

degree in Library Science, before continuing her education at the University of South Florida where she received a Master's in Administration and Supervision.

She served for 59 years at Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, where she was on the finance committee and served as a choir member and secretary. In addition to serving at her church, Florida worked for 40 years as a teacher within the Hendry County School System. After retiring from teaching, Florida felt she could still serve her community so she began working as a full-time librarian at the Harlem Library where she worked until she retired in 2014.

Throughout her career, Florida was recognized again and again for her hard work and dedication to those around her. She was the first black librarian in the state of Florida within the integrated school system and was named "Children Intermediate School (CIS) Teacher of the Year" in 1987. She was also an active member of The Order of the Eastern Star fraternity. In May, 2017 the Harlem Community Library was re-named in her honor, and now serves the community as the Florida B. Thomas Library. And, just last year, she was honored with The Heritage Award for 2018.

Madam Speaker, Florida Thomas was a champion for her community and she positively impacted the lives of many in Harlem and surrounding communities. I extend my deepest condolences to her husband, Melvin, and the rest of her friends and family during this extremely difficult time. Florida Thomas was a blessing to our community and I am proud to honor her memory today. She will be dearly missed.

IN HONOR OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE POLICE ASSOCIATION PIPES AND DRUMS

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Mr. PAPPAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the New Hampshire Police Association Pipes and Drums as they celebrate their 25th anniversary. In October of 1994, New Hampshire State Police Sergeant James Noyes was shot and killed during a standoff with an armed barricaded subject. Inspired by the Boston Police Gaelic Column's performance at Sergeant Noyes's funeral, members of the New Hampshire Police Association set out to create a pipes and drums band of their own. Coming together from various police departments across the state, a small group was assembled in December of 1994 and made its official debut in 1996 during the New Hampshire Police memorial in Concord.

Ever since, this distinguished band has grown in size and notoriety. We gather to celebrate a quarter century of this effort, and to acknowledge and honor the life of Sergeant James Noyes and of every New Hampshire law enforcement officer who has been tragically killed in the line of duty.

Sergeant Noyes's sacrifice is a humbling reminder about the acute danger our brave police officers face each day as they put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. Their service deserves our appreciation and

our undying support. In order to truly honor their service and sacrifice, we need to do more than pay lip service to their effort. As elected leaders, we have a responsibility to fight for additional resources that allow them to do their jobs effectively for the rest of us.

In order to properly serve New Hampshire's First District and pay appropriate respect to the services we are lucky to receive from our New Hampshire police officers, I am committed to fighting on their behalf in Congress, to guarantee that our law enforcement officials have the resources they need to combat the opioid crisis, keep our streets safe, and protect our communities from harm.

Congratulations to the New Hampshire Police Association Pipes and Drums on 25 years of excellence. It is my honor to serve them as the Representative of New Hampshire's First Congressional District.

KENDALL MCCOY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kendall McCoy for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Kendall McCoy is a student at The Manning School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kendall McCoy is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kendall McCoy for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING VICKI HAUGEN'S 37 YEARS AT VERMILION ADVANTAGE

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vicki Haugen, who took over leadership of Vermilion Advantage 37 years ago.

Vermilion Advantage is the lead economic development office for Vermilion County, Illinois. Vicki began her tenure at Vermilion Advantage during a time when the business environment in Danville and Vermilion County was in turmoil. Major businesses, which had contributed for many years to the financial and economic health of the community, were leaving or considering doing so. Rather than be defeated by these setbacks, Vicki enlisted other community leaders to pull together and develop a coordinated plan to keep the losses to a minimum and attract replacements for those business that left.

Vicki saw early on that if the community was to survive and prosper, the political, business, education, and community leaders would need to work together. This became the focus of Vermilion Advantage. More than simply an advocate for the community, Vicki had a comprehensive vision focused on creating the next generation of community leaders and a skilled and educated workforce, diversifying the economic base of the county, and developing a cooperative environment between labor and management, to name just a few of her initiatives.

A major component of what Vicki has done is sell outside companies to the advantages of locating their operations in Vermilion County. Doing this for several decades has likely made Vicki the most informed and effective champion of Vermilion County. Her steady efforts over the past 37 years has had an inestimable impact on the community that she cares so much for.

Indeed, Vicki's efforts are a labor of love. She grew up in Vermilion County, graduated from Danville High School, and lives in the community she helped remake. Her tireless efforts, mental toughness, professionalism, and unshakable faith that Vermilion County was worth trying to save has made a difference worthy of recognition.

Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure and honor to rise today to recognize Vicki Haugen and to thank her for her leadership of Vermilion Advantage for these past 37 years. That leadership, by the way, has led to the creation of well over four thousand full-time jobs and counting. I wish Vicki all the best and Vermilion Advantage continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KATIE PORTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I was unable to be present for votes on Monday, March 25, 2019. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on Roll Call vote 126.

LEAH MENDOZA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Leah Mendoza for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Leah Mendoza is a student at Mandalay Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Leah Mendoza is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Leah Mendoza for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have

no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BELOVED CAPITAL REGION EDUCATOR ERNEST D. STECK

HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of beloved community leader, veteran and educator Ernest D. Steck who passed away in February.

Mr. Steck was a symbol of virtue and discipline to many in our Capital Region. Our community owes him a debt of gratitude for his commitment to educating and shaping the minds of the young men under his tutelage, both in his history classroom and on the football field.

Ernest was born in Rock Island, Illinois and grew up in Chicago and Brooklyn during the Great Depression. He enlisted and served in the U.S. Army during World War II and fought in the Pacific Theater. After the war, he went back to school to earn his undergraduate and advanced degrees in physical education at the University of Iowa.

After brief stints teaching in Bridgeport, Connecticut and Providence, Rhode Island, Ernest moved to Albany and brought his love of teaching to the Albany Academy, where he taught from 1953 to 1991. He also coached football, basketball, track, and tennis. Each discipline provided a welcome opportunity for Ernest to share the principles that guided his life: the importance of hard work, discipline, and integrity. These earned him the respect of his colleagues and students. Classrooms were known to fall silent before he arrived while students waited eagerly for him to speak.

Ernest's legacy of service earned him a promotion to athletic director and a spot in the Capital Region Hall of Fame in August of 2014. If not reminding his teams that "cool heads win games," he could be found virtually silent on the sidelines. He believed in allowing the students to call their own plays, giving them a chance to develop team unity and trust. His creative approaches worked time and time again. In 1970, the Albany Academy football team won the State Championship for small high schools. He led a record-achieving championship streak until 1982. Students he coached referred to themselves as "Ernie's Boys," a moniker that denoted their respect and appreciation. Even to people who never stepped foot on a court or entered an arena, Ernest was legendary.

Above all, Ernest was a proud family man. His legacy lives on in his sons David and Phillip and grandchildren Kaylee, James, Alexandra, and Aaron. He was laid to rest in late February alongside his wife Roselyn. To those who knew him, loved him, and were made better by his presence, I offer my sincere condolences.

May we all take inspiration from the incredible service and courage of Ernest Steck and honor his legacy for years to come.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate Women's History Month.

I want to offer a special mention for the U.S. House of Representatives women firsts:

Congresswoman Jeanette Rankin of Montana who was the first elected woman member of the House of Representatives;

Congresswoman Patsy Mink of Hawaii was the first woman of color and the first Asian American woman elected to Congress;

Congresswoman Shirley Anita Chisholm of New York who was the first African-American Congresswoman member of the House of Representatives; and

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen whom we have the honor of working with is the first Hispanic woman elected to serve in Congress.

National Women's History Month's roots go back to March 8, 1857, when women from New York City factories staged a protest over working conditions.

International Women's Day was first observed in 1909.

In 1981, Congress passed a law authorizing the President to proclaim March 7, 1982 as "Women's History Week." It was a modest beginning, but very significant to women because it started a societal and cultural change in how women—and especially young girls saw themselves within the American story.

In 1987, Congress expanded the week to a month. Every year since, Congress has passed a resolution for Women's History Month, and the President has issued a proclamation.

This month we recognize Women's History Month by noting the fundamental role women have played in shaping America's history. But I say to you that a month is not enough to make known the significant contributions of women to the success of the United States of America.

We taught our girls about Rose the Riveter who represented the millions of American women who went to work on assembly lines to manufacture tanks, planes, and weapons for the defense of this nation during World War II.

We have many American Women heroes in the STEM area like: Sally Kristen Ride, the first woman sent into space; Eileen Marie Collins, the first woman space shuttle pilot; and Grace Murray Hopper, an American computer scientist and United States Navy rear admiral.

Admiral Hopper developed the first compiler for a computer programming language, which made it possible to program computers without using punch cards.

The Shriver Report, "A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink: Some Recommended Steps for Government Businesses, and Women reported on the economic health of the average American woman.

Today, women make up half the U.S. workforce, but the average full time working woman earns only 77 percent of what the average full time working man makes.

And that is why the House must pass H.R. 7, the Paycheck Fairness Act, when it comes to the floor for debate and vote.

There are many women in the State of Texas and in the city of Houston who have

made significant contributions to the American story:

Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas was the first African American woman elected to the House of Representatives;

Kathryn "Kathy" Whitmire was the first woman elected to serve in Houston City government; and

Mae Carol Jemison, the first African American woman astronaut.

These many accomplishments does not mean there is not more that needs to be done.

There is still a long way for women to go according the Shriver Report.

Women are more than 50 percent of the population and more than 50 percent of the votes.

A woman working full time, all year at a minimum-wage job, or a job close to the minimum wage, will not be able to bring her family above the poverty line.

Families need an income closer to 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold to escape the brink.

In the Shriver Report's survey:

73 percent of Americans said that in order to raise the incomes of working women and their families, they strongly favor the government ensuring that women get equal pay for equal work;

79 percent of Americans said the government should expand access to high-quality, affordable childcare for working families;

Almost 60 percent of Americans said women raising children on their own face tremendous challenges and should be helped financially by government, employers, and communities; and

If we are going to win the war on poverty we must wage and win the war of discrimination of women in the workforce.

Pay inequality is not just a women's issue—it is a family income equality issue.

In 2012, Texas' ranked second among the 50 states among with workers earning at or below the federal minimum wage.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics of the 6.1 million workers are paid hourly rates in Texas in 2012,

In Texas 282,000 earned exactly the prevailing federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, while 170,000 earned less.

From 2011 to 2012, the number of Texas workers who earned at or below the federal minimum wage was 7.5 percent. The percentage of workers earning less than the federal minimum 2012 was 2.8 percent, while the share earning exactly the minimum wage was 4.7 percent.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to help celebrate Women's History month by becoming cosponsors of H.R. 863.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF BILLY MARTIN

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Billy Martin, who passed away on Sunday, January 27th at the age of 52.

Billy, a native of Gulfport, Mississippi, graduated from Gulfport High School and attended