

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during Roll Call votes No. 300, and No. 301 due to my spouse's health situation in California. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on H.R. 2292—To extend a project of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission involving the Cannonville Dam. I would have also voted Yea on H.R. 2457—J. Bennett Johnston Waterway Hydropower Extension Act of 2017.

IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES DONALD GRAY III

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a long-time member of my team here in my Washington, D.C. office. Today marks Jim Gray's last day with our office, after years of service that began when he was just an intern in my first term. Jim returned to my office as a staff assistant even before he had graduated from the University of Maryland, and balanced the demands of life on Capitol Hill against the completion of his academic course of study. Jim has always brought to my team a commitment to service and a relentless desire to get the job done.

Jim rose through the ranks to become one of my most trusted policy advisors, handling a broad policy portfolio including trade, defense and foreign affairs. He'll soon be departing Washington for sunny South Carolina, and I wish him the best. I know his parents, James Donald Gray Jr. and Teresa, and his sister Lindsay, are proud of him.

IN RECOGNITION OF ANDREA LUNA CERVANTES' RECEIPT OF THE 2017 HAMILTON SCHOLARS AWARD

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Ms. Andrea Luna Cervantes of Yuma, Arizona. Andrea is an accomplished and dedicated student who has devoted tremendous amounts of time and energy to her studies and to improving her community. I am excited to announce that Andrea is one of 35 national recipients of the 2017 Hamilton Scholars Award for outstanding academic accomplishments and community service. Her work

ethic, academic aptitude and ability to connect with people of all ages renders her receipt of this award no surprise.

Currently, Andrea is a rising senior at Yuma High School, where she is well on her way to becoming a productive service leader. In reaching this point, she has overcome many hardships through determination and a supportive community. I fully expect she will continue to grow into a productive and engaged citizen—exactly the kind of leader our society is in need of.

Those who know Andrea recognize that she has the natural ability to reach out and connect with people of all backgrounds. Included amongst her work in the community is her service as the Vice President of Junior State of America (JSA)—an American non-partisan youth organization that helps high school students acquire leadership skills and the requisite skills to be effective debaters and civic participants. She also serves as the President of her chapter of the National Honor Society—an academic membership-based organization that fosters a commitment to academic excellence. Andrea has competed at high levels of debate moderation and math competitions, and was a participant in the selective Yuma Youth Leadership program.

Andrea is an ambitious, high-achieving young woman. She embodies the characteristics which, when cultivated, give rise to the best of our society's leaders. It is an honor of mine to recognize this Hamilton Scholar, and I expect only the best from Andrea's future endeavors.

U.S. WWII MIA RECOVERY OPERATIONS IN INDIA

HON. GEORGE HOLDING

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the ongoing and long-standing efforts to recover the remains of American service members who served during World War II in northeast India.

These service members remain missing in action to this day and they deserve a proper burial.

During World War II, the United States flew hundreds of supply missions on a route that included flight paths directly over the Himalayas through enemy territory from India to China.

Given these treacherous routes and hazardous flying conditions, the United States took heavy casualties.

To this day Mr. Speaker, U.S. airmen remain unrecovered and unburied.

Efforts to locate and document these crash sites have been intermittently undertaken by both private citizens and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Over the years, in addition to these documentation efforts, the Governments of the

United States and India have worked together to recover our service members.

However Mr. Speaker, the tempo of recovery operations could be categorized as slow at best for a variety of reasons, leaving the families of the deceased without closure.

Part of the problem involves the challenging conditions in which these crash sites are located—some have been located on the Himalayan mountainsides at altitudes approaching 10,000 feet.

Unfortunately Mr. Speaker, the single largest impediment to these recovery operations came when the Government of India placed a de facto moratorium on operations in Arunachal Pradesh for the vast majority of 2010 until 2015.

It should be noted during this time, that Leon Panetta, who at the time was Secretary of Defense, visited India and was able to secure permission for the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command to recover remains and bring them back to the United States. The spirit of this agreement lives on today.

In early 2016, then-Secretary of Defense Ash Carter participated in a repatriation ceremony in New Delhi which highlighted a recovery operation undertaken by the Joint POW/MIA Account Command at the end of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, the United States and India today enjoy ever-increasing defense and security ties that underscore our strategic partnership.

As co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, I urge the Governments of the United States and India to increase their collaboration and accelerate the recovery of these remains. The families of those lost during World War II deserve closure. We need to bring our airmen home.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD J. SLOMA

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Richard J. Sloma, a Syracuse native and second-generation Polish-American, who has dedicated much of his adult life to serving this great country and our community. Colonel Sloma enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve upon graduating high school and later went on to obtain his bachelor's degree from SUNY Oswego and his master's degree from the University at Albany. Colonel Sloma is currently a member of the Polish Legion of American Veterans—Post 14, the Syracuse Polish Home, the Polish American Historical Association, and serves as an Archivist for the New York State Archives in Albany.

This year, Colonel Sloma will be honored at the 2017 Syracuse Polish Festival as the "2017 Pole of the Year." He will be recognized for his dedicated service to our country.

Colonel Sloma served on U.S. Army active duty assignments in New York State, North

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Dakota, and Italy. Colonel Sloma then joined the New York Army National Guard and was deployed to Afghanistan with the 27th Infantry Brigade from Syracuse in 2008. There, Colonel Sloma served as the Director of Intelligence for the Task Force Phoenix in Kandahar. Colonel Sloma later retired in 2013 with the rank of Colonel as the New York State Counterdrug Task Force Commander. Colonel Sloma had over 20 years of active duty experience and 31 years of total military experience, earning the Legion of Merit award, Bronze Star, Joint Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Commendation Medal, three Meritorious Medals, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and the Airborne Badge.

I am honored to recognize Colonel Richard J. Sloma for his service to our great nation and upon being named "2017 Pole of the Year" by the Syracuse Polish Scholarship Fund, Inc.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF
WILLIAM H. HECHT

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and public service of William H. Hecht.

Born in Tifton, Georgia, Bill received a Master's of Divinity from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, and an M.A. in philosophy from Washington University. After serving as a Lutheran pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Mt. Vernon, Illinois, he became a campus pastor at the University of Oklahoma.

Bill had a long history in both Missouri state politics and on the national stage in Washington, D.C. In 1967, he became the executive director of the Missouri State Republican Party. Two years later, he served as Vice President of the American Security Council, and in 1971 he became Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the House Committee on Internal Security. After serving as an advisor and spokesman for the Reagan for President Campaign, Bill founded the respected government relations firm Hecht, Spencer and Associates in 1981.

Bill was well known for his political camaraderie and engaging conversation. He was a regular at the Capitol Hill Club, where he was respected by lawmakers for his sharp wit and political advice. Bill also took great pride in mentoring some of the brightest young minds in Washington, dedicating his time to getting to know countless young people and their families. Bill was always direct, and even in the digital media age he exemplified the value of authentic relationships and person-to-person communication.

Outside of politics, Bill was deeply dedicated to his family and friends. He was a devoted husband, proud father, and loving grandfather. Bill touched the lives of many and will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

LAWRENCE ZHAO

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lawrence Zhao, who is a 7th grade student at Next Generation School in Champaign, Illinois. Lawrence will be competing in the 2017 National You Be the Chemist Challenge. The You Be the Chemist Challenge is an interactive academic contest that invites students from all around the United States in Grades 5 to 8 to explore chemistry concepts and their real-world applications.

Lawrence has advanced through many rigorous levels of competition over the past school year to qualify for the national competition, which is held Monday, June 19th, in Washington D.C. The competition starts out at a local level, where students participate individually, with first the distribution of a quiz that relates to chemistry and those who pass it are eligible to participate in the local contest. The local contest consists of a quiz-bowl style format containing several rounds of multiple choice questions.

Lawrence won the local challenge and had the opportunity to compete in a similar style state-wide competition. Having received the highest score at the state challenge, he advanced to the national challenge. I applaud Lawrence Zhao for his exemplary performance thus far, and I wish him the best of luck in not only the challenge, but all his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, due to a personal conflict, I was unable to make votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 300, and YEA on Roll Call No. 301.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes Monday, June 12, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call votes 300 and 301.

HONORING THE WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Women's Enterprise Development

Center (WEDC) based in Westchester County, New York, which is celebrating its 20th Anniversary on June 15th.

Since its establishment in White Plains, NY, in 1997, the Women's Enterprise Development Center has helped hundreds of aspiring entrepreneurs start and grow their own businesses by providing them with training, advisory services, and access to capital. The more than 1600 graduates of WEDC's 60-hour Entrepreneurship Program have achieved business success in many fields ranging from accounting to moving organic food products to construction and landscaping to senior services. WEDC's clients include women who lack access to traditional business and financial resources. In 2015 alone, WEDC provided 1,666 motivated clients with the tools they needed to succeed.

The accomplishments of WEDC have not gone unnoticed, and over the years it has gained support from the federal, state and local governments as well as major corporations such as IBM, M&T Bank, MasterCard, Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, Verizon, and Wells Fargo. WEDC was recently designated as the New York Empire State Development Entrepreneurial Assistance Program (EAP) Center for the Mid-Hudson Valley, and its work has been recognized by the County governments of Westchester and Rockland as well as the U.S. Small Business Administration, which named it a Women's Business Center in 2003.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have worked for the last two decades with Anne Janiak, a founder and the CEO of WEDC, and her team to support entrepreneurial women in New York's Hudson Valley. I urge my colleagues to join me in applauding their 20 years of service to the Lower Hudson Valley and congratulate them as they celebrate this important anniversary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes No. 300 and No. 301. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on rollcall No. 300, and yea on rollcall No. 301.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the District of Columbia National Park Service Improvement Act, a bill that would clarify that D.C. has the authority to enter into cooperative management agreements (CMAs) with the National Park Service (NPS) to maintain and invest in NPS properties in the city. NPS is the steward for many of our country's most beautiful natural wonders, but they are uniquely responsible for most of the small, urban parks here in the District. Given NPS's