

because of an understanding that the language within Title I of this bill grants the Secretary of Agriculture the discretion to provide assistance to producers who suffered timber loss due to Hurricanes Michael and Florence.

Even after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, there have been over 80 major disaster declarations. This much-needed disaster relief will support our Florida Panhandle communities, help rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base, assist farmers and ranchers, restore coastal infrastructure, and fund the Nutrition Assistance Program and infrastructure repairs for Puerto Rico.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in both chambers of Congress to bring relief to millions of families.

COMMENDING KIM KOWALEWSKI

HON. JOHN A. YARMUTH

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, today, I would like to recognize and honor the outstanding service of Kim Kowalewski, who retires this week after nearly 40 years as a public servant, the past 30 of them at the Congressional Budget Office.

Kim Kowalewski joined CBO in 1989. After serving briefly as a principal analyst in what was then known as the Fiscal Analysis Division, he was promoted to be the Chief of the Financial and General Macroeconomics Modeling Unit, which analyzed developments in financial markets and contributed to the forecast of consumer spending. He next headed the Financial Markets Unit, which, in addition to analyzing and forecasting financial market indicators, prepared cost estimates for various federal financial programs and developed policy options for the housing and financial markets.

In 2008, he was promoted to Deputy Assistant Director of the Macroeconomic Analysis Division. In that capacity, he played an essential role in developing CBO's economic projections, which underlie the agency's budget projections, and he directed numerous studies on developments in the economy, including the operation of automatic stabilizers, changes in trade policy, and the effects of federal tax and spending policies. In 2016, he became a senior adviser at CBO. In that role, he led cross-divisional efforts to improve CBO's graphics and written presentations and mentored and trained colleagues. Throughout, he has been a leader in making CBO's analysis accessible.

Kim Kowalewski's public service did not begin with his work at CBO. He came to the agency after eight years at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, where he led the preparation of the bank's forecast of the U.S. economy and provided analysis related to monetary policy, financial markets, personal bankruptcy, and consumer spending.

By all accounts, Kim's colleagues at CBO and on the Hill appreciate his dedication, ability, skillful work, and breadth of experience. They will miss his generosity with his time and knowledge and, especially, his kindness.

I know my colleagues join me in extending our thanks and appreciation to Kim for his service to our country. We wish him well in his future undertakings and hope that the nation

will continue to benefit from his expertise and commitment.

RECOGNIZING ST. PAUL BLUE
POINT LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR
ITS 150TH YEAR AS A CON-
GREGATION

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise to acknowledge St. Paul Blue Point Lutheran Church for its 150th year as a congregation. Built on October 31, 1869 in Altamont, IL, the church became a place of peace and fellowship for all attendees.

To celebrate this historic occasion, the church held honorary services dedicated to the anniversary on Sunday, June 2. Keynote speakers of the event included Rev. Mark Witte and Rev. David Witte, both of whom are direct descendants from the church's founders. At present, eleven families are of direct descent of the original 31 founders and are still active amongst the congregation.

I extend my well wishes to the current officers—Rev. David Speers, Todd Wachtel, Corey Guy, Alex Wendling, Doug Kopplin, Doug Hammer and many others who have played a major role in spearheading this event.

Madam Speaker, the St. Paul Blue Point Lutheran Church and the entire congregation should be very proud of their continuing commitment and service over the past 150 years. I am excited to see how the church will continue to grow and make an impact in the years to come.

ACKNOWLEDGING 40 YEARS OF
THE BUFFALO VET CENTER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Buffalo Vet Center, which, for the last forty years, has helped the veterans of Western New York readjust to life as civilians after returning home from a combat zone. The Vet Center provides our brave servicemen and women with much needed services outside of the traditional VA network.

Established by Congress in 1979, Vet Centers aimed to provide counseling and other health services to military veterans who returned home from Vietnam who were reluctant to access VA services. Readjustment counseling, a non-medical, community-based approach, was included in the official services offered to combat veterans. The centers immediately broke down barriers that exist in traditional healthcare by hiring other veterans as counselors to build a bond over shared experiences.

Following the high utilization of Vet Centers around the country, Congress acted to establish permanent centers in 1983 and made readjustment counseling a lifetime entitlement for combat veterans who qualify. Eligibility and

services provided have continually expanded since the 1990s and the constant military involvement in the Middle East created a new generation of veterans who needed and continue to depend on the services provided by the Vet Center.

In 2003, Vet Centers were authorized to provide bereavement counseling services to spouses, children, parents, and siblings of service members who died while on active duty. Today, there are over 300 permanent Vet Centers, 80 mobile Vet Centers, a 24/7 Vet Center call line, and more than 2,000 on staff who help veterans, active duty, and family members of those in the armed forces.

I thank the Buffalo Vet Center for its 40 years of serving the veterans of WNY and I hope they continue to provide exceptional service to the Veterans in WNY far into the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF 2019 WYOMING
GIRLS STATE

HON. LIZ CHENEY

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the gathering of Wyoming Girls State being held in Cheyenne, WY.

First, let me thank these young women for their interest in the workings of government and understanding our collective civic duty. The success of our constitutional republic depends on informed and engaged citizens, especially young people, who actively participate in it. As young women from across Wyoming gather to learn and discuss the basic fabric of our government, I hope you will take the lessons learned to heart as you continue with your future endeavors. I know you will go on to do big and important things for our state of Wyoming, and our country.

Again, Madam Speaker, I want to recognize and thank the participants of Wyoming Girls State 2019 for their participation in the program and enthusiasm for our democratic process.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on June 10, 2019 because I had the privilege of attending a tour of the Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy (SIRE) in my Congressional District with the President of United States. This tour and visit prevented me from traveling to Washington, DC in order to vote Monday the 10th. Had I been present to vote, I would have voted yea on H.R. 542—Supporting Research and Development for First Responders Act; yea on H.R. 2539—Strengthening Local Transportation Security Capabilities Act of 2019; and yea on H.R. 2590—DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2019.

HONORING MAYOR JOE JERKINS

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary Georgian, public servant and a great American, Mayor Joe Jerkins.

Mayor Joe Jerkins represents the city of Austell right in the heart of my district. During his 30-year tenure, Mayor Jerkins has earned a reputation of being a statesman rather than a politician.

Mayor Jerkins has dedicated his work to ensuring Austell, Georgia was home to more than 6,500 of our diverse constituents. Mayor Jerkins successfully acquired the former Coats and Clark Threadmill to conserve the historical economic driver that created hundreds of jobs during the Great Depression.

Mayor Jerkins also contributed greatly to the economic development of Austell. Mayor Jerkins led negotiations with the Norfolk Southern Railroad which resulted in a \$5 million dollar grant from the railroad. Mayor Jerkins led the City Council into placing the funds into interest bearing accounts. Interest from the accounts have been used for several different causes including the Garrett Middle School truancy program to keep students in school, Christmas bonuses for city employees, churches, Austell schools, cemetery upkeep and for families in need.

Mayor Jerkins continued his advocacy for the city of Austell through his role in the Atlanta Regional Commission where he represented Cobb County. Mayor Jerkins also was on the Board of Directors for the North Central Georgia Law Enforcement Academy. In these roles, Mayor Jerkins displayed his passion in serving all Georgians such as students, transit employees, and law enforcement.

Mayor Jerkins guided by a philanthropic compass and dedication to the State of Georgia, is a stellar example of great leadership.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Mayor Joe Jerkins on his retirement, and extend my sincerest wishes for his continued health and happiness.

God bless and best wishes to Mayor Joe Jerkins and his family.

HONORING DR. GARY W. YOHE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join family, friends, colleagues, and the Wesleyan University community in extending my heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Gary W. Yohe as he marks his retirement from Wesleyan University after more than forty years as a dedicated member of their faculty. I have had the good fortune to know Gary for many years and I have no doubt that in his retirement he will be missed by colleagues and students alike.

Over the course of his remarkable career, Gary has achieved a myriad of triumphs and

earned countless accolades. One of the world's foremost expert on climate change, he received a share of the 2007 Nobel Prize as a senior member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and served as Vice Chair of the National Climate Assessment Development and Advisory Committee under President Obama.

Gary has served as a member of the New York (City) Panel on Climate Change (NPCC), created in 2008 by then Mayor Michael Bloomberg to help the City respond to the risks of climate change, and he has testified frequently before Congressional committees. He is also the author of more than 175 scholarly articles, several books, and has contributed to countless media articles on climate issues as well as providing numerous opinion pieces. His extraordinary body of work will long stand as an inspiration to scientists, policy-makers, and advocates who will no doubt build on the solid foundation of his legacy.

I would be remiss if I did not add a personal note of congratulations to Gary as he celebrates this milestone. I first met him many decades ago and have fond memories of the opportunities we had to work together. I, like so many others, am in awe of all that he accomplished throughout his professional career. Though he marks his retirement today, I am confident that Gary will continue to make a difference in our world. He has left an indelible mark on his field and his expertise will certainly continue to be called upon. I wish him all the best for many more years of health and happiness as he begins this new chapter of his life.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
BRAD SEMONELL

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, I would like to honor Command Sergeant Major Brad Semonell, who served in the United States Army for 26 years as a master parachute jumper, Intelligence Officer, and a great leader.

Mr. Semonell was born in Cleveland, Ohio and ice skated throughout his childhood, earning a Silver medal at the state-level. Ice skating gave Mr. Semonell the athleticism and skills that helped to propel him to excellence in his military career when he enlisted at 18.

Mr. Semonell became part of the U.S. Army 11th Airborne Division. He then began Jump School at Ft. Benning and quickly became Squad Leader, eventually working his way up to become Platoon Sergeant. Mr. Semonell's military career was also marked by the significant role he played as an Intelligence Officer for the elite Army Special Forces in Vietnam and in East Germany while the Cuban Missile Crisis was unfolding. Throughout the 1960s, Mr. Semonell continued to serve and lead, advancing to Sergeant Major rank.

In 1973, Mr. Semonell earned his Canadian Jumping Wings by taking part in the first joint exercise with the Canadians since 1943. In 1977, Mr. Semonell was promoted to Command Sergeant Major and retired from the Army in 1979. Over his career, Mr. Semonell

made over five-hundred parachute jumps. In one jump, Mr. Semonell severely injured his shoulder and neck; he still deals with the pain.

Mr. Semonell's great strides and sacrifices for our nation have not gone unnoticed. He has earned numerous awards and recognitions including the Meritorious Service Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, various Good Conduct Medals, Army Reserve Components Achievements Medals, and many more.

After the Army, Mr. Semonell earned his General Contractor's License and started his own successful business, S & S Construction, with his son.

In 2000, Mr. Semonell retired. Today, he is the dedicated Sergeant-at-Arms for the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 291. He resides in his Anaheim home of over 40 years.

Command Sergeant Major Brad Semonell embodies the leadership and sacrifice our great nation is built upon. I am proud to honor his military career and service to our nation.

HONORING AND COMMEMORATING
SERGEANT JOSEPH P. COLLETTE

HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 2019

Mr. STIVERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Ohio's 15th Congressional District to honor and commemorate a husband, a father, a brother, a son, and a hero. United States Army Sergeant Joseph P. Collette, of Lancaster, gave his life in the service of our nation on March 22, 2019.

At age 29, Sergeant Collette was fulfilling a goal he had held for over a decade: to deploy with the United States Army. As his wife, Caela, tells it, following the tragedy of September 11, her husband felt the call to serve. As his time with the 242nd Ordnance Battalion, 71st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group was coming to an end, he desperately wanted to go on deployment.

It is that level of bravery, selflessness, and commitment for which Sergeant Collette will be remembered by both his loved ones and community. He was a genuine, laid back, funny young man who was beloved by many.

A man of many special talents, he loved sharing his passion for cooking for others and challenging his friends in paintball matches and Pokémon battles. He loved spending time outdoors including running, snowboarding, and four-wheeling. But his priority in life was spending time with his friends and family.

Like a pebble dropped in a pond, the ripples created by Sergeant Collette's life and work are far-reaching. His legacy will live on in the memories of those who knew him and loved him: his wife, Caela; his children; Blair and Cody Collette; step-children Lena and Aria Scott; his parents, Theresa Mecionis and Joe and Cindy Collette; his siblings; Anthony, Camille, and Nicholas; and the rest of his extended family and loved ones.

As a Brigadier General in the Ohio Army National Guard, I have had the distinct privilege to serve alongside outstanding men and women like Sergeant Collette. I can say with absolute certainty that Lancaster, Ohio is undeniably a better place because of Sergeant Collette, and our nation is a safer place because of his service. I am honored to celebrate his legacy, and I encourage my colleagues in the House of Representatives to