

retirement from the Plattsburgh City Police Department after 25 years of service.

Originally from Au Sable, New York, Ken entered the Police Academy in 1993 after graduating from Clinton Community College. In 2003, Ken was promoted to the rank of Patrol Sergeant. As Patrol Sergeant, he served on the Special Response Team, which received a mayoral commendation for service in the 2015 Dannemora Manhunt. Soon after, Ken was promoted to Administrative Lieutenant. After 24 years of service with the Police Department, Ken was appointed in 2017 by Mayor Colin Read to serve as Police Chief, where he worked tirelessly to promote community policing and made combating the opiate epidemic a priority. Ken is a lifelong resident of the Plattsburgh area, and is an exemplary member of his community.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I would like to thank Chief Parkinson for his years of hard work and dedication to his community, and wish him all the best in the years ahead.

MICHAEL VISSER RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED EDUCATION SERVICE AWARD FROM VVC FOUNDATION

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michael Visser who will receive the Distinguished Education Service Award from the Victor Valley College Foundation on February 24, 2018.

Michael was selected for this award by the foundation because of his commitment to encouraging his students to pursue careers in law enforcement. After retiring from three decades in law enforcement, Michael began teaching courses at VVC and was instrumental in opening the Regional Public Safety Training Center on campus. He also played a vital role in assisting the VVC Campus Police Department in obtaining new firearms and improved training. He has gone above and beyond in supporting the campus by facilitating emergency drills such as "The Great Shake-out" and "Active Shooter Training." Michael's passion for giving back to his students is evident in everything he does.

On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I would like to congratulate Michael Visser for his tireless effort on behalf of his students at VVC. Undoubtedly, he is well-deserving of the Distinguished Education Service Award.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RARE DISEASE ADVANCEMENT, RESEARCH, AND EDUCATION (RARE) ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Rare disease Advancement, Research, and Education (RARE) Act.

This important, bipartisan legislation would address many of the issues facing rare disease patients and families. Today, Rare Disease Day, many of these individuals are sharing their stories and educating communities of researchers, health professionals, governments, families, and friends about how rare diseases affect them. I am proud to introduce the RARE Act not only in recognition of these efforts, but moreover to address the many unique challenges facing the rare disease patient community.

Almost 7,000 rare diseases affect nearly 30,000,000 Americans, and many lack an effective treatment. There remains much Congress can do to improve rare disease awareness, education, research, surveillance, diagnosis, and treatment, and to address common challenges faced by rare disease patients.

Over the course of my time in Congress, I have met with countless rare disease patients and their families. Each story is unique—and in many cases heartbreaking—but it is essential that Congress address some of the root causes behind these stories.

Rare diseases cross the medical spectrum, but individuals with rare diseases face some common challenges. In large part due to their limited patient population size, these individuals may have difficulty obtaining an accurate diagnosis, finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their disease, and ultimately finding appropriate treatment options and cures. While over 450 drugs have been approved for the treatment of rare diseases, millions of Americans suffering from a rare disease have no approved treatment options.

For decades, Congress has worked to support advancements in rare disease, with legislation ranging from the Orphan Drug Act to the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act to most recently, the 21st Century Cures Act. In addition, the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health have made important strides, prioritizing research, development, and approval of treatment targeting rare diseases. Nonetheless, it remains clear that there remains much policymakers can do to further these critical efforts.

The RARE Act would represent an important step in this direction, addressing some of the commonalities between rare diseases and aiming to improve rare disease treatment, research, and diagnostics.

First, the RARE Act would expand our understanding of rare diseases by enhancing an existing and successful program: the Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network. The Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is made up of 21 research 'centers of excellence' studying rare diseases in an interdisciplinary way, working with patients and others on clinical studies and other research.

Second, the RARE Act would fill critical gaps in our healthcare system, improving coordination, surveillance, and awareness of rare diseases. For example, the RARE Act would require the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to create a National Rare Disease or Condition Surveillance System. Modelled off of similar systems for other conditions, this formalized infrastructure would track rare disease data, helping researchers to understand commonalities between diseases. The RARE Act would also require the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to expand and

intensify its work to ensure that health professionals are aware of rare disease diagnoses and treatments. And it would mandate an updated report on rare disease efforts from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, to ensure that Congress has the best tools possible to address these issues.

Passage of the RARE Act would represent a major stride in combating these unique diseases and conditions, and enhance the federal government, non-profit, and private sectors capacities to improve patients' lives. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the RARE Act.

SUBURBAN SUGAR LAND WOMEN HONOR FORT BEND COUNTY LEADERS FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fort Bend County women honored by the Suburban Sugar Land Women (SSLW) for Women's History Month 2018.

The National Women's History Project celebrates the diverse and historic accomplishments of women. Every year, SSLW recognizes women who have made a positive impact upon our community. There are six women from Fort Bend County who received this honor—Evelyn Peters Dean, president of the Suburban Houston Fort Bend Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Ammie Blahuta, president of Gigi's Playhouse Down Syndrome Achievement Centers, Tran Pham Rich, president of Cookie Joe's Dancin' School, Sugar Land, Manuela Arroyos, CEO of Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels, Cynthia Ginyard, a passionate retired educator and public servant and Lupe Uresti, former mayor of Rosenberg and current Rosenberg Housing Authority director and treasurer for the board of directors of the Fort Bend Hispanic Heritage Forum. Each of these women contributes to the strength and vibrancy of our community and we thank them.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Suburban Sugar Land Women honorees. Thank you for all you do for our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF JIM WAGNER'S LIFE OF DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jim Wagner as he retires from a lifetime of distinguished public service to the Downrivers of Michigan. This week he will retire as Trenton City Administrator, but his service has been long and extensive. He has brought our community together for years through his leadership.

A lifelong resident of Wyandotte, Michigan, Mr. Wagner grew up with a passion to serve

the community that he loves. He operated Wyandotte Sporting Goods in his early adult life and was known for his kind demeanor, friendliness and helping anyone that needs it. At age 34 in 1979, Mr. Wagner was approached and told that he would be a good candidate for Wyandotte Mayor. He served as Mayor for 8 years and later served in various capacities before being appointed as Trenton City Administrator in December 2011. In his role as Trenton City Administrator, he was responsible for identifying the city's top priorities and effectively utilizing the city's resources. He has held this role for over 6 years and leaves behind a legacy of passionate and successful leadership as he retires from this position. He has helped guide Trenton, Wyandotte and surrounding areas through tough economic times and challenging circumstances and is an important reason that the Downrivers remain strong.

Mr. Wagner is known by community members throughout the region as someone who has a deep knowledge of the area and worked hard to create local partnerships to make continued improvements. One of the most successful projects spearheaded by Mr. Wagner was the "Say Yes to Downriver" slogan that increased the area's visibility and brought new families and businesses to Trenton and the surrounding cities. Other successes included creating the yearly business summit held by the Southern Wayne County Regional Chamber of Commerce, helping establish the Downriver Community Conference, assisting residents who have lost their jobs, authoring a national grant to retrain workers, addressing serious environmental issues in both Brownfield and superfund sites and continuing to renovate the International Wildlife Refuge. His colleagues have said that there need to be more public servants like him and that he is leaving behind a legacy of excellence. Mr. Wagner looks forward to seeing the Downriver area continue to flourish in his retirement, and his hard work and expertise is valued and the community will continue to tap his wisdom in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Jim Wagner's lifetime of leadership and public service. Mr. Wagner has effectively served the Downriver area throughout his career.

RECOGNITION OF MS. FRANCESCA ALFANO

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege to rise today to honor Ms. Francesca Alfano, for her outstanding community service work in her hometown of West Palm Beach, Florida.

Ms. Alfano was one of five students selected by Florida's Hometown U.S.A. Program, Inc. this year. She is a high school junior at Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts, a public high school located in West Palm Beach, Florida. She is the daughter of Monique McCall and Gianpaolo Alfano.

Throughout this year, Ms. Alfano will proudly represent West Palm Beach as she travels to visit nursing homes, children's hospitals,

Veteran's hospitals, charity events, and other activities throughout the State of Florida.

She certainly reflects the values of Florida's Hometown U.S.A. Program, Inc., which encourages and supports students who have a desire to volunteer. There is truly no limit to the difference students like Ms. Alfano can make in the lives of their neighbors with the support of organizations like Florida's Hometown U.S.A., Inc.

Florida's Hometown U.S.A. Program, Inc. is a non-profit educational youth organization, which has received Disney's Helping Kids Shine Award, Disney's VolunteAR of the Year, the Governor's Points of Light Award from former Governor Jeb Bush, and the national President's Daily Points of Light Award from former President George W. Bush.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that Ms. Francesca Alfano represents my district. She is a student and community member whom we can all admire and respect. I commend her for her deep commitment to volunteer work, and wish her the best as she pursues her high school diploma and beyond.

KISD BRINGS HOME FIVE STATE SWIMMING MEDALS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate five Katy ISD state swimming medalists.

Kaloyan Bratanov, a senior at Katy High School, won the 6A championship in the 200-yard medley and won the silver medal in the 100-yard freestyle. Emma Sticklen, a sophomore at Taylor High School, brought home a bronze medal in the 100-yard backstroke. Cinco Ranch High School senior, Aria Bernal earned her third consecutive state silver medal in the backstroke, finishing with a time of 52.72. William Coakley, a junior at Seven Lakes' High School, earned a bronze medal in the 200 free. Senior Brayden Rudd of Seven Lakes' High School finished his high school career with a bronze medal in the breaststroke. Each of these students has made Katy and all of Texas proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to each of you on your accomplishments. We look forward to seeing what you will accomplish in the future.

TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S PASTOR AND GOD'S MAN—BILLY GRAHAM

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Paul wrote in the book of Galatians "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." This was Billy Graham's favorite bible verse. He chose only to boast in humility, sacrifice, and the cross of Christ. He was America's Pastor, who lived his life to bring the lost and hurting to Christ.

Today, as his body lies in honor, inside the Capitol's Rotunda, I am proud to pay tribute to long time famed evangelist, Billy Graham.

On a dairy farm located outside Charlotte, North Carolina, Billy Graham was born November 7, 1918. He grew up like most rural 1920s American children. He was raised in a colonial-style house with indoor plumbing. He lived a quiet country life where he helped work the farm, played baseball, and went to church on most Sundays.

In 1934, at the age of 16, he was saved during a revival meeting led by Dr. Mordecai Ham. After high school, he moved to Tennessee and enrolled in a small Christian school, Bob Jones College, for half a semester before leaving. He found the school too strict. He transferred to Florida Bible Institute where he continued his education and prepared himself for his future ministry. He soon felt called to preach.

In Florida, he joined a Southern Baptist Convention church, and was ordained to preach in 1939. He began preaching at small churches and revival meetings. He graduated with a bachelor's in theology and decided to further his spiritual training at Wheaton College in Illinois.

With a deep faith in God, 21 year old Graham arrived at Wheaton College in 1940 as a tall, gentle man with a booming voice whose one goal was to preach the gospel. Here he met his future wife, Ruth Bell. Ruth, the daughter of medical missionaries, was raised in China. She prayed that God would let her live out her life as a missionary. God gave her Billy Graham. After graduating with a bachelor's in anthropology, Graham married Bell on August 13, 1943 in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. "There would have been no Billy Graham . . . had it not been for Ruth," said the late T. W. Wilson. She was his anchor and advisor for over 63 years.

Graham discovered God's call was to lead others to Christ by becoming an evangelist. He first made national attention during his Los Angeles Crusade in fall 1949. Under a white tent, 30 year old Graham preached over 65 sermons to more than 350,000 people. Overnight, he became a household name.

The Billy Graham Crusades were heard all over our world between 1947 and 2005. He filled large arenas and stadiums across our country with a focus of bringing people to Christ. Long before churches were ready for racial integration, he integrated his crusades. His Crusades made it to my neck of the woods three times: in 1952, 1965 and 1981. In 1952, half million Texans came out to hear Graham preach. Roy Rogers and Dale Evans gave their testimony, too. The brand new Astrodome opened its doors for 10 days to Graham in 1965. Lyndon B. Johnson and Lady Bird Johnson attended. At 63 years old, Graham preached at Rice Stadium in 1981.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association was founded in 1950. It was made up of a core team who created the "Modesto Manifesto," a covenant to ensure the integrity of his ministry. Millions more could now hear him on the radio and see him on TV. Graham understood the power of the media. He also became one of the world's best-selling authors. He became a world evangelist called to spread the good news.

Graham was called the Pastor to our Presidents. He met with all post war Presidents up to Obama. Our country called on him in times