

taken from us tragically on February 27th, 2015, after over 40 years of dedicated service to our nation's hardworking families.

Mr. Scanlon served as the longtime Political Director for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). In this role, he fought to raise the minimum wage, protect Social Security, and add a voice for middle class families in our government and national discussion.

Larry recognized that our country's success is tied to the economic health of the middle class. In this vein, he sought to make this country greater by fighting to give families the fair shot that they deserve at the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for Larry's contributions as a fighter for the middle class, and my thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

HONORING THE JERICHO PROJECT FOR ITS RECEIPT OF THE 2015 INNOVATION IN JUSTICE AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Jericho Project for its receipt of the 2015 Innovations in Justice Award for approaching criminal justice challenges in a new and effective way. The Innovations in Justice Award recipients were selected by the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Center for Court Innovation.

The Jericho Project was launched more than a decade ago by the Shelby County Public Defender's Office to better serve people living with serious mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders who have been cycling through the criminal justice system. The main architect, Shelby County Chief Public Defender Stephen Bush, my constituent, developed the initiative while working as an Assistant Public Defender, a position he held for almost 20 years before being appointed as Shelby County's 10th Public Defender in 2010.

Mr. Bush has overseen the development of community linkage plans that are presented to courts in support of community-based, alternative forms of sentencing. Recovery Support Specialists on the team support clients for four months after they are released from prison and help them transition to life back in the community. I am proud to say that nearly 60 percent of those participating in the Jericho Project have successfully completed their recovery plans and have avoided further cycling through the criminal justice system.

What began as a grant-funded experiment has matured into a permanent part of Shelby County's efforts to address the needs of some of its most vulnerable citizens. The Jericho Project's success has made it a national model for how criminal justice systems can better serve those struggling to survive with serious mental illnesses.

The Jericho Project has been changing lives for more than a decade, and this recognition is well deserved. I ask the House to join me in congratulating the Jericho Project for receiving the 2015 Innovations in Justice Award.

AUTHORIZING SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO RECOUP BONUSES AND AWARDS

SPEECH OF

HON. JODY B. HICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 2, 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 280, legislation authorizing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup bonuses and awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs. I would like to commend Chairman MILLER for his continued leadership on this issue. I also want to express my gratitude to the House Veterans Affairs Committee for their hard work on this bill, and for its work last year on the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.

Last year, reports by the VA Office of Inspector General revealed widespread mismanagement, inadequate standards of care, and unnecessary delays for appointments in VA facilities across the country, including facilities in both Atlanta and Augusta, Georgia where veterans in my home district seek care. The appalling lack of responsible oversight at certain facilities led to the placement of veterans on secret waiting lists created to manipulate data in order to cover up long wait times. This was an inexcusable practice that prevented our nation's heroes from receiving the timely care that they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, those responsible for overseeing those VA facilities were clearly failing at their jobs. Yet, in Fiscal Year 2013, VA issued over \$380,000 in bonuses to employees at hospitals under investigation by the VA Inspector General for falsifying records. This is unacceptable. Under no circumstances should VA employees receive a 'performance award' for purposefully fostering an environment of negligence. H.R. 280 provides the authority to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to order VA employees to pay back their bonuses so that no employee will remain rewarded for their misconduct.

We owe our veterans a great debt of gratitude, and one small way of repaying that debt is to ensure that our veterans receive the best possible care. This commonsense legislation will bring much-needed accountability to the VA system and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 280.

COMMENDING LOCAL BROADCASTERS

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, every day, our nation's broadcasters serve communities across the country by providing the news and entertainment we rely on to get through our day. Whether it is an update on what is happening in the world, educational programming, or a review of the movies opening that weekend, most Americans turn to broadcasters for news on issues big and small.

This is especially true for local broadcasters. These broadcasters provide the public with the

news that is most important, and most useful for them, because it is the news from their own communities. This is true in Sacramento and across the nation. Our broadcasters play an integral role in Sacramentans day-to-day lives, informing all of us about everything from local traffic to an in-depth look at local political issues.

Local broadcasters play a particularly important role in times of an emergency. In Sacramento, we continue to experience drought-like weather conditions, as well as heavy rains that bring with them the threat of flooding. Unfortunately, the entire state of California is susceptible to a number of natural disasters, including earthquakes, wildfires, and—of course—flooding. It is essential that residents have access to local emergency broadcasts, so that they have the public safety information they need when a disaster strikes.

And the role of broadcasters goes beyond disseminating information to the public. They have also played an important part in growing and investing in our nation's airwaves. The spectrum sharing agreement that the broadcasters entered into with the Department of Defense helped solidify the Federal Communications Commission's recent record breaking spectrum auction of the AWS-3 band. This spectrum auction generated nearly \$45 billion in revenue, enough to fully fund FirstNet, the nationwide interoperability network for America's first responders and public safety officials.

Broadcasters play an important role in our country. I want to applaud the work of broadcasters, particularly those in Sacramento, for working diligently to cover and provide local news programming to our communities, and for being strong community partners.

RECOGNIZING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize International Women's Day. This day is celebrated across the world in different ways to honor the role of women throughout history. Here in the United States, we celebrate this day during Women's History Month. Since 1913, March 8 has been marked as a day to honor the economic, political, and social achievements of women.

International Women's Day serves as a reminder of the steps we have made towards equality in the United States and internationally, and honors the women who worked to make these steps possible. As a Member of Congress from the only state in the country to have had an all-female delegation, I am proud of how far our country has come towards equality for women. But we cannot recognize these accomplishments without also mentioning the work that still needs to be done.

While we have come so far, women still face political and economic obstacles. Women are still not equally represented in small business ownership or in the technology sector. I have been working to build support and encouragement for more women small business leaders and women in technology. A few weeks ago, I had the privilege to congratulate

eighteen female high school students on completing the BAE Systems Women in Technology Program, which encourages young women to consider pursuing careers in technology. As a country we need more programs like this to encourage our young women to pursue their interests and become future leaders, and to discourage them from thinking that certain careers are strictly for men.

In New Hampshire, women make up half of the state's population and about a quarter of our businesses are owned by women. It is clear that the success of women in business is vitally important to New Hampshire's future, and the same can be said for the rest of our country. On International Women's Day, I ask my colleagues to recognize not just the progress we have made, but also how much work remains to be done. As a country we must promote the success of women.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in recognizing International Women's Day and the women who are continuing the fight to ensure there is equal opportunity for women in the present and future.

THE FIRST AND FINEST

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Port of Houston Authority for successfully completing its certification process for International Organization for Standardization 14001 Environmental Management Systems. This tri-annual process certifies the ports' Central Maintenance facility and the Bayport and Barbours Cut container terminals.

International Organization for Standardization 14001 certification is one of the hardest to achieve in the environmental industry. Of the 360 seaports in the United States, only 10 are certified. This also marks the fifth consecutive successful certification for the Port of Houston Authority. In 2002, it became the first port in the United States to achieve ISO 14001 status.

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Port of Houston Authority for receiving this critical certification. The Port of Houston is an important asset for Houston, Texas and the nation. Best wishes on your continued success.

WELCOMING THE KOREAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER TO WASHINGTON

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Mr. Chung Ui-Hwa, Speaker of the Korean National Assembly, to Washington. Speaker Chung—a neurosurgeon by training—is a distinguished member of the National Assembly, having served five consecutive terms since 1996. Last year, in his capacity as President of the Korea-U.S. Inter-Parliamentary Council, he led a delegation and paid a

visit to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where I hosted a legislative exchange. I'm honored to welcome him back to Washington and in his new capacity as Speaker.

For over 60 years, the U.S.-South Korea relationship has been a linchpin of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2013, I welcomed President Park Geun-hye, the Republic of Korea's first female president, to Southern California where she addressed the Korean-American community to discuss the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-South Korean alliance. As a former Chairman of the U.S.-Republic of Korea Inter-Parliamentary Exchange, I have been proud to help enhance the alliance, including by upgrading Korea's Foreign Military Sales status to NATO+4, passing the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement and securing an extension of the U.S.-Korea Civilian Nuclear Energy Agreement.

As North Korea continues to threaten the United States and our close allies with its nuclear, missile, and now cyber capabilities, I introduced legislation, together with Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, to step up the targeting of those financial institutions in Asia and beyond that are supporting this brutal and dangerous regime. By shutting down North Korea's illicit activities, we deprive the Kim regime of the money it needs to pay the generals and to conduct nuclear weapons research. I appreciate that humanitarian groups around the world are strongly supporting this bipartisan legislation.

The United States and the Republic of Korea are strengthening their combined defense posture on the Korean Peninsula. Together, we are working toward a shared goal of a Korean Peninsula that is free of nuclear weapons and peacefully reunited on the basis of democratic and market principles and as articulated in President Park's Dresden address last year.

Mr. Speaker, I am again pleased to welcome my friend, Speaker Chung Ui-Hwa, to Washington and to the Congress. We are at critical juncture in the U.S.-Korea alliance, but our relationship has never been better. I look forward to working with Speaker Chung on the issues of mutual concern. I further urge my colleagues to do the same and to offer their own expressions of best wishes and support.

RECOGNIZING THE 23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 23rd anniversary of a terrible event in the history of Azerbaijan: the massacre of hundreds of people in the town of Khojaly in what was the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians in the course of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Khojaly, which is located in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, was once home to 7,000 people. That was before Armenian armed forces descended on the town on February 26, 1992, killing over 600 people—including 106 women and 83 children. Hundreds more became disabled due to their injuries. More than one hundred children lost one of their parents, and 25 children lost

both parents. At least 8 families were completely wiped out.

More than two decades after a ceasefire went into effect, more than 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts, remains occupied and more than 1 million Azerbaijanis remain displaced from their homes. Ongoing violence along the line of contact surrounding occupied Azerbaijani territory reinforces the urgency of robust American participation in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Minsk Group as it works towards a peaceful resolution of the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict.

Azerbaijan is the only country that borders both Russia and Iran, and yet Azerbaijan has been a strong partner of the United States and its allies in security and energy matters. This has included: enforcing sanctions against Iran; providing troops that served shoulder-to-shoulder with U.S. forces in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan; allowing transit for 40 percent of all non-lethal equipment used by NATO forces in Afghanistan; construction of the Southern Gas Corridor from the Caspian Sea to Italy that will provide Europe with an alternative source to Russian energy; and supplying 40 percent of Israel's oil.

I ask my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the devastation of Khojaly twenty-three years ago. As Azerbaijanis around the world recall this massacre and mourn the loss of loved ones, let us remember our support of peaceful efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and reforms that promote stability throughout the Southern Caucasus region.

HONORING BMO HARRIS BANK

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce in congratulating BMO Harris Bank as it is honored at the 39th Annual Salute to Accomplishment Dinner.

For over a century, BMO Harris Bank has invested in Joliet, where it currently has five branches employing 61 people. Partnering with community organizations and local governments, BMO Harris Bank has worked on a number of initiatives to improve the quality of life throughout the community including investing in health care research and community service projects.

Additionally, many BMO Harris Bank employees serve on boards and committees, and are members of various local non-profit organizations, including the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Joliet, the Greater Joliet Area YMCA, the Will County Council on Economic Development, and the Joliet Park District.

Again, I would like to congratulate BMO Harris Bank and thank its employees for being a driving force of change in our community.