

HONORING DOUGLAS L. BRAGG

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Douglas L. Bragg for his extraordinary career of public service and leadership on the occasion of his retirement. Mr. Bragg is retiring after thirty-four years of dedicated service to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), where he has served as Director of the Oakland VA Regional Office since October 2011.

Mr. Bragg is a Vietnam Era veteran who served in the United States Air Force from 1970 to 1973. Mr. Bragg began his career with the VA in 1979 at the San Francisco VA Regional Office. In 1986, he took on the role as a Veterans Benefits Counselor and also served as the station's outreach coordinator. He was at the forefront of the Regional Office's response to the Loma Prieta earthquake, as he was primarily responsible for the outreach efforts to victims of the earthquake.

He joined the Veterans Benefits Administration as a Supervisory Field Examiner in 1989. In 1994, he accepted a position as a Program Analyst in the Veterans Assistance Service (VAS) at the VA Central Office in Washington, DC, where he worked on the Foreign Medical Program, performed station surveys, and was a member of the VAS Business Process Re-engineering team.

In 1996, Mr. Bragg went on to become an analyst for the Fiduciary Program on the Policy and Regulations staff. He returned to the field in 1999 following his appointment as the Assistant Veterans Service Center Manager at the Washington, DC VA Regional Office. During his tenure in this position, he was accepted into Leadership VA through the VA Learning University, the VA's corporate university for VA employees to develop leadership and other management skills, and graduated in 2002. He became the Acting Veterans Service Center Manager at Washington Regional Office in 2003.

In 2004, Mr. Bragg joined the management team of the St. Louis VA Regional Office as the Education Program Manager. He further developed his leadership credentials while serving as the Acting Assistant Director in 2007, completing the Leadership for a Democratic Society course at the Federal Executive Institute in 2007. He was accepted as a participant in the FY 2007 Assistant Director Development Program.

He served as Assistant Director of the St. Louis VA Regional Office from 2008 through 2011. He was appointed to the Oakland VA Regional Office as Director in October 2011. In this capacity, Mr. Bragg has had the responsibility of overseeing California's 1.8 million veteran population. From the Oakland VA Regional Office, over 127,000 Californian veterans receive benefits with the total monthly compensation and payment benefits paid at over \$146 million.

Throughout his prolific career with the VA, Mr. Bragg has been praised for his strategy, strong leadership, integrity and compassion. He has worked hard to create opportunities for veterans, a critical commitment that we must continue to honor to make sure our veterans come home to good jobs and services that are

necessary to help transition successfully into civilian life.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, Mr. Douglas Bragg, I salute you. I congratulate you on your many achievements, and I wish you and your loved ones all the very best as you transition to this exciting new chapter of life.

HONORING JIMMY DIXON

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a hardworking and self motivated black farmer, Mr. Jimmy Dixon, who was born on June 12, 1953 to the late Colie and Anna Mae Dixon.

Mr. Jimmy Dixon was the 6th child of 12 children, a native of Copiah County, Mississippi and was born and raised on the farm.

Mr. Jimmy Dixon is passionate about the farming industry. His heart for farming stems from his late father, Mr. Colic Dixon, Sr. Even during struggling times for farmers, he and several of his siblings helped their father to build the legacy to raise cattle and harvest hay and plant corn, watermelons, okra, peas, sweet potatoes and other produce. They worked hard to acquire land and equipment. Together they owned over 300 acres of land.

Mr. Dixon went to Brushy Creek Attendance Center, an all black school and attended Holtzclaw High School and graduated from Crystal Springs High School, the first year they segregated in 1971. He joined the U.S. Army in 1979 and became a Military Policeman. He went to the conflict in the Persian Gulf in 1990 until 1991 and served in the Gulf War, receiving an Accommodation Medal Award in 1991 and retired in 1992.

Mr. Dixon is married to Marlene and they have three boys and one girl along with four grandchildren. He and his family attends Temple of Yah Hebrew Israelite Assembly in Terry, Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Jimmy Dixon for his dedication and endurance of successful farming.

RECOGNIZING THE TIRELESS  
WORK OF MR. RICHARD A. JOANIS

**HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a great American who has spent his career working to help the underserved in our country—especially migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

Richard A. Joanis spent 33 years as Executive Director of Telamon Corporation, one of the nation's most successful nonprofit organizations operating federal programs. He retires on February 14, 2014 after 44 years of service to farmworkers, elderly and other disadvantaged populations including major program efforts in Head Start, adult and youth training and employment, home ownership, housing rehabilitation, and homeless services.

Mr. Joanis' more than three decade career at Telamon allowed him the opportunity to serve in many capacities on behalf of those to whom he gave voice.

He served on the U.S. Department of Labor's National Advisory Committee on services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and also was a member of the Agricultural Employment Work Group set up by the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor. Mr. Joanis was former president of the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, a national federation of farmworker services organizations, now in its 42nd year.

At Telemon Corporation, Mr. Joanis built the organization from a one-state operation into a nationally recognized multi-disciplinary nonprofit organization serving America's migrant and seasonal farmworkers, children, youth and the rural poor in eleven states.

In 2004, in recognition of his accomplishments, Mr. Joanis was inducted into the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in my great state of North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Joanis has spent his career building hope, helping others see their inherent potential, and positively impacting countless lives by creating an upward trajectory for people around the nation. Mr. Joanis answered the nation's calling to assist its citizens when they are most in need.

Through his efforts on behalf of disadvantaged Americans, Mr. Joanis demonstrated that as citizens we are at our best when we are engaged in service to others, especially when that service leads to the empowerment of our fellow citizens and the improvement of our communities.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Mr. Joanis for his tireless work on behalf of those who are less fortunate.

HONORING MAUDE L. WILLIAMS  
BALLOU

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mrs. Maude L. Williams Ballou, who was born in Fairhope, Alabama, and raised in Mobile. She received a Bachelor of Science in business administration in 1947 from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. After marrying music instructor, Leonard Ballou, she and her husband relocated to Montgomery, Alabama in 1952. Mrs. Ballou met Jo Ann Robinson before the start of the bus boycott and talked with her about how to obtain better conditions for blacks in Montgomery.

After Martin Luther King's election as president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) at the start of the Montgomery bus boycott, Maude Ballou became his personal secretary.

After becoming King's secretary at the MIA, Mrs. Ballou helped coordinate carpools during the boycott. She often responded on King's behalf to his correspondence. Mrs. Ballou accompanied Dr. King when he moved to Atlanta in 1960, staying with the King family and assisting him in establishing his office at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference

headquarters there. Mrs. Ballou left that summer to rejoin her family in Petersburg, Virginia, where her husband had accepted a position at Virginia State College.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Maude L. Ballou for her dedication to serving others.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE ACHIEVEMENTS OF GORDON B. ZACKS

### HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the life achievements of Gordon B. Zacks.

Expressing how much Gordy has meant to Central Ohio and the nation is an impossible task. As a fellow graduate of The Ohio State University, as an admirer and as a friend of this remarkable person, it gives me great pleasure to add my personal appreciation and commendation.

Gordy served with distinction as an advisor, confidant, and friend of U.S. presidents to help change the political landscape of the American Jewish community and improve U.S. relations on behalf of Israel and its neighboring Arab states. Gordy worked with three U.S. presidents and five Israeli Prime Ministers, and his political involvement reached its highpoint during the Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush presidencies. Gordy declined an ambassadorship in the Reagan-Bush Administration and a Cabinet post during the Bush-Quayle Administration in order to serve as unofficial advisor and confidant to Vice President and subsequently President Bush. He met privately with Vice President and then President Bush on a monthly basis to discuss Israeli/American relations, the Middle East peace process, Soviet Jewry, Ethiopian Jewry, and the political landscape of the American Jewish community.

Blessed with true ambition, Gordy is also a brilliant businessman who catapulted R.G. Barry Corporation from a small family firm into an international footwear industry leader. He joined the Columbus, Ohio-based company in 1955 and became president in 1965. He was elected CEO of the company in 1979 and retired in 2004. He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the company. Today, R.G. Barry is the world's largest marketer and supplier of at-and-around-the-home comfort footwear for men, women and children, under the brand name of Dearfoams.

Gordy's book *Defining Moments—Stories of Character, Courage, and Leadership* profiles remarkable leaders who have made the world a better place. Gordan Zacks has built his own legacy of leadership and integrity—the benefits of which have accrued to his family, his friends and all those who are privileged to know him.

On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 12th Congressional District, I would like to thank Gordy for his devotion to the great state of Ohio and to all of the communities that have benefitted from his invaluable contributions.

#### RESOLUTION TO COMMEMORATE PAM TRUSDALE'S 15TH ANNIVERSARY AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRAILER MANUFACTURERS

### HON. LYNN JENKINS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my constituent and friend, Pam Trusdale, on the occasion of her 15th anniversary as Executive Director of the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers. From NATM's headquarters in my Congressional District in Topeka, Kansas, Pam leads advocacy, outreach and safety-promotion efforts on behalf of the light and medium duty trailer industry, one that is responsible for hundreds of thousands of American jobs and several billion dollars of positive economic output.

The great work NATM does on behalf of its members and the industry at large would certainly not be possible without Pam's 15 years of leadership and vision. When she joined the organization in 1998, it was a fledgling group of a handful of companies who joined together to better the industry's future. Since that time, membership has expanded dramatically and NATM's advocacy on behalf of its members in Washington, D.C. has, as well. Soon, NATM will move into a new headquarters building in Topeka in order to accommodate its growth in staff and continue serving its members.

Among the many initiatives in which Pam's leadership has been instrumental is the creation of NATM's Compliance Verification Program. Through the Program, NATM's technical staff visits members' manufacturing plants to ensure the proper procedures are in place to build trailers that are in accordance with federal safety regulations and best industry practices. Pam has guided the Program from its creation through a unanimous vote to make participation mandatory for membership in the Association. When consumers across the country see the NATM decal on a dealer's showroom floor, they know instantly they are purchasing a safety compliant trailer.

In addition to her efforts leading NATM, Pam has also been active in serving the Topeka community. She currently serves on the Board of Regents of Washburn University, her alma mater, and is active with the Kansas Society of Association Executives. She is also a member of the Stormont-Vail Foundation Advisory Board and past chairwoman of the Stormont-Vail Foundation Board of Trustees.

Congratulations, Pam, on this milestone. May you and NATM enjoy many more successful years.

#### HONORING JOHN T. HART

### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a hardworking and self motivated 65 year old black farmer, John T. Hart, who just keeps on going.

Mr. John T. Hart, a native of Holmes County, Mississippi, has been a farmer most of his

life, with the exception of some years that he lived in Chicago. He left Mississippi, a farmer and relocated back to Mississippi approximately four decades ago. If it was possible, one might say that farming is in his DNA. He is just that passionate about the farming industry. His heart for farming stems from his late father, Harrison B. (HB) Hart, who was one of the largest African-American farmers in Holmes County, even during struggling times for farmers. John Hart and several of his siblings helped their father to build the legacy.

Today, Mr. Hart still carries on his father's legacy through a successful farming business of his own. One of his brothers also has a thriving farming business. To work from before sun up to pitch black dark is the norm for this hill farmer, who has also farmed hundreds of acres in the Mississippi Delta. Cotton, corn and soybeans have mainly been his crops of choice over the years. This year, just for fun, he has added 20 acres of "delicious" watermelons that have become in popular demand by local and area consumers and grocery businesses.

Just like other industries, the farming business for Mr. Hart and others have had its share of blows. In a November 22, 2009 New York Times article by Shaila Dewan titled, "In Mississippi Delta, a Promising Summer Washed Away by the Fall," Mr. Hart was one of the featured farmers interviewed for the article about continuous rain that had damaged farm crops that year for farmers in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, eastern Arkansas, and parts of Louisiana. "You just keep going," Hart is quoted saying in the article.

Mr. Hart is also a cattle rancher. Yes, the man who has turned dirt for decades also raises cattle. He owns a herd of cattle from good stock. How does he do it all with only the help of two farm hands? Only God knows.

Although the Mississippi farming business has seen its share of ups and downs, Mr. Hart still remains steadfast to his passion even though at 65 he could be sitting on the beautiful front porch of their ranch house with his wife, Prince Ella Edwards Hart, of 44 years, looking out over the horizon of land God has blessed them with.

Mr. Hart is a graduate of Tchula Attendance Center (now, S.V. Marshall High School). He and his wife, a retiree in the medical arena, have three adult children and three grandchildren.

Will this be the year Mr. Hart brings all of his farm's heavy equipment out of the fields for good, recline in that chair beside his devoted wife and friends on that front porch? Who knows?

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. John T. Hart for his impeccable dedication and endurance of successful farming.

#### THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 2014*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the District of Columbia Paperwork Reduction Act, to eliminate the wasteful congressional review process for legislation passed by