

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE DAVID L. HUGHES

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished public service of the Honorable David L. Hughes, who retired earlier this year after 41 years as the City Clerk and Secretary to the Mayor and Common Council of Summit, New Jersey. During his record tenure, David achieved a number of significant accomplishments in service to the City of Summit.

David oversaw the transformation of the City Clerk position, bringing community services into the 21st century and instituting greater accessibility and transparency. To the benefit of residents, downtown merchants and taxpayers, public information is readily available and put to good use for City projects.

David was an integral part of the coordination of City business, reviewing all matters before the Council's consideration, securing legal and background information from stakeholders and forming advisory opinions so that elected officials could make the most informed decisions. He also managed the municipal elections—a major undertaking including the oversight of 25 election districts, numerous polling machines and poll workers and thousands of ballots cast in each election.

Due to his years of service and trusted counsel, David and his office became an encyclopedia of City history, local ordinances and best practices. I join elected officials from both parties and countless Summit residents in considering David a very thoughtful public servant.

I wish David many years of enjoyment in his retirement spent with, his wife, Maria, and his children. I thank him for his dedicated public service.

CONGRESSIONAL COMMENDATION FOR THE LIFE OF CHARLES DAUGHERTY TOWERS, JR.

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we are deeply and profoundly saddened by the loss of our friend, Charles Towers, Jr. This man of prominence and bearing was the epitome of a gentleman and a scholar. We were moved by his passion, emboldened by his commitments, honored by his friendship and made all the better by his innate wisdom and his belief in the integrity of the human experience. We came to know him as a husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, World War II veteran, Silver Star Recipient, and dedicated servant to people and causes, a humanitarian, a civic leader and businessman without comparison.

As a member of the Jacksonville community for more than ninety years, Charlie Towers, presence will be missed by many. In 1949, he began his career as an attorney, with Rogers Towers & Bailey Law Firm and continued until

his retirement in 2000. He served on many community boards in positions of leadership up to and including, Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, Salvation Army, Jacksonville Tocqueville Society, long time member and devoted Deacon, Elder and Trustee of First Presbyterian Church and many other organizations.

Though our hearts ache, our tears of pain are mixed with loving memories of his smile, his touch and that gleam in his eyes telling all who knew him, that he loved you and always will. And in his remembrance, we are drawn to the words of Paul, in the book of 2nd Timothy, "For I am now ready to be offered, the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept my faith". May the Lord bless and keep you now and forevermore and may the memory of our dear friend, Charles Daughtry Towers, Jr., remain with us for all times.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ANDREW WEISS ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Andrew Weiss of Findlay, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Andrew's offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Naval Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2019. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country but also guarantees a world-class education, while placing demands on those who undertake one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Andrew brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2019. While attending Findlay High School in Findlay, Ohio, Andrew was a member of the National Honor Society and Honor Roll. He earned his Eagle Scout award with the Boy Scouts of America and was selected for Buckeye Boys State. In addition, he earned his private pilot's license.

Throughout high school, Andrew was a member of his school's track team where he served as team captain and earned his varsity letter. I am confident that Andrew will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the Naval Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Andrew Weiss on the offer of his appointment to the United States Naval Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Andrew will excel during his career at the Naval Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to the Nation.

HONORING MS. SHERRI STRAUSER

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Ms. Sherri Strauser. She will be retiring from the Windsor C-1 School District on July 1, 2015. Ms. Strauser has contributed to the educational system for 37 years.

Ms. Strauser has worked in various capacities: 3rd Grade Teacher, Intermediate Center Assistant Principal, Intermediate Principal, and Assistant Superintendent. She has worked in the Dunklin R-V School District and is ending her career in the Windsor C-1 School District. Her current title of Assistant Superintendent has allowed her the opportunity to connect personally with students, staff, parents, and the community. This Assistant Superintendent position has given her the opportunity to direct Curriculum and Instruction, Special Services, Team Leaders, Professional Development, and serve as the Compliance Officer for the District. During her time in each position, she was committed to making a difference in the lives of students. Ms. Strauser has received the Dunklin R-V Teacher of the Year award, Dunklin National Education Association Award, and the 'Who's Who Among American Educators' award. These awards showcase her ability to make a positive impact on anyone she comes into contact with.

Over the years, Ms. Strauser has been an active member of her community, and the state, through memberships with the Rotary Club, Missouri Association of School Administrators, Missouri Association of School Business Officials, and the Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals. From her time giving back to the community, it has enabled her to nourish productive relationships and witness success for thousands of individuals.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Ms. Sherri Strauser on her retirement after 37 years of commitment to students.

HONORING THE MARTIN'S MILL LADY MUSTANGS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the Martin's Mill Lady Mustangs basketball team who won the Texas 2A High School Basketball Championship on March 7, 2015 at the Alamodome in San Antonio. This victory marked the third time since 2008 the Lady Mustangs captured the title.

I would like to recognize teammates Jocie Bennett, Cheyenne Brown, Calli Camacho, Hailey Celsur, Hannah Celsur, Madi Daniel, Jacee Greenlee, Hailey Hawes, Briley Moon, Hannah Munns, Sarah Munns and Alyssa Pate. I would also like to recognize Head Coach Lauran Jenkins, Assistant Coach Melissa Camacho and Managers Lydia Burns, Mollie Daniel, Hannah Manry, Abbie Orrick and Taylor Sparks.

As the congressional representative of the families, coaches, and supporters of the Lady

Mustangs, it is my pleasure to recognize their outstanding season and continued success. This victory and accomplishment is an event that these young ladies will remember for the rest of their lives.

IN RECOGNITION OF ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEY CHARLES LEWIS

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Assistant United States Attorney Charles Lewis and to honor his more than four decades of federal service.

In 1973, Charlie began his career as a law clerk to the Honorable Reynaldo Garza in Brownsville, Texas. After completing his clerkship, he joined the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Throughout his career, Charlie distinguished himself as a tough and ethical prosecutor who passionately represented the United States in federal court.

Charlie's career included positions as Assistant Director of the Attorney General's Advocacy Institute in charge of training federal prosecutors in criminal prosecutions; Coordinator of the Presidential Drug Taskforce for the states of Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi; Coordinator of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Houston division; Resident Legal Advisor to the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest, Romania; and Prosecutor Representative for the anti-terrorism advisory committee in Brownsville, Texas.

Charlie's dedication to the prosecution of organized crime and drug trafficking resulted in seizures of tens of millions of dollars of currency and property and the convictions of many large-scale narcotics traffickers and corrupt public officials.

Many of Charlie's cases included investigations in multiple countries across numerous federal investigative agencies, and took years to develop and prosecute. Charlie was particularly good at explaining complex cases to federal juries and applying the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.

Charlie is particularly proud of the three years he spent in Bucharest, Romania where he helped reform the Romanian legal system and served as the U.S. representative to the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (now known as the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center) which provides support to member states to combat transnational organized crime and corruption.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to honor Charles Lewis and his more than four decades of public service to the United States. I join my colleagues in Congress in wishing him and Mary, his wife of more than 30 years, the best.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF JEFFREY WILSON ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Jeffrey Wilson of Perrysburg, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Jeffrey's offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Air Force Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2019. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country but also guarantees a world-class education, while placing demands on those who undertake one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Jeffrey brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2019. While attending Lake Local High School in Millbury, Ohio, Jeffrey was a member of the National Honor Society and received hockey and golf academic awards. In addition, he received his Eagle Scout award through the Boy Scouts of America.

Throughout high school, Jeffrey was a member of his school's hockey, golf and baseball teams, earning varsity letters in each. I am confident that Jeffrey will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the Air Force Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jeffrey Wilson on the offer of his appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Jeffrey will excel during his career at the Air Force Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to the Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POLICE TRAINING AND INDEPENDENT REVIEW ACT OF 2015

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of The Police Training and Independent Review Act, which I introduced earlier today with colleague LACY CLAY of Missouri.

If enacted, the Police Training and Independent Review Act would help ensure the independent investigation and prosecution of law enforcement officers in cases involving their use of deadly force. It would also provide sensitivity training for law enforcement officers.

America received a wakeup call last year in Ferguson, Missouri. It received another in Staten Island, New York.

It received yet another in Cleveland, Ohio, and then North Charleston, South Carolina, and more recently in Baltimore.

Our nation faces sobering questions about the basic fairness of our criminal justice system. And we face sobering questions about race. These questions simply cannot be ignored.

For too many, for too long, justice has seemed too lacking.

Precisely how long, and for how many—these are numbers we ought to know, and it is shameful that we do not. The fact that police departments are not required to report data about when, where and against whom they use deadly force is absurd. Even FBI Director James Comey has said it is, "ridiculous that [he] can't tell you how many people were shot by the police last week, last month, last year."

Last year, and again earlier this year, I introduced the National Statistics on Deadly Force Transparency Act to address this. The legislation would give both lawmakers and the public the numbers we need to measure the problem, so we can figure out how best to address it.

However, I rise today to talk about another equally important step we can take, right now, that does not require us to wait for more data. We can remove the looming cloud of doubt that hangs over too many instances in which law enforcement officers use deadly force against unarmed individuals.

We can stop asking local prosecutors to investigate the same law enforcement officers with whom they work so closely, and whose relationships they rely upon to perform their daily responsibilities.

This is an obvious conflict of interest, and if we are serious about restoring a sense of fairness and justice, we must remove this conflict immediately.

To be sure, the vast majority of prosecutors and law enforcement officers are well meaning, dedicated public servants, and we depend upon them to keep us safe from criminals. And they have dangerous jobs, as we have seen all too frequently in recent months.

But the fact remains that some police departments don't vet their patrolmen well enough. Some allow wealthy supporters to be reserve officers where judgment is lacking and some don't provide all appropriate training. There are also some officers who go beyond the law in a callous disregard for due process.

While we have seen charges against officers in North Charleston and in Baltimore, the question remains: would they have been prosecuted if we didn't have video of the events in question?

According to a recent Washington Post investigation, there have been, "thousands of fatal shootings at the hands of police since 2005, [and] only 54 officers have been charged. Most were cleared or acquitted in the cases that have been resolved."

I can't stand here today and tell you whether each of these prosecutors was biased. But what I can tell you is that there is a perception of unfairness in certain kinds of cases, and that perception is poisoning the public trust.

But we can fix this problem.

The Police Training and Independent Review Act would give states a reason to do what they should already be doing: require the use of independent prosecutors when there is an obvious conflict of interest. If states refuse to use independent prosecutors for cases against law enforcement officers involving their use of deadly force, they lose federal funding,