

I also am disappointed that the omnibus did not include a number of key spending priorities that should command support from everyone. The bill does not include an important change to wildfire spending. We should treat wildfires like other major disasters and eliminate the practice of "fire borrowing," which drains agency non-fire budgets to pay for firefighting. The bill also fails to reauthorize the Historic Preservation Fund, the main source of federal support for preservation projects that celebrate the heritage and history of communities across America. Finally, the omnibus continues a decades long ban on federal research on the causes and factors behind gun violence. Everyone should allow researchers to study and share information about gun violence in order to promote evidence-based policies to reduce horrific incidents.

Despite these shortcomings, however, I support the overall package. On the whole, it's balanced and includes meaningful provisions that will support priorities important to Oregonians and across the country. I'm hopeful this is an indication that going forward, Congress can work across the aisle and compromise, so that we can do our jobs for the American people.

HONORING SHREWSBURY BOY SCOUT TROOP 114

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Shrewsbury Boy Scout Troop 114.

January 2016 will mark the 100th anniversary of Shrewsbury Boy Scout Troop 114. The troop, which has been chartered by the First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury since 1916, is one of the oldest troops in Mohegan Council as well as one of the oldest troops within the Boy Scouts of America.

For the last hundred years, Shrewsbury Boy Scout Troop 114 has been a vibrant part of our community and helped to teach our young boys the skills that prepare them to lead and the values that strengthen our families in Shrewsbury and the surrounding communities.

Troop 114, which is comprised of 70 Scouts who range in age from 10 to 17, is led by Scoutmaster Rick Spurr as well as 28 registered adult leaders. All of them work to build character and train the Scouts in the responsibilities of participating citizenship and developing personal fitness.

Troop 114 helps our boys stay active and physically fit with 10 campouts per year and a week of summer camp. Since 1916, Troop 114 has spent over 2,500 nights camping throughout New England and members of Troop 114 have represented Shrewsbury proudly at every National Boy Scout Jamboree that has ever been held.

Through the years, 124 members of Troop 114 have attained the rank of Eagle Scout. For the last decade, crews of Scouts have attended national High Adventure camps across the country, including Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, Seabase in Florida and the Bahamas, and Maine High Adventure in northern Maine.

Over the past 100 years Scouting, Troop 114 has kept up with the changing world by

offering many new merit badges that focus on cutting-edge technologies and industries that did not exist years ago. And while much has changed, the core values of the Scouting program have remained constant since Troop 114 was founded in 1916.

I am pleased to congratulate Shrewsbury Boy Scout Troop 114 as they celebrate their centennial and a proud history of helping all of our boys reach their full potential. Here's to another great hundred years.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF MR. CHARLIE HALL

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorable service of Charlie Hall as he retires as CEO of AM General after five years of remarkable leadership of this world-renowned company, the manufacturer of the Humvee. Few exemplify the American spirit more than Mr. Hall and his contributions are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

For more than 35 years, Hall has worked in domestic and international business. He began his career as a summer intern at Chrysler Defense where he returned full time upon completing his business degree from Western Michigan University.

A driven and natural born leader, Hall then became an employee of General Dynamics in 1984, where he worked at nearly every level of the organization including plant manager, vice president, and president of General Dynamics Land Systems. While serving in the Combat Systems Group at General Dynamics, Hall oversaw nearly 20,000 employees.

Hall joined AM General as CEO in January 2011, and set out to fortify the HMMWV brand, grow international sales, and diversify the commercial vehicle business. Hall will retire from the company accomplishing these goals and much more. He restructured the business from top to bottom, launched critical partnerships with the National Guard and Reserves, secured unprecedented foreign military sales, and diversified the company's commercial portfolio, just to name a few of his most notable achievements.

Best known for his collaborative, deliberative, no-nonsense leadership style, Hall has never lost track of his top priority: delivering the best light tactical vehicles on the planet for our men and women in uniform. Under his leadership, AM General has truly been transformed and stands poised for a very bright future.

I want to take this opportunity to once again thank Charlie Hall for having such an extraordinary impact on this company and for serving as a role model for the next generation of leaders in our community. On behalf of myself and my fellow Hoosiers, I thank him for his commitment to service and exceptional leadership.

CELEBRATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOMESTEAD RESORT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, the Homestead Resort is a piece of American history nestled in the Allegheny Mountains of Virginia—surrounded by the natural beauty of the landscape, permeated by healing mineral waters, and displaying the quintessential Southern charm for which it has become so well known. For 250 years, The Homestead Resort has served as a respite for weary travelers. From presidents and celebrities to families and visitors from around the globe, The Homestead has been a place where generations have come to rest, relax, and rejuvenate—all while enjoying the hospitality of our region.

Located in Virginia's Sixth Congressional District in the village of Hot Springs, the history of The Homestead begins more than a decade before the founding of our nation. A young George Washington visited the area, and later granted the land on which The Homestead was built to Captain Thomas Bullitt. In 1766, The Homestead saw its start as an 18-room lodge. In 1818, former President Thomas Jefferson spent three weeks soaking in the mineral pools. To date, 23 U.S. presidents have visited the resort, including former President George W. Bush in 2015.

Under the ownership of the Ingalls family for roughly 100 years until 1993, The Homestead saw many additions and improvements to shape the property as we know it today. Now known as The Omni Homestead Resort, over the past 200-plus years it has grown to encompass 2,300 acres with 483 guest rooms, numerous dining outlets, and more than 30 recreational activities. Today, this iconic resort continues to play a critical role in the economy of Bath County as a leading employer. Annually, the resort employs upwards of 1,000 workers, and is a significant source of tourism for surrounding communities and attractions.

The success of The Homestead is a testament to its hardworking and dedicated employees, like Woody Pettus, the long-time maitre d' in the main dining room. Woody is an institution at The Homestead and is one of five generations of his family who have worked there over the years. For many guests, the staff at The Homestead has become an extended family.

If you have not been to The Homestead, you are truly missing out on a little slice of heaven. From the columns flanking the main entrance and the welcoming expanse of the Great Hall to the beautifully designed gardens and miles of trails, a visit to The Homestead is certainly a unique experience. Over the years, this resort has become a special place for my family and many others. The people of Bath County are proud to call this landmark their own, and it is an honor to represent them and America's First Resort in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Throughout 2016, The Homestead will honor the past, present and future of America's First Resort. I congratulate The Homestead on this 250th anniversary, and wish them many more milestone anniversaries to come.

IN MEMORY OF KISHIN "KAY"
BHAVNANI-RAMA

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, even with the joys of the holidays all around us, this week has been a sad one for The Woodlands. A 'bigger than life' bright light has left us after a long illness.

I was honored to be one of Kishin "Kay" Bhavnani's first friends when he moved to The Woodlands in 1987. Kay made any day brighter.

When he passed away on December 16, 2015 after a lengthy illness, I lost a dear friend, but Veena (Shalani), Nick and Amit lost so much more.

Kay was kindness in human form. He never met a stranger. Friends were family and anyone who needed an open shoulder found one in his presence.

Having Kay's support from my days at the Chamber to today was a blessing I can never repay. There were many nights that midnight had long passed, but Kay and I kept talking, laughing, and simply enjoying what friendship is all about.

Kay will be remembered for his bottomless hospitality. When you left his presence, you were on top of the world, because you knew you mattered.

Whether it was a great meal or engaging conversation, Papa Rama, as he was known to his many "honorary kids", was the confidant's confidant. His advice, comfort, laughter, and sometimes even a well-deserved kick in the pants to the many young friends of his sons were golden and will be sorely missed.

I will always remember his deep love of all things Elvis Presley. He was born in Hong Kong in 1938 to Sita Bai Bhavnani (nee Advani) and Ramchand Bhavnani, but he embraced America with everything he had.

He not only spent his life making everyone around him feel good, he made them look good. His tailoring talents were second to none.

Our prayers are with his soul mate of 45 years, Veena, their children, beloved grandsons, Zachary and Julian, nieces, nephews and extended family who miss Papa Rama greatly.

I am grateful for his friendship and I grieve along with the entire Rama family.

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Katy Firefighter Lt. Simon VanDyk for receiving this year's Fire Chief Gary Tilton Firefighter of the Year Award.

Lt. VanDyk's efforts to create and build a program to inform the citizens of Katy about fire and life safety practices has been a long time passion. VanDyk took it upon himself to create a program that would expand outreach and safety education in the community. Rallying other battalion chiefs, the Katy area now

has in place an educational safety program for its residents and firefighters alike. Lt. VanDyk has shown what it means to go above and beyond the call of duty and truly has improved the safety of the Katy community. Keep up the hard work and thank you for all that you do.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second District of Texas, congratulations again to Lt. Simon VanDyk for winning this year's Firefighter of the Year Award.

A TRUE AMERICAN HERO PASSES

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened by the passing of Tibor (Ted) Rubin. Our community and our nation have lost a true hero.

Ted was born in Hungary in 1929. He survived 14 months in a Nazi concentration camp during WWII, before his liberation, and eventual migration to America.

Inspired by the American soldiers who rescued him, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, eventually being deployed as a member of the 1st Cavalry Division during the Korean War. During his service, he faced anti-Semitic discrimination from his sergeant who sent Ted on the most dangerous assignments in South Korea's Pusan Perimeter, where he fought valiantly in several notable engagements.

He was eventually captured by the North Koreans on one of these missions. During his captivity he continued to inspire others, providing moral support and improvised medical techniques to care for his fellow soldiers.

For his gallantry in close contact with the enemy and his unyielding courage and bravery while a prisoner of war Ted was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 2005.

Last August, I was proud to join Ted at a ceremony in Garden Grove to celebrate the first United States Postal Service stamp honoring the extraordinary courage of the 145 Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine service members who received the Medal of Honor for action during the Korean War.

I was also proud to see the City of Garden Grove name a library after Ted earlier this year: the Garden Grove Tibor Rubin Library.

Talking about his decision to immigrate, Ted once said that America is, "... the best country in the world and I am part of it now. I do not have to worry about the Gestapo knocking on my door tonight. I have shalom—peace—people die for it."

A long-time resident of Garden Grove, Ted was an inspiration to our community in so many ways. We should all honor his perseverance, dedication, and determination to make the world a better place.

HONORING JONI EARL

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Joni Earl, longtime Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Seattle area's re-

gional transit system, Sound Transit, on her retirement. Joni has been an extraordinary and transformative civic leader; forever changing the public transportation system in the Puget Sound region.

Joni's public service has been a lifelong endeavor and began when she was just a teenager, when she served as Assistant Treasurer at the City of Bremerton's City Treasurer office. Upon graduation from Washington State University, Joni would continue her career in 1987 as the City Manager of Mill Creek. Later, she brought her leadership abilities to Snohomish County as the Deputy County Executive until 2000, when she was recruited to join Sound Transit as its Chief Operating Officer (COO).

As COO, Joni was tasked with saving a \$1.9 billion light rail project that was years behind schedule and a billion dollars over budget. Just months after arriving, Joni was unexpectedly appointed to the role of CEO, where she discovered the true extent of Sound Transit's difficulties with several projects behind schedule, over budget, and in danger of losing federal and public support.

With the agency's future very much in doubt, Joni spearheaded Sound Transit's remarkable turnaround in the early 2000s. She immersed herself in the subject material, gaining a realistic perspective from agency staff and realigning expectations for the then-troubled light rail line. Her skillful navigation of the relationship with the Sound Transit board, which includes local elected officials from throughout the region, won her the trust of Democrats and Republicans alike. To those who had worked with Joni in the past, the transformation of Sound Transit came as no surprise: her career is filled with stories of successful turnarounds.

Thanks to Joni's careful stewardship, the Puget Sound region's transit system is today on stable footing with Sound Transit rolling out new light rail and bus service. The initial portion of an extensive light rail system—the first of its kind in the region—was up and running by 2009; in 2016, a new light rail extension to the University of Washington is set to open months ahead of schedule and \$150 million under budget. Moving forward, Sound Transit is expected to expand its light rail throughout the region, providing new transportation opportunities for citizens and transforming the economic vitality of the region in the process.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize Joni Earl on her retirement from Sound Transit and for her lifetime of service to the Puget Sound region. It is without a doubt that her leadership and commitment to a better future of public transit will continue to impact the region for generations to come.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RUCKER PRO LEGENDS & HOLCOMBE RUCKER PARK

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Holcombe Rucker Park; and the legacy, and work of The Rucker Pro Legends of Basketball fame, a dynamic organization and an excellent community service provider. On Friday, August 14th