

bypass China's "Great Firewall." The networking site LinkedIn agreed to censor content and Facebook is promising to do the same in order to get access to the Chinese market.

Chinese operations to curtail the activities of dissidents and critics of the Communist Party are also pervasive, troubling, and must be stopped. We have heard multiple stories from U.S. citizens and foreign nationals living in the U.S. about efforts to intimidate, censor, and silence them.

The case of Chinese billionaire Guo Wengui is just the latest example of egregious behavior. High-ranking Chinese security ministry officials, in the US on transit visas no less, met with Mr. Guo multiple times in order to threaten and convince him to leave the U.S.

Chinese agents have repeatedly violated U.S. sovereignty and law according to the Wall Street Journal report on the incident.

These incidents and those we will discuss today are just the tip of the iceberg.

The Commission's 2017 Annual Report contains several recommendations to counter Chinese foreign influence operations—including expanding the mandate of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) to include Chinese government media organizations and think-tanks, expanded Internet Freedom initiatives and efforts to counter Chinese propaganda and disinformation at the State Department. I encourage those interested to look at our recommendations.

As we start to grapple with the scale and scope of Chinese influence operations, we will be looking for new legislative ideas and I hope our witnesses today can provide recommendations for the Commission's action.

We must be clear from the outset that we support better relations with the people of China and the United States. The issues we are discussing here today are part of influence operations conducted by the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese government.

President Xi Jinping, who has concentrated more power than any Chinese leader since Mao, is determined to make the world safe for authoritarianism. Beijing is intent on exporting its censorship regime, intimidating dissidents and their families, sanitizing history, and stifling critical discussions of its repressive policies.

These actions pose direct threats to deeply held core values and fundamental freedoms enjoyed by all democratic societies. We must find ways to effectively and resolutely push back. Doing so should be a critical national interest.

CONGRATULATING LANARK, ILLINOIS FOR BEING NAMED A PROJECT WINNER FOR THE 2017 GOVERNOR'S HOMETOWN AWARD

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lanark, Illinois for being named a project winner for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award due to its project, Workation 2016.

A group of volunteers from Lanark First Brethren Church, who were previously involved in Alaskan mission work camp pro-

grams, believed they needed a more local, neighbor-helping-neighbor type of program in Lanark. From this idea, Workation 2016 was created. This project sought requests from older residents that had small projects that they were not able to accomplish on their own. Volunteers would then complete these maintenance projects, safety upgrades, or landscaping projects at no cost to the resident. 30 different projects around town were completed by 30 volunteers. According to the volunteers, the greatest benefit of the program is the relationships that are developed and the rewarding feeling of making a home safer or more comfortable for a resident.

The hard work and generosity visible through Lanark's Workation 2016 project makes me especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Lanark, Illinois for being named a project winner for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award.

RECOGNIZING JUDGE WALTER F. DRAG UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Judge Walter F. Drag, who is retiring after more than three decades of judicial service to the City of Dunkirk, New York.

Judge Drag was recommended for appointment as Acting City Court Judge on January 1, 1985, and became City Court Judge in 1990. Over that time, he has heard thousands of cases and upheld the law with distinction. In addition, he maintained a private law practice until 2007, and spent several stints teaching law as a college professor.

Among Judge Drag's many accomplishments as City Court Judge is the establishment of a Treatment Court in 2002 for individuals charged with crimes related to substance abuse. In the years since then, more than seven hundred people have participated, with the majority successfully completing the treatment program.

It is a privilege to congratulate Judge Walter F. Drag on a distinguished career of service to the City of Dunkirk, and to wish him all the best in retirement. He leaves behind a legacy that will benefit the residents of his community for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO JODY REYNOLDS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jody Reynolds of Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. Jody has been a tireless advocate for children her entire life. Her experience with birth com-

plications with her third child opened her eyes to what services were and were not available, and led her to advocacy. She's helped to raise \$109 million for Variety—The children's Charity over the years, and served as the first female president of Variety International. One of the many words of advice she offered to the magazine was to press forward through adversity, and to also enjoy the journey.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Jody for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud her for her service to her community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jody for this outstanding achievement and in wishing her nothing but the best.

HONORING PEDDRICK M. YOUNG, SR. OF PENNSYLVANIA ON HIS RETIREMENT AFTER MORE THAN 29 YEARS OF SERVICE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I extend my sincere congratulations to my constituent, Peddrick M. Young, Sr., upon his retirement from almost 30 years of service with the Lower Allen Township Board of Commissioners.

First, I thank Mr. Young for his service to our Nation in the United States Marine Corps. I've long appreciated the commitment of people who devote themselves selflessly to serving our Nation.

Mr. Young also has a demonstrated record of service to our communities. He previously retired from his position as facilities manager with Commerce Bank, staff to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, and staff assistant in the U.S. House to one of my predecessors, the late Congressman Bill Goodling.

Mr. Young's civic service included the Pennsylvania Crime Stoppers, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners, and many others. He also served as an active member of many community service organizations.

Mr. Young's tireless dedication, professionalism and sacrifice touched the lives of countless people and challenged all with whom he served to be the best. His legacy of service to our communities will endure.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, I thank and congratulate Peddrick M. Young, Sr. on his service and wish him and his family Godspeed, great happiness and success in their future adventures.

RECOGNIZING THE LENA-WINSLOW PANTHERS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR THEIR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Lena-Winslow Panthers Football

Team for their Class 1A championship win against the Tuscola Warriors.

The Panthers held a 21–7 lead at half-time, with 267 yards of total offense. By the fourth quarter, the Warriors had closed the Panthers' lead to one point. The Warriors had a chance at a game winning touchdown when Panther player Rahveon Valentine broke up a pass on fourth down with only 10 seconds remaining in the game. This secured Lena-Winslow's third state championship title in the last eight years and the program's first-ever unbeaten season.

Mr. Speaker, as a former athlete, I understand how important this is to the young men, the coaches and the community. They never gave up. They kept playing their best, and their team spirit and belief in themselves helped them become state champions. Their efforts and resilience should inspire us all.

HONORING MRS. JUANITA KNOTT

HON. JOHN J. FASO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound respect that I rise today to recognize and celebrate Mrs. Juanita Knott for being named a "New York State Registered Historian". This designation is reserved for those special few in our state who exemplify ingenuity and have an authentic passion for promoting local history.

Mrs. Knott has served the Town of Stuyvesant as its historian for over twenty years. Through actively conserving, interpreting, and presenting the town's history in unique and engaging ways, she has unearthed the wonders, heroes, and stories of Stuyvesant's past. Understanding local history is a key way in which we discover a shared identity and strengthen our democracy. That is why historians like Mrs. Knott play such a vital role in communities throughout New York and nationwide.

I am grateful for Mrs. Knott's years of dedicated service to the Stuyvesant community, to the 19th District, and to New York state. I wish her the best as she continues to preserve the historical integrity of Stuyvesant. Her work will be remembered for generations to come.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL DANFORTH

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Paul Danforth of Des Moines, Iowa, for being named one of *dsm Magazine's* 2017 "Sages Over 70."

The "Sages Over 70" award honors community leaders who continue to serve as mentors and leaders when others have retired. Paul is a longtime leader in the clinical social work community, having the distinction of being the first African-American to have a private practice in Des Moines and serving as an instructor at three universities. He's been a longtime advocate for social justice, and has devoted countless hours to making a dif-

ference for the community's most vulnerable people. One of the many words of advice he gave to the magazine included to not give up, and to think positively.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Paul for being named a "Sage Over 70" by *dsm Magazine*, and applaud him for his service to his community. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Paul for this outstanding achievement and in wishing him nothing but the best.

HONORING CHIEF DAVE BROWN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Hemet Police Chief David M. Brown on his retirement after more than 30 years in law enforcement. His dedication to ensuring the residents of Hemet are safe and secure is truly commendable. Today, I want to recognize his outstanding life achievements and years of service.

Chief Brown is an esteemed member of our community. He moved to the San Jacinto Valley when he was a child and graduated from Hemet High School. He obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science from California State Polytechnic University and a Master's Degree in Leadership and Organizational Studies from Azusa Pacific University.

His commitment to keeping our citizens safe earned him many promotions over the years, starting as a patrol officer and eventually becoming Chief of Police. During his early years with Hemet Police Department, Chief Brown was one of the founding members of the department's first gang team, raising awareness about gang issues and providing enforcement training to fellow officers and members of the community. Throughout his stellar career in law enforcement, Chief Brown has excelled in several other positions, including field training officer, gang investigator, and SWAT team commander.

Chief Brown is an exceptional leader in our community, dedicating his life to public service. He has served as President of the Riverside County Police Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association, President of the Inland SWAT Commanders Association, a member of the Statewide Committee on Regionalized SWAT Teams, and a member of the CA Police Chiefs' Municipal Policing Resource Workgroup. His wealth of proven leadership experience earned him the award of "Man of the Year" by the Hemet/San Jacinto Valley Chamber of Commerce in 2013 and 2015.

Chief Brown has dedicated his life serving the residents of Hemet. His valuable contributions and arduous work strengthening our community will be felt for years to come.

On behalf of the entire 36th Congressional District, I am humbled to honor and recognize Chief Brown. I offer my sincerest congratulations on his accomplishments and years of public service. I wish him, his wife, and his children all the best on his well-deserved retirement.

FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF SANDY HOOK SHOOTING

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I'd like like to thank the gentlelady from Connecticut for organizing this special order and for her commitment to honoring the victims of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

I rise to join her in remembrance and to call on my colleagues to take immediate action to end gun violence across our nation.

The horrific shooting spree in Newtown, Connecticut, five years ago shocked us all. Twenty innocent children and six brave educators fell victim to unspeakable violence—the work of a deeply disturbed young man armed with a semiautomatic rifle and two handguns.

More than ever, it revealed the desperate need to reform our gun laws.

But five years later, we have nothing to show for it but more mass shootings—more innocent lives lost. We have made no meaningful progress, and we have not passed any commonsense legislation, like banning high-capacity magazines, which the Sandy Hook shooter used.

It is far past time to enact laws to strengthen our background check system, closing loopholes that allow unlicensed gun dealers to sell firearms to Americans without background checks at gun shows and over the internet, putting us all at risk.

Instead, my Republican colleagues continue to try to weaken gun safety laws by passing legislation like the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which would override state law and allow domestic abusers, teenagers, and people untrained in gun safety to carry concealed weapons freely across the nation.

Moreover, they block federal funds from being used to even research gun violence, for fear it will be used to "advocate gun control."

This is simply unacceptable and morally irresponsible. As members of Congress, it is our duty to pass laws to make our communities safer. The only way to respond to mass shootings like the one at Sandy Hook Elementary is to take action that will prevent such tragedies from happening in the future.

Since 2012, more than 170,000 other lives have been ended by gun violence, more than 170,000 families devastated. The gun violence epidemic continues to plague our nation, and we must act now to stop it.

CONGRATULATING MS. PAM VAN KIRK FOR BEING NAMED AN ILLINOIS LIBRARY LUMINARY FOR 2017

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Pam Van Kirk for being named an Illinois Library Luminary for 2017.

Pam Van Kirk's library career started at sixteen years old with typing catalog cards at the