

the individual may use a firearm or explosive in connection with terrorist activity.

This legislation was originally crafted in 2007 and endorsed by President Bush's Justice Department, has bipartisan support in the House, and is supported by prominent Republicans and counter-terrorism & law enforcement experts.

H.R. 1076 greatly reduces the likelihood that a terrorists can obtain some of the most lethal weapons in America.

Right now a terrorist can buy a firearm in the parking lot of a gun show, over the internet, or through a newspaper ad without needing a background check.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot be against criminals, terrorists and the dangerously mentally ill getting guns and be against H.R. 1076.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1076 will save lives and strengthen the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

It deserves a vote in the House.

CONGRATULATING THE FESTUS HIGH SCHOOL TIGERS FOR THEIR 2015 MISSOURI CLASS 3 BOYS CROSS COUNTRY STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Festus High School Tigers for their first place win in the 2015 Class 3 Boys Cross Country State Championship.

This team and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the Festus Tigers for a job well done.

HONORING SERGEANT THEODORE TRAVIS, SR.

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to pay tribute to Sergeant Theodore Travis, Sr., a man committed to duty and family, who lost his life in service to this nation.

A Niagara Falls, New York native, Theodore Travis chose active-duty to support his young family after serving in the U.S. Army Reserves. He was a member of an elite team, the 101st Airborne—a Screaming Eagle and initially traveled to Fort Campbell, leaving behind his wife, high school sweetheart Cynthia, and two young sons, Theodore Jr. and Stefan. Sergeant Travis left the United States with his unit on an assignment to aid peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel.

Following their mission, Sergeant Travis and his comrades boarded a plane in high spirits and with great anticipation of returning to their families for Christmas. Tragically they never made it home. On December 12th, 1985, Arrow Air Flight 1285, carrying homeward bound members of the 3rd Battalion, 502nd

Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, crashed in Gander, Newfoundland. On that day 248 members of the 101st Airborne Division, including Sergeant Travis, were killed in the worst air disaster in U.S. military history.

This year, as we recognize the 30th anniversary of this disaster, family, friends and the community will gather at New Hope Baptist Church in Niagara Falls to remember Sergeant Travis, known to all as a "giver." He gave help to his community, gave his faith to the church, gave his love to his wife and children, and gave himself in service to the military in defense of this country, in the name of peace abroad, and in hopes of giving his family a better life.

So today, on behalf of a grateful nation, with a heavy heart we remember Sergeant Theodore Travis, Sr., who in selfless service to the United States of America, gave until he could give no more. Sergeant Travis, his family, and the others who lost their lives on Flight 1285 will be forever remembered for the great sacrifices they have made.

CONGRATULATING THE BRAHMA KUMARIS AND SISTER JENNA ON THE GRAND OPENING OF THE MEDITATION MUSEUM II

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Brahma Kumaris and Sister Jenna on the grand opening of the Meditation Museum II in Tysons Corner, Virginia.

The Brahma Kumaris is a non-profit organization with over 9000 branches in 120 countries. Founded in Hyderabad, Sindh in 1936, the Brahma Kumaris seeks to help individuals re-discover and strengthen their spirituality through self-reflection, meditation, and participation in activities of social and humanitarian concerns.

Sister Jenna began her spiritual journey with the Brahma Kumaris and is the founder and director of both the original Meditation Museum in Silver Spring, Maryland as well as this new location in Tysons Corner. Sister Jenna and several of her colleagues created the "Pause for Peace" campaign which has expanded into new programs including the Pause for Peace in the Classroom and Pause for Peace Spaces. Sister Jenna's commitment and influence have been recognized with numerous awards and proclamations including the President's Lifetime National Community Service Award, the Every Day Hero Award, and the Friendship Archway Award.

The benefits of meditation are scientifically proven. According to Psychology Today, meditation has been shown to increase immune function, decrease depression and anxiety and even positively affect higher-order cognitive functions in the brain. Perhaps the most profound aspects of meditation are those that cannot be measured scientifically. Self-awareness, inner-peace and tranquility, becoming one with your surroundings and your faith, and true acceptance of and respect for all others regardless of age, race, gender, religion, or economic status are but a few immeasurable and invaluable benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Sister Jenna and all who

have worked to make the grand opening of the new Meditation Museum II a reality and in wishing them continued success.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY AND CAROL ANDRESS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Larry and Carol Andress of Council Bluffs, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married on September 25, 1965 at St. Patrick's Church in Council Bluffs.

Larry and Carol's lifelong commitment to each other and their children, Dave, Teresa and Deb, along with their grandchildren, truly embodies our Iowa values. It is families like the Andress family that make me proud to call myself an Iowan and represent the people of this great state. I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

HONORING MAUREEN NICHOLSON FOR HER SERVICE TO THE TOWN OF POMFRET, CT

HON. JOE COURTYNE

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. COURTYNE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute Maureen Nicholson's more than thirty years of service to the Town of Pomfret, Connecticut. Maureen has served in all corners of local leadership since she moved to Pomfret in 1988, most recently as the town's First Selectman.

From her start in Pomfret, Maureen was involved in the Parent Teacher Organization, Recreation Commission, Democratic Town Committee, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Finance, and Tree Warden, among many more town and regional organizations. In 2009, she was elected to the Board of Selectmen, and in 2012 was elected First Selectman.

During her years as First Selectman, Maureen secured almost half a million dollars in grants for the Town of Pomfret. She secured the town's emergency shelter and began work to bring large-scale solar power to the town. Maureen saw the potential cost-savings in collaborating with neighboring towns to share accounting and auditing services, and launched an innovative initiative with the Town of Brooklyn. It is this enterprising spirit that delivered forward thinking policies to Pomfret, and the town and region have benefitted.

Maureen also worked to increase awareness for residents of Pomfret by founding and editing the Pomfret Times, and redesigning the town's website to promote and inform residents of the town's resources and news. Her other non-governmental achievements include service on the Day Kimball Hospital Women's

Board, founding of the Pomfret Gardeners, membership on the Community Regional YMCA Board, and serving as Director of the Performing Arts of Northeastern Connecticut.

I ask my colleagues to please rise to thank Maureen for her years of steadfast dedication. Although her leadership as First Selectman will surely be missed, I am confident that her commitment to Pomfret will continue in the years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BANKRUPTCY JUDGESHIP ACT OF 2015

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the “Bankruptcy Judgeship Act of 2015,” authorizes 6 additional permanent bankruptcy judgeships and converts 16 temporary bankruptcy judgeships to permanent status, based on recommendation of the Judicial Conference of the United States. With respect to the 6 additional permanent bankruptcy judgeships, they are authorized pursuant to section 3 of the bill as follows: 2 for the District of Delaware; 2 for the Eastern District of Michigan; and 2 for the Middle District of Florida. With respect to the 16 conversions, they are authorized pursuant to section 2 of the bill for the following districts:

- 5 for the District of Delaware;
- 2 for the Southern District of Florida;
- 3 for the District of Maryland;
- 1 for the Eastern District of Michigan;
- 1 for the District of Nevada;
- 1 for the Eastern District of North Carolina;
- 2 for the District of Puerto Rico;
- 1 for the Western District of Tennessee; and
- 1 for the Eastern District of Virginia.

This legislation responds to a serious need. Since the last time additional bankruptcy judgeships were authorized, which was 10 years ago, the 6 districts that would be authorized additional judicial resources by this bill have experienced a 55 percent increase in weighted filings, according to the Judicial Conference.

All 16 of the temporary bankruptcy judgeships that the bill converts to permanent status are set to lapse as of May 25, 2017. As the Conference observes, “These bankruptcy courts would face a serious and, in many cases, debilitating workload crisis if their temporary judgeships were to expire.”

The need for these additional judicial resources is based on a comprehensive analysis performed by the Judicial Conference based on a formal survey of all judicial circuits conducted pursuant to section 152(b)(2) of title 28 of the United States Code. Criteria considered include the workload of each court, case filing statistics, and geographic factors, among other matters.

CONGRATULATING THE HERCULANEUM HIGH SCHOOL BLACK CATS FOR THEIR SECOND PLACE FINISH IN THE 2015 MISSOURI CLASS 2 BOYS CROSS COUNTRY STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Herculaneum Black Cats for their second place finish in the 2015 Class 2 State Boys Cross Country Championship.

This team and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home 2nd place to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the Herculaneum Black Cats for a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET FLETCHALL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Margaret Fletchall on the celebration of her 102nd birthday. Margaret celebrated her 102nd birthday on October 31, 2015 in Mount Ayr, Iowa.

Our world has changed a great deal during the course of Margaret’s life. Since her birth, we have revolutionized air travel and walked on the moon. We have invented the television, cellular phones, and the internet. We have fought in wars overseas, seen the rise and fall of Soviet communism, and witnessed the birth of new democracies. Margaret has lived through seventeen United States Presidents and twenty-four Governors of Iowa. In her lifetime, the population of the United States has more than tripled.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent Margaret in the United States Congress and it is my pleasure to wish her a very happy 102nd birthday. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Margaret for reaching this incredible milestone, and wishing her even more health and happiness in the years to come.

CONGRATULATING THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES ON THE OPENING OF THE FAIRFAX VETERANS BENEFITS OFFICE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs John C. Harvey, Jr. and Department of Veterans Services Benefits Director Tom Herthel on the opening of the new Veterans Benefits office in Fairfax City.

The 11th District of Virginia is home to almost 54,000 veterans. More than 70% are veterans of the wars in the Persian Gulf. The opening of this new center will ensure that they receive timely access to the benefits they have earned.

The opening of this office is yet another step in addressing the needs of our veterans. While the statistics indicate that overall, veterans in the 11th District may be more economically or professionally secure, the dedicated men and women who have served our country in uniform are still plagued by the same issues that veterans around the country face including prolonged disability or appeal processing times, difficulty scheduling appointments with the VA medical centers, and delays in receiving Post 9-11 GI Bill educational benefits. We must do more to ensure that these issues and others are addressed and resolved. For our community, the statistics are encouraging. The percentage of unemployed veterans is 3.3%, two percentage points better than the national average. The percentage of veterans living below the poverty line is 2.2%, well below the national average of 12.5%. More than 60% of veterans in this district have a bachelor’s degree or higher, almost twice the national average.

These numbers speak to the character of these individuals and also to the network of support services that have emerged in the 11th District. We, as a community, are united in our efforts to provide any and all assistance and guidance needed.

Mr. Speaker, providing care for our men and women in uniform after they return home from the battlefield is a sacred obligation. I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Virginia Department of Veterans Services and its dedicated staff on the opening of this new Veterans Benefits Office, and I offer my continued support and assistance to these ongoing efforts.

OYSTER CREEK’S STAR TEACHER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Brittany Mayland for being named a Star in the Classroom by the Houston Texans.

Ms. Mayland is a kindergarten teacher at Oyster Creek Elementary School in my hometown of Sugar Land, Texas. Her positive impact and commitment to her students led one of her students, Izabelle Paul, to nominate her for this award presented by the Houston Texans and First Community Credit Union. Her dedication to creating a fun and engaging learning environment shows her star quality in the classroom. The students at Oyster Creek are lucky to have her.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Ms. Mayland for being named a Star in the Classroom.