

of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and I wish him continued success in his future education and career.

RECOGNIZING DR. GARY BRANCH
ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of my friend, Dr. Gary Branch, on his retirement as President of Coastal Alabama Community College (CACC). Dr. Branch leaves a legacy of deep devotion to his staff and students, exceptional leadership by example, and has had an immeasurable impact on the lives of countless members of our community.

Dr. Branch inherited an institution waiting for a leader such as himself. At the start of his tenure in 1981, he had to make the difficult decision to let go thirteen employees from then-Faulkner State College in the midst of a financial crisis. In true form, Dr. Branch was able to hire nearly all of them back to the college and has never faced another such crisis since.

Moving ever upward from his start, Dr. Branch oversaw immense growth in enrollment at CACC, from 1,100 students at one location in 1981 to now nearly 8,000 students in ten counties. Not only has he spearheaded increased opportunity for students in south Alabama, he also instituted the annual Student Leadership Retreat, Gatlinburg Getaway; the Black Ministerial Dinner and scholarship awards; the High School Counselor's Dinners; the Scholar Bowl; and has overseen the creation of a women's intercollegiate softball league, leading to an impressive softball stadium benefiting our entire community.

Throughout his entire time as President, Dr. Branch has constantly pushed for greater accessibility to post-secondary education for all students in Alabama. To this end, he was chairman of the committee that created the Statewide Transfer Articulation and Reporting System, allowing associate-degree-holding students to transfer to four-year universities in Alabama, and fought for CACC to benefit from state sales tax in Baldwin County. Possibly most notable, he oversaw the consolidation of Faulkner State and other institutions into Coastal Alabama Community College.

From my personal experience with him during my time as Chancellor of Alabama's Community College system, I can attest to Dr. Branch's steadfast commitment to Southwest Alabama, our students, and our economy. His impact will undoubtedly live on for many, many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the incredible service of Dr. Gary Branch as he leaves a legacy of 37 years to a grateful community. It is difficult to express our gratitude in mere words, but on behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives, we simply say: thank you.

COST ESTIMATE ON H.R. 6374 FIT
ACT

HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, the following cost estimate for H.R. 6374, FIT Act prepared by the Congressional Budget Office was not available to the Committee at the time of filing of the legislative report.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2018.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 6374, the Fitness Information Transparency Act of 2018.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be please to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Mark Grabowicz.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 6374—*Fitness Information Transparency Act of 2018*

H.R. 6374 would direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), within 180 days of enactment, to issue uniform fitness (or conduct) standards for hiring contract employees that must be followed by all DHS agencies. Within one year of enactment, DHS would have to provide contractors with monthly updates on the status of their employees' fitness determinations and collect quarterly data on processing times for fitness investigations.

Using information from DHS, CBO estimates that implementing those provisions would cost about \$1 million in fiscal year 2019 and less than \$500,000 annually thereafter; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Most costs would be for technological enhancements to a system to provide accurate monthly updates on the status of contract employees' fitness determinations. DHS currently employs thousands of contract employees.

Enacting H.R. 6374 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 6374 would not increase net direct spending or on budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

H.R. 6374 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mark Grabowicz. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT
NATHAN SCHWAB

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Nathan Schwab of Clive, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Nathan is a member of Boy Scout Troop No. 208 of the Mid Iowa Council.

The Eagle Scout designation is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Approximately

5 percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the past century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Nathan's Eagle Scout Project was completed for the Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt—Polk County Conservation. Nathan built 16 American Kestrel nesting boxes to help increase the population of this bird in central Iowa. He also donated the extra funds from his fundraising to Polk County Conservation. The work ethic Nathan has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Nathan and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all my colleagues in the House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and I wish him continued success in his future education and career.

IN RECOGNITION OF KEN AND
JULIA FALKE

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and thank Ken and Julia Falke, founders of the Boulder Crest Retreat for Military and Veteran Wellness in Bluemont, Virginia, and the EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) Warrior Foundation, for their extraordinary efforts to support our nation's wounded warriors and their families.

Last year, a special ceremony unveiled a statue of a Naval modification to the Battle Cross on the grounds of the Boulder Crest Retreat, honors those military heroes who lost their lives in combat, in training and in the struggle against the "invisible injuries of war that followed them home." Ken Falke's inspiration for the statue was the beautiful memorial erected in San Diego, to the four members of EOD Mobile Unit Three who had been killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Boulder Crest Retreat is the nation's first privately-funded rural wellness center dedicated exclusively to our nation's combat veterans and their families. Opened in 2013, it has offered a beautiful setting for more than 2,500 veterans and their families to rest, reconnect and recharge. Motivated by a limitless desire to serve combat veterans, especially the 11 percent to 20 percent of Iraqi and Afghan war vets who suffer from post-traumatic stress (PTS), Ken and Julia have ventured into modes of therapy and support that are outside the mainstream. As a Navy bomb-disposal expert who was seriously injured in a 1989 parachute jump, Ken had learned firsthand in his recovery from traumatic brain injury and a broken back, not to rely on medicines alone. Later, through their work with the

EOD Warrior Foundation, Ken visited many fellow EOD veterans at Veterans Administration facilities and was dismayed at how many of them were continuing to struggle with the PTS that their medications had not cured.

As a result, Ken and Julia began a program called Warrior PATHH, or “progressive and alternative training for healing heroes.” The 18-month program that starts with a weeklong boot camp at the Boulder Crest Retreat, where days begin at 7 am with physical conditioning and end at 8:30 pm with discussion around a campfire led by other combat veterans, has allowed the 120 vets accepted for PATHH to explore their past, make greater sense of their struggles, and develop a realization that their preparedness and leadership skills can be carried from the battlefield to the home front. As an indication of the program’s success, over the past three years, 95 percent of combat vets who have participated in the program continue to participate in monthly video chats that help the Falkes keep track of their emotional health and keep them setting and accomplishing goals.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly a privilege to ask you and our colleagues to join me in thanking two great patriots, Ken and Julia Falke, for the extraordinary difference they are making in the lives of our nation’s combat veterans, ensuring that they have the opportunity to succeed in their new mission—a life of passion, purpose and service, here at home.

RECOGNIZING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JOSEPH PALAZZOLO

HON. PAUL MITCHELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vietnam veteran, Private First Class Joseph Palazzolo of Imlay City, Michigan. I recently had the honor of presenting Mr. Palazzolo with his long overdue Bronze Star with Valor Device for his heroic actions 52 years ago. On November 16, 1966, while serving near Pleiku in Vietnam, Joe’s unit came under heavy enemy fire. Joe dropped his pack and set a line of fire to protect others when he was shot in the shoulder. Even after being wounded himself, Joe refused to be evacuated, and instead stayed inside the line of fire to help others. By the end of the fire-fight, Joe carried a half-dozen wounded soldiers to safety. His selflessness and bravery were evident in his actions that day. Mr. Palazzolo’s devotion to his fellow soldiers and his duty reflects distinction upon him, the 25th Infantry Division and the United States Army. It was an honor to meet Private First Class Palazzolo to present him with a Bronze Star, and I wish him the best of luck in the future.

RECOGNIZING RED ARNDT FOR HIS LIFETIME OF SERVICE AND COMMITMENT

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Red Arndt for his many years of

service to the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System, as well as his lifetime commitment to bringing safe and reliable water to the rural corners of this country.

Born Lennis Arndt on May 1, 1948, he earned the nickname, Red, while in grade school from his full head of red hair. The name stuck and most people only know him today as Red Arndt.

Red grew up in Springfield, Minnesota, about 90 minutes from his current hometown, Luverne where he first started working in 1989 as their public utilities director. Shortly after beginning his new position, Red heard about a proposal to bring water from the Missouri River in South Dakota to the surrounding states. A major undertaking with more people doubting the idea than supporting, Red saw the opportunity and potential, recommending to the mayor and city council that Luverne join and become one of the first members of the corporation that would later become the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System.

Seeing Lewis & Clark develop from conception to construction was a labor of love for Red, and a mission he fought hard to achieve. Red, one of only two original directors from 1990 still on the board, held a shovel when the ground was first broke in 2003. He has probably made over 60 trips to Washington, DC and many more to the state capitals and attended countless county, city and community meetings.

Fighting to get Lewis & Clark off the ground was just a starting point for Red. He has worked tirelessly on behalf of the project, serving as the vice-chairman of the board beginning in 1994 until becoming the board chairman in 2006, a position he still holds. Lewis & Clark has experienced ups and downs during those years, yet under Red’s leadership over 200 miles of pipeline have been laid in the ground currently delivering much needed water to 14 member communities and rural water projects, reaching over 300,000 people across South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. He has seen over \$470M in funding to Lewis & Clark, including \$57M in advance funding from the three states.

Red’s indisputable dedication was demonstrated when he participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony for the water treatment plant in August 2012, a mere two weeks after having open heart surgery. His fellow directors surprised him at the ceremony by presenting him with the Lewis & Clark Trailblazer Award, which is the organization’s highest honor.

In May 2016, Luverne was finally able to celebrate their connection to Lewis & Clark, with Red reveling in taking the first swig of water. It was at this ceremony that the meter building in Luverne was dedicated in Red’s honor. Red will be the first to acknowledge that this endeavor, benefiting generations to come in the tristate area, has been a true team effort. But, there is no question Red’s vision for the future, dogged dedication and strong leadership have been a driving force through the years.

When he is not dedicating his time to Lewis & Clark, Red is a proud father of three boys (all sharing his red hair) and grandfather of three red-headed little girls. His family is his pride-and-joy. You will often find Red wearing a pin honoring his son who served in the United States Air Force.

As a dessert first type of guy, Red lives life to the fullest, enjoying travel, fishing and nu-

merous other outdoor activities in his free time, as well as hanging out in his “man cave”. I am grateful for his commitment to public service, his hard work on behalf of Lewis & Clark, and, more importantly, I am proud to call him a friend.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Red Arndt for his many great contributions and wish him the best as he continues to make the most out of the life God has given.

IN HONOR OF THE 130TH ANNIVER- SARY OF SOLENBERGER HARD- WARE

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 28, 2018

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the 130th anniversary of Solenberger Hardware of Winchester, Virginia. Solenberger Hardware is truly the classic story of American entrepreneurialism, a story of humble beginnings, of overcoming adversity and adapting to new circumstances.

On the occasion of the company’s anniversary celebration, a large, beautiful historical mural about the company has been completed that includes portraits of past company leaders and an illustration of the original store. The mural highlights one biblical expression to summarize those 130 years: “Do to Others What You Would Have Them Do to You.” This high standard of trustworthiness and loyalty, that was developed by each of the company’s leaders, is what has set Solenberger Hardware apart. John S. Solenberger, the founder of the store in 1888, made a significant contribution to this corporate culture when, during the Great Depression, he promised his employees that he would keep them working and on the payroll, and paid in cash. Herbert Solenberger, of the following generation, treated the store’s customers with such integrity that, if he found that the store had short-changed a customer, he would personally seek out the customer to repay him or her. And Herbert’s brother, Hugh, developed a standard of customer service that involved training employees to be experts about the store’s products and services, always approaching their work with the customer’s best interest in mind.

Such extraordinary loyalty and trustworthiness have always been extended to the larger community, as well. The 1960s and 1970s were times of racial unrest in Winchester and John T. Solenberger, Hugh’s son, expressed loyalty to an African-American employee by promoting him to a management position in the company, based on his merits, without being thwarted by any concerns he may have had for how such a decision might affect their business. Additionally, Solenberger Hardware annually hosts fundraising events to benefit the Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter and the Winchester Rescue Mission.

Another tradition contributing to Solenberger Hardware’s resilience has been its passion for change and innovation, starting with John S.’s modifying the very nature of the Solenberger business, to current leaders John, Jr. and Cyndi Solenberger’s move of the store to a place offering greater access to the customer.