

In line with his passion for fighting for children in need of nutrition and housing, Mr. Belcoe actively engaged with legislators and communities to support low-income families. Recently, he celebrated 15 years as the President and CEO of North Coast Credit Union in Whatcom and Skagit counties and in October of 2016, he was selected as the Washington Credit Union Advocate of the Year, but unfortunately he passed away less than three weeks before the honor could be presented.

Mr. Speaker, Terry Belcoe was a dedicated public servant and I would like to honor him for his many contributions to our community and our state. My thoughts are with his partner Karen, his daughters and his sister. Terry will be greatly missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent December 1st and 2nd due to a medical appointment. Had I been present I would have voted:

On Roll Call Vote 594, I would have voted No. On Roll Call Vote 595, I would have voted No. On Roll Call Vote 596, I would have voted No. On Roll Call Vote 597, I would have voted No. On Roll Call Vote 598, I would have voted Aye. On Roll Call Vote 599, I would have voted No. On Roll Call Vote 600, I would have voted No.

HONORING ERICA STRIEBEL

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor my Chief of Staff, Erica Striebel, for her service and commitment to the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, and to our country.

For the last 15 years, Erica has been one of my closest advisers. She was a sounding board for me on legislative issues as Congress fought through many difficult challenges facing our country. Erica has been my chief strategist during my time on the House Appropriations Committee and my right hand for my work on the Defense Subcommittee.

The late management consultant Peter Drucker said, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." Fortunately for me, my staff, and the people I have had the privilege to represent, Erica is both an excellent manager and an inspiring leader. She has a special talent for seeing around corners to identify the next challenges and leading others to solutions.

Erica's devotion to the servicemen and women who protect our nation at home and around the globe sets an example for all to follow. Erica Striebel is a patriot. She values those who serve today and respects the veterans of yesteryear. Her knowledge was acquired through her Bachelor's degree in International Affairs and Security Policy from The George Washington University and her Mas-

ter's degree in National Security from the Naval War College. She shares my strong belief that national security is our country's number one priority. Erica fights on the policy front to ensure our military can effectively defend the United States of America. An integral portion of her work—traveling to military bases to meet with commanders—is a vital part of how Erica makes sure that she is prepared to fight for what is needed to keep our military the best trained and best equipped in the world. Military leaders in Northeast Florida at Naval Air Station Jacksonville and Naval Station Mayport remind me often that their confidence in Erica is unique. Her command of the missions and the intricacies of military assets is well respected. She is the staffer who makes things happen. Also, in a spirit of teamwork, Erica unselfishly shares her expertise with other Capitol Hill staffers. She fully appreciates that all Members of Congress need to work together to support our military.

Erica is diligent in ensuring that the contributions of our veterans are recognized, and they receive the benefits they have earned and deserve. With her support, more than 2,400 veterans in the 4th Congressional District have attended ceremonies and received my Veterans' Special Recognition Certificate. She also played a key role in ensuring all the necessary steps were accomplished to locate the Jacksonville National Cemetery on Florida's First Coast.

I have no doubt that Erica will bring the same drive and determination she has shown in my office to the next chapter in her professional career. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in thanking Erica Striebel for her leadership and for her commitment to public service and wish her continued success in her future endeavors.

God bless and Godspeed.

TRIBUTE TO GABRIEL MINTZER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Gabriel Mintzer, a senior at Valley High School in West Des Moines, Iowa, for earning a perfect score on his American College Testing (ACT) examination.

Gabriel is one of only 2,235 students out of 2.1 million 2017 high school test-takers who earned this very rare honor. He was one of five students in his Valley High School class to earn the top composite score of 36, a milestone that had never before been reached in the school's history. He was able to accomplish this impressive feat while still remaining active in a number of extracurricular activities, including: co-founding and co-directing the Des Moines Student-to-Student STEM Speaker Series, Science Bowl and Knowledge Bowl teams, Central Academy mathematics team, and treasurer of Valley High School's National Honors Society chapter.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Gabriel for his hard-work, dedication, and commitment to excellence. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Gabriel and in wishing him nothing but continued success in all of his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE BURKE VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Burke Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department on the occasion of its 68th Annual Installation of Officers Banquet, and to thank its volunteers for filling an essential role in keeping our community safe.

The Burke Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department was founded in January 1948, and for more than 6 decades it has provided life-saving fire suppression/prevention and emergency medical and rescue services to the residents of Burke and the surrounding communities. It also provides, houses, and maintains firefighting and emergency medical equipment; provides opportunities for professional growth and development for the membership; and maintains and fosters a strong viable organization.

As one of the county's most active volunteer fire and rescue departments, the Burke Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department works in cooperation with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department to serve the community. Last year alone, the Burke VFD provided more than 3,000 hours of volunteer time as well as an additional 2,159 hours of supplemental staffing.

I am honored to recognize the dedicated men and women of the Burke Volunteer Fire Department who have volunteered for extra duty as officers or as members of the board of directors.

Board of Directors—President Patrick Owens, Vice President John Powers, Secretary Tonya McCreary, Treasurer Ian Dickinson, Larry Bockneck, Rich Guarrasi, Becky Dobbs.

Officers—Chief Thomas Warnock, Deputy Chief Tina Godfrey, Deputy Chief John Hudak, Captain Melissa Ashby, Captain Keith O'Connor, Lieutenant Emily Fincher, Lieutenant Kevin Grottle, Sergeant Jennifer Babic, Sergeant Peter Hamilton, Sergeant Shaun Kurry, Sergeant James Reyes, Team Leader Paul Stracke, Team Leader/Chaplain Harry Chelpon.

In addition to the men and women who have generously assumed the responsibilities of serving as an Officer or a member of the Board of Directors, the Burke Volunteer Fire Department is also presenting awards to the following individuals in recognition of their exemplary service during the last year:

Rookie of the Year—Lindsay Fox and Blaine Reis

Firefighter of the Year—Ian Dickinson

EMS Provider of the Year—Caitlin Curran

Officer of the Year—Shaun Kurry, James Reyes

Administrative Member of the Year—Charlene Murphy

Career Member of the Year—FireMedic Anthony Tran

Team Award—BVFRD Bingo Team (Tina Godfrey, Matt Bryant, Charlene Murphy)

Chief's Award—E414 Procurement Team (John Hudak, Larry Bockneck, Peter Hamilton, Mike Istvan, George Hahn, Sam Sandeen, Robin Clement)

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the department for 68 years of service and in thanking all of the brave volunteers who do not hesitate to drop everything when the community calls in need of help. To all of these men and women who put themselves in harm's way to protect our residents I say: "Stay safe."

H.R. 34, THE 21ST CENTURY CURES ACT

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 34, the 21st Century Cures Act, a bill which aims to authorize and promote biomedical research, mental health, opioid abuse assistance, and advance medical future research, but falls woefully short.

Unfortunately, this bill is a missed opportunity for Congress to take meaningful action to address skyrocketing drug prices. It also falls far short of the funding that is needed to support the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and to address the growing opioid abuse epidemic. I also believe that this bill puts the goals of pharmaceutical and medical device companies ahead of the needs of individuals.

As a Member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations Subcommittee and as an ardent supporter of biomedical research and public health funding, I was disappointed in the inadequate funding levels in this bill. Last year, this bill included \$10 billion in mandatory funding for the NIH. Unfortunately, the revised version that passed the House Floor last week included only \$3.8 billion for the NIH, and it is not mandatory spending.

And to make matters worse, this bill strips \$3.5 billion from the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which provides critical investments to improve health outcomes through prevention activities like screenings and public health workforce training. We should be increasing support for public health programs, not robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Additionally, I am concerned that this legislation loosens Food and Drug Administration (FDA) standards for approving pharmaceuticals and medical devices. While we do need to ensure that new, lifesaving treatments are available to consumers, we cannot do so at the expense of safety and efficacy. We need to make the FDA's standards stronger—not weaker.

Lastly, despite outcry from constituents and despite months of hearings and press conferences on the issue of rising prescription drug prices, H.R. 34 did not include any provisions to make drugs more affordable.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have a shared obligation to ensure that ALL Americans have access to equitable, high-quality and affordable healthcare. While this bill does include a few good provisions, like positive steps to address mental health reform, it ultimately puts industry and profits over patients, and I therefore cannot support it.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DAVID SIMAS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service, dedication, and brilliance of our good friend and distinguished Portuguese American, White House Political Director David Simas. After eight years guiding the policy of the Obama Administration it is both fitting and appropriate to honor his service to the United States of America where he helped craft policy that improves the lives of countless Americans.

A self-proclaimed "Kid from Taunton, Massachusetts," Mr. Simas is the son of Portuguese immigrants, Antonio and Deolinda Simas. Although his parents did not attain more than an elementary school education, Mr. Simas ever excelled under their parentage. His father taught him the impact political policy has on everyday lives and his mother instilled in him the importance of family and the support they lend in times of need.

From his upbringing in Taunton, Mr. Simas went on to attend Stonehill College and later Boston College Law School. Returning home after graduation, he started a law practice and launched a political career of his own running for and winning a seat on the school board. Lending his talents to the local Portuguese community, Mr. Simas defended those in need and led successful political movements on behalf his friends and neighbors.

Later, as an advisor to the mayor of Taunton Mr. Simas helped devise a strategy to bring down the city's health care costs, working with the public sector unions to reach an agreement that saved the city money while ensuring access to good health care. Mr. Simas became well known in Massachusetts policy circles, and in 2006, he joined the office of Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick where he served as Deputy Chief of Staff.

It was not long after the 2008 election of President Barack Obama that Governor Patrick connected the two, officially introducing Mr. Simas to the President and starting a run of eight years of service to the President and our country.

Calm, unflappable, clinical, and humble are just a few of the words used to describe Mr. Simas. He has taken his knowledge and political acumen and applied them to the service of the American people. He dedicated himself to pass health care reform, bringing coverage to millions who previously were left out of the American health care system.

Mr. Simas has always thought about how the decisions he makes and the issues he fights for impact everyday people. From his childhood in Taunton's Portuguese Village to the West Wing of the White House he has always been an advocate for the disadvantaged and underrepresented. I wish him, his wife Shauna, and daughters Rowan and Payton the best of luck in the years to come. In whatever endeavor he finds himself next, I know he will continue to ask himself the same question President Obama asked of him: "Are you doing something every day to help people?"

I am confident he will.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great appreciation that I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of

Representatives to recognize the service of Mr. David Simas and his many contributions to the wellbeing of the American people.

HONORING MS. LINDA SEIFERT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Linda Seifert upon her retirement from the Solano County Board of Supervisors. Ms. Seifert has represented the Second District on the board since 2008 and served as the Chair of the Board from 2012 through 2014.

Ms. Seifert has been a longtime leader in our state's legal community. She earned her bachelor's degree from the California State University, Fullerton and then went on to complete her law degree at the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law. Ms. Seifert led a tremendously successful law career and became the first female partner at the McNamara Law Firm in Walnut Creek, before she went on to serve as General Counsel for the California Dental Association.

Since her election as Supervisor in 2008, Ms. Seifert has been a champion for Solano County's citizens and our community's future. She has worked to preserve the agricultural heritage and resources of our community and to create more park space and recreational services. For instance, Ms. Seifert successfully pushed to dedicate open space in Rockville Hills and secured \$13 million to permanently protect the land for future generations.

Education and responsive social services have also been Ms. Seifert's priorities as supervisor. To protect victims of domestic violence, she secured the site for the Family Justice Center in Fairfield. She believes that investing in members of our community improves both their well-being and our economy.

Mr. Speaker, Supervisor Linda Seifert has been a champion of our community for the past eight years. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROGER WILLIAMS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call 592 on final passage of H.R. 34, the 21st Century Cures Act, I would have voted Aye, which is consistent with my position on this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO GUOWEI QI

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Guowei Qi, a senior at Valley High School in West Des Moines, Iowa, for earning a perfect score