

priority of U.S. foreign policy. But unfortunately, we often hear from religious groups globally and from NGOs working on the issue that this Administration has sidelined the promotion of religious freedom.

This criticism does not discount the work done by our men and women at the State Department and the efforts of Ambassador Saperstein himself. They do important and substantive work, but it seems too often that the issue is marginalized and isolated from issues of national security or economic development—even though we know from academic research that countries with the highest levels of religious freedom experience more prosperity and less terrorism.

Religious persecution has catastrophic consequences for religious communities and for individual victims. But it also undermines the national security of the United States. Without religious freedom, aspiring democracies will continue to face instability. Sustained economic growth will be more difficult to achieve. Obstructions will remain to the advancement of the rights of women and girls. And, perhaps most urgent of all, religious terrorism will continue to be nourished and exported.

The global religious freedom crisis will not disappear anytime soon. According to the non-partisan Pew Research Center, 75% of the world's populations live in countries where severe religious persecution occurs regularly.

It has been almost 17 years since the passage of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. Religious freedom diplomacy has developed under three administrations of both parties. Unfortunately, the grim global realities demonstrate that our nation has had little effect on the rise of persecution and the decline of religious freedom.

It is worth asking why.

It is worth asking not only what the State Department is doing, but what can be done better? Are new tools or new ideas needed to help U.S. religious freedom diplomacy address one of the great crises of the 21st century? Does the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 need to be upgraded to reflect 21st century realities?

That is why I introduced the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2015 (H.R. 1150). This legislation, named after the author of the original IRFA Act, my good friend former Congressman Frank Wolf, would, among other things, strengthen the role of the Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom and the IRF office at State and give more tools to the Administration to address the crisis we face. The bill is roundly endorsed and supported by a broad, diverse array of religious freedom, civil society and diaspora organizations. They acknowledge what too many policymakers and administrations, Republican and Democrat alike, have been unable to appreciate—America's first freedom ought to be infused, at every possible level, into our foreign policy.

Upgrading and strengthening U.S. international religious freedom policy—and further integrating it into U.S. foreign policy and national security strategy—will send the clear message that the U.S. will fight for the inherent dignity of every human being and against the global problem of persecution, religious extremism, and terrorism. In so doing, we can advance the best of our values while protecting vital national interests.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN M. FAMULARO

### HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of a very special man, John M. Famularo of Lexington, Kentucky. Famularo spent most of his life in the legal profession and over the years earned a stellar reputation among his fellow attorneys and all that knew him.

Famularo was raised in Mt. Olivet, Kentucky. He came from a family of legal minds, with his father serving as county attorney, district judge, and circuit judge and his brother serving as U.S. Attorney. Famularo graduated from Loyola University and the University of Kentucky College of Law. Two years after graduation from law school, he successfully argued a boundary dispute case before the U.S. Supreme Court. He began serving as an assistant commonwealth attorney for Fayette County in the 1970s. Much of his career was spent as a partner with the Stites and Harbison law firm in Lexington, where his practice focused on product liability, class-action defense, and medical malpractice defense. He also served as Chief Judge of the 22nd Judicial District in Fayette County. Famularo was well respected for his great legal mind.

Mr. Famularo was special to me personally. As a young lawyer, he was my first mentor. Many attorneys, including me, owe our success to the selfless interest he took in our professional development. He was a great lawyer, a fierce advocate for his clients, a dedicated officer of the court, and the best litigator I have ever seen.

Mr. Famularo became a regent and state chairman of the American College of Trial Lawyers, served on the board of governors of the Kentucky Bar Association, and was inducted into the University of Kentucky College of Law Hall of Fame. He passed away on October 23, 2015. He is survived by his wife Karen, three children, and three grandchildren. The legal community and all those associated with John M. Famularo mourn his passing and honor his legacy.

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANICS

### HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 25th Anniversary of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. Since 1990, the initiative has played a critical role in advocating for and advancing policies that have helped our community grow.

While our work is not done, as we conclude Hispanic Heritage Month, it is important for us to celebrate our progress. Our nation's high school graduation rate is the highest in history, and the Latino dropout rate is half of what it was in 2000.

More importantly, however, we must recognize the work that remains and those committed to doing it. Earlier this year, the Department of Education issued a national call for commitments to action for Hispanics in education. The initiative aimed to encourage private, public and nonprofit investments to create and/or expand high quality educational services. The results were astounding; 150 Commitments to Action with a collective investment of over \$335 million.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the commitment of an organization in my district, the Mariachi Music Education Initiative, who has committed nearly \$900,000 over three years for music education.

It's commitments like this, and those of the other 149 organizations that will help our community prosper. Together, through the work and contributions of public, private and nonprofit organizations, we will continue working to close the achievement gap, and ensure every child in America has the tools and opportunity they need to succeed.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. MARK TAKAI

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, October 26, 2015, I was absent from the House to attend to a personal health matter. Due to my absence, I am not recorded on any legislative measures for the day. I would like to reflect how I would have voted had I been present for legislative business.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on Roll Call 569, providing for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 597) to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes.

## BOKO HARAM AND THE CHIBOK SCHOOLGIRLS

### HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the world was shocked as 276 schoolgirls from the northeastern Nigerian town of Chibok were kidnapped by the Islamic militant group Boko Haram. In the days following this event, we learned that the military had four hours' warning of the attack, but failed to mobilize sufficient forces to fight off the attackers, who arrived at this predominantly Christian town in a convoy of vehicles. A military redeployment to find the girls two weeks later resulted in the massacre of at least 300 residents of the town of Gamboru Ngala.

Since that time, the previous Nigerian Government made many announcements about freeing the kidnapped girls, none of which proved to be accurate. Hope had been raised last October by a government announcement of a cease-fire and release of the girls only to be dashed by increasing Boko Haram attacks and the continued captivity of the Chibok girls. In fact, Boko Haram kidnapped more girls in northeastern Nigeria, especially Christian girls.

President Muhamadu Buhari has said he won't make promises about freeing these captives that he can't guarantee, but I expect he will make every effort to free the Chibok girls, as well as the many others taken by Boko Haram.

I have met previously with young women who have escaped from Boko Haram, in Jos and Abuja, Nigeria, and here in the United States. They confirm the abuse of their sisters and mourn their loss as we do. I want to thank Emmanuel Ogebe for all his help in arranging these meetings and the programs allowing some of these young women to come to the United States for an education. An estimated 10,000 other Nigerian youth are prevented from being educated because of disruptions caused by Boko Haram.

My subcommittee has held several hearings on Boko Haram and convinced the administration to declare Boko Haram a Foreign Terrorist Organization, which they announced at our November 13, 2013, hearing.

I have since pressed the administration to use authorities under the FTO designation to investigate and identify for the Nigerian Government those who support Boko Haram. I also have worked to end the current roadblocks preventing U.S. counterterrorism training for Nigerian troops.

During the past year, social media worldwide has exploded with the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign. I must compliment my colleague, Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON, who has maintained her efforts to free the Chibok girls and all the others kidnapped by Boko Haram, while others have moved on to different issues.

I have worked with Congresswoman WILSON to update her House Resolution 147, which focuses on bringing to an end the violence unleashed by Boko Haram and bringing material aid to those harmed by their attacks. We also have joined in this legislation to press initiatives I mentioned earlier. I hope my subcommittee and our committee can move this legislation to the floor soon to give a boost to U.S. efforts to help Nigeria end the reign of terror by Boko Haram.

#### RECOGNIZING BROWNSTOWN ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY

#### HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, many Hoosier small businesses across my district power the economic engine of the state, while also playing a critical role in the civic life of their communities. Today it is my honor to highlight one such small business. Brownstown Electric Supply Company, based in Brownstown Indiana, is a privately owned electrical supply company that has provided utility companies with technical expertise and electrical supplies for over four decades.

Carl Shake founded Brownstown Electric Supply Company in 1970 after a long career in the electrical supply and utility service industry. Brownstown Electric has grown from a small business in Jackson County, Indiana to a regional company that has expanded its reach as far as Illinois, Kentucky, and Ohio. Brownstown Electric is now run by Carl's son

in law, Greg Deck, who stewards the company with the same principles that have made Brownstown Electric a staple of Southern Indiana.

In addition to supplying electrical equipment and providing expertise in the field, Brownstown Electric is an active member of the local community. They sponsor local high school sports teams, participate in the Brownstown High School school-to-work program, and contribute to the Jackson County History Center of Indiana. Brownstown Electric also encourages their employees to get involved and volunteer in the community. This heart for service is exemplified in their organization of the Zach Pickard Pelican Run. The community-wide event is a 5K run/walk event dedicated to raising money to find a cure for Hutchinson-Gilford progeria syndrome. Employees of Brownstown Electric organized the fundraiser in honor of an employee's son who lives with the genetic condition.

Brownstown Electric Supply Company is emblematic of the Hoosier ethic. They are family-owned and operated, deliver quality products and service, and possess a strong commitment to improving the lives in the community.

It is an honor to represent a business like Brownstown Electric. I hope their exemplary business ethic serves to inspire other would-be entrepreneurs, and I am pleased to highlight their good work today in this installment of Indiana's 9th District Small Business Spotlight.

#### CONGRATULATING SHARON CONATSER

#### HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sharon Conatser on being elected national president of the American Legion Auxiliary earlier this year. The American Legion Auxiliary is the nation's largest women's patriotic service organization, led by the national president who promotes the organization's mission advocating for veterans, educating citizens, mentoring youth, and promoting patriotism, good citizenship, peace, and security.

Mrs. Conatser grew up in Central Illinois and has been a lifetime member of the American Legion family. She first became involved through her father, a WWII and Korean War veteran. Her husband also served as the national commander of the American Legion, making her the first national president who was also a First Lady of the American Legion.

Mrs. Conatser is retired from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she worked for 25 years. She has held numerous leadership positions with the American Legion Auxiliary, and remains active in her church and her community, serving as an inspiring example of a dedicated public servant. I am proud of Mrs. Conatser's accomplishments and it is an honor to represent her in the 13th District of Illinois.

Mrs. Conatser will be a strong national leader for the American Legion Auxiliary and I wish her the best in serving our country's veterans, active duty military, their families, and their communities.

#### HONORING THE SERVICE OF DAVID DOWNEY

#### HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a special man, David Downey, of Bourbon County, Kentucky. Mr. Downey, a part of the Greatest Generation, answered the call to serve during World War II and had a long military career. Today it is my honor to recognize him before the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Downey was born in Bourbon County and graduated from Western High School. He was drafted into the United States Navy in 1944 and began his career in boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois. He left the Navy after a year and a half of service, and quickly decided to return in 1946. He remained in the Navy until 1968. Mr. Downey served on a transport ship during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. He also served on destroyers and served as a cook. During his service in Vietnam, he was honored to meet Roger Staubach, a Naval Academy graduate and Heisman trophy winner.

Following his retirement from the Navy in 1968, he returned home to Kentucky. He worked various jobs before taking a position as a bus driver for the Paris Independent School system. He spent the next twenty two years driving schoolchildren in Bourbon County.

Mr. Downey is an active member of the Seventh Street Christian Church where he serves as a deacon and sings in the Chariots of Fire choir. He loves to bowl and is an active member of a league. Downey and his late wife Nannette, were married for fifty three years. He has two girls and a boy.

The bravery of Mr. Downey and his fellow men and women of the United States Navy is heroic. Because of his courage and the courage of individuals from all across Kentucky and our great nation, our freedoms have been preserved for our generation and for future generations. He is truly an outstanding American, a patriot, and a hero to us all.

#### RECOGNIZING JEFF HUNT

#### HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2015*

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Jeff Hunt on being selected to serve as the new leader of Colorado Christian University's Centennial Institute. I commend his hard work and dedication to the community. Mr. Hunt's impressive career in public service has enriched the lives of so many.

Mr. Hunt's work in the public and private sector, coupled with his principled values, has proven to be invaluable. I am confident that his great spiritual and intellectual strength will make him an exceptional Director at the Centennial Institute.

On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes as he takes on this well-deserved position. It is truly an honor to celebrate his many accomplishments. Mr. Hunt's dedication to public service