

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## CONGRATULATING MS. MARIA DIAZ ON HER RETIREMENT

### HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Maria Diaz on her retirement. For over thirty-five years, Maria has supported my constituents with advice, information, and guidance on Social Security matters.

Maria began her extensive career in public service as a co-op student working at the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Little Havana Field Office in Florida. Through her dedication and hard work, Maria was swiftly promoted to the position of Claims Service Representative in the Perrine Field Office. Her invaluable contributions were recognized when, in 1990, she was promoted to Operations Supervisor in the Perrine Office, where she continuously displayed a high level of attentiveness and care.

In September 2001, Ms. Diaz's strengths were acknowledged when she was appointed Public Affairs Specialist of the South Florida Area and the Atlanta Region, a position she held until her retirement. In this capacity, she has represented the SSA with an outstanding degree of professionalism and has remained steadfast with the main goal of the Administration, which is to serve the public. She continuously provided our community members with timely and relevant information and cultivated media and community contacts to ensure messages were delivered in a concise and positive manner. Throughout her impressive career, Maria demonstrated her commitment to public service and efficiently resolved our constituents' Social Security issues.

In recognition of her invaluable contributions to the SSA, Maria has received numerous awards, including multiple Commissioner Citations, which is the highest honor conferred upon SSA employees. Maria's support to my constituents over the years has been remarkable and her dedication to her job commendable.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Ms. Maria Diaz for her outstanding service to our community, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

## CELEBRATING MRS. BETTIE J. BROUSSARD CURTIS

### HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Bettie J. Broussard Curtis, a distinguished educator and woman of profound spiritual convictions. Mrs. Curtis was

born and raised in Orange, Texas to her parents Shelton and Ophelia Broussard. Coming from a family of thirteen, Mrs. Curtis learned a strong work ethic and faith in God from her parents which no doubt led to her success. Mrs. Curtis married her husband James Ilenon Curtis in 1963 and was married for 31 years before his demise.

Mrs. Curtis received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Education from Wiley College and a Master of Education Degree in Business from Texas Southern University in Houston. While pursuing her advanced studies she taught at both Texas Southern and Lamar University.

Mrs. Curtis is best known for her 56 years as a business education teacher for West Orange-Cove CISD where she inspired her students with her beautiful smile, gracious demeanor, and the skills necessary for success in the global workplace. The school district honored her by naming the new elementary school library the Bettie J. Curtis Library.

Mrs. Curtis has always shown a strong commitment to civic and political organizations throughout her community—she was named the first African American to serve as President of District V Texas State Teachers Association as well as involvement in National Education Association, Texas Business and Technology Educators Association, National Business Education Association, NAACP, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and Top Ladies of Distinction. Mrs. Curtis has also received countless awards including Teacher of the Year, Outstanding Educator and Woman of the Year at Mount Olive Baptist Church just to name a few.

On Saturday, January 13, 2018 Mrs. Curtis will be presented with the Blossoming Minds MLK Gala Legend Award, and for this I congratulate her. This award is a testament to her passionate service to others and unwavering commitment to her community and faith in God. It is my privilege to honor her for this special achievement and incredible career.

## HIGH FIVE

### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I salute the Houston Fire Department and Houston City Councilmember Brenda Stardig for their rescue efforts during Hurricane Harvey.

In a move that can only be described as divine intervention, HFD's new high water rescue vehicle was delivered only a few days before one of Texas's most devastating storms rocked the state and dumped more than 50 inches of rain in the Houston area. When Councilmember Stardig used her district's discretionary funds to purchase the high water rescue vehicle for HFD she knew it was a much needed addition to the city's rescue fleet; she just didn't know how timely her purchase would be.

Called the "High Five" because it is docked at HFD Station 5 in my congressional district, HFD's high water rescue vehicle was the only high water rescue vehicle available exclusively to the city of Houston during the hurricane. The "High Five" is a heavy duty military vehicle that can carry 15 people and two operators. Its electronics and fuel system are sealed, giving it the ability to transport in more than four feet of water.

Other vehicles like city garbage trucks were used for rescues, but this vehicle is unique because it is designed not only to go through high water but to also rescue people easily. For example, it has a lift on it to assist people in getting on board. Mr. Speaker, even my jeep with its lift kit is no match for what this vehicle can do. It was estimated that in one day, over 400 people were rescued with this truck and possibly 1,000 people total.

Since the storm, HFD has received a surge of donations to continue to upgrade their rescue fleet. Councilmember Stardig and the Firefighters Foundation of Houston recently raised more than \$52,000—enough for two additional rescue boats. Since Harvey, private donors like HEB and Metro National have stepped up to help fund two additional high water rescue vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, much of my district and the Houston area are still reeling from Harvey's damage. Much work remains to be done. It is heroes like Assistant Chief Ruy Lozano who oversees the HFD rescue fleet, HFD Chief Sam Peña, and Houston City Councilmember Brenda Stardig who rose up during his catastrophe to save lives. Many of us will remember their contributions to our community during this crisis. We always say, when Houstonians see a need they step up. Sometimes it's into a 10-foot high water rescue vehicle.

And that's just the way it is.

## RECOGNIZING RICHARD LEE

### HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank Mr. Richard Lee, a dedicated public servant and dear friend. Mr. Lee is retiring this January from his position as executive director of the Waukegan Public Library after fifteen years of extraordinary service on behalf of our community.

Under his leadership, the Waukegan Public Library has become an indispensable resource for our local community, a place where residents can gather to learn, collaborate on school homework, or even just hang out with Lizzy, the library's bearded dragon.

Throughout Mr. Lee's tenure, the library expanded its programs to offer literacy classes covering everything from English language learning to computer skills to basic reading, writing, and math skills for adults. Mr. Lee also oversaw a \$1.2 million renovation that finished

• 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.

in 2015, to modernize the facilities and increase cooperative working spaces. And the library even hosts a summer concert series.

The library's inspired initiatives and incredible progress were recognized by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which awarded the Waukegan Public Library with the National Medal in 2013, the highest national recognition for libraries.

In fact, it was at the White House award ceremony hosted by First Lady Michelle Obama that I first met Mr. Lee and his team. Since then, the Waukegan Public Library has been an important partner in my work for our community, including allowing us to host regular Neighborhood Office Hours to serve residents closer to home, as well as graciously providing the venue for a recent ceremony honoring local Vietnam Veterans.

In closing, I want to again thank my friend, Mr. Richard Lee, for his dedicated leadership, creativity, and passion over these last 15 years. I wish him the very best in his well-deserved retirement with family and friends.

#### COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIERRA SACRAMENTO VALLEY MEDICAL SOCIETY

##### HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society.

On March 18, 1868, twelve physicians formed the Sacramento Society for Medical Improvement, which is known today as the Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society.

The medical society's early goals of learning about diseases and cures, formulating public health, sanitation, and food safety ordinances, and supporting the principles and ethics of the medical profession continue to benefit Sacramento communities.

The Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society founded the Sacramento Board of Health and helped form the first State Board of Health in California.

SSVMS represents more than 3,500 physicians, medical students, residents and fellows. Thirteen SSVMS physicians have served as President of the California Medical Association and three have served as President of the American Medical Association.

SSVMS's RX Safe Physicians program has partnered with opioid task forces in Sacramento and El Dorado Counties to create a physician led coalition that is fighting opioid abuse.

As a member myself, I want to thank the Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society for their work over the past 150 years.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society on 150 years of service to the Sacramento region.

#### HONORING SENSEI MARUYAMA

##### HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Sensei Shuji Maruyama, the Founder of Kokikai Aikido, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his teaching Aikido in Pennsylvania. In so doing, I honor his achievements and the beneficial role that Kokikai Aikido has played in enriching the lives of the men, women and children of Bucks County, PA and the USA.

Kokikai Aikido is a self-defense training system that stresses timing, centering, and coordination, rather than meeting force with force. Aikido students strive to use minimum effort for maximum effect, making Aikido an effective self-defense method for people of all levels of physical ability and of all ages. Kokikai Aikido teaches that strength comes from one's mental state as well as from one's physical prowess. It provides a path for personal realization and ethical self-defense. Students learn that as they become stronger, a peaceful resolution of conflict becomes more, not less, possible. In this way Aikido students also become better citizens, as they work toward attaining their personal goals.

After 50 years of teaching in the USA, Sensei Maruyama continues to share his unbounded energy with his students. He constantly strives to improve and simplify his technique, and to find even more effective ways of teaching. Through his leadership, Kokikai Aikido has grown to include dojos all over the United States and the world. Keystone Kokikai Aikido has made his teachings accessible to hundreds of Southeastern Pennsylvania residents.

I offer congratulations to Sensei Maruyama on his achievement and congratulations to his students who are fortunate to celebrate this milestone with him. It is my hope that Kokikai Aikido will continue to flourish and that Sensei Shuji Maruyama will continue to bring his skills to the martial arts community for many years to come.

#### HONORING COMRADE WILLIE L. LINDSEY, JR.

##### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Comrade Willie Lee Lindsey, Jr. who was born on February 23, 1936.

He enlisted into the United States Air Force on February 3, 1954 and was trained to be a Fire Fighter in the United States Air Force.

He obtained the rank of Airman 3rd Class (A/3C) during his 3 years and 10 months of service.

Comrade Willie L. Lindsey Jr. served 1 year and 10 months under imminent danger and hazardous duty conditions on the Korean Peninsula of South Korea.

He was awarded the National Defense Medal along with the Korean Service Medal during his time of service in the Air Force.

Airman 3rd Class Willie L. Lindsey, Jr. was Honorably Discharged from the United States Air Force on January 7, 1958.

After serving his country as a Fire Fighter in the military, Comrade Willie L. Lindsey, Jr. transitioned into civilian life and worked and retired after 30 years of employment at Vickers, Inc. in Jackson, Mississippi.

In December of 1985, Willie Lindsey joined the Brooks, William, Stewart, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9832, in Jackson, MS.

He was elected VFW Post 9832 Commander in 1988 and served in that position from 1988 to 2008. He also served as VFW 5th District Commander during his time as VFW Post 9832 Commander.

In 2006 through 2007, Willie Lindsey became the first African American in the State of Mississippi to be elected and serve as State Commander of the Department of Mississippi's Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Comrade Willie L. Lindsey, Jr. was a member of Shady Grove Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi. He is survived by his son Roderick Odems.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Comrade Willie L. Lindsey, Jr. for his dedication to serving his country.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. DAVID ROUZER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to make it back to Washington, D.C. to vote on the evening of 1/8/2018 due to inclement weather conditions. Had I been present, I would have voted Present on Roll Call No. 1.

#### RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF EMMA COUTURE

##### HON. CHARLIE CRIST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 9, 2018*

Mr. CRIST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Emma Couture, a remarkable and talented young woman who tragically left us too soon.

At 19 years old, Emma accomplished a great deal more than many of us could hope to in a lifetime. And she did it with an open and giving heart that inspired everyone she met. Emma exemplified the best and the brightest of our Pinellas community: a brilliant student, gifted actress, and a thoughtful, selfless individual.

From a young age, Ms. Couture showed a keen interest in the theater. In high school, she used her role as District Broadway Cares Representative to draw attention to AIDS research, organizing a donation drive and raffle at her local thespian competition. Emma used her unique talent on the stage as a platform to advocate for LGBTQ rights and other important issues, orchestrating a theatrical production that raised thousands of dollars for charity and drew performers from all over the country.

Emma's dedication to good works was matched only by her impressive intelligence. She was a victor on the television game show