

people I speak to are surprised to learn that there are five countries in the Caribbean—only a few hundred miles from the United States—where we have no physical diplomatic presence. My legislation will correct this problem by establishing U.S. embassies in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Currently, all diplomatic relations with these countries are run out of the U.S. embassy in Barbados.

While these countries are small, they must not be taken for granted. They are key voting members of the United Nations and other international organizations. As members of the Organization of American States (OAS), their votes are extremely important. Without a U.S. presence in these five countries, it is very difficult to conduct in-person diplomacy with our counterparts on a range of crucial international issues. These countries are also of profound interest and importance to the millions of Caribbean-American citizens in the United States.

Currently, in order to meet with local officials, the private sector or civil society, U.S. diplomats must fly in from Barbados (or Washington) on often expensive, infrequent flights, and stay overnight in often expensive island hotels. Close working relationships with key leaders cannot develop, because our diplomats are not there to establish them. And, our diplomacy is limited to phone calls, emails and faxes, even though we all know that the best interaction is carried out in person. In addition to our stymied diplomacy, U.S. citizens living in these countries do not have full consular services to assist in the event of emergencies.

This bill establishes uses existing embassy construction funding to establish these new embassies. In 2011, I authored a bipartisan amendment with the former Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, Congressman Connie Mack (R-FL), to create these embassies which was approved unanimously by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I look forward to working with the Obama Administration to get this legislation across the finish line and to seeing U.S. diplomats permanently stationed in every country in the Caribbean.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO CAROLINE JOK

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Caroline Jok attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: in

your opinion, what role should the government play in our lives?

It is said: One can never have too much of a good thing.

While it is certainly true that in many cases it is harder for a good thing to turn bad, it is impossible for this statement to be infallible with the absolute qualifier “never” hanging in the balance. For example, though water is essential to life, if one drinks too much of it they will face hyponatremia, otherwise known as water intoxication. While chocolate is undeniably sweet and pleasant, too much chocolate induces contrastingly unpleasant feelings, sickness, and even dangerous health conditions. Even something as wonderful and essential as freedom—the very virtue this great Nation is founded on, the very virtue that our ancestors fought and gave their lives for—can become a negative force if there is too much of it. The statement “too much freedom” sounds seemingly absurd, however, this is precisely why our founding fathers, despite the hard fought efforts to escape the oppression of one government, worked to build another. Too much freedom can result, ironically, in oppression, in chaos, in exploitation, and in a bloodbath driven by greed. This is where the role of our government comes in.

Our government serves as a counterbalance to a good thing, not to control all things; it is the protector of this good thing. It is the role of our government to address and settle conflicts from an unbiased standpoint to the best of its ability. It is the role of our government to compose and enforce legislation that will benefit, protect, and create opportunity for its citizens, to set limitations on freedom so that freedom can be preserved and ensured. It is the role of our government to serve as the voice of the nation to the rest of the world, to serve as our representative, as our ambassador. It is the role of our government to serve the people who elected it. It is essential for our government to be involved in the day to day lives of its citizens, be it through the corporate world, cyberspace and security, on a local level, in education, immigration, in the health industry, and countless other niches, not to control these realms, but to serve as an equalizer, safeguard and creator of opportunity in each of these.

Professor of Communication at American University, Leonard Steinhorn comments, “[if many] Americans feel ‘unease’ toward [our] government’s role in our daily lives, it is either because they take much of what the federal government does for granted, or because the media tend to give a disproportionate voice to those whose ideological temper tantrums against government make for good copy and sound bites.” Our government’s involvement in day-to-day life proceedings is essential to balance and preserve a very good thing: freedom. This is precisely the role our government plays in our lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID P. ROE

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote yesterday because of a family medical issue. Had I been present, I would have voted:

Roll Call #130—NAY

Roll Call #131—YEA

EGAN WALKER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Egan Walker for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Egan Walker is a 10th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Egan Walker is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Egan Walker for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following remarks regarding my absence from votes which occurred on March 23, 2015. I was delayed in arriving in Washington because I was in attendance at a funeral for a beloved family within our community. The Columbia community and the University of South Carolina worshipped in thankful memory for the life of Charles “Charlie” Leverett Adams Terreni, Jr.

H.R. 360—Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act—NAY

H. Res. 162—Calling on the President to provide Ukraine with military assistance to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity—AYE

JASON SHORT OF INTERNATIONAL FALLS

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jason Short of International Falls, Minnesota and the work of the Falls Hunger Coalition under the leadership of Nancy Anderson.

I am sure many of my fellow Members have seen the nightly weather reports indicating that International Falls has the coldest temperatures in the United States.

Jason is a young adult working as a delivery driver for UPS in the International Falls region that covers a 300-mile route. On one brisk day, one of his package recipients noted that Jason was wearing shorts and told him he

was crazy for dressing like that in the cold weather. He took that craziness and his love of wearing shorts to Facebook to initiate a challenge to his friends and posted, "Until I raise 1,000 dollars for the Falls Hunger Coalition Food Bank, I'm going to wear shorts no matter if it's snowing, 30 below, rain, sleet, or snow."

Soon the amount turned into \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000, \$6,000 to \$7,192 at the end of the year.

The comments on his Facebook ranged from, "We need to dress this young man," or "I don't know, maybe we want to keep Jason in shorts all winter. However, he did stop wearing his shorts when he reached \$5,000 with contributions from friends and strangers all over the United States. He modestly says, "It's all about paying it forward. Everyone can use a helping hand once in a while and you never know if the shoe was on the other foot, you never know if you're going to need something yourself so why not get out there and help somebody."

The Falls Hunger Coalition served over 8,000 people in 4,178 households in calendar year 2014. That added up to over 164,000 pounds of food distributed through Bonus Bucks, Senior Select, the Nutritional Assistance Program for Seniors, and the Summer Snack Packs and Summer Meals. Population wise, it's a small county but the coalition is doing an outstanding job of serving the needs of many.

I understand that Jason is planning to hatch another fundraising later this year and as a former UPS employee during my college days and spending time on a ride-along-driver "in the browns" this past summer in Duluth, I know he has the determination to once again achieve great success. With one out of five children in this country going to bed hungry every night, I am so proud of this young man for stepping up and trying to alleviate the issue of hunger in his own community.

Let's just hope for warmer temperatures during his next fundraising phase.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL CASSIE STROM OF THE UNITED STATES AIR NATIONAL GUARD

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Missouri's 1st district, I am proud to honor one of our most distinguished constituents and home-grown heroes, Major General Cassie Strom of the United States Air National Guard. In June of this year—2015, General Strom is retiring, after an incredible 31 plus years of dedicated service.

General Strom received her commission by direct appointment and began her active duty career with the Air Force in February 1984. She has served at all levels—Department of Defense, Combatant Command, Headquarters United States Air Force, Major Command, wing and base legal offices. She previously served on active duty for six years at the base legal offices at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, Osan Air Base, Korea and Torrejon Air Base, Spain. General Strom is admitted to

practice law in the State of Missouri and the State of Nebraska.

General Strom transferred to the Air Force Reserve with an assignment as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. She then moved to the Missouri Air National Guard in 1990 as a traditional Guard member. She has deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina and augmented the Army Civil Affairs mission, worked a variety of international peacekeeping exercises, served in the Department of Defense Office of General Counsel in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, acted as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, United States Transportation Command, and as a Supervising Senior Attorney at the United States Air Force Academy.

Major General Cassie A. Strom concludes her achievement filled career as the Air National Guard Assistant to The Judge Advocate General. In this position, she is the principal adviser and liaison to The Judge Advocate General on Air National Guard legal matters. In addition, she serves as a senior representative on The Judge Advocate General's Air National Guard Council, providing leadership, strategic planning and management of the entire Air National Guard Judge Advocate program, encompassing over 440 judge advocates and paralegals at Air National Guard legal offices throughout the United States.

Her service to our country does not stop with her time in military status—she runs the Veteran's Advocacy Project for the Catholic Legal Assistance Ministry, which is housed in Scott Hall, in our own St. Louis University School of Law!

As further testament to her exceptional service, General Strom's military decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal (with 3 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster), Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster), National Defense Service Medal (with Bronze Star), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Ribbon Short, Air Force Overseas Ribbon Long, Air Force Longevity Service (with 3 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters), Armed Forces Reserve Medal (with 1 Gold Hourglass) Air Force Training Ribbon, and NATO Medal!

General Strom has set a truly inspiring example of dedication to the defense of freedom, service before self, and what it means to be an Officer. She has been a trailblazer—as one of the first JAGs to deploy into Bosnia to becoming the first female ANG Advisor to Air Force Special Operations Command's Staff Judge Advocate to becoming the first woman to become a Major General Air National Guard Judge Advocate! The people of the first district of Missouri—thank General Strom for her service and wish her well in her future endeavors!

CHARLIZE GALLEGOS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Charize Gallegos for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Charize Gallegos is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Charize Gallegos is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Charize Gallegos for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO KANIKA DRAKSHARAM

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Kanika Draksharam attends Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: in your opinion, what role should the government play in our lives?

In my opinion, the role of the government in our lives should be to protect and help the people of the country when they are not able to do those things themselves.

The topmost priority for a government should be the safety of the people living in that country. If the people are not safe, then the country will fall apart. Providing safety for the people includes a police force, military, a fire department or emergency response team, and an emergency medical system. Without a working police force, society would not be stable, as there would be large amounts of crime. This should be provided from a local government. A military is vital to a country's protection. A government must ensure that the borders of a country are protected. Federal protection is necessary in order to maintain the safety and well being of the people. The military should be provided from a federal level however. Federal and local law enforcement must be enforced. If a country did not have a fire department or emergency medical system, the