

RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICERS AND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WITH 25 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HOUSE AND RECIPIENTS OF THE HOUSE EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARD AND THE OFFICERS' AND INSPECTORS GENERAL'S TEAM PLAYER AWARD

## HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, today, Ranking Member ROBERT BRADY and I wish to recognize the exceptional employees of the Officers (Clerk of the House, Sergeant at Arms, and Chief Administrative Officer) and the Inspector General of the U.S. House of Representatives, and congratulate those who have reached the milestone of 25 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as the recipients of the House Employee Excellence Award and the Officers' and Inspector General's Team Player Award.

The House's most important asset is its remarkable and steadfast employees, whose work is essential to keeping the operations and services of the House running efficiently and effectively. The employees we acknowledge today are commended for their hard work, dedication, professionalism, and teamwork; support of House Members, their staffs, and their constituents, and for their contributions day-in and day-out to the overall operations of the House. These employees, whose work is often performed behind the scenes, possess a wide range of responsibilities and skills that support the legislative process, ensure the security of this great institution, maintain our technology and service infrastructure, and contribute to more efficient and productive House support operations. These dedicated employees have accomplished many great things in a diverse range of activities, and the House of Representatives, its Members, staff, and the American public are better served because of them.

We recognize and honor the individuals named below for 25 years of loyal service to the House. Collectively, the employees listed below have provided 350 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Lisa Alvey, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Kevin Brennan, Office of the Sergeant at Arms;

William Crudup III, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Sharon Ellis-Gregg, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

John Hodges, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Derek Johann, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

William Michalek, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Louis Miller Jr., Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Michael Modica, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Christopher Naughton, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Todd Redlin, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Ronald Simmons, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Tammy Taft, Office of the Clerk;

Louis Williams Jr., Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

We also recognize and congratulate the House employees receiving the House Employee Excellence Award. This award is merit based; given to one employee from each House Officer organization, and the Office of Inspector General. Selected employees exhibited outstanding overall job performance and displayed a willingness to go above and beyond the requirements of their job for their organization throughout the last year. We honor the individuals named below for receiving this prestigious award.

Steven Johnson, Office of Inspector General;

Diana Rodriguez, Office of the Sergeant at Arms;

Robert Rota Jr., Office of the Clerk;

Angelisa Sarnowski, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

And finally, we recognize and congratulate the House employees being presented the Team Player Award. This award recognizes the value the House Officers and the Inspector General place on working collaboratively across House organizations to strengthen and protect the U.S. House of Representatives. These awardees have demonstrated a collaborative attitude, commitment to achieving team objectives, respect and support of their teammates, and dedication to the betterment of House operations. We honor the individuals named below for receiving this distinguished award.

Kim Arenas, Office of the Sergeant at Arms;

Karen McKinstry, Office of the Clerk;

Joseph Picolla, Office of Inspector General;

Timothy Wright, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

On behalf of the entire House community, we offer our congratulations and once again acknowledge and thank these employees for their professionalism and commitment to the U.S. House of Representatives as a whole, and in particular to their respective House Officers, the Inspector General, and collaboratively across these organizations. Their long hours, hard work, diverse skills, and team spirit are invaluable, and their years of unwavering service, dedication, and commitment to the House set an example for their colleagues and other employees who will follow in their footsteps. We celebrate our honorees, and we are proud to stand before you and the nation on their behalf to recognize the importance of their public service.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO BETTER LIFE IN RECOVERY

### HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Better Life in Recovery, an organization located in Springfield, Missouri. Founded by David Stoecker, this organization is a wonderful example of community service and is an inspiration to many across the state of Missouri.

Better Life in Recovery has a mission that is twofold. Firstly, to foster dignity for those who

struggle with substance abuse and mental health issues through performing community service. Secondly, the organization seeks to generate more public awareness of the dangers of substance abuse, through the medium of educational presentations, media interviews and public safety announcements.

On September 16 of this year the organization will be hosting a fundraising race to benefit recovery programs. It will begin at Rutledge Wilson Farm in Springfield. The fact that the race is held in September is also very pertinent with regards to the Better Life in Recovery's mission as it is held during National Recovery Month. National Recovery Month runs through the month of September. The purpose of National Recovery Month is to raise awareness and understanding of the various mental and substance use disorders some of our fellow Americans suffer from. It is also a month to celebrate those who have recovered from their addictions.

Mr. Speaker, Better Life in Recovery is an inspirational organization that I am humbled to recognize today. I would like to extend my personal congratulations and admiration on their achievements and hard work over the years. On behalf of the 7th District of Missouri, I wish this great organization the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. VAL BUTLER DEMINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, my return to Washington this week was delayed by the impacts of Hurricane Irma.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 485, NAY on Roll Call No. 486, and NAY on Roll Call No. 487.

## INTRODUCTION TO ELECTORAL COLLEGE REFORM

### HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the resolution I am introducing today expresses the sense of Congress that it and the states should consider a constitutional amendment to reform the Electoral College and to establish a process for electing the President and Vice President by a national popular vote. The resolution also encourages the states to further their efforts to form an interstate compact to award their Electoral College votes to the national popular vote winner.

This Sunday, September 17 is Constitution Day, marks the 230th anniversary of the Philadelphia Convention's approval of the Constitution. We should rightly celebrate the day that the Framers endorsed the basic framework of our democratic system of government enshrined in our Nation's governing charter. Yet, we should also use this day as an opportunity to reflect on the fact that the Constitution still retains the Electoral College, a fundamentally

anti-democratic process for electing our Nation's highest federal officeholders.

On five occasions in our history, the Electoral College has permitted the national popular vote winner to lose the presidential election, including the most recent election, where Hillary Clinton won nearly 3 million more votes than Electoral College winner Donald Trump. This occurs because a presidential candidate needs only 270 electoral votes and 48 states award their electoral votes on a "winner-take-all" basis. As a result, the Electoral College creates perverse incentives for candidates that further distort the presidential campaign process in undemocratic ways.

For example, the Electoral College encourages candidates to focus their campaign efforts on only a handful of so-called swing states. During the last presidential campaign, for example, both major party candidates largely bypassed three of the four states with the largest populations and skipped campaigning in 12 of the 13 smallest states as well.

Additionally, the Electoral College is an anachronistic institution intended, in part, to protect the institution of slavery. According to Yale Law School Professor Akhil Reed Amar, who participated in a forum on Electoral College reform sponsored by House Judiciary Committee Democrats last year, the Electoral College was established, in part, to preserve the political influence of slaveholding states. Although enslaved populations were not allowed to vote, slave states insisted that three-fifths of enslaved persons be counted when determining a state's representation in the House, which in turn affected the number of Electoral College votes allotted to the state.

Given its history and undemocratic nature, it is clear that the Electoral College system must be replaced with a process that determines the election of the president and vice president by a national popular vote. As such, Congress and the States should consider a constitutional amendment to reform the Electoral College.

And, Congress should also encourage the States to reform the Electoral College through the formation of an interstate compact. Eleven states representing 165 electoral votes have already entered into an interstate compact to cast their electoral votes for the national popular vote winner. When enough states—representing 270 electoral votes—join the compact, the presidential election will essentially be determined by national popular vote, obviating the need for a constitutional amendment.

In a democracy, no person's vote should be worth more than any other person's vote. Congress should affirm its commitment to this essential principle and definitively declare that the American people, not state-based Electors, should have the power to directly select the President and Vice President of the United States.

HONORING REV. DR. AMOS BROWN  
AND JANE BROWN

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Reverend Dr. Amos Brown and Jane

Brown, as they celebrate 40 years of service at the historic Third Baptist Church of San Francisco.

Born on February 20, 1941 in Jackson, Mississippi, Rev. Brown became a fighter for civil rights and social justice at an early age after being influenced by Emmitt Till's murder and other examples of injustice in the Jim Crow South.

As a student leader attending Jim Hill High School, he spoke out about segregation in public education, and was barred from serving as valedictorian despite being elected to that position by his schoolmates.

His social activism led him to Morehouse College, where he was personally selected by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to enroll in the only class that Dr. King taught during his life. After graduating from Morehouse, Rev. Brown dedicated himself to the ministry and received his Masters of Divinity from Crozer Theological Seminary, and his Doctor of Ministry from the United Theological Seminary.

In 1976, Rev. Brown and his wife Jane moved west when he accepted a position as the senior pastor of Third Baptist Church of San Francisco. In that position he was able to combine his passion for tending to the spiritual well-being of the community with his desire to promote social and community activism to address the causes of injustice throughout society.

Under his guidance, Third Baptist has established itself as a leader in addressing the physical needs of the community and built bridges to expand the reach of his congregation in helping those in need around the world.

Third Baptist has led relief efforts in Africa, including sponsoring refugees and helped enable 80 children from Tanzania to receive heart surgery in the United States.

Rev. Brown's social activism also led him to many leadership positions outside of the ministry. He has served as the President of the San Francisco NAACP, and on the board of the national NAACP organization. He has also held elected positions as a San Francisco Community College Trustee and a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

On a personal note, I have been honored to learn from and work alongside Rev. and Mrs. Brown. I am incredibly grateful for their support, and for the selfless example that they have set by living out the teachings of scripture in their everyday lives.

Today, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I salute Reverend Dr. Amos Brown and Jane Brown for their 40 years of service to the greater Bay Area, and beyond. The East Bay joins in celebrating the leadership that you have shown, and I look forward to many more years of working with them and Third Baptist.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF HARVEST CHURCH OF  
GOD

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize the 100th Anniversary of Harvest Church of God in Anniston, Alabama.

In 1916, J.B. Ellis walked through Gadsden, Alabama, and started the Alabama City Church of God, then moved on to Jacksonville, Alabama, and founded the Jacksonville Church of God. In 1917, in Anniston, Alabama, he put up a tent in Zinn Park and started a revival meeting that resulted in church set in order as Anniston Church of God.

Today those humble beginnings have resulted in Harvest Church of God. The church has 1,750 members who worship in a \$12 million sanctuary, ministering to all of Northeast Alabama through multiple ministries. The church has also been a global television ministry for 20 of the 100 years.

The present pastor, Bishop Jerry Irwin, was appointed Senior Pastor of the church in 1986 and has begun his 32nd year of serving in the position.

The 100 year celebration will take place at Harvest Church of God on September 17, 2017.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the 100th Anniversary of Harvest Church of God.

SUMMER 2017 TRIP TO POLAND,  
LITHUANIA, AND ISRAEL

**HON. SCOTT TAYLOR**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD remarks on behalf of my constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the Founding Rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Born in Chu, Kazakhstan (USSR) in 1945, he is the son of Polish Holocaust Survivors.

"It was early Sunday morning and I was leaving the house on the way to preach at Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church in Virginia Beach. I am, gratefully, this historic church's Honorary Senior Rabbi Schol-ar. Having visited Poland, Lithuania, and Israel earlier this summer, I was eager to share my unsettling and transforming experiences from the trip, experiences that still keep me up at night. My 97-year-old mom's call from Haifa, Israel, 6,000 miles away, alarmed me. My indomitable mom, a Holocaust survivor from the Ukraine, worriedly uttered, "What's happening in Virginia?" She was referring, of course, to the tragic events that unfolded in Charlottesville due to the neo-Nazi, white supremacist, and KKK (What an unholy alliance!) repulsive rally.

That truly anti-American, vile anti-Semitic rally resurrected history's worst images which led to untold pain and loss. My mom's keen conscience and life's trying legacy, prompted her to be deeply concerned about what transpires in America 2017. After all, she is a witness that hatred of the other, fueled by prejudice, bigotry and jealousy, can end up, as it did, in gas chambers and mass executions of millions. The presence of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in our nation's capital is a poignant statement and a timely warning that democracies, even our great one, are vulnerable institutions; that poisonous ideas and pernicious minds can undermine all that we so cherish.