

an avid hunter, lacrosse player, and environmental advocate. He worked to obtain a new health center for the Onondaga Nation School, and to return sacred objects from museums to the Onondaga people. He published several books, including, "Who are These People Anyway?"

It is my honor to recognize the life and legacy of this great leader in our community. May Chief Irving Powless, Jr. name and legacy forever be remembered in the RECORD. Rest peacefully.

HEZBOLLAH'S ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a recent report reveals that the Obama White House, in a desperate attempt to appease the Ayatollahs in Iran, let Hezbollah off the hook. The report outlines how the DEA was on to Hezbollah's illicit network of drug and arms trafficking, money laundering and other criminal activities, yet the Obama administration stalled or blocked any prosecutions that would have disrupted the terror group's nefarious activities so that Iran would agree to the nuclear deal. This stunning revelation adds more evidence to why the JCPOA was a bad deal.

For years Hezbollah built an extensive network in Latin America to raise money for its terrorist activities. Addressing Hezbollah's illicit activities across the globe, but in particular the Western Hemisphere, has been a top priority for Congress for many years.

Through hearings and legislation we have exposed the direct ties between Hezbollah and criminal groups in the region that allowed Hezbollah to amass nearly \$1 billion annually. Yet the U.S. failed to take sufficient action to disrupt this massive flow of money, drugs, and arms that have made Hezbollah the most powerful terrorist group in the world.

In 2014, a GAO review noted that only two of 12 requirements that were mandated by the Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act were being addressed. Meanwhile, Hezbollah's activity in our hemisphere increased. In June 2017, an individual with alleged ties to the terrorist group was arrested in Paraguay and extradited to the U.S. That same month, another individual was arrested for attempting to provide support to Hezbollah in targeting the U.S. and Israeli embassies in Panama. These events followed the 2014 arrest of a Hezbollah operative in Peru, an Iranian-linked assassination attempt on the Saudi Ambassador in Washington in 2011, and the deadly terrorist attacks against two Jewish targets in Argentina in the 1990s. Moreover, the special prosecutor who uncovered Iran and Hezbollah's role in the Argentina attacks was murdered in 2015.

Together with my colleagues, Chairman Cook of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee and Chairman Ros-Lehtinen of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, I have sent a letter to President Trump urging him to address the shortfalls that occurred under the Obama administration in terms of dismantling Hezbollah's illicit activities. We, in the House, have provided the tools necessary to pursue Hezbollah, passing H.R. 3329, the

Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act, which includes Section 105 mandating a U.S. strategy to address Iran and Hezbollah's networks in the Western Hemisphere and requiring the alignment of U.S. actions with our regional partners. We are prepared to do more to make up for years of negligence under the Obama White House that allowed these killers to go unbothered. And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO THE CUMBERLAND TELEPHONE COMPANY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Cumberland Telephone Company of Cumberland, Iowa. This year marks the 120th year of operations for the telecommunications company, which opened its doors in 1897.

The company was originally named the Briscoe-Cumberland Telephone Company. Briscoe was a small mining town located in Adams County, Iowa. Today, the Cumberland Telephone Company is a full-service communications company offering internet, local and long distance phone service, and fiber-to-the-home packages for their customers. It also provides wireless internet services throughout the Cumberland exchange.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate the Cumberland Telephone Company and its staff for providing cutting-edge telecommunication services to the Cumberland community and Southwest Iowa for the past 120 years. I urge my colleagues in the United States Congress to join me in congratulating Cumberland Telephone Company for their numerous achievements in the communications industry and in wishing them all nothing but continued success.

REMEMBERING POTA VALLAS

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Pota Vurnakes Vallas, who died last week at the age of 109, surrounded by her family. A loving wife, mother and grandmother, pioneering businesswoman, and public-spirited citizen, Mrs. Vallas was one of the Fourth District's oldest residents and the matriarch of Raleigh's Greek community. Lisa and I extend our condolences to her family and her many friends and admirers in the Greek community and beyond.

Mrs. Vallas was born in 1908 in the small village of Krissfa, Greece, the eldest of ten children. In 1924 her father, Gus Vurnakes, became the first Greek immigrant to settle in Raleigh and Pota soon followed. Gus opened a fruit and soda stop in downtown Raleigh and Pota assisted him, delivering ice cream and chocolates on a horse-drawn wagon to homes and businesses in Raleigh.

In 1927, she married fellow immigrant George Vallas and began raising her family.

She and George were stalwart members of the community, helping to establish a Greek Orthodox Church in downtown Raleigh. Eventually George and Pota donated the land upon which Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church stands today.

George and Pota lost their home and business in the Great Depression. To provide for her young family, she applied to work for the Singer Sewing Company in 1931 and quickly emerged as a talented salesperson and manager. Her dream of owning her own business finally came to fruition in 1944 when she bought the distributorship of the National Sewing Machine Company and opened National Art Interiors, one of the first interior decorating businesses in Raleigh. Pota's store became a landmark for the finest furniture and fabric companies, furnishing many homes and businesses throughout the state. She ran the business with her daughters and other family members until retiring at the age of 94 in 2002.

In addition to managing a thriving company, Mrs. Vallas served on the Boards of First Citizens Bank and the North Carolina Community Foundation. She was a lifelong member of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church and a member of Philoptochos. She was honored with the Saint Michael's Award, the highest recognition for a layperson, for her years of dedicated service by the Greek Orthodox Diocese of America.

Mrs. Vallas was one of my most memorable constituents. I often saw her at Raleigh's Greek Festival and treasure the memory of delivering a birthday letter from President Obama to her on one such occasion. She was quick with a smile and an encouraging word. She was a woman of great energy and faith, an indomitable spirit. She leaves behind a community that she loved and that loved her in return. We join with that community in mourning her passing and honoring her exemplary life.

TRIBUTE TO SHIRLEY AND BILL KOENIG

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Shirley and Bill Koenig of Underwood, Iowa on the very special occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on October 26, 2017 and were married in Treynor, Iowa in 1957.

Shirley and Bill's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 60th anniversary may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 60th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion and in wishing them nothing but the best.

GREGORY SMITH

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to posthumously recognize and honor Gregory Smith for his service and dedication to the State of Colorado. Greg had a remarkable career and served the citizens of Colorado for more than 15 years.

Greg served five years as Executive Director of the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). He joined PERA as General Counsel in 2002 and in 2009 he was promoted to Chief Operating Officer. Greg was known for his extensive knowledge of the public pension system and had a passion for ensuring retirement security for hundreds of thousands of Colorado public employees. In addition, Greg served on several national industry boards, including the National Institute of Retirement Security, the Council of Institutional Investors, the National Council on Teacher Retirement and the National Association of Public Pension Attorneys. Greg was also a former president of the Denver Mile High Rotary Club. Greg will be missed by PERA members and the community he served.

I extend my deepest appreciation to Gregory Smith for his service and dedication to the citizens of Colorado. His positive impacts will be felt for many years to come.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1,
TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters from the Real Estate Roundtable, National Association of Home Builders, Financial Services Roundtable, American Bankers Association, RATE Coalition, and the National Milk Producers Federation:

REAL ESTATE ROUNDTABLE.

TAX BILL WILL SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH:
REAL ESTATE ROUNDTABLE

WASHINGTON, DC.—Real Estate Roundtable President and Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey DeBoer today commended congressional policymakers on reconciling differences between the Senate and House versions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1)—historic tax legislation that faces a final vote in both chambers next week. DeBoer stated: “Today’s agreement by Senate and House leaders on the final details of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is a significant effort to encourage capital formation and investment in all types of businesses. New investment incentives in this bill should spur economic growth and boost job creation throughout the United States. We applaud the dedicated efforts of congressional lawmakers and Administration officials who brought this legislation to fruition.

In addition to reducing the tax rate for American corporations to make them more globally competitive, the legislation also encourages capital formation and investment by ushering in a new tax regime focused on

businesses conducted in pass-through format such as partnerships and Subchapter S corporations. These pass-through entities are the backbone of the American economy, representing over 60 percent of all business income and creating more than 60 percent of all jobs in America over the past 25 years.”

Mr. DeBoer added:

“We anticipate that many provisions in the bill, including the pass-through tax regime, will require the immediate focus and attention of the Treasury Department to draft interpretative regulations. This process will be critical in maintaining needed guardrails to prevent abuse, but also to make certain the new rules function as efficiently as possible and result in robust economic activity.

The Act also ensures that commercial real estate development and ownership continues to be taxed on an economic basis, thereby avoiding significant market distortions that could harm local communities and lender portfolios.”

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
HOME BUILDERS.

LETTER NO. 1

NAHB SUPPORTS FINAL TAX BILL

WASHINGTON, DEC. 16.—Granger MacDonald, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a home builder and developer from Kerrville, Texas, issued the following statement regarding the final House-Senate conference report on tax reform legislation:

“NAHB fully supports the final conference report on tax reform legislation and commends the work of House-Senate conferees. This comprehensive overhaul of the nation’s tax code will help middle-class families, maintain the nation’s commitment to affordable housing and ensure that small businesses are treated fairly relative to large corporations. Lower tax rates and a fair tax code will spur economic growth and increase competitiveness, and that is good for housing. We urge the House and Senate to move quickly to pass this legislation.”

LETTER NO. 2

On behalf of the approximately 140,000 members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), I am writing to express strong support for the conference report to H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. NAHB commends the work of the House and Senate conferees to deliver a final bill that will spur greater economic growth. Due to the importance of this legislation to our economy, NAHB has designated support of H.R. 1 as a key vote.

This comprehensive overhaul of the nation’s tax code provides tax relief to middleclass families, maintains the nation’s commitment to affordable housing, and ensures that small businesses are treated fairly relative to large corporations. Lower tax rates and a fairer tax code will spur economic growth and increase competitiveness, and that is good for housing. Housing not only equals jobs, but jobs mean more demand for housing.

By passing this bill, housing can be a key engine for the job growth we all seek. After all, the housing sector—representing roughly one-sixth of the U.S. economy—is operating at only two-thirds of its potential capacity. There is tremendous potential in unlocking and unleashing housing to lead the country to greater economic growth.

Again, NAHB has designated passage of H.R. 1 as a key vote, and we urge the House and Senate to move quickly to pass this legislation. Thank you for considering our views.

FINANCIAL SERVICES ROUNDTABLE.

FSR URGES CONGRESS TO PASS CONFERENCE
TAX REFORM PACKAGE

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 15, 2017.—The Financial Services Roundtable (FSR) today came out in support of the conference committee report on tax reform and urged Congress to quickly pass its tax reform bill to help boost economic opportunity for all Americans. “Tax reform will help deliver expanded opportunity for individuals and American businesses of all sizes,” said FSR CEO Tim Pawlenty. “Congress should quickly move tax reform over the finish line and enable America to go on economic offense.” FSR believes the outcome of the conference committee report will help drive more jobs and long-term investment that benefits American workers and their families. With a near 35% rate, the U.S. has one of the highest corporate tax rates in the industrialized world. These reforms will finally put our country on a more competitive footing for business and investment from around the globe.

AMERICAN BANKERS ASSOCIATION.

ABA STATEMENT ON TAX REFORM
LEGISLATION

(By Rob Nichols, ABA president and CEO)

“We congratulate the House and Senate conference committee for reaching a final agreement on comprehensive tax reform. Committee members have moved the nation another step closer to the first major overhaul of the tax code in more than three decades.

“ABA believes the significant reforms included in this legislation will help grow the economy and create jobs. We particularly applaud the provisions that significantly lower tax rates for all types of businesses beginning in 2018. Banks currently have one of the highest effective tax rates of any industry, and these important changes will allow our members to better serve their customers and the broader economy.

“While there is much to like in the bill, lawmakers missed an opportunity to reform the outdated, unfair and unreasonable tax advantages enjoyed by credit unions and the Farm Credit System. Congress should treat businesses providing the same services the same way, and that is not happening today. We will continue to argue for a level playing field until Congress ends this inequity.

“We still believe this legislation as a whole will benefit our members, their customers, and the country. As a result, ABA supports the conference report and encourages members of the House and Senate, and ultimately President Trump, to enact it into law as soon as possible.”

The American Bankers Association is the voice of the nation’s \$17 trillion banking industry, which is composed of small, midsize, regional and large banks that together employ more than 2 million people, safeguard \$13 trillion in deposits and extend more than \$9 trillion in loans.

RATE COALITION.

RATE COALITION STATEMENT ON THE TAX
CUTS AND JOBS ACT CONFERENCE REPORT

The Reforming America’s Taxes Equitably (RATE) Coalition—whose affiliated companies represent over 30 million employees in all 50 states—released the following statement on the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act Conference Report:

“We are proud of the diligence with which this Administration and this Congress have worked to craft historic tax reform. We are equally proud to fully support the end result of those efforts: The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act Conference Report. A critical fix to our broken tax system—one that punishes job-creating businesses of all sizes with the highest