

DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ART CONTEST WINNER JESSICA CHAI

### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jessica Chai of Katy's Roosevelt Alexander Elementary School for being one of only thirteen winning students of the Don't Mess with Texas Elementary School Art Contest.

Jessica, currently in the fourth grade, is one of the thirteen winners selected from the 8,228 elementary school students from across Texas who entered the contest. Keep Texas Beautiful and the Texas Department of Transportation selected the contest winners who displayed tremendous artistic talent, dedication, and creativity. Jessica's submission will appear in the 2016 Don't Mess with Texas Calendar and will be displayed on the Keep Texas Beautiful and Don't Mess with Texas websites. Her work will even be showcased at the Keep Texas Beautiful's 2015 Annual Conference.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Jessica for being selected as one of the winners of the Don't Mess with Texas Elementary School Art Contest.

### IN RECOGNITION OF DÍA DE PORTUGAL

### HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues Mr. VALADAO of California, Mr. CICILLINE of Rhode Island, Mr. NUNES of California, Mr. LANGEVIN of Rhode Island, Mr. MCGOVERN of Massachusetts, Mr. KEATING of Massachusetts, and Mr. HONDA of California to recognize Día de Portugal and to champion the strong bond between the United States and Portugal. Celebrated on June 10 each year, Día de Portugal recognizes Portugal's beautiful heritage and culture.

Día de Portugal honors the death of the revered Portuguese poet Luís Vaz de Camões in 1580. Camões is famously known for *Os Lusíadas*, one of Portugal's most treasured literary works. The poem pays tribute to Portugal's golden age of exploration and celebrates the many monumental discoveries made by Portuguese explorers in the 15th century.

Vibrant Portuguese American communities can be seen across our nation from Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island, to California and Hawaii. These communities are filled with over 1.3 million Americans of Portuguese descent who have been making positive contributions to our society for generations. We are a nation of immigrants, and celebrations like Día de Portugal remind us all that it is important to remain connected to our own individual heritage.

The United States and Portugal maintain a robust relationship, and have been connected ever since the Portuguese were among the

first to recognize the U.S. as an independent nation at the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. President George Washington formalized diplomatic relations on February 21, 1791, and our oldest continuously-operated U.S. Consulate in the world is located in Ponta Delgada on the island of São Miguel in the Azores.

Mr. Speaker, on this Día de Portugal, we are reminded that our special relationship with Portugal must be continuously strengthened. As U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has said, "The strong partnership between our two countries is more vital than ever." This day celebrates the accomplishments of Portuguese and Portuguese Americans, and we congratulate these communities on their global impact and achievement.

### IN HONOR OF ALAN SLOBODIEN, UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM VERNON YOUTH SERVICES

### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize an exceptional public servant from my hometown of Vernon, Connecticut, Mr. Alan Slobodien, and mark his retirement from Vernon Youth Services.

Over the past 20 years, Alan has ably served as the director of Vernon Youth Services, an organization devoted to ensuring that "all Vernon children birth to age 18 are safe, healthy, and productive." It is with this goal in mind that Alan has developed forward-thinking programming and policies to engage young people in our town, ensure that they have safe places to learn and play, and have opportunities for success in the future. His commitment to Vernon's youth is unparalleled, and his optimism about Vernon's future has resulted in real, recognizable benefits for our community. With Al at the helm, Vernon Youth Services through summer nutrition programs, mentoring, to homework support, has continued to make Vernon an ideal place to raise children.

On a personal note, I first met Al over 30 years ago when I was the Assistant Public Defender at the Rockville Superior Court and Al was an invaluable contact to get help for young clients. He was incredibly resourceful, sizing up the needs of young people in trouble with the law and designing treatment programs that helped both the community and the person. He had a wonderful combination of compassion and smarts that I really admired. Despite the sometimes hopeless circumstances he tried to fix, he never lost his optimism about people and their potential to change for the better. What an inspiration to all of us.

Please join me in congratulating Alan on his decades of remarkable service to his community, and wishing him and his family a rewarding, and well-deserved retirement.

### TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL MESSINA

### HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life

and achievements of my friend, Michael Messina, former Mayor and City Councilmember of Alhambra, who passed away on April 10, 2015.

Michael was devoted to his city and his community. A lifelong resident of Alhambra who attended Ramona Elementary School and Alhambra High School, he graduated from California State University Los Angeles, and remained a resident of Alhambra until his passing.

In 1979, Michael began his public service career, serving on the Alhambra City Council from 1979 to 1986, and as Mayor in 1982 and 1986. During this time, Michael dedicated himself to improving the city and community he loved.

Michael was driven to help businesses to flourish in Alhambra and thanks to his efforts, downtown Alhambra is now a thriving commercial center with restaurants and businesses, giving the intersection of Main and Garfield streets a "Main Street USA" feel. Michael worked to expand development, tackling things as instrumental as repaving streets and sidewalks to paving the way for Price Club (now Costco) to come to Alhambra, which has become the largest retail tax producer in the city. He also personally led a city delegation to meet with the founder and CEO of Mervyns Department stores, as he was convinced that such an addition would bring even more business to the city center, and he was right. Mervyns planted its roots in Alhambra, and stores followed, including the Alhambra Place shopping center, which is still the center of retail in the city today, and every year hosts the "Taste of Alhambra" Festival. This is all thanks to Michael's vision for his city.

As the population of Los Angeles County grew in the past 20 years, Michael fought to increase his community's access to transportation and to bring down congestion in the area. He was a champion of seniors, expanding programs like Senior Ride and Senior Housing, and he believed deeply in the public spaces of Alhambra, increasing the capacity of the Parks and Recreation department, so everyone in the city could enjoy the beautiful outdoor spaces in the San Gabriel Valley. For him, civil service was about the people and the community he loved.

Even when he left the Alhambra City Council, Michael remained as a key figure in the community, eventually sitting on the Oversight Board for the city. He was a devoted parishioner of All Souls Church, and volunteered with Meals on Wheels, Knights of Columbus, the Alhambra Exchange Club, the Foundation for the Blind, and was president of the local St. Vincent de Paul Society. No matter what he did, Michael was determined to give back. Michael's dedication to Alhambra was an inspiration, and when I was first elected Mayor of the neighboring city of Monterey Park in 1988, I looked to Michael as an example of a true public servant.

There is no doubt that Alhambra has lost one of its most devoted citizens and most stalwart champions. We are thankful for his many years of service, and will continue to honor his legacy of leadership and commitment to our community.

RECOGNIZING BILL MURPHY FOR  
HIS OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT  
TO THE SOUTH BUFFALO COM-  
MUNITY

**HON. BRIAN HIGGINS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to recognize and honor Mr. Bill Murphy for his work in the South Buffalo community. Mr. Murphy has dedicated his career to helping area labor unions and injured workers in their legal battles against insurance companies and those that caused them harm.

Mr. Murphy is a Bishop Timon high school class of 1989 graduate as well as a graduate of Medaille College where he earned his Bachelor's Degree. He would then go on to enroll in the University at Buffalo Law School where he developed the skills which made him a partner at the law firm Maxwell Murphy. Mr. Murphy prides himself on his Buffalo roots and on his ability to help those who live in his native town.

The contributions that Mr. Murphy has made to the South Buffalo community are many and varied. He has served as a Chairman of the Timon Lawn Fete and Timon Sports Night. Both he and his law firm have donated to various community events throughout Western New York, and they have supported such events as the "Run Jimmy Run" Charity Race, the annual Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Golf Outing, and the Mount Mercy Academy 5K. Additionally Mr. Murphy's law firm helped the students of Saints Peter and Paul Grade School to purchase new hockey uniforms to replace their worn jerseys.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor and recognize Mr. Bill Murphy. I ask that my colleagues join me congratulating Mr. Murphy on an accomplished career, and to commend him for the exemplary work he has done to enrich the communities of Western New York.

RECOGNIZING DR. LUKE TORIAN  
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 20TH  
PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY AT  
FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST  
CHURCH OF DUMFRIES

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my dear friend, the Reverend Dr. Luke E. Torian, on the occasion of his 20th Pastoral Anniversary at First Mount Zion Baptist Church of Dumfries, Virginia.

First Mount Zion Baptist Church has a long, prosperous history starting with its founding in 1867, which now continues under the tutelage of Dr. Torian, who became its first and only full time pastor in 1995. Since his installation, Dr. Torian has served an instrumental role in the growth of the church. More than 4,000 now call First Mount Zion Baptist Church their religious and spiritual home and approximately 70 different ministries now serve the needs of the congregation and community.

Not only has Dr. Torian served his congregation, but he also has dedicated his time

to serve the community at large. He is currently a member of the Prince William County Ministerial Association. He has served on the Cardinal Bank Advisory Board; the Board of Directors of the Baptist General Convention, and is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. In June 2004, former Governor Mark Warner appointed Dr. Torian to the Virginia Board of Counseling. He also served on the ACTS Board of Directors for three years. In addition, in 2009 he was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates, representing the 52nd District.

Dr. Torian's dedication to his faith and his congregation, combined with his exceptional leadership abilities have been recognized by others. In 2002, Howard University presented him with the James Floyd Jenkins Pillar of Faith Award in recognition of the outstanding contributions that he has made to his church and the community. In the fall of 2003 and 2004, Dr. John Maxwell, renowned expert in leadership development, selected Dr. Torian as one of 50 leaders from across the country to participate in a special leadership institute in Atlanta.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my Colleagues join me in recognizing Dr. Luke E. Torian and the First Mount Zion Baptist Church congregation as they celebrate this significant milestone in their history and in wishing them continued success and prosperity.

DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS ELE-  
MENTARY SCHOOL ART CONTEST  
WINNER ANNABELLE DU

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Annabelle Du of Katy's James E. Williams Elementary School for being one of only thirteen winning students of the Don't Mess with Texas Elementary School Art Contest.

Annabelle, who is currently in the fourth grade, is one of the thirteen winners selected from the 8,228 elementary school students from across Texas who entered the contest. Keep Texas Beautiful and the Texas Department of Transportation selected the contest winners who displayed tremendous artistic talent, dedication, and creativity. Annabelle's submission will appear in the 2016 Don't Mess with Texas Calendar and will be displayed on the Keep Texas Beautiful and Don't Mess with Texas websites. Her work will even be showcased at the Keep Texas Beautiful's 2015 Annual Conference.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Annabelle for being selected as one of the winners of the Don't Mess with Texas Elementary School Art Contest.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on June 9, 2015 I was absent for recorded

votes #309–#318 due to a flight cancellation from Knoxville. I would like to reflect how I would have voted had I been present:

On Roll Call #309, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #310, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #311, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #312, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #313, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #314, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #315, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #316, I would have voted No.  
On Roll Call #317, I would have voted Yes.  
On Roll Call #318, I would have voted Yes.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL  
DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,152,778,985,959.44. We've added \$7,525,901,937,046.36 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING THE BIRTHDAY OF  
HONOR DOLD

**HON. ROBERT J. DOLD**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish my daughter, Honor Dold, a happy birthday.

Honor turned eight years old yesterday. She was born in Evanston, Illinois, and since that day in 2007, has kept me, her mother, Danielle, her sister Harper, and brother Bobby always smiling.

Honor's favorite subject is math and always puts her best effort forward into everything she does. Honor excels not only in soccer and lacrosse, but also in dance. She brightens every room she walks into with a truly contagious smile. Honor is the perfect amount of smart, silly, and funny that makes everyone around her happy.

Honor enjoys spending time with her proud grandparents, Nana and Chief, Papa and Granma, her aunts and uncles, and all of her cousins.

I look forward to watching Honor grow and mature into a fine independent young woman, and a shining light to our family and community. Happy Birthday, Honor.

RECOGNITION OF MARLENE  
ISBELL DEVINE

**HON. ERIK PAULSEN**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 10, 2015*

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Marlene Isbell Devine who retired