

Richard Gale is a pillar of the Bozeman community. He was awarded the President's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015 for his strong commitment to volunteerism.

Mr. Gale is an active member of the Bozeman American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America, and eight other organizations. His civic service includes positions on the Bozeman Police Commission and the Gallatin County 9-1-1 Advisory Committee. The Bozeman Elks honored him as the 2017 Veteran of the Year.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Richard Gale for his dedication and service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on November 30, 2017, I was not present for votes because I was unavoidably detained due to a death in the family. Had I been present, I would have voted: Nay on Roll Call No. 642; Yea on Roll Call No. 643, passage of H.R. 3905, Minnesota's Economic Rights in Superior National Forest Act; Yea on Roll Call No. 644; Yea on Roll Call No. 645; Nay on Roll Call No. 646; Nay on Roll Call No. 647; Yea on Roll Call No. 648; and Yea on Roll Call No. 649.

TRIBUTE TO SHRIYA MAGATAPALLI

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Shriya Magatapalli. Shriya and her fellow teammates created the winning app, City Recycle Day, as part of the 2017 Congressional App Challenge. Their team is combined of students who attend Waukee High School and Prairie View Middle School in Waukee, Iowa.

The Congressional App Challenge encourages students to learn how to code through annual district-wide competitions hosted by Members of Congress from their home district. The team's app is entitled "City Recycle Day". It is designed to alert members of a community as to the date of their next trash/recycle pickup day. It also alerts users of special pickups and delays.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Shriya and her teammates for creating the winning app, and I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Shriya and her teammates on this outstanding accomplishment and in wishing them all nothing but continued success.

RECOGNIZING FRANK STOLTZ FOR THE MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. GREG GIANFORTE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Frank Stoltz of Miles City for the Montana Congressional Veteran Commendation for his service to his country and leadership in his community.

Mr. Stoltz joined the United States Army Air Corps in 1943 and fought overseas during World War II. He was awarded numerous medals including the Purple Heart and the Prisoner of War Medal. His service to his community, however, did not stop after his discharge in 1945.

Upon his return to Miles City, Mr. Stoltz started his own auto body repair shop and became active in supporting Montana communities through local and statewide business organizations. He also participated in the VFW and ExPOW organizations.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending Frank Stoltz for his dedication and service.

BROWNFIELDS ENHANCEMENT, ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT, AND REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER A. DEFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 30, 2017

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following letter:

THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES, NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES, AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS,

March 28, 2017.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,
Chairman, Energy and Commerce Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. FRANK J. PALLONE, JR.,
Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Ranking Member, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WALDEN, RANKING MEMBER PALLONE, CHAIRMAN SHUSTER AND RANKING MEMBER DEFAZIO: On behalf of the nation's mayors, cities, counties and regions, we strongly encourage you to reauthorize and improve the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields program, which is key for both economic development and job creation in local communities across the country.

Since its creation, the EPA Brownfields program has provided crucial assistance to local governments for reclaiming hazardous, polluted and underutilized properties. To date, there have been over 26,000 brownfields assessments and 1,200 brownfields cleanups

nationally, which has led to over 123,000 jobs. Each of the \$22 billion federal dollars that has been invested since the program was established in 2002 has leveraged approximately \$16 in other investments, close to \$400 billion in total.

While many communities have benefited from brownfields redevelopment efforts under this program, the U.S. Government Accountability Office estimates there are between 400,000 and 600,000 remaining brownfields sites throughout the United States. To build upon these past successes and assist in the cleanup, reuse and redevelopment of remaining sites, some key improvements to the program are needed.

INCREASE OR MAINTAIN AUTHORIZATION AMOUNTS

While we understand the fiscal challenges and constraints faced by the U.S. Congress, we strongly encourage you to authorize and fully fund the Brownfields program to at least previously authorized levels. The Brownfields program has a proven track record of leveraging additional investments, creating new jobs, and redeveloping new properties, while creating additional tax revenues.

At current appropriation levels, EPA has had to turn away many highly qualified applicants due to a lack of funding. EPA estimates that for the past 5 years, over 1,700 requests for viable projects were not awarded money because of limited funding. EPA estimates that if they were able to provide funding to those turned away applicants, an additional 50,000 jobs would have been created along with \$12 billion of leveraged funding.

Additionally, President Trump has made reinvesting in America and putting people back to work as key priorities for his administration. In order to make this happen and to do so quickly, Congress should utilize existing programs, and we believe that the Brownfields program would be a strong candidate for any type of reinvestment initiative. That is why we urge Congress to increase or at least maintain the current authorization levels for EPA's brownfields program.

INCREASE OVERALL GRANT FUNDING TO ALLOW COMMUNITIES TO CLEANUP MORE DIFFICULT SITES

Although many brownfield sites have been redeveloped, what remains are brownfield sites that are more difficult to redevelop due to their level of contamination or marketplace conditions. Communities would like the EPA program to be expanded to address the clean up challenges at these more complex sites.

We suggest the following:

Increase Cleanup Grant Amounts—Congress should recognize the complexity of the cleanup process for larger or more complicated sites by increasing the funding limit for cleanup of a single site to \$1 million. Under special circumstances, EPA could waive the limit, up to \$2 million per site.

Establish Multi-Purpose Brownfields Grants—Congress should allow local governments to have the option to apply for multi-purpose grants that can be used for the full range of brownfields-funded activities (assessment, cleanup, reuse planning, etc.) on a community-wide basis. Applicants should be required to demonstrate a plan and the capacity for using this multi-purpose funding within a set timeline in order to qualify for such funding.

Allow Funding for Reasonable Administrative Costs for Local Brownfields Programs—Congress should allow brownfields grant recipients to use a small portion (10 percent) of their grant to cover reasonable administrative costs such as rent, utilities and other costs necessary to carry out a brownfields project.

BROWNFIELDS LIABILITY CONCERN ARE A DISINCENTIVE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Local governments face enormous challenges in brownfields redevelopment. One of the most significant challenges is the potential liability for local governments, which creates a disincentive to acquire contaminated property. We encourage Congress to revise the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) to encourage and protect local communities who choose to take ownership of blighted properties for the purpose of brownfields redevelopment where the local government had no role in creating the contamination. These changes should include:

Clarify Eligibility of Publicly-Owned Sites Acquired Before 2002—Congress should allow local governments to be eligible for grant funding for properties that were acquired prior to the January 11, 2002 enactment of the Brownfields Revitalization Act—when there was no required standard for “all appropriate inquiries”—provided that the applicant did not cause or contribute to the contamination and performed “appropriate care.” For these sites, applicants would not have to demonstrate that they performed all appropriate inquiry.

Remove Barriers to Local and State Governments in Addressing Mothballed Sites—Congress should exempt local and state governments from CERCLA liability if the government unit (a) owns a brownfields property as defined by section 101(39); (b) did not cause or contribute to contamination on the property; and (c) exercises due care with regard to any known contamination at the site. We suggest language to amend section 101(20)(D) that clarifies that properties acquired through eminent domain qualify for the CERCLA exemption for local governments involved in “Involuntary Acquisitions.” Alternatively, we would suggest language that establishes a simplified and clear exemption from CERCLA liability for local governments that acquire brownfields sites.

Eliminate Eligibility Barriers for Petroleum Brownfields Sites—Grantees that seek to use assessment, cleanup or multi-purpose grants on sites with petroleum contamination should not be required to make the difficult demonstrations that the site is “low risk” and that there is “no viable responsible party” connected with the site. We recommend replacing the “No Viable Responsible Party” language in section 101(39)(D) with a prohibition on using funds to pay for cleanup costs at a brownfields site for which the recipient of the grant is potentially liable under the petroleum statutes. This would parallel the language for non-petroleum brownfields sites.

If you have any questions, please contact Judy Sheahan at USCM, Carolyn Berndt at NLC, Julie Ufner at NACo, or Leslie Wollack at NARC. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

TOM COCHRAN,
CEO and Executive
Director, The U.S.
Conference of Mayors.

MATTHEW D. CHASE,
Executive Director,
National Association
of Counties.

CLARENCE E. ANTHONY,
CEO and Executive
Director, National
League of Cities.

LESLIE WOLLACK,
Executive Director,
National Association
of Regional Councils.

RECOGNIZING COMMANDER BRIAN “BEEF” DRECHSLER

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise, along with my colleague Representative SCOTT PETERS, to recognize Commander Brian “Beef” M. Drechsler as a recipient of the 2017 Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale Leadership Award.

Established in honor of Vice Admiral Stockdale, this award symbolizes the highest standard of excellence in both personal conduct and leadership. According to VADM Stockdale, there are five roles of a leader—moralist, jurist, teacher, steward, and philosopher. CMDR Drechsler embodies these standards.

Hailing from Pittsburgh, PA, CMDR Drechsler is a 1998 United States Naval Academy graduate and was selected to become a SEAL. At the Academy, he played football and was eventually elected to both the Naval Academy Hall of Fame and the Navy Marine Corps Stadium 50th Anniversary team. He went on to further his education and earned a Master’s degree in Organizational Management from The George Washington University.

After graduation from Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training, and an assignment to SEAL Team FIVE, Beef completed three tours of duty—combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, deployments to PACOM, and was an integral member in the creation of the U.S. Central Command Crisis Response Element. He went on to serve as the Aide to the Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, and as Troop Commander and Squadron Operations Officer at Naval Special Warfare Development Group.

Subsequently, he served in the U.S. Special Operations Command Officer of Legislative Affairs, then as Operations and Executive Officer of SEAL Team ONE. Next, he became the Director of Operations and Plans (N3/5) for Naval Special Warfare Group ONE and then took command of SEAL Team FIVE until 2017. Currently, he serves as a special assistant to the Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command.

Nominated in recognition of “his high standards, strong example, selfless service and personal commitment to his command members and their families,” CMDR Drechsler truly exemplifies all that is encompassed in a leader.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, we are proud to celebrate the accomplishments of CMDR Drechsler and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING STANLEY WATSON FOR THE MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. GREG GIANFORTE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stanley Watson of Forsyth for the

Montana Congressional Veteran Commendation for his service to his country and leadership in his community.

Mr. Watson enlisted in the United States Marine Corps following his high school graduation in 1966. He became a sergeant and served on many important battlefronts during the Vietnam War. He was honorably discharged in 1968.

Following his military career, Mr. Watson joined Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1849, later serving other veterans as the post commander. He is a member of the Honor Guard and is a strong advocate for the organization, encouraging other veterans to become involved.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending Stanley Watson for his dedication and service.

TRIBUTE TO OWEN SCOTT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Owen Scott. Owen and his fellow teammates created the winning app, City Recycle Day, as part of the 2017 Congressional App Challenge. Their team is combined of students who attend Waukee High School and Prairie View Middle School in Waukee, Iowa.

The Congressional App Challenge encourages students to learn how to code through annual district-wide competitions hosted by Members of Congress from their home district. The team’s app is entitled “City Recycle Day”. It is designed to alert members of a community as to the date of their next trash/recycle pickup day. It also alerts users of special pickups and delays.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Owen and his teammates for creating the winning app, and I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Owen and his teammates on this outstanding accomplishment and in wishing them all nothing but continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MAJOR CAESAR CIVITELLA

HON. CHARLIE CRIST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 1, 2017

Mr. CRIST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and service of Major Caesar Civitella of St. Petersburg, Florida.

With his passing on October 25, 2017, America lost a man who was emblematic of what it means to be a true patriot. Both in defense of his homeland, and when called to protect the homes of our allies, Major Civitella was always ready to answer the call to service. His heroic combat achievements on battlefields across the globe, coupled with his many contributions to our intelligence services, leave a legacy that Florida’s 13th Congressional District is proud to uphold.