

JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S  
COMMITMENT TO VETERANS**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2017*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues a story of a corporate leader whose commitment to our nation's veterans is unmatched. Under the leadership of Alex Gorsky as CEO, Johnson and Johnson's commitment to providing the highest quality medical products is only matched by the firm's efforts to provide for the military service members it employs.

Johnson & Johnson's long history of supporting military service members began as early as the Spanish-American War. Beginning in 1898, Johnson & Johnson began retaining positions and paying salaries to employees during military service. For the past century, Johnson & Johnson has been at the cutting edge of developing initiatives to cater to the unique needs of military service members and veterans. Alex Gorsky has doubled down on this impressive record with an unwavering dedication to continuing these traditions for those who have served our nation.

Under Gorsky's leadership, Johnson & Johnson continues to make groundbreaking strides in support of those who have served with initiatives like the Johnson & Johnson Veterans Leadership Council (VLC). The VLC provides for the company's retired service members in an unprecedented manner by supporting the health care and recovery needs of our American heroes in 26 chapters across 11 states.

I was particularly impressed to learn of Johnson & Johnson's Enhanced Military Leave Policy, also instituted by Mr. Gorsky, which enables active service members to defend our nation without fear of job instability, falling behind on bills, or being overlooked during the transition period back at work. I've learned that Mr. Gorsky's own distinguished military career has given him insight into the inherent value of hiring active and retired military service members. A graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, Alex previously served as a U.S. Army Ranger and finished his career with the rank of Captain. Given his commendable service and past experience, Mr. Gorsky recognizes the importance of hiring veterans as they bring invaluable contributions to the workplace like discipline, integrity, critical thinking, and leadership skills.

Johnson & Johnson's military support is not just good corporate culture. Alex Gorsky has led the way in offering financial stability and resources for service members and their families across America, and rewarded our nation's finest for their noble, patriotic service. I believe his legacy as a corporate leader in veteran advocacy creates unquestioned good will, which is valued by consumers, service members, and community leaders. I commend Mr. Gorsky's efforts to put military service members first as they protect our nation at home and abroad, and help Johnson & Johnson tackle our pressing health care needs.

## TRIBUTE TO SCOTT GILES

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Scott Giles of Mount Ayr, Iowa, for being inducted into the Iowa High School Athletic Association Officials Hall of Fame.

This award was presented to Scott by the Iowa High School Athletic Association on March 10th, during the Boy's State Basketball Tournament. Scott has been officiating basketball for 34 years, including regular season, district, sub-state games and state tournaments. He has also officiated high school football for 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Scott embodies the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent him, and Iowans like him, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for this achievement and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

COMMEMORATING THE ALPENA  
COUNTY GEORGE N. FLETCHER  
LIBRARY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY**HON. JACK BERGMAN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2017*

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to recognize the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library as it celebrates 50 years of meaningful work in the Alpena community. Michiganders understand how important it is to have reliable access to library services, and we are so grateful for Alpena County Library's half-century of community service.

The establishment of a public library in Alpena dates to 1860 when the up-and-coming community commissioned just \$25 a year to maintain a collection in the private home of Diane Morse Richardson. Thirteen years later, the Alpena Public Schools system began housing the library's collection at Alpena High School, where it remained until a temporary location on Second Avenue was acquired. In 1967, the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library was officially established as a county library serving the educational, social, and historical interests of the community. Serving a community of just 2,700 people in 1860, the library now accommodates a population nearly 15 times that size by circulating some 120,000 articles and books.

In addition to offering an extensive collection of literature and other resources, the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library has consistently proven itself to be a leader in the community through targeted initiatives that enhance the wellbeing of all citizens. Programs like READ Tutors, which helps students achieve new reading levels and learn English as a second language, engages our young people in activities that help them reach their potential and prepare them for the next steps in their lives. The library has also started a new early childhood literacy-project called 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, which en-

courages parents to read 200 books a year to their children before the age of five. This program exemplifies the library's tremendous efforts to foster academic achievement within the community, and promotes childhood development in a robust family setting.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library for 50 years of service in the Alpena community. Northern Michigan residents can take great pride in knowing that Alpena is a better place thanks to the work and dedication of the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library. On behalf of my constituents across Michigan's First District, I thank the Alpena Community Library for its work and look forward to its continued success.

HONORING CPL. HAROLD  
WESBECHER (RET.)**HON. MIKE BOST**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2017*

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Harold Wesbecher's honorable service to our nation during the Korean War. Born February 16, 1929, in Evansville, Illinois, Harold graduated from Red Bud High School in 1947 and was drafted into the U.S. Army on June 19, 1952.

Faithfully serving our country over a two year deployment in the Southwest Pacific, Harold toured Mt. Fuji and Sendi, Japan alongside Pusan and the Chun Chon Valley of Korea. Guarding the Neutral Nations Inspection Team in Korea until May of 1954, Harold returned home to continue farming beef cattle and row crops for 60 years upon being discharged from the service.

The husband to Gerry Wesbecher and father of two children, Harold is known to his family as "The Boss" because of his hard work, integrity, and honesty. Today, he continues to be a lifelong member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, where he serves on the parish board.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service that Harold dutifully gave to our nation during the Korean War. We are forever grateful for his service.

THE GROWING RUSSIAN MILITARY  
THREAT IN EUROPE**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2017*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my capacity as Co-Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission, I participated in a hearing to examine Russian military threats in the OSCE region.

Russia today stands in violation of the central commitments of the Helsinki Final Act. These commitments include respect for the territorial integrity of States, fundamental freedoms, and the fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law. In violating these commitments, Russia is threatening the

foundations of European security and recklessly endangering the lives of millions.

One such victim of Russian aggression is Joseph Stone, the 36-year-old American medic who was killed by a landmine while on patrol in separatist-controlled eastern Ukraine with the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission on April 23rd. If it weren't for Russia's unjustifiable aggression toward Ukraine's sovereignty there would be no need for such a monitoring mission. And yet, day after day, OSCE monitors put themselves in harm's way to try to reduce the tensions created by the reckless conduct of Russia and its proxies in eastern Ukraine. It is a conflict that has already claimed over ten thousand lives, and sadly is sure to claim more.

Russian aggression is not a localized phenomenon—it threatens the entire region. Moscow has seized sovereign territory by force, threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons against other countries, harassed U.S. and NATO military assets, and abandoned key transparency measures and commitments. These actions are unacceptable.

In the face of such provocations, the United States must leave no doubt that we stand behind our Eastern European and Baltic Allies. There is no time to waste: we must ensure the confidence of our friends at this critical juncture.

One way to do this is to continue building a credible conventional deterrent to Russian aggression alongside our allies, in particular Poland and the Baltic States. I have consistently supported robust funding for the European Reassurance Initiative. With the support of this initiative, since 2014, NATO members have held over 1,000 military exercises in Europe. ERI has allowed the U.S. to participate more extensively in such exercises and increase its deployment of soldiers and military assets in allied countries. Furthermore, it has helped us to build the capacity of our partners and generally make our commitment to European security felt. These kinds of activities must be sustained and expanded to ensure that we are ready to counter any threat at any time.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must act, bilaterally and within NATO, to robustly deter, defend against, and roll back Russian aggression in the OSCE region. This includes ensuring that Ukraine has the defensive weapons it needs to more effectively repel Russian occupying forces and respond to Russian-backed proxies. As Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko told a joint session of Congress several years ago, "One cannot win the war with blankets." That is at true today as it was then.

If Russia's invasion, occupation, and fracturing of Ukraine stands, then Russia will be emboldened to do likewise in other neighboring countries. It is in the interests of the United States to help ensure that the Russian Federation does not become the new Soviet Union, invading, occupying and annexing its neighbors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL'S WORK TO PROTECT CITIZENS' INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES

### HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the American Human Rights Council for their advocacy and efforts. The AHRC has been a steadfast champion in ensuring that all Americans, regardless of background, are able to exercise their civil liberties.

Founded in 2014, the AHRC brings together community leaders and civil rights activists to promote and defend human rights defined in the United States' Constitution and by the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights. Initially focused on protecting and preserving the rights of prisoners, the AHRC has expanded its advocacy efforts to address pressing humanitarian issues in the United States and abroad. In addition to its work on prisoners' rights, the organization has also strongly pushed for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Yemen and relief for the humanitarian issues facing the country's citizens, as well as opposed the Syrian government's attacks on innocent civilians during the Syrian civil war. The AHRC also recognizes outstanding individuals who work to further the group's mission during its annual Spirit of Humanity Gala event.

The AHRC has played a critical role in protecting and advancing human rights both in the community and around the world. By working with state and local partners, the AHRC has been able to draw attention to human rights issues by hosting public forums and educational awareness events. In the past year, AHRC has investigated dozens of inmate inquiries relating to issues in prison facilities and participated in multiple community forums, including discussions about community policing initiatives and an annual Capitol Day visit to Lansing in order to highlight the organization's mission and its concerns with elected officials. These efforts have helped raise awareness while driving action to further the AHRC's mission of promoting human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the American Human Rights Council for its work to protect and preserve Americans' civil liberties. The AHRC's work has helped safeguard our nation's fundamental rights.

RECOGNIZING M. SMITH COFFMAN FOR HER INSPIRATIONAL POEM, GHOSTS OF THE PAST

### HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize M. Smith Coffman for her powerful poem and kind words of inspiration to many. While the poem is meant to move and inspire our service members and veterans in times of need, I believe everyone should experience it. I intend for everyone to procure

some good fortune and hope from her message.

#### GHOSTS OF THE PAST

The fog shrouded, silent vale,  
comes to life before my trail.  
Ghosts of the past, ride in the predawn mist,  
in their stirring I am by angels kissed.

Here, the plan of war was born,  
and there, soldiers' lives were torn.  
Brave warriors on snorting, restless steeds,  
our heroes against men of evil deeds.

See Lexington and Concord's men of pride.  
Rebs and Yanks who at Chickamauga died.  
See the tired, straggling wagon train,  
faces parched by sun, in battle's strain.

Indians silently move their camps,  
past sod houses lit by dim oil lamps.  
I see the brave men from the Alamo,  
as on, and on, and on they go.

Oh, ancient rocks, you saw it all,  
you saw where gallant man did fall.  
You echoed the shot, felt the glance of spear,  
the price for freedom, we hold dear.

Our troops who fell on foreign soils,  
they the victors, won the spoils.  
There were those from the sky  
and from the sea,

They gave of themselves to keep us free.  
Their souls, at last, are at home,  
no more foreign lands to roam.

All are soothed in the mist,  
as o'er their separate paths they twist.  
Their laughter softly echoes from the rills,  
and across the windswept, rugged hills.  
Mingling, they have enemies no more,  
here at home or foreign shore.

In cadence, I heard them say,  
"Let not our sons go this way.

Alas the new born cries at birth,  
but men must know of joy on earth.  
Oh, that we could right the wrong;  
Oh, that we could leave but song."

Oh Lord, many of our brave, gallant men of  
pride,  
put their lives upon the line, fought and  
died.

Men with bodies and emotions torn,  
this great loss we all should mourn.  
I stand and salute you, one and all.  
You went through hell, for country's call.

Dear Lord, I pray their pain relive,  
give them strength and hope, and ease.  
They should receive the best of care,  
FOR 'TIS BY THEM WE BREATHE FREE  
AIR.

For freedom's cause they did not bend,  
they pledged their allegiance to the flag  
until the end.

"Children, Listen," the midst does sing.  
"We know not what this day or the years  
will bring.

Stand brave and strong for liberty's call.  
Your country needs you one and all.  
Give thanks for all that was and is,  
and for the heroes who lived, and live.  
Give thanks for freedom that was not lost.  
Give thanks to those who paid the cost."

The mist soon melted into the morning sun.  
THEY ARE OUR HEART'S BLOOD  
THEY ARE NOT GONE.

These brave men and women did not live or  
die in vain.

Our flag unfurled we will sustain.

IN GOD WE TRUST

AMEN

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing M. Smith Coffman for her encouraging words.