

The stunning fresco, which Mary Flores and Lupe Flores helped to create, is uniquely Texan and includes a cactus and rattlesnake in the background.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to honor Mary Flores, Lupe F. Flores and their contribution to Our Lady of Loreto Chapel. I appreciate you and the House of Representatives joining me in recognizing the beauty and history of Our Lady of Loreto Chapel and Goliad, Texas.

UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES
ENLISTEES FROM FLORIDA'S
22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor seventy-five high school seniors in Florida's 22nd District who have decided to enlist in the United States Armed Forces.

Of these seventy-five, twenty-two have joined the Army; their names are Daryl Flowers, Stanly Ramirez, Jonathan Belman-Otero, Wilfredo Colon, Jeanette Cox, Dalenjie Jeanty, Cory Chobot, Kendall Gonsalves, Jamile Hill, Devon Petchner, Gage Morgan, Mario Valenzuela, Jr., Vanessa Sheika, Jackenson Toussaint, Jeffrey Edano, Krista Ramirez, Julianna Guerra, Caylah Murray, Kamyra Johnson, Daniel Castillo-Hernandez, Matthew Smith-Mullaly, Matthew Woods. Thirty-three have joined the Marines; their names are Kevin Cobty, Andres Cifuentes, Jimmy Octave, Frank Barker, Timothy Murray, Nicholas Nixon, Emilio Perez, Devonta Battles, Rock Joseph, Artem Solomakin, Arnulfo Vasquez, Gabriel Figueredo, Brian Sauls, Thales Rodrigues, Richard Lemus, Manuel Gonzalez, Bailey Ochoa, Collin Murphy, Julian Sosa, Leandra Sinclair, John Newkirk, Alexander Averhart, Bryant Mercely, Jace Bowes, Eric Morzella, Dylan Pierre Louis, Emmanuel Rivera, Argelis Hernandez, Jacob Quikkel, Victor Stremel, Christian Pontier, Jonathan Vallejo, Devon McCarthy, Jr. Three have joined the National Guard; their names are Jimmy Lopez, Shalena Higgins, Kenneth Talvo. Fifteen have joined the Navy; their names are Jason Bagnall, Bobby Thomas, Raymond Brooks, Alec Johnston, Max Joseph, Xavier Owens, Christian Peraza, Ariah Pickering, Victoria Umpierrez, Christina Coder, Christopher Gibb, Jose Lopez, Charles Tookes, Maria Valdes, and Nehemie Jean-Charles. Two have joined the Air Force; their names are Gabrielle Etheradge and Aubrey Amoror.

It is in thanks to the dedication of patriots like these that we are able to meet here today, in the United States House of Representatives, and openly debate the best solutions to the diverse issues that confront our country. On behalf of myself and all of my constituents in Florida's Twenty-Second District, thank you for your service and best of luck as you pursue this challenging endeavor.

ON THE OCCASION OF COACH ALBERT FRACASSA'S RETIREMENT AS HEAD FOOTBALL COACH FROM BROTHER RICE HIGH SCHOOL IN BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Al Fracassa as his family and the Greater Detroit community celebrate his retirement as Head Coach of the Brother Rice Warriors football team in Birmingham, Michigan. Capping off a 57 year career in football coaching, Coach Fracassa leaves the field as the winningest high school football coach in the State of Michigan's history having compiled 430 victories.

Long before his days as coach, Fracassa played football in high school and college—where he earned All State honors at Detroit's Northeastern High School and later joined the Michigan State University Spartans. At Michigan State, he was part of the school's dominance in colligate football during the early 1950s. While playing with the Spartans, Coach Fracassa was part of a team that won the National Championship in 1952 and played in the Rose Bowl in 1954. During his senior year, Coach Fracassa was honored with the highly coveted Fred Danziger Award. Praised by his teammates for his contributions both on and off the field, they describe Coach Fracassa as a dedicated athlete whose leadership inspired the best in his teammates—qualities that would continue to inspire while he worked the sidelines as a coach.

After his graduation from Michigan State, Coach Fracassa joined the coaching staff at Royal Oak's Shrine High School and became head coach several years later. In 1969, he went on to become head coach at Brother Rice High School in Birmingham, where he has served for 45 years and built a dynasty of dominance in Michigan high school football.

In football, so many important metrics of performance are measured by statistics, numbers which tell an incredible story of success for the Warriors under the direction of Coach Fracassa. With nine Michigan High School Athletic Association Championships—including three in the last three years, 16 Catholic League Championships, four teams that have been ranked national by USA Today and 430 victories over his career, Coach Fracassa has built an incredible program at Brother Rice. He is the recipient of many awards throughout his career, including the 2013 Coach of the Year Award by USA Today.

However, statistics do not tell the entire story of Coach Fracassa's success—the inspiration he instills in his players through his leadership and dedication to overall well-being. A constant throughout his career, Coach Fracassa is praised by his players for his inventiveness in play calling, his support of their development both on and off the field, and his genuine love for the sport of football. And as a testament to the long-term impact of his coaching, many of his players have gone on to excel in college and the National Football League.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Coach Al Fracassa for the incredible impact he has made on the Greater Detroit community and the State of Michigan. For 57 years, he has demonstrated leadership and dedication that have truly inspired his players to reach for their maximum potential. Coach Fracassa leaves an incredible legacy at Brother Rice—45 years of success and hundreds of students who he has helped develop both in personal character and in skill on the football field. I know his leadership on the field will be greatly missed and I wish Coach Fracassa and his wife, Phyllis, the very best as they embark upon a new chapter in their lives.

CONGRATULATING WEYERHAEUSER COMPANY FOR BEING RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE 100 BEST CORPORATE CITIZENS

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 2014

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Weyerhaeuser Company on being recognized as one of best corporate citizens in the nation. Weyerhaeuser ranked sixth on Corporate Responsibility Magazine's 100 Best Corporate Citizens 2014 list.

Since 1957, Weyerhaeuser has been an important part of communities throughout eastern North Carolina. Weyerhaeuser employs 1,051 North Carolinians and helps sustain families and businesses in rural communities across the state. More than 545,000 acres of land in North Carolina is owned or leased by Weyerhaeuser. The company's Softwood Lumber Mill in Plymouth and the Carolina Timberlands and GHW Operations Center in Washington are essential economic drivers for North Carolina's First Congressional District.

North Carolinians benefit from Weyerhaeuser's presence in our state. The company is an important economic contributor through job creation and business development, but importantly serves as an environmental steward and engages in philanthropy throughout the state. Over the last six years Weyerhaeuser has donated more than \$2.5 million to philanthropic causes in North Carolina communities. Nationally, Weyerhaeuser and its employees have donated more than \$215 million since 1903 to support education and youth development, affordable housing and shelter, human services, civic and cultural growth, and environmental stewardship.

Corporate Responsibility Magazine's 100 Best Corporate Citizens 2014 list evaluates companies based on climate change, employee relations, environment, finance, governance, human rights, and philanthropy. I am proud to represent Weyerhaeuser and am grateful for their extraordinary efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the outstanding efforts of Weyerhaeuser employees in North Carolina and across the country.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4486, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4487, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 30, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the Rule for H.R. 4486, the "Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2015," which supports our military and their families and provides the benefits and medical care that our veterans have earned for their service.

H.R. 4486 provides the facilities and infrastructure needed to house, train, and equip our military personnel to defend this Nation, both in the United States and abroad, provides the housing and military community infrastructure that supports a good quality of life for them and their families, and allows the military to maintain an efficient and effective base structure.

The bill also funds programs to ensure that all veterans receive the benefits and medical care that they have earned as a result of their sacrifices in the service to our Nation.

Just as our military pledges to leave no one behind on the battlefield, Democrats in Congress have pledged to leave no veteran behind when they come home.

The bill provides a total of \$165 billion in FY 2015 to fund military construction projects and programs of the Veterans Affairs Department, an increase of \$7 billion (4%) over current funding levels. This total includes \$93.5 billion in mandatory spending for VA benefits and \$71.5 billion in discretionary funding.

The bill provides a total of \$64.7 billion in discretionary funding for the VA in FY 2015, a 2% increase over current funding and I am pleased that it increases mandatory funding for veterans' compensation and benefits by almost 10 percent.

Mr. Speaker, although there is much in this bill that I support, I wish to note two major concerns.

First, I disagree with the funding level for VA Medical Care in the bill, which is \$368 million below the President's request and the amount I support. This underfunding for VA Medical Care could delay the timely delivery of health care services to veterans and impede our efforts to end veterans' homelessness in 2015.

Second, the bill provides \$50 million less than the President's request for Information Technology operations and maintenance programs. The result is likely to be a delay in making the necessary improvements to technology infrastructure that ensure continuity of operations for services that support all of VA's services and benefit delivery.

Third, I do not support section 411 of the bill, which would prohibit the use of funds to construct, renovate, or expand any facility in the United States to house individuals held in the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. I do not support this rider because it unduly con-

strains the flexibility that the our Armed Forces and counterterrorism professionals need to best protect U.S. national security.

Mr. Speaker, the VA serves nearly 48.5 million people: 22 million veterans and 26.5 million family members of living veterans or survivors of deceased veterans, so in my remaining time let me highlight some of the positive aspects of the bill:

\$1.2 billion for family and military personnel housing—equal to the administration's request;

The bill contains an advance appropriation for FY 2016 of \$58.7 billion, continuing the trend started in the Democratic-led 111th Congress of providing advance appropriations to the VA for the medical services, medical support and compliance, and medical facilities accounts.

This is a significant benefit to the veterans served by the VA at the 152 hospitals, 107 domiciliary residential rehabilitation treatment programs, 133 nursing homes, 300 Vet Centers, 70 mobile Vet Centers and 821 outpatient clinics, which include independent, satellite, community-based and rural outreach clinics.

\$589 million is provided for medical, rehabilitative, health services and prosthetic research—\$3.3 million above current levels and recommends that a proportionate amount of funding for prosthetics should be focused on prosthetics for females, who outnumber male amputees by 3 percent.

In addition to veterans medical benefits, the bill provides \$93.7 billion, an increase of \$8.84 billion, in mandatory funding for other veterans benefits—primarily veterans compensation and pensions, and readjustment benefits.

\$78.7 billion for veterans service-connected compensation benefits and pensions, an increase of \$7.2 billion (10%) over current funding levels.

These funds are used for service-connected compensation payments to an estimated 4.6 million veterans, survivors and dependents and pension payments to 519,000 veterans and survivors.

\$14.8 billion for veterans readjustment benefits, an increase of \$1.6 billion (12%) over current funding levels. These funds include education and training assistance to veterans and service personnel; vocational rehabilitation; special housing and transportation grants to certain disabled veterans; and educational assistance to eligible dependents of deceased and seriously disabled veterans, as well as dependents of servicemembers who were captured or are missing in action.

This is not a perfect bill but this piece of legislation addresses the most critical needs of our service members, military families, and veterans.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
EDELSTEIN FAMILY

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 2014

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Edelstein family and their contributions to the Brownsville community.

In 1906, Lithuanian Immigrant Morris Edelstein opened Edelstein's Best Furniture

store in Brownsville, Texas. By the 1930s, Mr. Edelstein had expanded his furniture business to include 12 stores throughout the Rio Grande Valley. In the 1940s, Morris Edelstein's sons, Ruben and Ben, took over the family furniture business. Together, they operated the chain of stores for more than 60 years and would grow the company to employ 260 people.

Morris Edelstein taught his children the importance of giving back to the Brownsville community. Ruben started the first United Way in Brownsville, served as mayor of Brownsville, and was the first director of the Brownsville Public Utilities Board. Additionally, he worked with Washington policymakers to secure funds to build the Brownsville Community Health Center.

In 2008, the Edelstein family sold its 12 Edelstein's stores but retained two Designer's Showroom stores, managed by Ruben Edelstein's daughter, Julie Edelstein-Best. This summer, Ms. Edelstein-Best will be closing the two remaining stores due to changing market conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to honor the Edelstein family and their commitment to Brownsville for more than 100 years.

CONGRATULATING THE HONOREES
OF THE MAINE SPORTS HALL OF
FAME'S 39TH ANNUAL INDUCTION
BANQUET AND SCHOLAR-
ATHLETE AWARDS CEREMONY

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorees of the Maine Sports Hall of Fame's Annual Induction Banquet and Scholar-Athlete Awards Ceremony.

This Sunday, the Maine Sports Hall of Fame will honor Maine athletes and sports figures who have exemplified a tireless commitment to their sport and to their community. Recognition awards and scholarships also will be presented to five of Maine's outstanding high school scholar-athletes. Each of the honorees have distinguished themselves on and off the field and are most deserving of this recognition.

This year's inductees to the Maine Sports Hall of Fame are: Julia Faith Dawson Clukey, Augusta; Jack W. Cosgrove, Bangor; Joseph L. Ferris, Brewer; Edward J. Flaherty, Portland; William (Bill) Green, Cumberland; Eleanor D. Logan, Boothbay Harbor; George J. Mitchell, New York City; Steven M. Pound, Greenville; and Abigail L. (Abby) Spector, Waterville.

This year's scholar-athlete honorees are: Carsyn Koch, Washburn District High School; Ian Lee, Madawaska High School; Alexandra Logan, Cheverus High School, Portland; Mikayla Turner, Messalonskee High School, Oakland; and Rayne Whitten, Massabesic High School, Waterboro.

The President's Award is presented to "an individual who has bettered sports and athletics and has become a leader at state and national levels." This year's recipient is William E. Hagggett of West Bath.

Each of these honorees is among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and their incredible commitment to their