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IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BETH ISRAEL CONGREGATION

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Beth Israel Congregation in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It is an honor to highlight their continued commitment to the spiritual and cultural life of the Washtenaw County community.

In 1916, The Beth Israel Congregation was established, and for many years was the only Jewish congregation in Ann Arbor. At its inception, the congregation celebrated the Jewish High Holidays in the home of Osias Zwerdling who served as the President of the congregation for forty years. The congregation was without a Rabbi until Joshua Sperka who served from 1932–1934. For many years, the Beth Israel congregation occasionally had a Rabbi, but made the community work through a wonderful spirit of volunteerism and faith. Today, the congregation is blessed to have the leadership of Rabbi Robert Dobrusin and Rabbi Kim Blumenthal.

The Beth Israel Congregation has had an important influence on Jewish life in Washtenaw County. In fact, Beth Israel was one of the first conservative congregations in southeast Michigan to become an egalitarian congregation. For the Beth Israel congregation, participation in, leading, or chanting the service is an important aspect of the congregation and they have fully welcomed LGBT individuals into this congregational life. Beth Israel Congregation's services reflect Ann Arbor's rich diversity; making it one of the leading advocates for the ordinations of LGBT rabbis in the Jewish diaspora. Beth Israel is a faithful, forward looking congregation that is growing, welcoming new members, and staying positively involved in the community, in the finest tradition.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Beth Israel Congregation and wish them many more years of faithful service.

JAMES TRESKO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud James Tresco for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

James Tresco is a 7th grader at Jefferson Senior/Junior High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by James Tresco is exemplary of the type of achieve-

ment that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to James Tresco for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF GUNNY SERGEANT GEORGE A. CRISWELL

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service and career of Gunny Sergeant George A. Criswell as he retires from the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC). Gunny Sergeant Criswell served in the USMC for 20 years and deserves to be commended for his outstanding service and dedication to our country.

Gunny Sergeant Criswell was born in York, Pennsylvania on March 18, 1972. From a young age he embodied the traits of a Marine; he is selfless, courageous, intelligent, loyal, and enthusiastic. It is no coincidence that Gunny Sergeant Criswell would dedicate his life to serving our country and become a heroic leader to our nation.

During his most recent overseas deployment from November 10, 2011 through October 31, 2012, he served as the Staff Non-Commissioned-Officer-in Charge of CJ3 Borders Division, Combat Joint Task Force and Regional Command—East. While he was deployed, Gunny Sergeant Criswell was in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom XIII in Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan as well as other locations throughout Afghanistan. The mission of Operation Enduring Freedom XIII was to facilitate coordination of near-border combat operations and emergency de-escalation of fires between Coalition Forces, Afghan National Security Forces, and the Pakistani Military.

While stationed in the Bagram Airfield, Gunny Sergeant Criswell witnessed a situation in which 2000 local Afghans attempted to breach an entry control point. When Sergeant Gunny Criswell returned to the United States, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his valiant service where he was subject to over 45 indirect fire attacks.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring the career and noble service of Gunny Sergeant George A. Criswell. It is with great pride that we thank him for his genuine selflessness and service to our country.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS OF U.S. AND CANADA CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand before you and offer

my heartiest congratulations to the professional musicians and leadership of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (AFM). This year, the union which represents more than 80,000 professional musicians will convene and celebrate its 100th Annual International Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada on June 20, 2016. Many members of Congress maintain a close personal relationship with the professional musicians of this storied organization many of whom live and work in your respective districts. I know you like I wish them another 100 years addressing the complex issues that drive the American music industry.

For more than 119 years, the AFM has represented the interests of musicians working in America's major and regional symphony orchestras like the Washington National Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony and many others. The organization also represents jazz, country and pop greats such as Winton Marsalis, Bonnie Raitt, Bruce Springsteen, and Willie Nelson to name a few. AFM musicians for decades have performed the sounds movie goes around the world have been privileged to hear in such epic American films as Star Wars, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Sponge Bob Movie, the Wolf of Wall Street, and Trumbo to name a few. These incredibly talented American musicians have performed under the batons of such distinguished American internationally recognized composers and AFM members as John Williams, Clint Eastwood, Lennie Niehaus, and others.

The AFM also has a unique set of accomplishments on Capitol Hill, successfully representing musicians in the areas of performance rights, copyright, intellectual property, federal appropriations, immigration reform, Department of Transportation regulatory reform, Department of the Interior regulatory reform, as well as work in the area of tax reform.

Mr. Speaker, no other national instrumental music organization has the tenure and reach of the American Federation of Musicians having affected legislation and regulations that have helped more than one million professional musicians, students and amateur professionals create uniquely American music.

The AFM's longevity is so storied that the United States Department of Labor recognizes it as one of a few American labor organizations that has existed for more than 100 years and proudly displays a plaque in honor of that accomplishment in the corridors of the Department of Labor.

As a performing musician myself, I understand the nature of the music business and recognize that the work of the AFM has benefited more than its own members but has been a driving force in the advancement of America music recognized the world over as some of the most progressive and entertaining domestic product in great demand around the globe.

So, I ask members of congress to join with me in celebrating a unique American institution comprised of some of the best musicians recognized across the globe. Our hats are off to those who make American music great.

A TRIBUTE: REMEMBERING THE
2015 AMTRAK DERAILMENT

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the 8 people who were killed, as well as the more than 200 people injured in the Amtrak train 188 derailment one year ago today in Philadelphia. This tragedy affected the entire region, touching the lives of hundreds of people across the country. It serves as an important reminder that we must work to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place, in order to protect Amtrak riders and employees from unnecessary heartbreaks such as this.

On this day, it is also important to remember and be thankful for the selfless work of our first responders and hospital staff that treated the victims and consequently saved lives. Equally important was the open hearted response of the residents of the area, who truly showed the nation why we are known as the "City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection" by immediately opening their doors to the victims and providing food and water. In spite of this terrible tragedy, we can be proud of the humanity exhibited by all those who offered help.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring the victims of the train 188 derailment one year ago today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, on April 28 through 29, 2016, I was inadvertently detained on Rollcall Votes 176, 177, and 179. Had I been present to vote, I would have voted "yes" on each. In addition, I was inadvertently detained on Rollcall Vote 178. Had I been present to vote, I would have voted "no."

MASON KIM

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Mason Kim for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Mason Kim is a 7th grader at Mandalay Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Mason Kim is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Mason Kim for winning the Arvada Wheat

Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM HUELSKAMP

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on May 11, 2016, I was not present for roll call vote number 182 due to a meeting with Senator PAT ROBERTS. If I had been in attendance, I would have voted yes on roll call vote 182.

AZERBAIJAN

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express deep concern over the recent surge in hostilities along the front line between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

This outbreak of violence has claimed dozens of lives on both sides.

The recent violent clashes followed a successful visit to the U.S. by President Aliyev of Azerbaijan, which included meetings with Vice President Biden and Secretary of State Kerry, as both reaffirmed U.S. support for expanding ties with Azerbaijan, a reliable strategic partner in a tough neighborhood.

Given Russia's apprehension with the strategic Southern Gas Corridor project championed by Azerbaijan and providing energy security for our allies in Europe, and Azerbaijan's security alliance with the United States, this latest upsurge in fighting is another sign of Moscow's meddling in the affairs of states along its borders.

As we've seen in Eastern Ukraine and Georgia, Russia continues to exploit separatist movements along its periphery to pressure America's friends and bring them back into its orbit.

Unfortunately, it's not the first time that Armenia—the Kremlin's key regional ally and the host to a number of Russian military bases—is being used as a proxy to intimidate U.S. partners, including Azerbaijan and Georgia.

As the latest loss of life shows, Armenia's nearly complete economic, political and military dependence on Russia no longer is a threat to its neighbors alone—it's a security challenge to Armenia itself.

These latest hostilities between Azerbaijan and Armenia once again remind us of the urgency to find a peaceful solution to the protracted Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

I urge the Administration to step up its efforts to achieve a peaceful solution and work with both sides to stabilize the situation.

Meanwhile, in the face of increasing Russian interference and aggression against its neighbors, the United States should remain steadfast in its support for our friends in Azerbaijan.

IN HONOR OF JOHN MORRIS
DAVIS' EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE
TO HIS COMMUNITY

HON. RENEE L. ELLMERS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I seek to honor the life of John Morris Davis, Jr., who died May 7th 2016 due to a cardiac arrest suffered while volunteering as a firefighter in Kenly, North Carolina.

Mr. Davis had a fierce passion for serving his community, as made apparent through his role as a local police officer and also as a volunteer firefighter. He always sought to provide aid to people in need, frequently showing up to help even on days he wasn't expected to. Mr. Davis' heroic bravery in seeking to save the life of another speaks volumes about his character and his dedication to the motto of others before self.

Mr. Davis is survived by his wife, Dwaina; three children, Courtney, Autumn, and Hanna; and his brotherhood of the Kenly Fire Department.

John M. Davis, like so many of our brave firefighters and policemen, sacrifice time with their families and loved ones to ensure our community's safety. We are forever indebted to them for their courageous service.

CONGRATULATING KIMMIE
ETHEREDGE ON HER RETIREMENT AS PRINCIPAL OF KAY
GRANGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kimmie Etheredge for her nine tremendously successful years as Principal of Kay Granger Elementary School in Fort Worth, Texas.

Principal Etheredge came to the Northwest Independent School District in north Fort Worth in 2007 to open Kay Granger Elementary. She helped build a community in the new suburb by meeting parents and encouraging them to be a part of their children's education. She called and personally welcomed every incoming student to the new school.

She developed a strong academic and parental and community support base, and is extremely popular among current and former students and their families. Under her leadership, the campus has averaged over 10,000 volunteer hours every year.

The school won the district's Partner in Education Campus of the Year Award three years in a row. It received an exemplary rating in academics for five straight years. It was chosen as a state School of Character in 2012, and was designated a National School of Character the following year.

During her 28 years in education, Principal Etheredge spent 12 years teaching Fourth Grade, two years as assistant principal, and 14 years as a campus principal. She was named a 2014 Texas National Distinguished Principal.