN
SERVICES OF YUMA ARIZONA
AND THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Achieve Human Services and the

AbilityOne® Program. The AbilityOne Program partners with participating community-based nonprofit agencies that are dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities. Organizations like Achieve, located in every state of our great nation, employ nearly 45,000 Americans who are blind or have significant disabilities through this Program.

AbilityOne affiliated non-profit agencies offer people who are blind or who have significant disabilities opportunities to acquire the job skills and training necessary to receive good wages and benefits that ultimately improve their quality of life. The value of these opportunities cannot be overstated as only 21 percent of individuals with disabilities currently have jobs.

Achieve helps Americans with disabilities lead more productive lives, support their families, gain important work experience and share in the same pride that each of us have after an honest day's work. Many of these individuals work in support of our men and women in uniform, doing their part to improve our country and ensure safety and security for us all.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize the AbilityOne Program and to Achieve Human Services. I also want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of Ms. Carol Carr, the Executive Director of Achieve, and her staff for helping individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities find employment opportunities. Such actions greatly improve the lives of those less fortunate and make our country a better place.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CARY
MARIE FAIRCHILD

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise with Congressman EARL BLUMENAUER and Congressman KURT SCHRADER to honor the life of Cary Marie Fairchild, an Oregonian who tragically lost her life as the result of a car accident in October of 2014.

Cary was a force of nature who served her community with kindness, compassion, and joy. Born in New York City, Cary moved with her family, several times before moving to Hammond, Indiana, where she was raised with her three younger siblings. Growing up, Cary was a natural-born leader. She was the center of her family who not only depended on her, but enjoyed the wild ride. Cary graduated from Hammond Morton High School and attended Ripon College, studying language abroad in Lausanne, Switzerland. Cary graduated with honors from Indiana University and went on to receive her Masters in Psychology from Valparaiso University. She also completed the course work required for a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in Chicago.

After high school, Cary married Terry Luchene. They had two children, Aaron and Ann. Cary was a very devoted mother who adored her children and her grandson, Logan.

Cary met Jim, her husband of over 30 years, when they both worked as therapists in the same mental health center in Valparaiso. In 1989, they moved to Oregon. They sold everything that didn't fit into a rental truck and

set out for Portland. Although they didn't know anyone in Portland and didn't have jobs, they knew where they were meant to be and trusted in their ability to make a new life in a place they loved.

Cary worked at the Oregon State Hospital, where she was employed as a Mental Health Specialist for almost 25 years. She was an outspoken advocate for her patients and fellow workers. Cary championed patient rights and fought to bring the option of alternative care to the hospital. She was instrumental in starting successful yoga and mindfulness meditation programs at OHS. These programs were well-liked and well-attended. Many of Cary's patients sent her notes affirming how very helpful yoga and meditation are to their recovery.

One of Cary's colleagues said, "Speaking up for alternative care in the workplace can take courage. Cary treated her patients with compassion, dignity and respect, and they loved her for it. She was fierce!" Cary's family and friends will forever remember her for her caring, compassionate, playful nature and for the joy she brought to all their lives. Cary was loved by everyone who knew her and she is terribly missed.

Cary is survived by her husband Jim, and mother, Eileen Zneimer of Portland; father, Jack Zneimer of Sarasota, FL; son Aaron Luchene of Canby; daughter, Ann Klug of Merrillville, IN; brothers Peter Zneimer of Chicago and John Zneimer of LaCrosse, WI; and sister Maud of Mill Valley, CA.

We send our sincere condolences to her family, and join in the celebration of her life.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN HOWARD

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Howard, an indispensable member of my staff and good friend who will soon retire after ten years of faithful service to me and the people of Oregon's Second District.

John has had a long, dedicated career serving his country. In fact, this actually marks John's second retirement. In 1994, John left his beloved United States Navy after a thirty year career, rising from enlisted seaman to Commander. A passionate Fighting Illini alumnus, John received his commission in 1970 as a graduate of the Navy ROTC program at the University of Illinois. John served on five ships, including command of the USS *Saginaw* (LST-1188) and several shore assignments, including two tours in Washington D.C.

After a few years of retirement—and a brief stint as a dotcom millionaire gone bust with an independent software development company—John and his wife Cathy relocated from Virginia Beach, Virginia to Medford, Oregon in September 2001. In fact, the closing on his home was delayed because of 9/11. He persevered through and settled in to the Rogue Valley getting involved in his community through the United Way and several military organizations. I first met John when he was the president of the Rogue Valley Council of the Navy League where he presented me with an honorary Navy League membership.

A lifelong Republican, John stepped up to volunteer with the 2004 Bush/Cheney presi-

dential campaign in Jackson County, OR. John stayed in touch with my office through similar political and community volunteer efforts. Soon, when a member of my staff decided to return to school part time, I brought John on to share the workload and the following year, John joined my team full time to handle veterans and military casework and provide input on related policy matters.

Bringing John onboard wasn't without issue. John Howard is a pretty common name for one and we already had a John on staff. The communication logistics could have been daunting, yet by chance House IT averted a crisis. John was bestowed with a non-standard email address that had no "dot" between his first and last name. Thereafter and furthermore, John was referred to as NoDot amongst Team Walden.

During his ten years on staff, John has handled 4,144 cases for individual constituents and veterans, almost 1/3 of all the cases handled in 16 years by my office. That doesn't include the countless other veterans and other constituents assisted on the side with information and guidance.

Of course, it was hard for him to top the success of one of his first cases on staff where he showed an ability that surprised us all, bringing veterans back to life. John was contacted by a veteran who had received a letter from the VA containing the shocking news that he was deceased. Working with his contacts at the VA, John was able to get the error corrected and brought the veteran back to life in the VA's records. Over the years, John has had a couple other similar cases, all of which he found fascinating to resolve.

As my veterans caseworker, and later as Director of Constituent Services, John worked with veterans organizations across the district to make sure that I heard their concerns and let them know I was available to assist. John was a familiar face at veterans meetings and events in southern Oregon. Further, he was instrumental in developing a presentation for civic groups on what goes on in congressional offices, making my services more known and available to constituents.

A good naval officer is always concerned about the morale of his sailors. John carried that approach with him and became the de facto Morale Officer in my Southern Oregon District Office. Combining this with a firm belief in the importance of quality community outreach in politics, John founded "Rope Yarn/Veterans Outreach Wednesdays" which are weekly after hours gathering for staff and local veterans to discuss local veteran's issues and partake in the occasional fermented beverage—as any good sailor would!

During his tenure, John took the reins of my service academy selection process, changing and building it into the strong program it is today. He constructed a board of retired military officers to interview all candidates that was decidedly "Purple," ensuring all service components were fully represented. This system has proven to be highly successful. In fact, nine of the 18 students I nominated last year received an appointment to the class of 2018.

As John heads into retirement, he is looking forward to some increased time with his extensive family, which includes his wife Cathy, his son, five daughters; soon-to-be 13 grandchildren—including two newborn fraternal twin granddaughters—along with 2 foster grandchildren.

Always service oriented, John will continue to volunteer in his community and was recently appointed to the board of the Jackson County Retired Seniors Volunteer Program. In addition, he has been approached to serve on the board of the United Way and the Jackson County Veterans Advisory Committee.

Whether spending time with family, golfing or volunteering it will always be easy to identify John from afar in the University of Illinois characteristic orange and blue, or overhear the words to the Songs of the Illini—from Illini Loyalty to Hail to the Orange—which he loudly and proudly belt out with the slightest provocation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring John's 40 plus years of public service and in wishing fair winds and following seas to a true gentleman, shipmate, and friend. Godspeed, NoDot!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 555, I was unavoidably detained on official business.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN H. KREBS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues, Congressman XAVIER BECERRA, Congressman AMI BERA, Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY, Congresswoman LOIS CAPPES, Congressman TONY CÁRDENAS, Congresswoman JUDY CHU, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, Congressman SAM FARR, Congresswoman JANICE HAHN, Congressman JARED HUFFMAN, Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, Congressman ALAN LOWENTHAL, Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI, Congresswoman GLORIA NEGRETE MCLEOD, Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY, Congressman GEORGE MILLER, Congressman RICK NOLAN, Congresswoman GRACE NAPOLITANO, Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI, Congressman SCOTT PETERS, Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, Congressman RAUL RUIZ, Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ, Congressman ADAM SCHIFF, Congressman BRAD SHERMAN, Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, Congressman ERIC SWALWELL, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON and Congressman HENRY WAXMAN to pay tribute to the life of former Congressman, John H. Krebs.

John Krebs was an honorable man, and a community leader whose unwavering service will be greatly missed. In addition to his two terms in the United States Congress from 1975–1979, Mr. Krebs was a civic and Democratic Party leader in Fresno, California. Additionally, he worked as an attorney for over 30 years, he was an apprentice diamond cutter during his youth in Tel Aviv, and he served in the U.S. Army.