

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Maudy Simpson-Wright, because she is definitely the epitome of an unsung hero.

IN RECOGNITION OF ELITE  
PUREED MEALS

**HON. PATRICK MEEHAN**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 2, 2017*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Elite Pureed Meals of Broomall, Pennsylvania for earning a Chester and Delaware County SCORE 2017 Small Business Award.

SCORE is a non-profit organization that helps small businesses by providing them with mentorship and educational workshops. Small businesses that earn a SCORE award "have demonstrated unique vision, innovation and achievement in support of America's economy and small business community."

Elite Pureed Meals deserves this designation. Colleen McCloskey was inspired to create Elite Pureed Meals while she operated an in-home care service. She witnessed a client lose a dangerous amount of weight due to swallowing difficulties and the unappealing food prepared for someone with that symptom. Colleen knew how important it was for him to have access to nutritious and appealing meals. She dedicated her small business to securing that access. Elite Pureed Meals prepares and delivers frozen pureed meals to those with swallowing disorders, helping them maintain a balanced diet and stay healthy.

I congratulate Elite Pureed Meals on their award. I am proud to serve them and the other small businesses in Pennsylvania's 7th District.

SULLIVAN COUNTY VETERANS  
CEMETERY

**HON. JOHN J. FASO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 2, 2017*

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a speech I delivered at the Sullivan County Veterans Cemetery on May 29, 2017.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished hosts, our Gold Star Mothers, and all honored guests: Thank you for gathering here with us on this observance of Memorial Day. It is my great privilege and distinct honor to speak to you today.

Memorial Day. A day of remembrance to our fallen soldiers. A day when all Americans are reminded of those who gave their lives to defend our freedoms. This is perhaps best honored by the phrase uttered by Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg. They gave to the cause of liberty, he said, "their last full measure of devotion."

Here in the 19th Congressional District, the history of our Sullivan County neighbors has made an everlasting contribution to the principles of self-sacrifice, patriotism and freedom we commemorate each Memorial Day.

Sullivan County is the namesake of Major General John Sullivan, an officer of the Revolutionary War. Sullivan was a lawyer, poli-

tician, prisoner of war and military tactician who was selected by George Washington to carry out a difficult campaign against British forces and Loyalists in what was then the borderlands of New York and Pennsylvania. Sullivan was a towering figure who believed in the American experiment and rejected the entreaties of the British to lure him to their side. He had his feet planted firmly in the soil of this continent.

During the Civil War, New York provided more men and munitions to the Union cause than any other state. But it was Sullivan County that let the men march. Over 80 percent of all the leather goods used by the Union side were conditioned in the tanning vats of Sullivan County, including Monticello's 143rd Infantry Regiment. It has been said with justification that "the Civil War was won with boots tanned in Sullivan County." Each step of the journey to preserve the Union and destroy the evil of slavery began here.

Here at the Veterans Cemetery, we have a visual reminder in the form of Sgt. Kenneth Von Ronn's M60A3 tank. Sgt. Von Ronn was killed in action in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was laid to rest in this place, downhill from his tank, fittingly inscribed on the marker as a "trooper and his mount." The vehicle today stands guard for all those here, opposing America's enemies for all eternity.

At Arlington National Cemetery, the 3rd US Infantry, the Old Guard, adorns thousands upon thousands of rows of headstones with American flags each Memorial Day. Each austere monument stands in perfect symmetry with the next. This is an act of gratitude to each individual warrior and the nation as a whole.

Memorial Day is an enduring reminder of those who gave their lives for our nation. We live in a time when only a small percentage of American families have someone who is serving on either active duty or in the reserves. As such, it is all the more important that we gather together on this solemn day to honor their sacrifice.

So too on this day, our obligation is not just to remember. It is also to teach our children and grandchildren that our liberty is more than just the words of the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution and its Bill of Rights. Those documents are the foundation stones of our system of government and the truth that governments derive their powers from the people and not the other way around. And further that the inalienable rights we enjoy as a free people come from God and not from government.

But none of this would be possible without the sacrifice of those we remember today. Inscribed on statuary at the National Archives building in Washington is the phrase "Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Liberty." We need to constantly remind ourselves that freedom is not free. Our liberties are guaranteed us by our Constitution and Bill of Rights; but they were also made possible by the determination of multiple generations of Americans who answered their nation's call and who defended our liberties to the last breath on the fields of battle.

We stand on the shoulders of the fallen today. We owe them our eternal gratitude; our respect; and that their collective sacrifice is forever etched onto our collective memories.

I recently read a quote attributed to the son of a U.S. soldier killed in Afghanistan. He said of his father: "His life was not taken: It was given, to his country."

His life was not taken: it was given, so that others can live in freedom and liberty. That truly sums up what we should always remember about those we honor on Memorial Day. May God bless our fallen soldiers and may God bless the United States of America.

HONORING JACK SCHLEETER

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 2, 2017*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jack Schleeter. Jack is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jack has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jack has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jack has served his troop as an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, become a member of the Order of the Arrow, and earned the rank of Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Jack has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jack constructed two 8 x 12 foot planters outside St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Liberty, Missouri, filling the planters with 6 bushes and 24 perennials.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jack Schleeter for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for its efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. CECILIA  
LAIDEMITT

**HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 2, 2017*

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Mrs. Cecilia Laidemitt, the Associate Superintendent of Personnel and Administrative Services for the South Whittier School District. After a dedicated and impactful 52 years with the district, Mrs. Laidemitt is retiring at the end of this school year.

Mrs. Laidemitt is appreciated and admired by many in this community, and has set a high bar for those to follow her. From a young age, Mrs. Laidemitt knew teaching was her dream. She attended Whittier College, and later received her teaching credentials and began her career at Los Altos Elementary School.

Over the years she has served in a number of roles including teacher, principal, and Director of Curriculum. In each position she has brought her inspiring attitude and passion for learning. Mrs. Laidemitt often stated how she "loved seeing the light go on for students." And it's this passion that has made her successful and cherished.

Her dedication and hard work has not gone unnoticed in the community; she is beloved by all she encounters. A truly admirable public servant, I wish Mrs. Laidemitt a happy and well-deserved retirement. You are an inspiration to us all, and your wisdom and kindness will be greatly missed.

IN RECOGNITION OF KRISTIN  
WEAVER

**HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 2, 2017*

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an extraordinary Veterans Service Officer (VSO) in Northern Virginia, Kristin Weaver, for the incredible impact she has had on individuals, families, and communities in Virginia's 10th District and beyond.

Ms. Weaver is currently an American Legion Veterans Service Officer, representing the 16th District in Virginia, which includes the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park and the counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock and Stafford. In this role for the past 5 years, she has assisted 20 to 30 veterans per month on a variety of issues, including helping with disability claims, assisting with health and/or financial issues, and more.

It is also important to note that in addition to the excellent services Ms. Weaver provides to veterans on a daily basis, she also places an importance on training other VSOs. In fact, over the last five years she has trained approximately 350 VSOs in course work covering all types of veterans' benefits. Additionally in that time, Ms. Weaver has gone above and beyond in her role, often opening her home on Saturdays to help as many veterans as possible. It is important that we recognize and help our service members, military retirees, and their families who have all made sacrifices for our great country, and I am very thankful for Ms. Weaver's hard work.

Her dedication to improving the lives of veterans in Northern Virginia is evident through her years of service. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking Ms. Kristen Weaver for all she has done. I wish her the best as she continues her work helping veterans and with all of her future endeavors.

**DISAPPROVING PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT**

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 2, 2017*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong opposition to the President's misguided, short-sighted, and disastrous decision to withdraw the United States from participation in the Paris Climate Agreement.

Since the end of World War II, the United States has proudly carried the mantle of global leader off the international community.

American leadership brought us the United Nations, the World Bank, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Marshall Plan, which helped rebuild a continent decimated by war and secure a peace that has lasted for more than 70 years.

As a senior member of Congress, a member of the Helsinki Commission, and member of the American delegation to the 80th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting of European Union and United States Legislators, one of my respon-

sibilities is to work with the delegation's European counterparts on cooperative efforts to address and resolve issues of mutual concern.

This is becoming increasingly difficult because in less than 150 days, President Trump has done more to damage relations with our allies and the standing of the United States in the world than all of his predecessors combined.

On his maiden trip abroad as the leader of the United States, Trump embarrassed our country and alienated our allies by failing to affirm our commitment to Article 5 of the NATO charter which regards an attack on any NATO member as an attack on all of them.

Driving a wedge between the United States and its European allies has been the long sought strategic objective of the Russians since the formation of NATO in 1949.

Compounding his disastrous performance at the NATO summit, the President has now renounced America's commitment to the landmark Paris Climate Agreement, which encourages all nations to set and reach national climate goals every five years.

The U.S. played the pivotal role in drafting the agreement, forging consensus, and securing the assent of 195 nations.

In withdrawing from the agreement, Trump has elected to place the United States in the company of Syria and Nicaragua as the only countries not to accept by the Paris Agreement.

As U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham stated, by withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, Trump is affirming that "he believes climate change is a hoax."

Mr. Speaker, climate change is not a hoax invented by the Chinese, and the Paris Agreement is an example of America's indispensable global leadership.

Almost every credible scientific voice tells us human activity has and continues to have a dramatic impact on climate change.

Moreover, scientists have warned that inaction by the major industrialized nations of the world could lead to global catastrophe.

According to NASA researchers, 16 of the 17 warmest years in the last 13 and a half decades have occurred since 2001.

Evaporation patterns have shifted producing more frequent and powerful storms.

The United States is the world's second largest contributor to carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere.

Experts say the resulting polluted runoff is degrading water quality.

As the founder of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I believe we have a duty to leave the planet we inherited in better shape for the generations that follow.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), changing weather conditions is cited as one of the main causes of trauma to children.

According to the AAP, between 2000 and 2009, there have been three times as many extreme weather events as occurred between 1980 and 1989 and that following climate-related natural disasters, high numbers of children are found to exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Children under one year of age are especially vulnerable to heat-related climate change and there is more than a 90 percent chance that by the end of the 21st century average summer temperature will exceed the highest temperatures yet recorded in many regions.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 88 percent of diseases attributable to climate change occur in children younger than five.

By 2030, climate change is expected to lead to 48,000 more children under the age of 15 dying from diarrheal disease in 2030, primarily in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

And in the world's poorest regions, where the disease burden is disproportionately high, children will be the most affected by climate change influenced infectious diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, West Nile virus, chikungunya, Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, diarrheal illness, amebic meningoencephalitis and coccidioidomycosis.

The President has often questioned the value of the Paris Agreement but has yet to provide any scientific or empirical basis to reject the consensus of experts that human activity is a leading contributor to climate change.

Indeed, if the President had any legitimate concerns regarding the efficacy of the Paris Agreement, he could and should work with America's partners to address and resolve them.

He has made no attempt to do so.

According to a recent Gallup poll, 54 percent of Americans believe that climate change is a serious problem.

As a Member of Congress, I have always acted on the basis of facts and promoted policies that are both aspirational and grounded in reality.

I have endeavored to always seek the truth by discerning what is real from what is fake.

And when it comes to the issue of climate change, I have listened to the scientists.

The President's isolated and short-sighted view threatens to quash years of deliberation and work by corporate leaders, scientists, educators, social actors and others who work tirelessly to protect the planet.

Withdrawing from the Paris Agreement would be disastrous, not only because it jeopardizes America's status as a world leader, but also because such action will undermine our competitiveness in the emerging clean-environment global economy.

According to studies, China is the world leader in renewable energy investment, pouring more than \$78 billion into renewable energy projects last year alone.

In contrast, the United States invested less than \$24 billion last year.

Many jobs are at stake, and that means non-participation in the Paris Agreement could undermine American economic interests.

We cannot afford to be left behind as the rest of the world moves toward a clean economy future.

A resounding bipartisan chorus has called for continued American observance of the Paris Agreement.

From Republican and Democratic Governors to Members of Congress to our NATO allies, the chorus of voices counseling against withdrawal continues to grow.

Americans want their country to lead the battle against climate change and for a healthy planet.

The President needs to recognize that he represents the entire country; not just the Trump Organization.

Trump needs to remember that he is the President of the United States of America.