

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING MR. JOHN C. PITTS

**HON. DANIEL WEBSTER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Mr. John C. Pitts of Evans High School in Orlando, Florida. Mr. Pitts, a Florida native, bravely served our country in World War II as a Navy Seal in the Underwater Demolition Team #25. In 1957, Mr. Pitts began teaching junior high at Evans High School, and in 1961, he moved into administration as the school's assistant principal. After temporarily leaving Evans High School to lead several other schools in Orange County, Mr. Pitts returned to Evans in 1977 where he served as principal until his retirement in 1988.

Educators like Mr. Pitts are shining examples of the fruits of selflessness. Their commitment to students models the life-changing impact a dedicated educator can have on a community and on the individual lives of students.

For more than five decades, Mr. Pitts has been a tireless advocate for the students, athletes and families of Evans High School. It is with sincere appreciation that I thank Mr. Pitts for his commitment to our nation's youth and for his service to our country. His leadership and dedication continue to be an inspiration to us all.

A TRIBUTE TO SONIA CLAYTON

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Sonia Clayton for her tremendous accomplishments with her business, numerous awards she has received and for being featured on the cover of Small Business Today magazine. Sonia is a perfect example of the American Dream.

Sonia was born in Colombia, where she spent the first part of her childhood, before moving to Venezuela and eventually the United States. Growing up, Sonia said life was not easy. She had no father figure, and grew up poor in an underdeveloped country. She said that living without a paternal figure, she had to figure things out on her own and learn how to survive. It is during this time that Sonia learned how to "think outside the box," as she put it.

She said that she learned to get creative and embrace the challenge, tackle it and overcome it. As she explained, when there is someone there to prevent chaos in your life, you learn nothing, but when you have to figure it out on your own, you learn how to survive, because you have to.

In 1984, Sonia moved to the United States. In order to support herself, she had three jobs. She first worked as a caretaker for an elderly

couple close to death. She then worked in a rest home and from that job, created a crew who cleaned houses around the Salt Lake City area. It was during this job that Sonia learned English. Sonia also worked as an interpreter; she is fluent in French, Spanish, Portuguese and English.

In 1990, Sonia came to Texas. She first worked for Air France and from there went on to work for Continental Airlines. She started out doing transit operations and later went on to work in corporate security. Sonia pioneered a team that put together Continental Airlines first security group.

It is during this time that Sonia began working with different databases and programs for training purposes, and first got into IT. Shortly after 9/11, Sonia created Virtual Intelligence Providers, L.L.C. (VIP). VIP is an information technology company that focuses on oil and gas. It first started out as a way to help her friends find jobs that had been lost due to the events on September 11th. She began reaching out to different companies and as Sonia put it, she didn't just start with the little guy, she reached out to huge corporations and Shell Oil became her first client.

VIP grew very quickly, making \$300,000 in its first year and hitting the million dollar mark in its second. VIP has been in business for 13 years.

In all her success, Sonia always remembers to give back and promotes this spirit throughout VIP and its employees. She has started three nonprofits: The VIP Education Foundation, The Angels for Soldiers Foundation and The Cancer Foundation.

Sonia also continues to support the Mormon Church. It is through Mormonism that she grew to become familiar and be involved with Christian and American values, which she witnessed growing up through the works of missionaries and Red Cross workers.

Sonia said that Americans are very generous people and America is the only country in the world that worries about its neighbors and helps maintain their freedoms and liberties. She also knows that it takes genuine people who are willing to sacrifice that make this country great. She raised her children with the principle that they can either serve God or their Country. Her son is an officer in the US Navy and her daughter is a returned missionary in the Mormon Church.

Sonia believes all these works are a way to give back to America so that someone is able to benefit from her and her family's generosity, the same generosity that she once benefited from.

Sonia is a remarkable, successful woman, gracious and giving citizen and a cancer survivor. Her exceptional story reminds us that even in times of great adversity, we can succeed if we work with tireless determination. She teaches people everywhere the importance of giving back and I am thankful to have her as one of my many neighbors in Houston, Texas. Sonia embodies the character of a Texan through and through.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING THE CAMP MERRILL CHOW STAFF

**HON. DOUG COLLINS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the exemplary actions of the Camp Merrill chow staff during the winter storms that hit Georgia in January and February.

L & S Services employees serve the 5th Ranger Training Battalion in the Camp Merrill Chow Hall.

When winter weather crippled parts of Georgia earlier this year, members of this team volunteered their personal time and even risked personal safety to ensure that Army operations would continue without degradation.

Thanks to the sacrifice of L & S Services personnel, more than 300 students were able to successfully complete the mountain phase of Ranger school.

In addition, this experience led to the development of a procedure for folks to stay at Camp Merrill to support operations during severe weather—a plan that was followed just a few weeks later, when a dangerous ice storm struck the area.

Even in the face of significant challenges this winter, L & S Services employees provided consistent and outstanding service to Camp Merrill.

I commend these individuals for going above and beyond the call of duty to support our men and women in uniform, and ultimately, our national security.

HONORING MR. GEORGE A. EMANUELSON

**HON. KEITH ELLISON**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of George A. Emanuelson, a World War II veteran who served as an Armed Gunner with the United States Navy aboard the S.S. *Mello Franco* as well as the S.S. *James S. Lawson*.

Mr. Emanuelson honorably and faithfully carried out his duties, and our country is indebted to him and his fellow sailors for their heroic service. As a member of our nation's "Greatest Generation," Mr. Emanuelson answered the call of duty during a perilous time of war. World War II was an event that shaped the trajectory of not only our country, but also the entire world. We owe service members like Mr. Emanuelson our eternal gratitude for standing up against fascism that threatened democracy and safety across the globe. Thanks to men and women like Mr. Emanuelson, our democratic ideals have persevered and led us to become the most influential nation in the world today.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Mr. Emanuelson makes Minnesotans proud. On behalf of all Minnesotans and Americans, I recognize Mr. Emanuelson's dutiful service to our country during one of its most dire times of need.

OPERATION HELPING HAND 10TH  
ANNIVERSARY

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Operation Helping Hand on its 10th Anniversary. Operation Helping Hand is a labor of love dedicated to providing support for our United States Military active duty personnel who have been injured in military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and are currently being cared for at the James A. Haley VA Hospital in Tampa, Florida.

Started in May 2004, Operation Helping Hand is a special initiative of the Tampa Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), which currently has over five hundred members. Operation Helping Hand is governed by five retired officers, one prior enlisted Non-Commissioned Officer, and operated by many dedicated volunteers. In the ten years since its inception, its efforts have assisted hundreds of active duty, recently retired, and wounded heroes and their families. Operation Helping Hand knows that one of the most important aspects of the patients' rehabilitation is having family support during their recovery. That is why it helps facilitate this through a myriad of services such as travel assistance with roundtrip air fare for immediate family members, rental cars for traveling, gas, lodging, and other various arrangements that help connect family members to their loved ones during their rehabilitation. These services would not be possible without the generous contributions and grants from individuals, corporations, and associations, which, through Operation Helping Hand's fundraising efforts, have been able to give well over \$1.8 million back to assist our wounded military service-members and their families.

Mr. Speaker, for wounded heroes and their families, Operation Helping Hand hosts monthly dinners—many of which I have been privileged to attend—at the James A. Haley VA Hospital. On May 15th, Operation Helping Hand will proudly host its 120th consecutive dinner. Those in regular attendance at the monthly dinners consist of concerned citizens, community leaders, active duty military and military retirees. Deliciously catered dinners are provided by local restaurants that, in conjunction with other local businesses, generously stuff gift bags chock full of useful personal items and gift certificates for the loved ones of wounded veterans.

Mr. Speaker, for its incredible charitable work, it is no wonder that Operation Helping Hand has received many accolades from, but not limited to, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the United Way of Tampa Bay, and the Mayor's Alliance. Additionally, Operation Helping Hand has been a recipient of the "Newman's Own" recognition, the 2010 Governor's Points of Light Award, the Florida Distinguished Service Medal, and the President's Call to Service Award. But, according to Oper-

ation Helping Hand, the most valuable and honored recognition comes from the grateful patients and their families once their rehabilitation has been completed.

Mr. Speaker, I could not be prouder to have many of these wonderful citizens as constituents. Caring folks like the ones at Operation Helping Hand are what makes America the land of the free and the home of the brave. God bless them, God bless our veterans, and God bless America.

CELEBRATING ONE HUNDRED  
YEARS OF COMMUNITY IN THE  
TOWN OF PROSPER

**HON. SAM JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the community of Prosper, Texas, in celebrating its 100th anniversary. This milestone is a true testament and living legacy of the hard work, perseverance, and spirit of community that the early settlers first fostered.

The Town of Prosper is conveniently located to the north of Frisco in Collin County. Incorporated in 1914 with a commission form of government, Prosper started off with a population of just 500 residents. After the war and the depression the mechanization of farming provided the next big impact on Prosper's population.

In 1980, the introduction of light industry, combined with the growth of the Metroplex, led to a comeback for Prosper. Today, Prosper continues to grow and is home to more than 11,000 residents, 100 businesses and one high school state football championship, Prosper High School. The town continues to welcome new ventures to their thriving community every year. While 100 years have passed since its founding, Prosper truly is a shining example of what makes North Texas a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Town of Prosper on their 100th anniversary. I also commend the Mayor of Prosper Ray Smith and all those who call Prosper home, for their dedication, commitment, and efforts in contributing to Prosper's continued growth and excellence while preserving the values of a close-knit community. That's something we simply can't put a price on. I look forward to seeing what the next 100 years have in store.

God Bless all your efforts, and I salute you.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR BENNY TATE

**HON. PAUL C. BROWN**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Pastor Benny Tate, the Senior Pastor of Rock Springs Church in Milner, Georgia, for over 25 years.

When Dr. Benny Tate first arrived in Milner, Georgia, Rock Springs Church had just 60 members in its congregation. Today, that number has grown to more than 6,000.

Under the leadership of Pastor Tate, several ministries were formed at Rock Springs Church in order to meet the needs of the community, including:

The Rock Springs Medical Clinic to care for those who cannot afford medical insurance, the Potter's House, which ministers to women battling drug and alcohol abuse, Rock Springs Christian Academy, offering quality education to children K through 12, and the Impact Street Ministries, which helps the homeless by serving meals and providing clothing to those in need.

Psalm 68:5 says, "A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling." Or James 1:27 says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Dr. Tate's work is a shining example of what scripture tells us the role of the church should be—to care for the poor, the fatherless, and widows.

Today, Pastor Tate and his wife of more than thirty years, Barbara, reside in Griffin Georgia, and are parents to their daughter, Savannah Abigail.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Pastor Benny Tate for his 25 years of outstanding leadership and service to his community at Rock Springs Church. I wish him many blessed years ahead as he continues to lead, serve, and further the gospel at his full service church.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT  
OF SIERRA SANDS UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPER-  
INTENDENT JOANNA RUMMER

**HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 9, 2014*

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of my good friend Joanna (Jody) Rummer, who has served the Sierra Sands Unified School District for 26 years.

Joining the school district as a science teacher in 1988, Jody went on to serve as assistant principal at Murray Middle School and Burroughs High School before eventually becoming Burroughs' co-Principal. In 2001, she joined the district administrative staff as the coordinator of special projects before becoming the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. In 2004, Jody became the school district's superintendent and embarked on a journey that would ultimately transform the Sierra Sands Unified School District.

When Jody took the wheel, her vision was to enhance and grow Sierra Sands. Today, Jody's vision is rooted in the foundation of all eleven district schools, which have been recognized statewide as institutions of academic excellence, earned the California Distinguished School award, and designated as a California Blue Ribbon school. Within the halls of those schools, you'll find students excelling in California's finest programs for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education, mastering the art of music, visual arts, and drama, and setting athletic milestones as state champions in multiple