

their families while they are learning new skills.

The PARTNERS Act and funding for the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act are two pieces of the greater need to invest in apprenticeships and other paid on-the-job training programs.

During National Apprenticeship Week, I stand ready to continue the fight for policies that can help more people access better-paying jobs and meet the demands of our local employers.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAMON P. NELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my colleagues who are here to pay tribute to the staff director of the House Intelligence Committee, Damon Nelson, who passed away on Saturday.

As you see from the tributes that have already poured in and those to come today, Damon worked closely with many Members of Congress for a long time. He served 12 years in my personal office as my legislative director, later as deputy chief of staff, and then almost 4 years on the House Intelligence Committee as senior adviser, deputy staff director, and, finally, staff director.

These testimonies reflect Damon's hard work and his enthusiasm for helping others. He showed immense respect for the institution of Congress and felt deeply honored to assist the people's Representatives and to participate in the legislative process.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for coming today to speak on the House floor about Damon. He will be deeply missed both inside and outside these halls, and especially by his wife, Dana.

At this time, I am honored to yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), my great friend and chairman of the Republican delegation from California.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor my friend Damon Nelson, who led the House Intelligence Committee staff on the committee very well. He passed away unexpectedly, as mentioned by Congressman NUNES, this past Saturday at the age of 46.

As many have known, Damon was a long-time friend and staff member of Congressman DEVIN NUNES. Over time, Damon became close with many us here. I got to know Damon through my work on California water policy.

There is a saying, "Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting," and that certainly was true when it comes to water in the West, and it continues to be. However, Damon showed a unique talent for mediating complex water issues, keeping the confidence of the stakeholders involved.

He became an expert on California water, mentoring staff and Members on the issue. Without a doubt, he was one of the most gifted, intelligent, articulate negotiators on a very complex issue that transcended political parties, regions, and, oftentimes, common sense.

He took this rare set of skills to his next role as staff director for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. As one of the appropriators assigned to HPSCI, I was fortunate to be able to continue to work with Damon. Just as he demonstrated on California water, Damon took the helm of the committee with ease and guided it through some of the most challenging times the committee has faced. He did all of this with a smile and the confidence that he was working toward something greater than himself.

His presence will be deeply missed on the committee and in Congress. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Dana, and to his entire family, including my good friend, DEVIN.

Damon served his country honorably in the United States Air Force, was a veteran of the Gulf War, and was an American patriot. He came to D.C. to make a difference, and he did.

Godspeed, Damon. We are grateful for your service, and we will honor your memory.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to someone I have gotten to know over the last few years pretty well.

Damon Nelson became an immediate friend, an ally, and a mentor. There are so many different words to describe what Damon was to a lot of us.

When I came in as a freshman, I still remember his help setting up offices, helping me interview potential staff, and giving me direction on every decision that we had to make. It was amazing to watch, as an incoming Member with brand-new staff, the way that he would take his time to mentor every single one of them from top to bottom.

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Damon treated everyone as an equal. He treated people with respect and dignity. He truly loved this country, loved this institution, and loved the process of helping others be successful here. He never, ever looked down on another person. He had a sense of humor even until the very end. Every chance I could, I would get down into the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and just spend some time with him in the office talking and laughing about whatever topic was going on that day.

He is going to be truly missed by a lot of us. He was truly a great guy who really added a lot to this institution. He made my time here in Congress much, much better, and even helped set us up for as much success as we have had over the last 6 years, and it is all

because of guys like Damon. I am grateful to have known him and grateful to have served with him. I really do wish his family the best.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAMON P. NELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and honor to an individual who made a difference, Damon Nelson. When I think of Damon I think of the quintessential staff person, and I think of three words: duty, honor, and country.

Like a lot of us who grew up in the San Joaquin Valley, he was always in touch with his roots. Damon was a person who obviously loved our country and dedicated his entire career to serving, first in the American military in the Air Force, and then later coming to our Nation's Capitol to try to make a difference.

He was a problem solver. He understood that oftentimes cooler heads prevail in bringing people together and that the efforts to bring the art of the political compromise ultimately served the people not only of our valley, but the people of our Nation.

He will sorely be missed in terms of his contributions, and we wish him and his family Godspeed during this time of mourning. We thank him for his service to our country.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARJAREE MASON'S PASSING

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this month marks the 40th anniversary of the tragic death of Marjaree Mason, a woman whose life was filled with so much promise and purpose.

In 1978, Marjaree was soon approaching graduation from Fresno State. She had a job she enjoyed, working for the National Economic Development Association. She was committed to serving others and surrounded herself with the support of family and friends.

That was until her life was cut short by a brutal death. At the age of 36, Marjaree was heinously kidnapped, abused, and murdered by her ex-boyfriend at his Fresno home.

To celebrate her life and continued legacy, the folks in Fresno dedicated the Marjaree Mason Center, which was founded in 1979, to provide victims and survivors of domestic violence a safe and supportive environment. The center offers long-term safe housing, legal assistance, educational opportunities, crisis support, and counseling to victims and their families. It is in constant need. The center offers long-term safe housing.

For decades, I have been working hard to end these horrific crimes plaguing our community and the Nation. Over 10 years ago, Congressman TED POE and I founded the bipartisan Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus in the House of Representatives to give a

voice to victims of domestic abuse and other crimes that sadly occur on a national scale.

The Violence Against Women Act, VAWA, a piece of legislation working to improve responses to domestic violence, is one of the major initiatives the caucus works on to protect, reauthorize, and expand the needs for this sad occurrence around our country.

In my district, we have several organizations, including the Central California Legal Services, Choice Women Empowerment, Centro La Familia, and Valley Crisis Center, in addition to the Marjaree Mason Center working non-stop to provide safety and support of domestic violence survivors.

I would like to thank Marjaree Mason's family for the continuous support and commitment to expanding the mission of its center over the past 40 years. Former Sheriff Steve Magarian and so many others continue to contribute to this important work that this center does, for domestic violence is still sadly prevalent in every community, affecting more than 10 million people each year in the United States.

We must continue to fight to ensure that no one in our valley and in our Nation suffers the same fate that Marjaree Mason faced. We must continue to work together to end domestic violence once and for all.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAMON P. NELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of my friend, Damon Nelson, who passed away only a few days ago. Damon was a gifted individual who dedicated his life to serving his country.

A short time after graduating from college, Damon enlisted into the United States Air Force as an in-flight refueling specialist. Damon distinguished himself in the Persian Gulf War for which he was awarded an Air Medal and three Air Achievement Medals.

Yet Damon's service to his country did not end when he left the Air Force. For the past 15 years, Damon has worked as a senior level congressional aide here in Congress, first in Congressman NUNES' office and most recently as staff director of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. Speaker, we are all shaken and heartbroken by the news of Damon's untimely passing. He was loved by all who knew him for his good humor, his cheerful optimism, and his friendly personality. You could always count on Damon to lend a hand or provide some much-needed guidance.

At work he earned a reputation as a highly intelligent and enthusiastic doer capable of attacking any challenge that came through the door.

Damon Nelson will be remembered as a loving husband and a gifted individual who dedicated his life to public service and as a good friend.

My prayers are with his wife, Dana; his family; his colleagues; and his many, many friends.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is with both sadness and pride that I rise to honor Damon Nelson. America lost a great patriot at too young of an age. Damon dedicated nearly his entire life to public service and always put service above self. He understood that freedom comes at a high price, and he dedicated his life to defending freedom for the next generation.

He believed that our country is worth sacrificing for and that freedom is worth fighting for. As Mr. HOLDING said, he served in the U.S. Air Force as an in-flight refueling specialist and was a veteran of the Persian Gulf War where he earned the Air Medal and three Air Achievement Medals.

Damon began his service on Capitol Hill working for his home district, the 22nd District of California. I know Damon for his exemplary service as the staff director for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Damon helped guide our committee and indeed our country through a tumultuous time with an unfailing commitment to seeking the truth and doing the right thing.

His calm leadership approach is an example to all of us. At moments where it seems like things may be falling apart, Damon was there with a joke and a laugh to hold the group together. He often used sarcasm with us when we needed it most, and he was a statesman when we needed it most. His kind and patient demeanor earned Damon the respect of everyone he knew. In a political climate that is often difficult, he kept sight on the fact that we are all Americans.

Indeed, all of us who knew Damon will sorely miss his strategic mind, warm personality, and genuine concern for others. My heart is with Damon's wife, Dana, and his family. I pray God's healing grace will be with them during this difficult time.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD).

Mr. HURD. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Damon Nelson, an Air Force veteran, a tireless public servant, and a friend to so many.

I was fortunate enough to know Damon through my role on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence where he protected some of the Nation's most classified information and navigated complicated national security issues with absolute confidentiality and professionalism during a highly polarizing and rocky time. Damon provided a steady hand when our country needed it most.

I want his wife, Dana, to know that her family is bigger than she may realize, and we all love her so very much.

Ernest Hemingway said: "Every man's life ends the same way. It is only the details of how he lived and how he died that distinguish one man from another."

Damon did much to distinguish himself in this life, and he is finally home. We will miss him.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD), who is my colleague and friend.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to join my colleagues in celebrating the life of Damon Nelson.

While I have only served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for a short time, I grew to know, respect, and cherish Damon as a professional and as a friend. Our work on the committee is some of the most challenging and rewarding I have done since being elected to this body and is supported almost entirely by a loyal staff whose dedication to the American people is second to none.

As staff director, Damon set the tone and direction of committee staff who work closely with us as members and others in the House. He always greeted us with a smile and positive attitude. His leadership ensured we were fully equipped and prepared for every caucus meeting, hearing, or legislative issue. His staff saw him as a leader who wanted us to have the best, most accurate information and preparation for our work. They followed him with trust and appreciation for his approach to his work.

As you have heard, he served in the Air Force and deployed to the Persian Gulf War where he earned numerous medals. Over the following years, he moved on to serve in the Capitol here. Over the next many years, Damon moved up and eventually took the helm of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence at a tumultuous time for this Chamber and for our country. His poise, his character, his attitude, and his care for our country shined through in recent years as this committee worked on some extremely sensitive and public matters. Not once did Damon put his own interests above anyone else's. He simply sought to serve his country through his role on this committee and in this body.

Mr. Speaker, I wish him and his family the best.

NAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Ohio's jobs and trade message to our Nation is as loud and clear as it always has been: trade must be about people, not just goods.

The job and wage destruction due to the original NAFTA continues to reverberate across our State and the