

Bites Competition is the kick-off to the Houston Rodeo, one of the most popular and attended attractions in Houston. We are so proud of Grazia's and can't wait to taste their delicious meals for ourselves.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the entire team at Grazia Italian Kitchen for being recognized at the Houston Rodeo Roundup Best Bites Competition.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

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 \$19,125,455,057,425.90. We've added \$8,498,578,008,512.82 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, this week I missed a roll call vote. I wish to state how I would have voted had I been present: Roll Call No. 102—"yes."

TRIBUTE TO AIR FORCE 2ND LIEUTENANT ESTEBAN HOTESSE, TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, DOMINICAN-AMERICAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Dominican-Americans across our great nation celebrated their heritage and their compatriots commemorated Dominican Independence Day over the weekend, on February 27th, today I rise to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Tuskegee Airman Second Lieutenant Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse (Service Number 32218759).

Esteban Hotesse, a Dominican native who immigrated to the country as a child, enlisted during World War II, and served in the lauded Tuskegee Airmen brigade. Though his team was scheduled to go into battle, they never saw combat abroad. As a member of the all-black unit, Hotesse was among a group of 101 Tuskegee Airmen officers arrested for refusing to follow Jim Crow orders from a white commanding officer at a base near Seymour, Indiana, where the KKK had a strong presence.

In March 1945, the last of the Tuskegee groups, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group, was moved from Godman Field, adja-

cent to Fort Knox, to Freeman Field because of the latter's better flight facilities. Tensions between the 477th and the white command structure on the base were tense as soon as the 477th arrived, and shortly thereafter, an incident occurred unparalleled in Air Corps history.

Upon their arrival at Freeman, the commanding officer of the base, Colonel Robert R. Selway, moved quickly to set up and enforce a segregated system. The group was housed in a dilapidated building. Col. Selway also created a novel system to deny the Airmen entry into the officers' club. He classified the Black airmen as "trainees," even though they had all finished flight school, and therefore were all commissioned officers. As trainees, they were forced to use a rundown, former noncommissioned officers club nicknamed "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This all occurred despite an order issued in 1940 issued by President Roosevelt himself that no officer should be denied access to any officer's club. On April 5, 1945 a group of the Airmen peacefully entered the officers' club in protest. Sixty-one were arrested within 24 hours. This act of disobedience later became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. Hotesse perished later that year in an accidental plane crash. His obituary in a Dominican newspaper lists his cause of death as a B-25 crash in the Ohio River in Indiana.

Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse was born on February 2, 1919 in Moca, Dominican Republic, and he came to the U.S. at the age of 4 with his mother, Clara Pacheco, who at the time was 25 years old. Hotesse was also accompanied by his sister Irma Hotesse, age 2. They came through the famous port of Ellis Island and, like many Dominicans at the time, went to live in my Congressional District within Upper Manhattan. At the time of his enlistment, he was living with his wife, Iristella Lind, who was Puerto Rican. They applied for U.S. citizenship in April 1943 after he'd served almost a year. The couple had two daughters before he enlisted. Today, one of his daughters, Mary Lou Hotesse, resides in New York City and two granddaughters, one named Iris Rivera, live in the South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of our nation's heroes. In life, he immigrated to our shores to join ranks with our military force in the advancement of peace, justice, and freedom here and abroad.

DON'T WRESTLE WITH CINCO RANCH GIRLS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Queenena Chen, Charlotte Fowler, Taylor Rosario, and Kayla De Leon for winning the state championship 6A trophy at the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Girls Wrestling Championships.

Queenena, Charlotte, Taylor and Kayla are students at Cinco Ranch High School in the Katy Independent School District. The four Lady Cougars racked up a total of 87 points, all placing in the top four; a new achievement. The 2016 UIL State Wrestling Championships were held at the Berry Center in Cypress,

Texas on February 19th and 20th. Senior Taylor Rosario has a standing record of 40-1, Senior Charlotte Fowler's record is 48-1, Senior Queenena Chen's record is 41-15, and finally, Sophomore Kayla De Leon has a record of 49-0. These talented students have made the Katy community proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Queenena, Charlotte, Taylor, and Kayla for winning the UIL 6A State Championship. We can't wait to see what these talented ladies do next.

TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE DIANA HOPPE

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the passing of Representative Diane Hoppe on February 27th, 2016. Rep. Hoppe was a beloved and distinguished community leader and longtime state lawmaker.

Rep. Hoppe grew up in Sterling and devoted her life to improving Colorado. In 1999 she was elected to House District 65 of the Colorado House of Representatives, where she served through 2006. During her service she was Chair of the House Agriculture, Livestock & Natural Resources Committee; Chair of the Water Resources Review Committee; and House Minority Whip.

In addition to her leadership in the Colorado legislature, Governor Hickenlooper appointed her to the Colorado Water Conservation Board in 2012. She was later elected as Chair in 2015. In addition, she was presented the Colorado Water Congress 2013 Wayne N. Aspinall Award for Outstanding Water Leader. Rep. Hoppe's limitless knowledge of agriculture and water has made a lasting impact on Colorado.

It is the hard work Rep. Hoppe embodied throughout her life that makes Colorado an exceptional place to live. She has shown true service to her industry and community. I extend my deepest sympathies to Rep. Hoppe's family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Representative Diane Hoppe for her commitment to family, community, and the State of Colorado. She will be sorely missed.

THE RULES OF THE U.S. HOUSE DENY MEMBERS THE ABILITY TO FULFILL OUR CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, the rules of the U.S. House prohibit congressionally directed spending. This prohibition undermines the ability of Members of Congress to represent their constituents, denies Members the opportunity to respond to critical needs that are in the national interest, and it strips Members of their authority pursuant to Article 1,

section 9, clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution—the authority to appropriate funds. Members of Congress are not even allowed the opportunity to offer amendments to a bill to be voted on by a committee or the Committee of the Whole on a construction project or research program deemed to be in contrary to the rule.

What the ban on congressionally directed spending does do is empower the Executive Branch to dictate to Congress projects, programs and priorities without input from Members. It denies Members the ability to advance alternatives to the President's priorities that better reflect the needs of states, communities and constituents. With this rule, Congress has unilaterally diminished our own power and ceded excessive power to the President. The House of Representatives' "power of the purse" must be more than simply rubber stamping funding for whatever project or program the President proposes.

My attached letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies highlights an example of how the ban on congressionally directed spending denies me—a member of the Appropriations Committee—the opportunity to advocate for a project that has been approved by the Department of Defense, in the Department's funding queue, and is now delayed for arbitrary budget reasons without any consultation with Congress. House rules deny me the opportunity to amend this decision. I find this outrageous and a clear example of how this Congress cedes power to unelected federal officials in the Executive Branch.

It is time to change the rules, repeal the prohibition on congressionally directed spending, and allow Members of Congress to do our job on behalf of the people who elected us.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2016.

Hon. CHARLIE DENT,
Chair, Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SANFORD BISHOP,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Military
Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related
Agencies, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR DENT AND RANKING MEMBER BISHOP: I am extremely concerned that the President's FY2017 budget proposal has failed to fund a shovel ready Minnesota Army National Guard project that has been in the pipeline since the release of the FY13 budget for FY17. The \$39,000,000 for the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arden Hills, MN (Project Number 270132 in the Department of the Army, Army National Guard FY17 Military Construction budget) now has been moved to FY18. This delay will directly affect the ability of members of the Minnesota National Guard to train effectively and carry out their duties to their utmost potential.

This facility is necessary to house the Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Company A 34th Infantry Division currently assigned to the Rosemount, MN Readiness Center, and Company B 34th Infantry Division currently assigned to the Inver Grove Heights, MN Readiness Center. Both of these facilities are undersized and seriously lacking in critical areas that support mission readiness. The construction of the Readiness Center in Arden Hills is long overdue and necessary to relieve over population in other aging National Guard facilities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

What is truly outrageous is that this Congress has ceded the authority of Members,

and particularly Appropriators, under the Constitution, to fund critically significant federal investments in our communities. Congress, by giving up the authority to direct spending and projects, has conceded a vital authority to the Administration. This Military Construction, Veterans Affairs bill makes it clear that the House and the Appropriations Committee now takes its guidance from Administration staff and the Office of Management and Budget, which I find unacceptable. Meanwhile the representatives elected by the American people, including Appropriators, are denied the opportunity to advance vital projects unless granted permission by the Executive Branch.

Therefore, I will not be submitting any requests to the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies because if I were to advocate for the members of the Minnesota Army National Guard and attempt to get funding reinstated in this year's appropriations bill, I would presumably be in violation of the ban on congressionally directed spending.

It is time to change this flawed system.
Sincerely,

BETTY MCCOLLUM,
Member of Congress.

KAY THACKER

HON. CARLOS CURBELO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today we honor the life of Kay Thacker, a woman who worked to make politics nobler and spent every hour of her life dedicated to helping others. As a visitor to the Keys since childhood and a 27-year resident, we will miss Kay Thacker tremendously. She was a woman who embodied the heart of the small and tight-knit community that we are.

Though born in Kentucky, Kay spent much of her life in Indiana. In the late 1960s and into the early 1970s she ran her own salon, Casa de Kay. She received her degree from the University of Indiana and then proceeded to earn the title of Vice President of Sales for Metal Honing Inc. Thankfully, she then decided to make Key Largo her home where she embodied the role of a passionate civic activist.

Tenacious and firm in her principles, Kay stood proudly as an environmental conservationist, advocate for the Arts and a staunch overseer of spending by public agencies. Even in the face of fierce adversity, Kay was a woman who refused to back down. Well known for her stubbornness, Kay knew when to put her foot down and fight for her beliefs, all the while never making that fight personal.

Kay Thacker's impact on our community is far reaching and universally appreciated, even from those that she stood up to. She will forever be remembered for her unyielding devotion to the community that we are all fortunate to call our own.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF
ELLINGTON, MO

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Church of Ellington, MO. The occasion was marked by four services held at the church: a morning Dedication Service, an Afternoon Service, a Youth Service, and an Evangelistic Service held later in the evening, presided over by Pastor Sandy Estes.

United Methodist Church was founded in 1887 by five trustees, Marian Copeland, Leon Daniels, P.B. Smith, U.G. Barnes, and Jefferson Wadlow. It was originally located on Cemetery Hill on land donated by Copeland. As the church grew, so did the congregation, eventually surpassing the capacity of the original property.

In 1909, the church founded the Women's Missionary Society, who purchased the land on which the current church stands today. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1913, and the construction concluded with a Dedication Ceremony on August 20, 1916. Although the building has since been renovated, much of the Sanctuary is original, including the stained glass and bell tower, which still rings every Sunday service.

The surnames of the five original trustees are still common to the Ellington area, a true testament to the enduring legacy of the United Methodist Church. The church has long served as a staple in the local community, offering a valuable service and place of worship for citizens. Thus, it is my pleasure to recognize its impressive history before the House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO SOSY ROBINSON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Canyon Lake in Riverside County, California are exceptional. On Friday, March 11th, Sosy Robinson will be honored as the Citizen of the Year by the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Born in Pasadena, California, Sosy Robinson was the first American citizen in her family which migrated to this country from the Middle East. Sosy's family moved to Canyon Lake in 2012 from Orange County and she went on to graduate from Temescal Canyon High School. Sosy and her husband, A.J., have six children, whose ages range from two to 25 years old.

In Canyon Lake, Sosy is serving for the second consecutive year as President of the Family Matters Club. The club hosted over 38 events, meetings and family meet-ups last year alone. Sosy is also a member of the Canyon Lake Lioness Club, serves as the official bingo caller at the Canyon Lake Senior Center, and graciously delivers groceries for homebound seniors in need. The nomination