

Like I said, we do not know exactly what Mueller knew, didn't know, but he surely had to know when the FBI agent who was assisting his supervisor in the case, when he did an affidavit, signed it under penalty of perjury, indicating the improprieties of the agent in charge of the case, which is named Kepner, Director Mueller had to have known that one of his agents said: I cannot live with this prosecutorial misconduct. This is figuratively what he said.

The agent in charge, the FBI agent in charge, hid evidence that would have proved what I believe, beyond a reasonable doubt, Ted Stevens was not guilty. Not just raised a reasonable doubt; would have proved he was not guilty.

As the Alaska Dispatch News asked in their headline from their article in September 2016—actually, June 6, 2012, then updated September 2016, their headline asked: “Why is lead FBI agent in botched Ted Stevens case still employed?”

So we do know, under Mueller's FBI, that he did such horrific damage, running off thousands of years of experience, years later, after one FBI agent had such pangs of conscience that an innocent man, Ted Stevens, was convicted when he was 100 percent not guilty, the agent that was the whistleblower had been run off from the FBI. That had to have been with Mueller's consent. He was removed from every criminal case, which means you need to get out because you are not going to have a job.

Yet the agent, Kepner, who was in charge of the investigation, manufactured evidence, hid evidence, according to these reports, and she was still working in the criminal division of the FBI.

So when anybody talks to me about how fair and ethical and upright Robert Mueller is, I don't buy it. I have seen the damage he did to the FBI. I have seen the damage he created by not allowing his FBI agents to be trained to recognize radical Islamists.

Sure, after the FBI got notice under Mueller that Tsarnaev, the Boston bomber, had been radicalized and he was a threat to lives and U.S. security, oh, yeah; they sent out an FBI agent to talk to him. And apparently he said: Oh, no, I am not a terrorist.

And then they went the extra step to talk to his mother who said: Oh, no, he is a good boy. He is not a terrorist.

But because of Robert Mueller placating the Council on American-Islamic Relations that was a named party co-conspirator supporting terrorism, he placated CAIR, and he had the training materials for our FBI agents purged so they didn't know what to look for. That is the reason the Boston bombers were on the loose. He needs to resign and go home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2045

DANGERS OF BURN PITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Helping Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits Act, H.R. 1279, and I will talk a minute about one of my own constituents, Brian, who is facing this very dangerous condition.

From the summer of 2004 through 2009, my constituent Brian was deployed a total of six times on combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan as a United States Marine Corps helicopter mechanic.

As a junior marine, he would haul trash daily to the airbases' burn pits. He helped burn all the unit's trash and stood security watch on the burn pits, which are always located near work or housing areas in airbases.

During each deployment, Brian would smell the trash burning in the pits and was always in the path of the smoke. He would often wear rags across his mouth and nose to reduce the foul smell and filter the smoke from the air he was breathing.

After some time, Brian developed breathing troubles, and the base medical center provided inhalers that helped temporarily. When he was home in between the deployments, he had breathing treatments and was diagnosed with bronchitis on multiple occasions.

In 2013, Brian developed a serious case of pneumonia. An abscess had formed in the lower lobe of his left lung. It ruptured, filling the lobe with fluid. The doctors removed a portion of Brian's left lung to save his life. The surgery kept him alive but greatly reduced lung capacity and functionality.

In 2016, Brian was offered the option to retire early from the United States Marine Corps. The Veterans Administration reviewed his case and determined a 100 percent disability rating. He is currently going through more testing due to undiagnosed heart issues and elevated blood level count for his blood cells, and he is still being treated for lung problems.

To this day, Brian reports having rib cage pain and nerve damage from the lung surgery on a daily basis.

Brian is, unfortunately, not the only servicemember whose health is deteriorating due to exposure to harmful substances from burning of waste in military bases.

While we are glad to see action taken in the NDAA for fiscal year 2018, we need a more permanent solution. I am proud to cosponsor H.R. 1279, Helping Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits Act, that would create a center of excellence within the Department of Veterans Affairs to better understand the health effects and treatments associated with burn pits.

I also encourage our United States military to provide proper breathing

safety apparatuses and reconsider their current policy of having burn pits on or near our bases.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and these reforms because we all have an obligation to care for our veterans.

HONORING DR. CYNDIA MORALES MUNIZ DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Cyndia Morales Muniz.

Dr. Cyndia Morales Muniz serves as an assistant director at Hispanic Initiatives in the president's division at the University of Central Florida, affectionately known as UCF in central Florida. As chair of UCF's Hispanic Serving Institution, HSI, Task Force, she facilitates communication and collaboration within the university community to strengthen UCF's Hispanic-serving efforts.

As founding president of the Latino Faculty & Staff Association, LaFaSA, at UCF, Dr. Muniz has been the catalyst that has elevated Latino programming at UCF. With grant support from the Hispanic Federation, she established the CREAR Futuros Mentoring Program at UCF in 2016. The following year, she planned UCF's inaugural Latino graduation ceremony, Nuestra Graduacion.

In the local community, she supports the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando and the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund of Metro Orlando.

Dr. Muniz is highly regarded in the central Florida community. She also advocates for Latino student success at the national level, helping lead two national projects in partnership with Excelencia in Education and serving as the UCF representative within the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. She also coleads the Puerto Rican Education Relief Team at UCF, helping support displaced students affected by Hurricane Maria in their transition to central Florida.

Having been a first-generation, low-income college student, she takes full advantage of opportunities to discuss and elevate best practices and policy implications for underrepresented communities.

Dr. Muniz earned a bachelor's degree in sociology at Binghamton University, a master's degree in sociology at St. John's University, and a doctoral degree in educational leadership at the University of Central Florida. Most recently, she was selected as a 2018 College Board Professional Fellow.

Dr. Muniz is a proud Puerto Rican and resides in Orlando with her loving husband, Antonio.

For that, Dr. Cyndia Morales Muniz, we honor you.

HONORING VETNAH “YEMEN” MONESSAR DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Vetnah “Yemen” Monessar.

Vetnah “Yemen” Monessar is a community organizer and political activist with over 13 years of experience in mobilizing and elevating the narrative of Muslim Americans in our community.

She has led legislative and electoral campaigns at all levels of government, advocating for equitable healthcare, education reform, fair access economic development, and human rights, in addition to numerous other issue-based campaigns.

Vetnah serves as the executive director of Emgage Florida, a civic engagement nonprofit that aims to educate, engage, and empower Muslim Americans in the civic engagement process.

She made history as the first hired woman State director for a Presidential campaign as the State coalition director for Hillary for America.

Vetnah currently serves as the vice president of the Orlando American Muslim Chamber of Commerce, on the Young Professionals Board of Harbor House, and on the Orlando Chapter 57 Citizen Review Board and has received numerous community service and leadership awards.

She received her degree in Islamic studies and religion from the Islamic University of Dr. Bilal Philips, as well as a degree in paralegal studies with a focus on transactional and litigation law.

As a community leader, she is a constant champion of those who traditionally do not have their voices heard and empowering them to be involved in the democratic process.

For that, Vetnah “Yemen” Monessar, we salute you.

HONORING MARGIE VIERA DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Margie Viera.

Margie Viera is a force of nature and an inspiration to us all.

She works with community leaders, government, and businessowners from all industries to bring opportunities and growth to the central Florida region. She has influence in major areas, including public affairs, education, business development, international commercial import and export, and strategic alliances.

She helps businesses, big and small, to achieve growth. Her work has made an impact globally in major world centers, including in Puerto Rico; California, Texas, Florida in the United States; as well as Latin America, Spain, among other countries.

Margie is passionate about volunteering and mentoring. She is the development director at the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando, one of the Nation's leading organizations committed to the economic development of the Hispanic community directly impacting the central Florida region. Throughout her tenure as development director, Margie has engaged widely in policy development and advocacy across education, economic, social, and cultural spheres.

In the educational industry, Margie worked transforming lives through her service as the daytime program director at Ana G. Mendez University System, where she started the first bilingual program that serves Hispanic

youth and empowered her students by giving them access to professional opportunities and skills development.

She is the cofounder of the Aspire to Inspire Youth Mentorship Program, which impacts underserved students to inspire them to become the next generation of leaders. Aspire to Inspire is a community organization that inspires Latin youth to stay in school and reach for the stars while creating a culture of #Paying IT Forward in her community.

Born in Puerto Rico and the single mother of two boys, Margie understands firsthand the challenges of living on the mainland away from her family on the island. She is a woman of valor, a loving mother, and a fierce advocate for education.

Margie Viera is a Latina leader using her powerful voice for our most vulnerable in central Florida.

For that, Margie Viera, we honor you.

HONORING KAREN COOPER WELZEL DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Karen Cooper Welzel.

Karen Cooper Welzel was born in Michigan. Both her parents fought for workers' rights and led the formation of the United Auto Workers union. Her family history became the basis for Karen to become politically active and as involved as she is today. Karen and her husband, George, moved to central Florida in 1994 and soon thereafter joined in the Polk Democratic Executive Committee meetings and the local Democratic club meetings.

Karen worked in human resources and later became a corporate HR director for a private hospitality company, overseeing five hotels and other properties.

Karen volunteered for the Howard Dean Presidential campaign in 2003 and continued in local politics by participating in Democratic clubs and the Polk County Democratic Party. She attended training sessions, served as a delegate to the Florida Democratic Party conventions, and encouraged and supported local candidates.

Karen was later elected chairwoman of the Polk County DEC. She chartered five new Democratic clubs in the county and opened two campaign offices. She also serves on the board of directors of Side Street Art Beat, an organization that provides opportunities for creative self-expression and support for individuals with special needs.

In 2014, Karen started a local chapter of the Democratic Women's Club of Florida in East Polk County. She currently serves as the chair of the Candidate Screening Committee.

In 2016, she was elected by the Polk County DEC members to serve as the State Committee Woman and currently is chairing the Polk DEC Campaign Committee. Karen and members of the DWC East Polk Ridge Club organized two women's rallies that resulted in the creation of the DWCF Lakeland Club.

Karen has stood before the Polk County Legislative Delegation several years in a row demanding voting rights for all citizens and gun safety measures.

Karen is the mother of two sons and now proud to be a grandmother.

For that, Karen Cooper Welzel, we honor you.

HONORING YBETH BRUZUAL DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor of Ybeth Bruzual.

Ybeth Bruzual is a beloved Venezuelan-Puerto Rican journalist in our community who has lived in central Florida since 1981 and considers our area her home.

Ybeth is an anchor for Spectrum News 13. She also hosts “Political Connections” on Sundays.

She is a three-time Emmy nominee and won an Emmy in 2016 for the Pulse Vigil live coverage at Lake Eola. Bruzual was honored with the UCF Department of Political Science Outstanding Alumni Award in 2015 for her political coverage.

She is fascinated by politics. She earned a bachelor's degree in international politics from the University of Central Florida. She puts that knowledge to good use in her job at News 13.

Ybeth bleeds black and gold and is a proud member of the UCF Alumni Association. She enjoys cheering on the UCF Knights at sporting event at Spectrum Stadium.

She also earned an AA degree from Valencia College, where she served as a writer and circulation manager in the 1990s on the school's newspaper, Valencia Voice.

She calls herself an endless prisoner of hope, and demonstrates that by her many community activities. She is a past board member for both Shepherd's Hope Clinic and Central Florida Chapter Board for Lighthouse of Central Florida, offering service to the blind, and a former mentor for the Compact Program for Orange County Public Schools.

Ybeth is the past president of the Central Florida Chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and is a proud lifetime member of that organization.

Ybeth and her husband, Alfredo, have a young son.

And for that, Ybeth Bruzual, we honor you.

□ 2100

HONORING LISA ANN FRANCHINA DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Lisa Ann Franchina.

Lisa Ann Franchina is a local attorney. She is also a member of many civic organizations, and has served on many community boards in central Florida.

Born in Queens, New York, Lisa received her bachelor of arts in humanities from Hofstra University, and her juris doctorate from the Shepard Broad Law Center at Nova Southeastern University.

After her graduation from law school, Lisa was an assistant public defender in Orlando, handling trials and appeals in criminal court. For the last 25 years, Lisa has been a small-business owner, operating her own firm.

In 2016, Lisa received a Spotlight Award for her service on the membership committee of the family law section of the Florida bar.

In addition, Lisa is an active member of our community. She is a current member and past secretary for the Orange County League of Women Voters, and a member of the Tiger Bay Club of Central Florida as well. Lisa has served as President of the Central Florida Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners, as a director and executive committee member of the Back to Nature Wildlife Refuge, and as a board member for the Orlando Marine Institute.

Lisa is currently serving her third term as president of the Board of Trustees for the Orange County Library System, and her second term as chair of the Orange County Animal Services Advisory Board.

Lisa is a shelter volunteer at the Orange County Animal Services, and has donated over 5,000 volunteer hours in the past 2 years.

Lisa was named as 2016 Orange County District Four Citizen of the Year for her service to the central Florida community.

And for that, Lisa Ann Franchina, we honor you.

HONORING DAISY LOPEZ-CID DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Daisy Lopez-Cid.

Not many people can say that, in the height of a financial meltdown and national housing crisis back in 2008, they would venture out on their own to open up a real estate brokerage.

While most were downsizing, Daisy Lopez-Cid was planning her empire. In 2007 and 2008, she dove in feet first and opened her office. By 2016, office number two made its debut, and both have been churning out steady numbers since their doors opened.

Daisy was ranked in the top 250 sales agents in the country 4 years in a row; and, in 2015, she was ranked number 3 in the Nation.

She joined NAHREP, the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals, in 2008, and quickly realized how the association's mission to advance sustainable Hispanic home ownership lined up with her core values as a real estate professional.

To give back to the organization that has empowered her for so long, she now serves as the NAHREP 2018 national president.

Recently, when Hurricane Maria hit our native island of Puerto Rico, she traveled down there for over 2 weeks, bringing down thousands and thousands of pounds of supplies: food, water, medications, clothing, and so many other of the bare essentials that we need for living every day.

She went down door to door, and people in Puerto Rico welcomed her into their homes and welcomed the much-needed help that helped lift up the island, along with so many entrepreneurs in central Florida who helped with our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico.

Although real estate was not her first career, it was clear to see that this former New York paralegal had found her calling in real estate. Daisy is someone you want to have in your corner, as her zest for success is contagious, and her wisdom speaks beyond her years. Her vast real estate knowledge and love for education and for educating her agents has allowed her firm to grow on Broadway in Kissimmee, and to put more families into homes.

Daisy has a passion for customer care that is contagious, and her 50 agents will tell you that she is in it to win it.

Her goal is and has always been quality over quantity, and that makes Daisy a success. It is a priority for her to educate her agents and equip them with the tools they will need for success.

She also serves as a trustee in our local community college, Valencia College, where we worked together to create Poinciana Valencia campus, which now is up and running and serving thousands of folks in south Osceola County.

And for that, Daisy Lopez-Cid, we honor you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2286. An act to amend the Peace Corps Act to provide greater protection and services for Peace Corps volunteers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs; in addition, to the Committee on Education and the Workforce for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4257. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of

Defense, transmitting Selected Acquisition Reports for the Navy/Marine Corps Major Defense Acquisition Programs, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2432(b)(1); Public Law 97-252, Sec. 1107(a)(1); (96 Stat. 740); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4258. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Twenty-fifth Report to Congress on Progress Made in Licensing and Constructing the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 16523; Public Law 109-58, Sec. 1810; (119 Stat. 1126); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4259. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's NUREG Revision — Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About 10 CFR Part 36 Irradiator Licenses Final Report [NUREG 1556, Volume 6, Revision 1] received March 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4260. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a report on the value of sales of defense equipment for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2018, pursuant to Secs. 36(a) and 26(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, the March 24, 1979, Report by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (H. Rept. 96-70), and the July 31, 1981, Seventh Report by the Committee on Government Operations (H. Rept. 97-214); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4261. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-272, "Extension of Time to Dispose of 8th & O Streets, N.W., Temporary Amendment Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4262. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-271, "Public Employee Relations Board Term Limit Amendment Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4263. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-270, "Office of Employee Appeals Hearing Examiner Classification Amendment Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4264. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-257, "Relieve High Unemployment Tax Incentives Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4265. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 22-258, "City Innovation Fund Re-Establishment Amendment Act of 2018", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4266. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's FY 2019 Annual Performance Plan and FY 2017 Annual Performance Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4267. A letter from the Attorney, CG-LRA, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Pequonnock River, Bridgeport, CT