

My entire staff has awaited this good news with eager anticipation of Jason and Erin becoming parents. Blakely is fortunate to have such a loving father and mother.

Congratulations and best wishes to Jason and Erin and their entire family on this wonderful addition.

CONGRATULATING THE LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL COUGARS FOR THEIR 2015 MISSOURI CLASS 2 VOLLEYBALL 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 Lutheran High School Cougars for their first place win in the 2015 Class 2 Volleyball 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 Lutheran High School Cougars for a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO CHET ROED

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 Chet Roed of Mount Ayr, Iowa, for being selected as a member of the Mount Ayr Community Hall of Fame.

Chet taught industrial arts at the Mount Ayr school system for over 30 years. He is credited by many in the community for teaching them how to take care of their homes, and to this day, years after his retirement, Chet remains highly respected by his former students for the knowledge he imparted onto them. He not only contributed to the Mount Ayr community in the classroom, but also in athletics. For years he led the track and football teams to postseason success.

Mr. Speaker, Chad's efforts embody the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent him, and Iowans like him, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating Chet for his achievements and wishing him nothing but continued success.

DEMANDING A MEANINGFUL STRATEGY TO DEFEAT ISIS

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, the President has repeatedly underestimated ISIS, and under-responded to the threat they pose. The American people have lost confidence.

For months we have heard the same refrain from the White House. They say, "We will degrade and ultimately destroy ISIS."

There has been little progress, if any. Top U.S. military officials have confirmed that ISIS is far from contained.

When the President addressed the nation from the Oval Office on Sunday, Americans needed to hear a real strategy to eradicate ISIS. The speech came just days after an act of terror here at home. Instead of a plan, our Commander in Chief delivered the same empty rhetoric.

The United States must show our international partners that we are committed to defeating ISIS. The first step is for the President to outline a plan to destroy them . . . not degrade them.

Until that point, the vacuum of American leadership will continue to grow, and so will the influence of ISIS.

IN HONOR OF TOM AND CHARLOTTE OLEINIK'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if there was a first couple of servant leadership and a model for a successful marriage, it would be Tom and Charlotte Oleinik of Huntsville, Texas. Today, I have the pleasure of honoring them on their Golden Wedding Anniversary and sharing just a bit of their half a century long love story.

Tom was born the fifth of 12 children in Rosholt, Wisconsin, worked on his family's dairy farm and attended a one-room schoolhouse. He served his country in Korea, at Fort Devins, and Fort Drum, before returning to the farm and then applying to protect and serve as a member of the Wisconsin Highway Patrol.

Native Texan Charlotte Fisher was a Christmastime gift to her parents, who ran a Goose Creek rice farm where she grew up with her two younger siblings. She went to work and then college in Florida after graduating from high school. That decision to attend Florida College and to spend a summer in Wisconsin with her roommate would change the course of her life forever.

That summer Charlotte worked days at American Motors and nights and weekends, she waitressed at the Timber Ridge Café where little did she know then a 50 year love story was about to begin when a handsome young state patrolman walked through the door.

Tom, being a very smart man, asked the beautiful waitress on a date, but after a few dates, Charlotte took ill and needed surgery. While she was hospitalized, a certain man in uniform was a frequent visitor, often arriving with flowers.

According to Tom it took a lot of proposing—and a lot of no's—to get a yes from his beloved Charlotte. Charlotte remembers it a little differently, but after Tom was baptized in 1965, this happy young couple got engaged and wed in Kenosha, Wisconsin on December 17, 1965.

They went back to Florida College together and then moved to Texas where Tom worked

with Charlotte's father while waiting to attend and graduate from the Academy. After receiving his badge as a Texas trooper, Tom and Charlotte settled in Corrigan, Texas, where they raised three boys of their own and took in many troubled teenagers in a home full of love and operated a family business in addition to their full time jobs.

After a transfer to Brazoria County, Charlotte worked in the Angleton School District while their boys finished school. Then Tom retired and Huntsville won the lottery when this wonderful couple chose to call the town home.

Charlotte and Tom's impact on Walker County has been lasting, after moving to Huntsville they created the HEARTS Veterans Museum, a gem for the Texas 8th and continue to this day to be pillars in the community. Their servant leadership in our Lord's name and the love they radiate has set an amazing example for us all.

And I believe their 3 children, 17 grandchildren, a great grandson and the many troubled teens they have cared for would agree. The U.S. House congratulates you on celebrating your 50th wedding anniversary.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR H.R. 1217 "PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT OF 2015"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, the past few months have been marked by senseless violence and tragedy across the globe and in our own country from Tuscon, Aurora, Sandy Hook, Charleston, Chattanooga, Roseburg, and now most recently in San Bernardino, California.

It is past time that we come together united by our common humanity and with this simple message: the violence must stop.

The senseless mass shooting in San Bernardino reminds us of the imperative of ending gun violence in our country.

And there are actions that can be taken to reduce gun violence beginning with the enactment of the bipartisan "Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2015" (H.R. 1217).

This bipartisan legislation, which I am proud to be an original co-sponsor, will help prevent guns from falling into the hands of criminals and reinforce the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding gun owners.

Expanding the existing background check system to cover all commercial firearm sales, the Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2015 ensures that criminals and the dangerously mentally ill cannot slip through background check loopholes that endanger the safety and rights of every American.

H.R. 1217 greatly reduces the number of places where a criminal can buy a gun.

Right now a criminal 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.

The bill closes these loopholes while ensuring that background checks are conducted in the same way federally licensed dealers have for more than 40 years.

The legislation also strengthens the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding gun owners by banning the government from creating a federal registry and makes the misuse of records a felony, punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

It provides reasonable exceptions for family and friend transfers and allows active military personnel to buy guns in the state they are stationed.

It lets gun owners use a state concealed carry permit issued within the last five years in lieu of a background check and permits interstate handgun sales from licensed dealers.

The bill also improves the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) by incentivizing states to improve reporting of criminals and the dangerously mentally ill and by directing future grant funds toward better record-sharing systems.

H.R. 1217 will also reduce federal funds to states that do not comply.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot be against criminals, terrorists and the dangerously mentally ill getting guns and be against background checks.

I thank Congressmen PETER KING (R-NY) and MIKE THOMPSON (D-CA) for introducing this bipartisan legislation (H.R. 1217), which is the House companion to an identical bipartisan bill introduced previously by Senators JOE MANCHIN (D-WV) and PAT TOOMEY (R-PA).

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1217 is anti-crime, pro-lawful gun owner and pro-Second Amendment.

It will save lives and strengthen the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

It deserves a vote in the House.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 MVLE AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 2015 MVLE Annual Award Recipients.

For 44 years, MVLE has provided employment opportunities and support services to individuals with disabilities and thereby created an environment which has allowed its clients to live in dignity and as independently as possible. MVLE has achieved this success by partnering with local businesses as well as with government agencies and other not-for-profit organizations to maximize the benefits of its various programs and services. MVLE, its staff, and dedicated volunteers and supporters can be proud that they are making a positive difference in someone's life every day.

Each year, MVLE honors individual participants, as well as business and community partners, who exemplify MVLE's ideals. I am pleased to submit the names of the following 2015 award recipients:

The President's Award is presented to individuals who have shown outstanding progress toward gaining independence and self-sufficiency through participation in employment and community services. The 2015 President's Award recipients are Anis Iqbal, Steven Pennington, and Josh Renggli.

The Chairman's Award is presented to an outstanding business partner who has shown

excellence in hiring practices, creating supportive work environments, and supporting the mission of MVLE. The 2015 Chairman's Award recipients are Ah Love Oil and Embassy Suites Springfield.

MVLE also presents four Community Awards in honor of the four components of our community: Government, Employment, Social Responsibility, and Integration.

The Government Champion Award is presented to Parsons in recognition of its commitment to the creation of meaningful employment opportunities across government and business sectors.

The Employment Partner Award is presented to the Arlington County Equipment Bureau in recognition of its efforts in creating meaningful community employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and military veterans.

The Advocacy Champion Award is being presented to state Senator Barbara Favola, who represents Virginia's 31st district. MVLE presents this award to an outstanding partner who advocates for community integration by fostering partnerships across sectors to create new opportunities one person at a time.

There are two recipients of the Social Responsibility Award: Digital Office Products and Supply World. MVLE presents this award to an outstanding partner who supports MVLE and our community through contributions and volunteer work.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending MVLE for its success in helping individuals with disabilities achieve independence and in congratulating the 2015 MVLE Annual Award recipients. The efforts of MVLE, its supporters, community partners, and clients are an inspiration to all and are truly worthy of our highest praise.

CONGRATULATING THE NEW HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL SHAM- ROCKS FOR THEIR SECOND PLACE FINISH IN THE 2015 MIS- SOURI CLASS 2 VOLLEYBALL 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 New Haven High School Shamrocks for their second place finish in the 2015 Class 2 Volleyball 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 second place win to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the New Haven Shamrocks for a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO KENNON BALSTER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and congratulate Kennon Balster of Blanchard, Iowa, for his induction into the

Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame. Kennon has been the coach of the Large Group and Director of Theatre at Clarinda High School for over 30 years.

The Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame was established in 1976 to recognize distinguished individuals of statewide reputation for their outstanding accomplishments. Inductees are selected for going above and beyond expectations with their contributions, service, dedication, and commitment to the Association. It is the highest honor the Association can confer on an individual.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Kennon for earning this award. He is a shining example of how hard work and dedication can positively affect the future of our youth. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kennon for his contributions to the speech and education community in the state of Iowa. I wish him nothing but continued success.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: THE CHINESE GOVERN- MENT HARVESTS THE ORGANS OF THE FALUN GONG

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is the 65th International Human Rights Day.

It is fitting that we remember how the Chinese Government has denied the human rights of so many of Falun Gong, their family members and their friends.

The most basic human right is the right to live free.

Today, there are more Falun Gong practitioners in prison in China than any other persecuted group.

The Chinese Government's top priority is not to take care of its people; it is to stay in power. It sees Falun Gong rise in popularity in the 1990s as a threat. In reality, Falun Gong just wanted to be left alone.

To silence this threat, the Chinese Government murders Falun Gong members, harvesting their organs to give to others deemed more worthy.

We know this because brave men and women have come forward and reported these crimes, refusing to be silent. Those who have spoken out include the wife of a doctor who was forced to perform surgeries to remove the organs. A security guard who was ordered to stand watch while the surgeries take place has also spoken out about these practices. The evidence is undeniable of this detestable, inhumane practice by the Chinese Government.

The practice is a billion dollar business for the Chinese Government. Organ harvesting is the number one source of revenue for Chinese medical centers. A medical center is supposed to save lives, not take lives. Apparently, in China, the lives of the Falun Gong do not matter. Reports indicate that more than 10,000 have been killed by these barbaric medical procedures; they have been murdered for their organs.

The Chinese Government makes a profit and silences any group it sees as threatening. But they can't silence the Falun Gong nor