

RECOGNIZING THE ST. JOSEPH-
OGDEN GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD
TEAM

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the St. Joseph-Ogden High School girls track and field team, who are the 2018 Illinois High School Association Class 1A state champions.

St. Joseph-Ogden won the title with a score of 43, easily outpacing the second place finisher by seven points. St. Joseph-Ogden benefited from having two event winners, Atleigh Hamilton, who won the long jump event with a mark of 18 feet two inches and the 4x200 Meter Relay team, composed of Abbey Mizer, MacLayne Taylor, Hailey Birt, and Atleigh Hamilton, who won with a time of 1:43.89. Also making important contributions to the overall victory were the 4x100 Meter Relay team of Abbey Mizer, MacLayne Taylor, Hailey Birt, and Atleigh Hamilton with a second place finish; the 4x400 Meter Relay team of MacLayne Taylor, Rylee Sjuts, Zea Maroon, and Atleigh Hamilton, which also finished second; and the 4x800 Meter Relay team of Rylee Sjuts, Zea Maroon, Hannah Rajlich, and Sam Mabry, which took third place.

Mr. Speaker, today it is an honor for me to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the St. Joseph-Ogden High School girls track and field team in winning the 2018 championship, and I wish the team and their coach, Kelly Steffen, all the best in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF PROVIDENCE
VILLAGE HEROES PARK

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Heroes Park in Providence Village, Texas. Heroes Park, which will be dedicated on Memorial Day of this year, seeks to honor the selfless acts of men and women in uniform, first responders, and other unsung heroes. Today I would like to thank the Providence Village Hope Foundation for its work to establish this park and support our community's men and women in uniform.

Each Memorial Day, we remember the brave members of our Armed Services who put their service to our nation first. While Heroes Park is a physical tribute to them, our gratitude and respect extends far beyond the confines of its land.

I am grateful to join Providence Village Mayor Michael Jordan and Providence Village Hope Foundation Founders Eric and Karen Mattson to dedicate this beautiful park, and pay tribute to North Texas service members past and present.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR.
THOMAS ESTILL REFFITT

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Thomas Estill Reffitt of Bath County, Kentucky. Mr. Reffitt is a distinguished veteran of World War II.

Mr. Reffitt was born September 20, 1924 to Samuel and Lillie Reffitt. He served in the United States Navy for four years as a Fireman 1st Class. He was stationed in the Gilbert Islands. Mr. Reffitt was honorably discharged March 4, 1946.

Mr. Reffitt returned home and worked as a truck driver and a farmer. At the present time, he is under hospice care at the Leestown Road Veteran's Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky.

Mr. Reffitt and all the brave men and women of the Greatest Generation are true heroes. Their bravery and their sacrifice preserved freedoms for ourselves and for future generations of Americans and for people around the world.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5515) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I will vote against H.R. 5515, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.

The legislation includes several provisions that I strongly support, including giving servicemen and women a well-deserved raise of 2.6 percent. Those who serve in uniform have made extraordinary sacrifices for our country and have earned and deserve a pay raise. It also includes funding for Ukraine and Eastern Europe security initiatives to counter Russia's heightened military provocations and annexation of Crimea.

Despite these important initiatives, I have strong concerns with H.R. 5515. This legislation authorizes more than \$708 billion, including \$69 billion to the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund, an account which is not counted in the budget and is not paid for. It adds to the deficit and is used as a slush fund by the Pentagon.

Unlike every other federal agency, the Department of Defense (DOD) has yet to complete a financial audit; taxpayers deserve to know how the biggest bureaucracy in the federal government spends their money. In fact, a shocking report released in December 2016 exposed \$125 billion in waste that the Pentagon tried to hide from the public.

I refuse to support increased bureaucratic waste at the expense of American taxpayers

and our men and women in uniform. A more accountable and transparent department would ensure taxpayer dollars are directed towards the needs of our troops and the benefits they deserve, rather than buying unnecessary weapon systems and giving the president a blank check to fund wars Congress hasn't authorized.

I have always advocated for maintaining Congress's constitutionally-continued prerogative to declare war under the War Powers Act and limiting the President's authority to engage in armed conflict without the consent of Congress. I strongly oppose the NDAA's continued authorization of spending for wars that are not congressionally approved. The Pentagon uses the 2001 Authorization of Use of Military Force (AUMF) to continue to justify the 17 years our troops have been fighting in the Middle East. President Trump has already sent troops to Syria, Yemen and elsewhere without seeking a new AUMF, a violation of the War Powers Act.

Additionally, the bill prohibits the closing of Guantanamo Bay, which costs more than \$100 million each year to house 41 prisoners and has been used as a top recruiting tool by terrorists. The prison at Guantanamo Bay has been a black eye for the United States, has eroded relationships with our allies, undermined U.S. missions abroad, and put U.S. citizens and our troops at risk of retaliation.

Congress can make responsible cuts to our defense budget without jeopardizing the safety of our troops or undermining our national security. Fiscal responsibility and accountability at the Pentagon would allow for funds to be better spent supporting the basic needs of our troops, meeting our obligations to veterans of past wars, and ensuring our true defense needs are prioritized.

HONORING MRS. EVELYN HICKS

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor Mrs. Evelyn Hicks of Winston County, Alabama. Mrs. Hicks is retiring from managing her local school cafeteria at Lynn School in Lynn, Alabama which is located in the Fourth Congressional District that I represent. I am honored to recognize Mrs. Hicks for her dedication to ensuring our children have nutritious and edible food. It should also be noted that she was honored on May 23, 2018 at Lynn School with a reception for her many years of service.

Mrs. Evelyn Hicks was born in my home county of Winston to Truman and Alice Baughn. She is a graduate of Lynn School and has been a member of Concord Missionary Baptist Church for 57 years. She has been married to Roy Hicks for 52 years. They have two daughters and four grandchildren. Mrs. Hicks also served on the Winston County Board of Education from 2000 to 2004.

Mrs. Hicks also played a major role in providing my office with "on the ground" feedback into how school lunch restrictions were having a negative effect on her job of feeding children. Because of Mrs. Hicks's assistance, we have been able to roll back many of the harmful restrictions and provide solutions that give

kids healthy food, while at the same time providing food they will actually eat and enjoy.

Mrs. Evelyn Hicks has been, in every sense, a devoted and passionate advocate for the children she has helped feed throughout her many years through school nutrition. I am proud to call Mrs. Hicks a friend and a fellow Alabamian, and she is truly deserving of this recognition from the United States House of Representatives.

I wish her all the very best for the future in all that she is involved with.

TRIBUTE TO HARVEY HALL

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, the Honorable DAVID VALADAO, in memory of Mr. Harvey Hall. Mr. Hall served as the mayor of Bakersfield, California from 2000 to 2016 and will be remembered as a community icon who never stopped believing in the city he called home.

A lifelong resident of Bakersfield, Harvey Hall was a model civil servant, a community legend who would greet you wearing one of his trademark suits and a welcoming smile. Mayor Hall was a cheerleader for Bakersfield in the purest sense. He was an advocate for the businesses and organizations of the city he served, and it was not uncommon to see him each and every day at ribbon-cutting ceremonies or lending his support at community gatherings across Bakersfield. Everyone knew Mayor Hall, and Mayor Hall made it his goal to get to know everyone he met. He was a man who remembered names and would always make the time to pull you aside for a chat, no matter who you were. When you were with Mayor Hall, you always felt like the most important person in the room.

Outside of his responsibilities in City Hall, Mr. Hall focused himself on bettering the quality of life in Kern County. A consummate businessman, Mayor Hall founded Hall Ambulance Services, Inc., an emergency services company that has been a mainstay in Kern County for nearly 50 years. Mayor Hall had a heart for education and dedicated his mayoral salary to the Kern Community Foundation, awarding over \$250,000 to fund scholarships for local

high school students pursuing secondary education during his time in office.

More than anything else, Mayor Hall's love of community was illustrated in quieter ways. He used his own money to help Bakersfield's homeless get back on their feet and would regularly host community clean-ups to beautify a city he saw nothing but potential in. Mayor Hall welcomed the diverse communities that make Bakersfield the community that it is, and was a mainstay at the annual Sikh Parade and Harvest Festival. Most importantly, he understood the power of a thank-you note and would always offer his humble thanks for the smallest of gestures. This love of community extended outside of Bakersfield too, for Mayor Hall understood that Kern County was a better place when all of its communities succeeded. He often gave his ear to neighboring communities and always made himself available to provide assistance or advice when it was needed.

There is a lesson to be learned in the manner in which Mayor Hall lived. He was a man who lived life's purpose both in and out of public service. He was a man forged by a city that he made into his own. He was a man who never missed an obligation, who always knew the true potential and promise of Bakersfield and its residents. Harvey Hall made an indelible impression on Kern County, and it is our every hope that those whose lives he impacted honor his legacy by showing the same love, passion, and dedication to Bakersfield as our city's longest-serving mayor did. For some, he was "Mayor Hall." For others, he was just "Harvey." But for us, he will always be "Mr. Bakersfield." We extend our deepest condolences to his wife Lavonne, his children, grandchildren, and a community that loves him as much as he loved it. Mayor Hall exemplified the best qualities of Bakersfield and will be missed, but he leaves behind a legacy that will continue to shape our community for years to come.

HONORING GAIL K. WRIGHT

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great Kentuckian, Gail K. Wright. Mrs.

Wright was born in Menifee County, Kentucky. Her parents taught her to love God and family and to be grateful. They taught her to treat everyone the same, no matter their economic status. These values shaped her life and carried over into her professional career. Mrs. Wright grew up on her family's farm and developed a love for reading. She went on to graduate from Morehead State University. She and her husband now live in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky.

Mrs. Wright has served as the Executive Director of the Gateway Area Development District in northeastern Kentucky for almost 30 years. She is unquestionably a leader in the field of economic and community development, with an extensive background in grant writing and administration. She has vast knowledge of federal, state, and local programs. Mrs. Wright became the chair of the Kentucky Area Development District's Executive Directors. She is quite an active member in her community and in the five county ADD region. Mrs. Wright serves on numerous boards related to community and economic development, education, tourism, downtown revitalization, and chambers.

After making tremendous progress in the Gateway ADD region over the past 30 years, Mrs. Wright is retiring. Her love for the people of Eastern Kentucky and her passion for helping to better their lives will certainly be missed. I wish her all the best of everything in her retirement and I thank her for her service and leadership. It is my honor to recognize Gail K. Wright before the United States House of Representatives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from the Chamber on Tuesday, May 22, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on Roll Call votes 210 and 211, and "yea" on Roll Call vote 212.