

the occasion of the town's Bicentennial in 2018. Throughout the next year, Amherst will reflect on and celebrate its 200th anniversary.

On April 10, 1818, the Town of Amherst was officially created from part of the town of Buffalo, later known as the City of Buffalo. As the largest town in Erie County, New York, Amherst has a total area of 53.28 square miles. Amherst encompasses municipalities such as the Village of Williamsville, and the hamlets of Eggertsville, Getzville, Snyder, Swormville and East Amherst.

In the nineteenth century Amherst was a prosperous farming community with seven grist mills, several saw mills, a tannery and boot and shoe factory and two forges with commercial activity centered in Williamsville. Amherst draws on its history in its modern development, with structures such as the Williamsville Water Mill complex finding new purpose today.

From its beginnings as a primarily farming community, Amherst transformed into an urban area in the twentieth century with the creation of new subdivisions. Landmarks such as the University of Buffalo Campus North Campus and Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital made Amherst their home.

Today, Amherst is comprised of approximately 125,000 residents. Those who live in Amherst enjoy a four rink recreational facility that attracts national and international ice tournaments, a state of the art senior center, three libraries, and a State Park within its borders.

The Town of Amherst will proudly mark its 200th Anniversary with a series of events throughout its Bicentennial Year, beginning on January 1, 2018 with a 200th Birthday Party. The celebrations continue with a gigantic Parade, historic walking tours, slogan contest, Interclub Service Club Luncheon and gala Bicentennial Ball.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to recognize the Town of Amherst's rich history and enduring contributions as we celebrate its Bicentennial. Congratulations to the Town of Amherst and its residents on this exciting and noteworthy milestone.

HIGHLIGHTING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A YOUTH GROUP IN NORTH-EAST PORTLAND

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to highlight the achievement of a group of young people in Northeast Portland.

In 2014, fourteen 6th grade girls at Beverly Cleary School formed the Grant Park chapter of Jane Goodall's "Roots and Shoots" youth service organization. Their goal was to raise funds for orphaned chimpanzees at Goodall's Tchimpounga Rehabilitation Center in Africa.

The girls' idea was to produce a vegetarian cookbook with sales benefiting the chimpanzee sanctuary. They wrote letters to chefs across the country asking for recipes and then spent most Friday evenings together cooking the food and taking notes. They also created artwork and bios for the chefs to go along with each recipe. Three years later, these young women are in 9th grade and the cookbook, called "Saving Pan," is done.

A first printing of 400 copies of Saving Pan was sold out in a week and raised \$4,000 for the Sanctuary. For meeting their goals and making a difference, congratulations to Brooke Abbruzzese, Talia Baskin, Lily Buckenmeyer, Martha Bulkeley, McKenzie Caldicott, Ruby Cooper-Karl, Emma Francioch, Willa Gagnon, Maeve Larco, Matisse Nash, Maya Rashid, Charlotte Stoeger, Hanna Stokes and McKenzie Tell.

HONORING MARY COBB-HILL

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life of Mary Alice Cobb-Hill, a singer, and pianist, and impresario of the negro spiritual, who passed away on December 9, 2017.

Ms. Hill was born in Oakland, California on March 16, 1945 to Mary Magdalene and Roosevelt Cobb. Her parents instilled in her from an early age a love of music, and in particular the spiritual and gospel music which was a staple of their family worship services. Mary's mother was a teacher, and she imbued the music with a strong understanding of the history behind it, especially the experiences of the black struggles for freedom from slavery.

Mary attended Golden Gate Academy in Oakland, and later studied at Merritt and Laney Colleges, along with the Pacific Union. She also took private music lessons in classical opera singing.

Mary made the preservation of the Negro spiritual her lifelong passion. Throughout her life, she spent more than 50 years singing and performing in this historical tradition. She also worked to advance the tradition by writing three original musicals, Flowers from Heaven, Dis Train, and The Seven Exaltations of Simeon of Cyrene.

In addition to her work as a performer and writer, Ms. Hill also dedicated her life to teaching others about the history and technique of the Negro spiritual. She founded and served as the creative director for the Voices of Legacy, a community choir that performs in churches, schools, and community events, and was selected to perform at the inauguration of then mayor Dianne Feinstein in San Francisco. Through her work as an educator, Ms. Hill has trained scores of new performers and fostered a love of the Negro spiritual tradition in new generations.

Through her tireless efforts, Ms. Hill endeavored to use the Negro spiritual tradition to maintain a link between those whose experience and yearning for freedom initially created the music, and modern generations who can learn from that struggle to continue the push for true equality. I am grateful to her for her dedication to promoting African American culture and history, and keeping alive the stories and traditions of our ancestors.

Ms. Hill is survived by her husband, Carl, and her daughters Maranatha and Gabrielle, as well as her grandchildren Duane, Josiah, and Nicole. She is also survived by her brothers Paul & Michael, her sisters Gloria Jean, and Sharon, and their families.

Today, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, it is my honor to commend

the life and achievements of Ms. Mary Alice Cobb-Hill. I offer my sincere gratitude for her continued commitment to promote the arts and arts education, and for the profound legacy she has left in our East Bay community. I also offer my condolences to Ms. Cobb-Hill's family and friends as they cope with this immeasurable loss and join together to celebrate her life.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF ROBERT "BOB" WILMERS

HON. KEITH J. ROTHFUS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, today, we remember the life of Robert "Bob" Wilmers, a visionary, successful business man, loving father and husband, who passed away this past Saturday.

In 1983, he became Chairman and CEO of M&T Bank and held those positions until his recent passing. Under his leadership, M&T grew from \$2 Billion to \$120 Billion in assets in 35 years. He saw the bank's reach grow from Buffalo to Maryland and the D.C. area, as well as Pennsylvania. Through it all, he never lost touch with his customers.

Bob's annual letters to shareholders were legendary and he was critical of over regulation that hurt regional banks.

His even handed, steady analysis will be missed. In addition to his successful career, Bob shared a deep commitment to the city of Buffalo, New York through his charitable giving and service to the community.

He was fiercely loyal to his work and bettering the community, an example we can all learn from. I extend my condolences to his family and friends. He leaves a large void that will be felt for years to come.

CONGRATULATING KAREN BALLARD ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE GRAPEVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Karen Ballard on her numerous years of service and dedication to the Grapevine Police Department in Grapevine, Texas. Karen retires this year after serving for fourteen years with the City of Grapevine, and accumulating over thirty-one years of dedicated service in emergency communications for the State of Texas.

Karen's admirable career first began when she joined the Arlington Police Department as a dispatcher in 1986. After serving for over seventeen years in the City of Arlington, Texas, Karen began her tenure with the City of Grapevine in 2003.

Throughout her career, Karen has served as a Dispatcher, Communications Coordinator, Coordinator Training Assistant, and a Communications Supervisor. Since joining the Grapevine Police Department, Karen has honorably served her community and has built a reputation as an outstanding Dispatcher and Communications Supervisor.

Karen's dedication as a public servant is apparent in her pursuit of continued education and trainings to help provide a better service to her community. In total, Karen has completed 4,227 training hours since beginning her career in emergency communications.

Karen's contributions to the emergency operations in the City of Grapevine have helped to ensure the Police, Fire, and EMS services have the best information available when they are needed. The importance of quick and accurate information can never be overstated in life-or-death situations. Karen's dedication and service have been a vital part of keeping our first responders effective, and more importantly, keeping them safe. Her legacy will leave a lasting mark on the City of Grapevine and the city's emergency services for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the notable efforts Karen has contributed to the City of Grapevine. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing Karen Ballard and her many years of service and wishing her the best in her retirement.

HOW THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN HURTS MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the proposal put forward by my Republican colleagues that is misleadingly titled the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act." I voted against the GOP Tax Scam when it was brought up in the House of Representatives a few weeks ago, and I did again this week when Republicans bypassed "regular order" to pass a partisan, highway robbery and power grab bill that will give massive tax cuts to corporations experiencing record profits and explode our national debt, while pulling the rug out from beneath the American Working Class and Middle Class.

As the elected representatives of the American people, Congress should be passing legislation that helps every American, not serving as a rubber-stamp for tax cuts advanced by a President who bankrupted four companies, his high-flying billionaire cabinet, and his wealthy corporate donors demanding a big Christmas bonus for the one-percent. Yet that is precisely what the Republicans in Congress have done.

Let's be clear: this bill will not "stimulate the economy" or "create more jobs"—in fact, more than 30 distinguished economists have invalidated these claims. This bill will not help middle-class Americans today and it will not help future generations of Americans tomorrow—in fact, these claims have also been

proved false by the analysis of nonpartisan tax experts and government entities. Maryland's middle class, seniors, students, working families, and everyone else who is not a gigantic corporation, one of the richest of the rich in this country, or anyone without their own lobbyist will be made worse-off under this proposal. Our children and grandchildren will be footing the bill for this irresponsible and reckless corporate giveaway for decades to come.

Both the House and Senate tax bills are bad deals for my constituents, Marylanders, and ninety-nine-percent of Americans. There were virtually no hearings and no Democratic input in the process, while special interest lobbyists inserted absurd provisions (such as eliminating the deductions for state and local taxes and medical expenses, and opening-up oil drilling in Alaska).

A recent analysis from the Joint Committee on Taxation found that many Americans, including many of my constituents, will receive a substantial tax hike under the Republican plan. Also, according to both the non-partisan Joint Committee on Taxation and the Congressional Budget Office, by 2027, those earning \$40,000 to \$50,000 would pay a combined \$5.3 billion more in taxes, while the group earning \$1 million or more would get a \$5.8 billion tax cut. Apparently the Republican version of the new American Dream is to raise taxes on the Middle Class while showering millionaires with tax breaks.

Congressional Republicans are also dismissing concerns over the debt, reversing years of deficit-hawk rhetoric so fast they are walking around with neck braces from the ideological whiplash. Suddenly the GOP is calling trillions of dollars of debt "a drop in the bucket"—which will of course, be true, only until Republicans decide that we need deep painful cuts to Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security to pay for the magnificent tax cuts they have already bestowed upon the nation's wealthiest one-percent.

If this legislation is such a boon for America's small businesses, why are the small businesses in my state so upset about the plan? Maryland's small businesses may be in favor of long-overdue tax reform, but this is not it. They wanted public hearings, where provisions like pass-through businesses could have been openly discussed and debated. Instead, we're looking at a bill which pretends to provide for small business but most pass-through income goes to the top one-percent of American earners. This is hardly helping America's Middle Class as the Republican leadership claims, but it certainly helps the GOP's gilded Donor Class.

My constituents are not fools and they are not suckers. They are not holding buckets waiting for the Koch Brothers' private jet maintenance exemptions to magically "trickle down" and benefit them. No credible research has demonstrated that corporate tax breaks will create millions of new American jobs. In

fact, documented history shows that just the opposite occurs. Foreign corporations are probably cheering along the GOP Tax Scam, knowing that America is only days away from creating millions of new jobs overseas. Trickle-down economics is a fraud. The only kind of economics that works for Americans is bubble-up economics where we invest in infrastructure, health care and education—we invest in the Middle Class and prosperity bubbles up everywhere.

Furthermore, I often hear from my overseas constituents, who have their own profound concerns about our tax system. As someone who has lived abroad, I appreciate their concerns. Americans abroad are being treated unfairly—taxed first by their local tax authority, and again by the United States. No other countries tax their citizens abroad, with the exceptions of North Korea and Eritrea. Yet Congressional Republicans have chosen to ignore the nine million voices of red, white and blue American citizens seeking help and relief. The GOP is callously ignoring our citizens overseas, refusing to help millions of constituents abroad who desperately want and deserve expat tax reform.

Congress should act immediately, so that U.S. citizens living abroad are not forced to choose between two terrible outcomes: draining their life savings to pay their taxes or renouncing their citizenship to escape this outrageous double taxation. There has been some important progress in this regard though. I'm pleased that my colleague from North Carolina, Representative GEORGE HOLDING, readily acknowledged the problem of expat taxation during the House Floor debate on H.R. 1, but frankly, it is shocking that the House Ways and Means Committee failed entirely to provide any tax reform relief whatsoever to millions of Americans living abroad.

My constituents did not send me to Congress to vote for a bill which adds more than \$1 trillion to our national debt; sends American jobs overseas; eliminates tax assistance provisions for the sick, seniors, college students, teachers, families with special needs children, working families, and middle-class families; and puts more into the pockets of people like President Trump.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is a hoax. Republicans boast that this bill provides "tax cuts for everybody," but millions of Americans will see their taxes increased under this proposal. Don't just take my word for it, check out the latest analysis from the official revenue referee of Congress, the Joint Committee on Taxation.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, this tax bill is a bad deal for Maryland, and indeed, nearly every American whose last name isn't Trump or Koch or Mercer or Adelson. I am proud to have taken a stand for Marylanders and America's Middle Class by voting against the GOP Tax Scam.