

have bright futures. They served as tour guides, interacted with constituents, and both learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity, and look forward to seeing them build their careers in public service.

Rob plans to continue pursuing his degree at the end of his internship, and I have recently hired Monica as a Staff Assistant in my D.C. office. I wish them both the best as they pursue their respective career paths. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Rob Austrian and Monica Mosimann for their service the last several months to the people of Colorado's 4th district.

#### HONORING CITY OF REFUGE UCC

#### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2016*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Refuge UCC upon its 25th anniversary for its legacy of promoting community building, inclusion, and faith in the Bay Area.

First established in San Francisco, the City of Refuge was founded in 1991 by a group of primarily gay and lesbian Christians with the goal of establishing a church that did not adhere to the exclusion of people based on gender or sexual orientation. Three years later in 1994, the City of Refuge joined the United Church of Christ (UCC) and became incorporated with over 5,000 churches worldwide working to uphold the denomination's commitment to social justice.

Founder and Senior Pastor Reverend Dr. Yvette A. Flunder has been nationally recognized for her work to promote the inclusion of gay and lesbian parishioners and to minister to their specific needs. In response to the AIDS epidemic, Rev. Dr. Flunder established the Ark of Refuge, a non-profit organization that provided direct services to homeless and low-income individuals, and also created the Hazard-Ashley House and Walker House in Oakland as a means to provide housing services, education, and training for people affected by HIV/AIDS. In 2000, she created the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, a network of more than 100 primarily African American churches around the world that work to promote "radical inclusivity", whereby the ministry is open to all without prejudice or discrimination.

In 2013 the City of Refuge UCC relocated to Oakland. Through the hard work and dedication of the ministry, staff, and congregation, community members and in particular women, immigrants, and those who identify as LGBTQ, have found a safe space for self-expression, belonging, and religious participation. Through the Church's various ministries, this community provides support for those needing help addressing substance abuse, homelessness, HIV/AIDS treatment, and environmental justice.

On behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I would like to congratulate the City of Refuge UCC on this important milestone, and thank the community for the many valuable services that they provide to those in need. I wish the congregation continued success in upholding its commitment to social justice and

expanding the radical inclusivity that has come to be the City of Refuge's hallmark.

#### RECOGNIZING ROMANIA'S GREAT UNION DAY

#### HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2016*

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, as the co-Chairman of the Congressional Romania Caucus and as the former President of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly, I congratulate Romania on its Great Union Day. Romania is celebrating the anniversary of its unification on December 1, 1918.

Romania is a loyal U.S. and NATO ally. Romania and the United States work closely together to confront a host of global challenges, including through our joint efforts to bolster regional defense, halt nuclear proliferation, and increase energy security. With the signing of the U.S.-Romania Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement in September 2011, Romania established itself as a key strategic partner in NATO's emerging missile defense capabilities effort. The Missile Defense Interceptor site at Deveselu Air Base near the Bulgarian border, which became operational in May 2016, now provides missile defense protection to our allies in Europe and the Middle East.

Tragically, ongoing events in Ukraine are unsettling the region and testing the transatlantic alliance. As you know, Russia seeks to once again destabilize much of Eastern Europe and restore influence over territories lost following the collapse of the Soviet Union. That is why it is critically important for the United States, Romania, and other European allies to continue to work together to strengthen the transatlantic alliance and bolster regional security.

The strategic partnership between the United States and Romania has greatly advanced our common interests in promoting transatlantic and regional security and free market opportunities. Our partnership should continue to foster greater economic and cultural exchanges, trade and investment, and social contacts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in celebrating Romania's Great Union Day.

#### FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

#### HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 30, 2016*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1555, the "Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015."

S. 1555 honors the brave Filipino soldiers who courageously fought for freedom in World War II by awarding the highest honor that this Congress can bestow.

More than 260,000 Filipino veterans, 18,000 of who are still alive today, who for decades

had to fight for benefits and recognition, will now receive the recognition they have earned and deserve.

These Filipino soldiers were instrumental to the United States efforts in the Pacific.

After the invasion of the Philippines by Japanese forces they retired to the Bataan Peninsula and continued to fight valiantly.

Among these brave soldiers is Dominador Soriano, a resident of San Antonio, Texas, who fought as a member of both the Philippine and United States Armies.

He was drafted into the Philippine Army in 1938 and then inducted into the U.S. Army in the Far East on September 1, 1941.

Under the leadership of General Douglas MacArthur, Soriano commanded the Echo Company of the 83rd Infantry Regiment, keeping watch on Japanese ships moving through the Tanon Strait.

During the Japanese invasion he was shot and in July of 1944 was captured, beaten and then released, but could barely walk.

Soriano continued working with the resistance until the surrender of the Japanese on August 15, 1945.

Recently, the city of San Antonio honored Soriano and other Filipino veterans with a resolution that recognized their efforts during World War II and supported legislation to award these courageous men the Congressional Gold Medal.

The resolution is the first of its kind by any city in the United States, and I believe that it is time for Congress to follow suit.

These brave Filipino soldiers answered President Franklin D. Roosevelt's call to serve in World War II and they deserve the highest award that we can give, for there is no higher duty than putting one's life on the line for freedom and country.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1555 the "Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015."

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. MIA B. LOVE

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2016*

Mrs. LOVE. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following remarks regarding my absence from votes which occurred on December 2, 2016. A member of my immediate family experienced a medical crisis out of state, and I traveled to support him. As a result, I missed votes for the day.

#### MR. ANTHONY XUEREBO

#### HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2016*

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to Mr. Anthony Xuerebo.

Anthony was born in Malta, and he had always yearned to come to the United States to make a better life for himself. He came to this country in 1934 during the Great Depression and struggled mightily to survive the terrible economic and social conditions of the time. He

sought employment in the Brooklyn Navy Yard and had the pleasure to work on the USS *Missouri*. As he continued working and living in the United States, Anthony applied for U.S. citizenship and became a naturalized citizen in 1943.

During World War II, he applied for military service, but unfortunately he lost most of his hearing in his left ear due to a diving accident he suffered from, and was unable to serve. Anthony still wanted to contribute to the country in whatever way possible, so he volunteered for civilian duty as an Air Raid Warden and served in this position until the end of the war. Air Raid Wardens were vital in ensuring the safety of everyone in the neighborhood and he did not take his role lightly. He returned to Malta in 1948, met the love of his life, and returned to the United States to start their new life together.

Anthony's exemplary life of service was motivated and fueled by his love of God, family, and country. He was a humble man who lived on a modest income and was very proud of his service as an Air Raid Warden. The service these dedicated civilians provided was vital in keeping civilians safe. It is important we acknowledge people like Anthony, who dedicated their services to a nation in need during a time of war. In honor and memory of Anthony Xuereb and all who served, and continue to serve, our great nation, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize his devotion to our country.

#### SUPPORT OF H.R. 4665, THE OUTDOOR RECREATION JOBS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ACT

#### HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2016*

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4665, the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act, introduced by my friend from Virginia, Congressman BEYER. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation to highlight the importance of the outdoor recreation economy.

In Oregon, we know how important the outdoor industry is to our economy. Northwest Oregon businesses like Keen, Columbia Sportswear, and Nike have thrived and brought thousands of jobs to our communities. Surveys conducted by the Outdoor Industry Association in 2012 show that, in my home state, the industry contributes 141,000 direct jobs, \$4.0 billion in wages and salaries, and \$12.8 billion in consumer spending annually. Nationwide, outdoor recreation generates \$646 billion in consumer spending every year.

The climbers, hikers, hunters, and anglers who are passionate about the outdoors spend time and money in hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, and stores in nearby communities, providing an economic boost for local economies. They also purchase necessary attire, gear, and footwear from innovative businesses to help them reach the summit, catch fish, and enjoy our nation's natural treasures.

I am proud to support the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO NATHANIEL JONES ON HIS RETIREMENT

#### HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2016*

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding educator, Superintendent Nathaniel Jones of the Metropolitan School District of Pike Township. Superintendent Jones is retiring after 43 years of exceptional service to students and the community. The people of the Fifth Congressional District of Indiana are forever grateful for Superintendent Jones' contributions and commitment to the students of the Pike Township School District and to our Hoosier community.

Superintendent Jones is an Indianapolis native. He received his formal education from the Indianapolis Public School (IPS) system. After graduating high school Superintendent Jones went to Indiana University where he pursued his interest in education. Upon completion of his B.S. in Elementary Education, he returned to IPS where he taught elementary school as well as adult education classes for five years. He returned to IUPUI to earn his M.S. in Education as well as an Administrative Certificate. In 1978, Superintendent Jones was named Assistant Principal to John Strange Elementary School of the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township, and shortly thereafter in 1980 he was named Principal of Delaware Trail Elementary, at age 27, making him one of the youngest principals in the state of Indiana. He served the Washington Township School system in a variety of positions over 25 years; he served Washington Township as Principal, Director of Elementary Education, and as Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. His leadership proved truly transformational as every school he led as Principal attained state and national recognition for academic achievement. In 1982, he earned his Education Specialist Degree in School Administration from Indiana University, Bloomington and in 1994 his Superintendent Certification. In 2003, he became the first African American to accept the role of Superintendent for the Metropolitan School District of Pike Township and the first African American IPS graduate to be a Superintendent in the state of Indiana.

Superintendent Jones has been instrumental in creating positive change in each of the school systems he has served. Pike High School in particular has made monumental strides under Superintendent Jones' leadership. Pike High School has one of the most successful pre-collegiate programs in Indiana with over 85 percent of students attending post-secondary institutions upon graduating from high school and has a graduation rate of over 91 percent. In 2005, the Standard & Poor's ratings recognized Pike High School for significantly narrowing the Black-white and Hispanic-white achievement gaps. During Superintendent Jones' tenure the number of scholarships and grants received by Pike students has grown tremendously. Pike High School boasts the highest number of Gates Scholars in Indiana. Superintendent Jones also implemented the STEM Center and spearheaded major construction and renovation of many facilities, and earned over \$75 million in Federal Competitive Grants from

2005 through 2015. Superintendent Jones' tireless efforts to seek educational grants and funding opportunities helped in part to create the Youth CareerConnect program. This program offers work-based learning opportunities that teaches students marketable and useful STEM skills empowering students in future learning as well as career opportunities. Through the collaboration of Superintendent Jones' visionary leadership, the help of a supportive board, dedicated administrators, extraordinary teachers, and engaged parents, Pike Township schools have become a more positive learning environment where student achievement continues to soar.

Throughout his career Superintendent Jones has received numerous awards that recognize the accomplishments and contributions he has made to education in our community. From Indiana University he received two "Distinguished Alumni Awards". In 1996, he earned the Milken Award, which aims to grant funds to accomplished mid-career educators. He received the Achiever Award from the Center for Leadership, is a recipient of a Sagamore of the Wabash Award, has received a Congressional Salute, and he received two District of Distinction awards. He was selected as one of the 100 top administrators in North America by the "Executive Educator" and has received over 60 local, state, and national awards for his leadership and innovative approach to educating students, teachers, and the community. His award winning work is well regarded not only from these institutions but from his peers and fellow educators. He has been invited to conduct and participate in numerous conferences throughout the United States. In addition, he is a lifetime member of the NAACP and in 2011 he was featured in the "Education Executive Publication" as a Trendsetter, and in a Who's Who in "Black Indianapolis".

Superintendent Jones continues to serve the community through his roles on numerous boards. He currently sits on the Board of Directors for American Heart Association, he was the Chair for National Council on Educating Black Children Conference in 2015, and he was the Board Chairman for Conner Prairie in 2011. In 2008, he served on the Indianapolis Marion-County Public Library Board of Directors and the Teachers' Treasures Board of Directors. He was the coordinator for the Lilly Initiative supported by the Lilly Endowment in 2000 through 2003. He was on the State Advisory Committee on Textbook Adoption in 2001 through 2003.

I am proud to thank Superintendent Jones for his service in helping the students of Pike Township graduate from high school with the essential skills necessary to be confident, creative, productive, and prosperous in college, careers, and life. He has always put the needs of students first throughout his educational career and truly enriched the lives of so many. He takes great pride in addressing the individual needs of the children he serves. Superintendent Jones never overlooked the fact that his students come to him from a variety of backgrounds, possessing individual gifts, talents, challenges and dreams. On behalf of all Hoosiers and the nation, I'd like to congratulate Superintendent Nathaniel Jones on his success and wish him, his wife Cynthia, two children, and their families all the best as Superintendent Jones enjoys a well-deserved retirement.