

In 2015, Officer Walser returned to the traffic enforcement team motorcycle unit, where he served until his recent retirement.

Officer Walser also serves as an active board member with the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 10. He has served as the president of Lodge 10 for an incredible 12 years, and has been selected 11 times as the FOP Lodge 10 Member of the Year.

Officer Walser is not only highly respected by FOP members, but also by his fellow Clearwater Police Department colleagues, City of Clearwater leadership, and a broad base of community leaders. Because of his exceptional service, Officer Walser has received the Chief's Unit Citation for his service with the honor guard team and the burglary unit.

When asked about Officer Walser, Clearwater Police Chief Dan Slaughter said:

Officer Walser proves that you don't need to be a supervisor to be a remarkable leader. I have never met a person more dedicated to the officers, their families, and the entire community.

I couldn't agree more with Chief Slaughter.

Mr. Speaker, John Walser is a dear friend of mine. He is a dear friend of so many in the Clearwater community, a constant source of faith-based counsel, a compassionate leader, a man who deeply loves his family, deeply loves his community, and deeply loves the God in whom he daily puts his trust.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking a remarkable person, Officer Jonathan Walser, for his years of service to our country and to our community in Florida. We wish him the very best in his retirement.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Hispanic Caucus, I rise today to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, the rich history, the culture, and the traditions of the Latino communities throughout our Nation and the world.

The United States of America is a nation of immigrants past and present, and the stories of the Latino communities who live in California's San Joaquin Valley are similar to the millions of stories of other immigrant families who have come to our country striving for the American Dream. They have come to our country from around the world.

Working together, we can ensure that policies that benefit our economy and keep families together, like the expanded DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and DAPA, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans, as well as comprehensive immigration reform, are enacted. This is important to fix a broken immigration system in America today.

These policies would move our country forward and provide a path to earned citizenship—not amnesty, but earned citizenship—so that individuals who only know the United States as their home can achieve the American Dream, the American Dream which is still a shining light around the world for people that are oppressed. Let us never forget what the American Dream embodies not just in our country, but for people around the world.

Please join me in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and the values, the dedications, and the rich diversity of immigrant families, of which my family was one and the majority of families in our country at some time or another were the proud immigrants from some other part of the world, that make this United States the greatest country in the world today.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to join in celebrating the 25th anniversary of Armenia. Twenty-five years ago today, Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union and, once again, the Republic of Armenia was established.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Armenia for the first time, and it truly felt like coming home. Why? Well, because it felt so much like the San Joaquin Valley that I proudly represent, where so many Armenians have settled for generations since their diaspora and as a result of the Armenian genocide.

Like so many other ethnic groups throughout the world, the people of Armenia are friendly. They are warm and proud of their traditions, culture, and religion.

I had the opportunity as a young person to grow up with so many of our good friends and neighbors—the Kezerians, the Abrahamians, the Koligians—whose Armenian heritage I learned as a young person and has added so much not only to the community of the San Joaquin Valley, but to our Nation as a whole.

It is an honor to recognize Armenia's 25th anniversary and the Armenian people in the San Joaquin Valley and the communities throughout the Nation and the world.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think I would be remiss in this recognition if I did not take this opportunity to urge Congress and the President of the United States to go on record as recognizing the Armenian genocide and the devastating violence committed against the Armenian people over 100 years ago, the first genocide recorded and recognized by historians in the 20th century.

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Of course, we know from that genocide came the later followed by the Holocaust, and sadly generations have suffered. I want to thank my colleagues for joining in recognizing Armenia's 25th anniversary.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend, Delegate John Overington, and the West Virginia State Legislature for passing the balanced budget amendment resolution in March.

West Virginia has joined 27 other States in calling for a constitutional convention under Article V to force the Federal Government to add a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution for one simple reason: the Federal Government has a spending problem. America has run up a debt of over \$19 trillion, largely to fund past and present expenditures using money that should belong to future American generations.

West Virginia families and businesses have to operate on balanced budgets, and I believe the Federal Government should also have to operate within its means. America cannot afford to continue spending like it has been. That is why I cosponsored H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I encourage my colleagues in the House and Senate to cosponsor this important joint resolution.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO CORPORAL HERSHEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say happy birthday to a true American hero, Corporal Hershel "Woody" Williams.

Woody is one of the last two surviving United States Marine Corps Medal of Honor recipients of World War II and the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Born on October 2, 1923, Woody Williams grew up on a dairy farm in Fairmont, West Virginia. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve in Charleston, West Virginia, on May 26, 1943.

Woody completed 2 years of service and was trained to use both tanks and flamethrowers. Williams, a corporal, landed in Iwo Jima in 1945. American tanks were trying to open a lane for the infantry when they encountered a network of reinforced Japanese concrete pillboxes, buried mines, and black volcanic sands.

Corporal Williams went forward with his 70-pound flamethrower in an attempt to reduce the devastating machine gun fire from the fortified enemy positions. Covered by only four riflemen, he continued this arduous task for 4 hours under heavy enemy small-arms fire.

He resupplied and returned to the front lines time and again to wipe out one enemy pillbox after another. On one of these returns, to the point of the spear of the battle, a wisp of smoke alerted him to an air vent of a Japanese bunker. He approached this heavily fortified position close enough to put the nozzle of his flamethrower

through the vent, killing all the occupants inside.

On another occasion, he was charged by multiple enemy riflemen who attempted to kill him with fixed bayonets. Woody was too quick, and he used his flamethrower to send them to their makers. These actions occurred on the same day as the raising of the U.S. flag on the island's Mount Suribachi. Woody fought through the remainder of the 5-week long battle and was wounded on March 6, for which he was awarded the Purple Heart.

President Truman awarded him the Medal of Honor in 1945. In 2013, the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation was launched to carry out Woody's vision of recognizing and honoring Gold Star families around the country. The goal of the foundation is to establish at least one Gold Star family memorial monument in every State over the next 5 years to honor families who have sacrificed a loved one in service of their country.

Woody spends his time traveling the country supporting the military families and reminding all of us that freedom has not been and is not free.

Upcoming memorial dedications are in Fort Knox, Kentucky, on September 23; Fall River, Massachusetts, and Port St. Lucie, Florida, on September 25; Palmetto Bay, Florida, on October 15; Barboursville, West Virginia, on October 30; Annapolis, Maryland, on November 11; and Medina, Ohio, on November 12.

Woody's passion and love of his country and fellow man has never ceased. We can all learn how to be better Americans from Woody, and I wish him a happy upcoming 93rd birthday.

DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE ADVOCACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, the Standing Rock Sioux and all tribes have the right to self-determination and a say in decisions that impact their health, land, and cultural preservation. It is not just a matter of justice, it is the law. Don't we all, as Americans, have that right? Isn't that the whole premise of our democracy?

Being able to have a voice in decisions that affect our lives is the cornerstone of our American democracy. It thrives when we stand up, speak up, and voice our concerns on matters vital to our existence as humans, like our health, clean drinking water, and cultural survival.

That is why I stand with the Standing Rock Sioux and hundreds of tribes throughout our Nation to demand that the Army Corps of Engineers comply with their legal trust responsibilities to protect tribal lands, cancel the Dakota Access Pipeline permit, conduct meaningful consultation with the tribes, and do a complete environmental impact statement.

The Standing Rock Sioux and neighboring tribes are rightfully concerned that the pipeline will destroy sacred sites and that an oil spill would cause devastating and irreversible harm to their land, health, and drinking water. The proposed pipeline is over 1,000 miles long, transporting up to 16,000 gallons of crude oil a minute, upstream from the tribes' water source, near the reservation, and on tribal land. A leak would be devastating. It was already determined to be too risky to construct near the city of Bismarck's water sources.

The Army Corps has granted construction permits, despite legal and noncompliance warnings by other Federal agencies. That is why, on September 8, I called for a systemwide GAO investigative report on Federal agencies' compliance with meaningful tribal consultation policies. On September 9, the Departments of the Interior, Justice, and the Army announced a pause in construction to review their compliance with Federal policies. I welcome this review.

Tribes have rights under law. The Federal Government has a moral and legally enforceable obligation to protect tribal treaties, land, and resources under the Federal trust responsibility. Tribes have the right to regular and meaningful consultation under executive order 13175. Under the Historic Preservation Act, Federal agencies are required to be responsible stewards of our Nation's historic resources and consult with Indian tribes when their actions may impact sacred sites.

Furthermore, the Army Corps, under the Clean Water Act, must protect our Nation's waters from contamination by conducting accurate environmental assessments to determine if construction permits should be granted. Unfortunately, the Army Corps granted a permit based on flawed assessments, incomplete information, and a willful disregard for the serious concerns raised by the tribe and other Federal agencies.

Chairman David Achambault from the Standing Rock Sioux reported that they were not meaningfully consulted and didn't even know about the Corps' assessment until it was made public. He has serious concerns about the pipeline's harm to the tribe's health, water source, and sacred sites.

Letters from the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to the Army Corps list their serious concerns. They mention the potential of a devastating oil spill, lack of emergency response plans, desecration of sacred sites, noncompliance with Federal policies and laws, and even disagreed with the Corps' environmental assessment.

They recommended a full environmental impact study, an expanded environmental justice analysis, consideration of all sacred sites along the path of the pipeline, and meaningful tribal consultation prior to any decisions.

Moving forward, all Federal agencies must conduct meaningful tribal consultation and address concerns regarding risks to drinking water and desecration of sacred sites. The Corps must cancel their faulty permit near tribal land and complete a full environmental impact statement. Only then can the President make an informed decision to permanently stop construction of the pipeline on Federal property near tribal land. You have the authority and moral imperative to do what is right.

Time after time, tribes have seen their treaties broken, their lands taken, and sacred sites desecrated. I visited with the Standing Rock Sioux and witnessed Native Americans from hundreds of other tribes standing together in peace and prayer to protect their water and ancestral sacred sites. I have witnessed their dignity and their resolve. They stand in solidarity for their full rights under Federal law and for their voices to be heard. They stand in unity, and I stand with them.

WISHING HERSEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS A HAPPY 93RD BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as the Congressman representing West Virginia's Third Congressional District, I am proud to call Hershel "Woody" Williams a constituent.

I first met Woody more than 18 years ago when I was first elected to the State legislature, and he has been a constituent of mine for the past two decades. But I am just as proud to call Woody my friend.

Over the years, at countless legislative committee hearings, veterans' recognition and appreciation events, Veterans Day, and Memorial Day commemorations, Woody has been there fighting for our veterans. Woody always has a kind word, a friendly smile, and an optimistic outlook.

I have two sons that became Eagle Scouts. Very often our local Scout council gets the newly awarded Eagles all together, and Woody is invited to come in and spend a little time with the boys and share a few thoughts. I can't tell you the power of the impact it had on my boys when Woody shook their hand, looked them in the eye, and challenged them to conduct their life according to the Scout oath and motto—to do their duty to God and country.

Woody truly embodies that motto. Throughout West Virginia and the Nation, Woody is best known for his brave efforts in the Pacific theater during World War II. At a critical point in the Battle of Iwo Jima, and with minimal backup, Corporal Williams heard the call and acted. He disregarded his personal safety. He thought not of the seemingly monumental task in front of him. He did not stop to calculate the odds of success—or the odds of failure.