

service has left a meaningful impact in the Monadnock Region and the Granite State.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's Second Congressional District, I commend Kendall Lane and wish him all the best in the coming years. I look forward to our continued work together to support the Keene community.

IN RECOGNITION OF CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL ON ITS 170TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congregation Beth Israel on the 170th anniversary of its founding. Congregation Beth Israel, a Reform synagogue located in Honesdale, Pennsylvania. It is one of the oldest synagogues in the United States still housing its original congregation.

As immigrants from across Europe made their way to the United States in the mid-19th century, a group of German Jews settled in the Pocono Mountains in Northeastern Pennsylvania, drawn by the prospect of employment with the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company. In the fall of 1849, a small group from that wave of settlers saw the need for a Jewish congregation in the recently-formed community of Honesdale. Together they formed the first Jewish congregation in the area—Congregation Beth Israel. Its beginning was humble; the group met in one of the member's homes to worship in the Orthodox tradition using a borrowed Torah.

The Congregation continued to grow and flourish under its first spiritual leader, Rabbi Kutner. In 1850, the congregation drafted a constitution, purchased its own Torah, Shofar, and Megillah, and started a cemetery that is still in use. By 1854, the Congregation had its own Hebrew school. In 1856, the Congregation dedicated its Colonial meeting-house style building. Despite its early reputation as the smallest synagogue in the United States, the building went on to undergo several renovations and restorations over its impressive history, including the addition of gothic style stained glass windows, a sanctuary decorated with a chandelier and Tiffany globe sconces, and an annex.

Between 1880 and 1890, the Jewish population in Honesdale declined, leaving the Congregation unable to maintain a full-time local rabbi after 1891. Congregation Beth Israel persisted in the face of these challenges and adapted to meet the changing needs of their community. The Congregation, which began as Orthodox, began to transform to reflect the German Reform or Classical Reform Tradition. The 1930s and 1940s saw an increase of Eastern European Jews, and the Congregation began to change from Classical Reform to a more mainstream Reform congregation.

Today, under the direction of Rabbi Elliott Kleinman and President Liza Roos Lucy, Congregation Beth Israel remains a thriving center for Jewish life in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Congregation continues to support a religious school, host a variety of Jewish cultural events for the community, and celebrate many B'nai Mitzvah and weddings each year. They

embrace a diverse and dynamic membership with members who can trace their lineage to the early founders of the synagogue and many others who have found and joined the community in the last 15 years. As a member of the Union of Reform Judaism, they are proud of their ability to embrace the changing world around them and welcome progressive values while upholding the spirit and teachings of the faith.

It is an honor to recognize Congregation Beth Israel on their 170th anniversary. May the Congregation continue to build on this impressive legacy of worship and community.

HONORING NATALIE PURDIE FOR RECEIVING THE WOMAN IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

HON. ELAINE G. LURIA

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Ms. Natalie Purdie on receiving the 2020 Outstanding Woman in the Community Service Award for the Tidewater Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. This award was developed to honor women who are making significant contributions to their community through their time, actions, talents and dedication. This is an amazing accomplishment.

This award recognizes Ms. Purdie's lifetime of service and commitment to Domestic Violence Advocacy. As a domestic violence survivor, Natalie has broken her silence to do, "Speak Up and Speak Out"!

Ms. Purdie is a board member and volunteer with My Help My Hope, Inc. She is also a member of the Samaritan House Women Against Violence (WAV) group. She was the keynote speaker for their annual event Unmask Domestic Violence. She was also the guest speaker at Green Run High School in Virginia Beach for their KNOW More Domestic Violence Assembly which was organized by the students.

Ms. Purdie now volunteers with Promise Place teaching the Teen Dating Violence Prevention Program to middle and high school students. She was the keynote speaker for Promise Place 1st & 2nd Annual Teen Dating Violence Summit at Georgia State University. She was also the panel discussion moderator for 2019.

Ms. Purdie's dedication to helping victims to become survivors and to raise awareness about bills such as the E.R.A. and Marsy's Law in the state of Georgia. I am proud to honor and recognize Ms. Purdie's leadership and the role she plays in making our community a better place. Coastal Virginia has significantly benefited from her presence.

HONORING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2019 LITERACY COUNCIL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA RECOGNITION EVENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the Literacy Council of Northern Vir-

ginia (LCNV) and to congratulate the volunteers, instructors, students, community partners, and others who will be recognized at the 2019 LCNV Recognition Celebration.

The mission of LCNV is to teach adults the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English in order to empower them to participate more fully and confidently in their communities and in society as a whole. LCNV serves low-literacy and limited English language proficient adults with a selection of low-cost, moderately intensive courses to help them transition into the workforce or other educational opportunities. LCNV provides the crucial first steps of language and literacy proficiency for workplace, citizenship, and community integration to help adults make measurable improvements in their lives.

Each year LCNV recognizes students and members of the community who have contributed their time, energy, and resources to achieving the mission of LCNV. LCNV will also recognize the recipient of the Patricia M. Donnelly Merit Scholarship. It is my great honor to include in the RECORD the following names of the 2019 LCNV honorees and scholarship recipient:

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARDS

B.F. Saul Company Hospitality Group

Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center

Rotary International District 7610

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Linton Favours

Fran Perros

Jody Sweet

PATRICIA M. DONNELLY MERIT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Santos Rubio

I also want to recognize those volunteers who are celebrating service anniversaries with LCNV. Volunteers are being recognized for service milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years respectively.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

25 years: Avis Black

20 years: Denise Murray

15 years: Mary-Jane Roth

10 years: Margaret Breen, Gerry Chiaruttini, Marla Diamond, Naomi Gittins, Lisa Godfrey, Mary Kalfatovic, James Kern, Julia Tungli, Karen Westlake, Suzanne Zimmerman

5 years: Natasha Atkins, Mary Rose Bayer, Jackie Corkins, Grace Kalfatovic, Donna Martin, Wendy Mayer, Marla Swaby, Michael Wesbecher, Farhana Zaman

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Literary Council of Northern Virginia and in thanking and congratulating each of the honorees of the 2019 LCNV Recognition Celebration. I wish all of them great success in their future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CLARENCE "SMOKY" SMEKOFSKI OF NORTH SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Ms. McCOLLUM, Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and remember the life of Clarence "Smoky" Smekofski. He was a beloved husband, father and uncle. He was also a proud veteran of the United States Navy and a longtime Letter Carrier for the United States

Postal Service. When Smoky passed away earlier this month at the age of 94, he was warmly remembered by his daughter Jeanne-Marie and many relatives and friends for his constant kindness, humor and love of nature.

Throughout his life, Smoky demonstrated the importance of service to his family, our community and our nation. As a Letter Carrier for more than 40 years, he rose as a leader in the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 28 in Saint Paul, always a steadfast advocate for his brothers and sisters who deliver the U.S. mail every day. In his role as Legislative Liaison for Branch 28, I was privileged to work with him to ensure that Letter Carriers have a voice in the U.S. Capitol, and receive fair wages and benefits for their hard work.

In retirement, Smoky stayed active well into this year, because he truly understood the importance of unions, and that Americans depend on Letter Carriers for reliable, six-day, door-to-door mail delivery. His endless dedication and mentorship of rising leaders and collaborative skills truly made a difference. He personified the mission of the U.S. Postal Service to ensure that neither snow, rain, heat nor dark of night get in the way of the delivery of our mail.

It was my pleasure to know and work with Smoky and call him a friend. He was a kind and extraordinary person who will be deeply missed.

Madam Speaker, thank you for rising with me to pay tribute to Clarence "Smoky" Smekofski.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RALPH NORMAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, on roll call no. 685, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA. Also, on roll call no. 686, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA.

HONORING DR. C. ELAINE SMITH FOR RECEIVING THE WOMAN IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

HON. ELAINE G. LURIA

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Dr. C. Elaine M. Smith on receiving the 2020 Outstanding Woman in the Community Service Award for the Tidewater Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. This award was developed to honor women who are making significant contributions to their community through their time, actions, talents, and dedication. This is an amazing accomplishment.

This award recognizes Dr. Smith's lifetime of service and commitment to the promotion of respect among people of diverse backgrounds. Dr. Smith generously serves the community with civility and justice.

As a second grader, Dr. Smith was one of the first to integrate the Virginia Beach City

Public Schools, then known as Princess Anne County. At the age of 6, her parents supported her on a journey of learning experiences that were both negative and positive yet vital to her development.

Dr. Smith has been an agent for change and an advocate for students with disabilities (SWD) as she sought Specials Education as her vocation. She retired from Norfolk Public Schools after more than 30 years, where she served in numerous leadership capacities. Her professional experiences are vast as she has taught students with emotional disabilities, autism, and learning disabilities. As a Teacher Specialist at the district central office level for secondary students with disabilities and as an Educational Diagnostician, her duties were to assess both general and special education students who experienced academic and behavioral challenges in school. In these positions, she made recommendations to improve academic and behavioral deficits and to keep students in the least restrictive environment based on their individualized needs.

Her service to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., National Alliance for Black School Educators, National Allies for Parents in Special Education, has allowed her to put enormous efforts in strengthening ties to the local community with her civic involvement with various organizations. Dr. Smith's dedication as a leader within our community is truly inspiring. I am proud to honor and recognize Dr. Smith's leadership and the role she plays in making our community a better place. Coastal Virginia has significantly benefited from her presence.

VETERANS CEMETERY GRANTS IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO

SABLÁN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. SABLÁN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Veterans Cemetery Grants Improvement Act, which helps get important operations and maintenance funding to locally-run veterans cemeteries nationwide faster by increasing the amount of grant funds the Department of Veterans Affairs can award for this purpose each year from \$5 million to \$10 million.

Our nation's veterans and their families have sacrificed so much to ensure that our country remains safe and free. While we may never fully repay these men and women for their sacrifices, we must do more to ensure their final resting place, whether in a national cemetery or a locally-run veterans cemetery like the CNMI Veterans Cemetery on Saipan, is operated and maintained with the high standards their families expect and deserve. As more veterans choose to be buried closer to home, more states, territories and tribal governments have applied for funding from the Department of Veterans Affairs to help cover the increasing costs of operating and maintaining their own veterans cemeteries. While the list of pending applications grows, the amount of grants the Department can award each year by law has not.

Under current law, no more than \$5 million in operations and maintenance grants can be awarded per year. The Veterans Cemetery

Grants Improvement Act updates the \$5 million cap to \$10 million so more cemeteries can receive the funding they need to keep up with the rising cost of maintaining them. Increasing the cap to \$10 million is critical as the need for operations and maintenance grant funding grows consistent with the growth of new and expanded cemeteries.

The Veterans Cemetery Grants Improvement Act will help expedite federal support for the over one hundred veteran cemeteries across our country operated by states, tribal nations and territories including my district, the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Act has the endorsement of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion.

The gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. STEIL, is an original cosponsor of the bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

HONORING LYLE MARTIN ON HIS RETIREMENT AS CHIEF OF POLICE IN BAKERSFIELD

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. McCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lyle Martin, Chief of Police for the Bakersfield Police Department (BPD), who is retiring after 31 years of service with the department, the last three as its Chief.

Lyle grew up in southeast Bakersfield, attended South High School, and earned his Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. Throughout his career with the BPD, Lyle has served with distinction and been promoted over the years, including serving as a lieutenant in the Gang Unit, Assistant Chief of Police, and finally Chief of Police.

When he is not saving lives, protecting our community, or leading our police force, Lyle can often be found serving many of the important causes in Bakersfield. He is a member of the Bakersfield Downtown Rotary, a member of both the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the California Police Officer's Association, and serves as Co-Chairman of the Mendiburu Magic Foundation Board, helping provide local children and their families with support as they battle life-threatening pediatric conditions. As President of the Bakersfield Police Activities League, Lyle has been a key leader in helping develop concrete plans to educate and benefit many of the at-risk youth in some of Bakersfield's most crime-ridden and poverty-stricken neighborhoods.

I want to thank Lyle for all the hard work and long hours he has put in for the City of Bakersfield. I also want to thank his wife, Connie, and their five children, Karl, Warren, Lyle Jr., William, and Lia for their patience over the years as he protected our hometown. I am looking forward to his continued efforts in safeguarding the City of Bakersfield, and now greater Kern County, as he transitions into his new position as the Attorney Investigator for Kern County. I am confident that in his new position, Lyle will continue to work to make Kern County safer and stronger, and that he will continue to serve our community with the highest dignity and respect as demonstrated over his past three decades in law enforcement. On behalf of a grateful community and