

being used effectively and efficiently so Americans are getting the most out of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars.

I have made it a priority to support legislation that addresses our government's spending habits. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I put forth a bipartisan amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) with fellow Oklahoman, Congressman TOM COLE, to allow the Department of Defense (DoD) to have better oversight of where and how government defense money is being spent. The amendment requires the office of the Inspector General to audit all sole-source contracts with depot maintenance centers. This audit, and other financial accounting tools, act as accountability measures to ensure the government is being a good steward of taxpayer money while keeping our country safe.

As a member of the Government Efficiency Caucus and the Blue Dog Coalition, I am constantly working with my colleagues to find ways to promote responsible government spending. The bipartisan Government Efficiency Caucus works to find pragmatic solutions to government spending that increase the efficiency and effectiveness of government programs. The Blue Dog Coalition's Fiscal Responsibility Task Force analyzes ways to strengthen our fiscal responsibility and close the cycle of widespread government spending.

During the 116th Congress, the Government Efficiency Caucus has identified three priorities to improve the government's fiscal efficiency. These priorities include focusing on ensuring government agencies adopt monetary best practices to increase efficiency and effectiveness; supporting reasonable policy proposals that will improve the on-time, on-budget delivery of federal infrastructure investments; and modernizing the federal government workforce to ensure government employees have the skills, knowledge, and technology, to be good stewards of taxpayer money.

The Blue Dog Coalition's Fiscal Responsibility Task Force has released a set of policy proposals that include financial stability measures like creating a federal rainy-day fund so Congress is less reliant on massive, unplanned emergency spending when disasters strike. Another proposal emphasizes a return to the regular process of creating and passing the federal budget on time every year. This proposal outlines concepts like "No Budget, No Pay" and "No Budget, No Recess," which would increase the consequences on Congress for not passing a federal budget on time. These and other proposals outlined by the Blue Dog Fiscal Responsibility Task Force should be given extensive consideration by Congress, so our government can correct the bad fiscal habits it has developed.

Future generations of Americans should not have to pay for our irresponsible spending. It is up to us to get America's fiscal house in order so we can prove to the world that we are a nation that keeps its fiscal promises. Doing so will not only improve our government and its standing in the world, but also increase the faith that taxpayers have in the government to spend their money wisely.

RECOGNIZING GERARDO BECERRA FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

### HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement as President of two local International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) chapters, I rise today to commemorate the years of service my close friend, Mr. Gerardo Becerra, has given to the maritime industry and the thousands of members he passionately represented in South Florida. Gerry is a remarkable individual whose legacy in the port industry and the ILA will never be forgotten.

Born in 1941 in Havana, Cuba, Gerry escaped the Castro dictatorship in 1960 and had to build a new life for himself in South Florida. Shortly after arriving to the states, Gerry enlisted in the United States Army in 1962 and served our nation for a number of years. After being honorably discharged from the army, Gerry began working at the ports and in 1965 he was one of the original charter members for ILA's Local 1922 chapter.

Gerry's retirement closes his chapter of over fifty-four years of service to the longshoremen industry and the ILA. From 1965 to 1983, Gerry worked as a checker and plan clerk and through his hard work and dedication, he was appointed Vice President in 1984 for Local 1922, Local 1922-1, and Local 2062. In this role, he represented checkers, mechanics, and truck drivers. In 2005, he became President of Local 1922 and Local 1922-1 and served in this position until his retirement. Additionally, he served as Vice President of the ILA from 2006 until 2018. During this time, Gerry was integral in negotiating contracts, mediating grievances, and representing the interests of his colleagues.

Having had the privilege of working with Gerry for many years, his determination and passion for bettering the longshoremen industry never wavered. While his retirement marks the end of an era, I have no doubt that Gerry looks forward to spending more time with his wife of fifty-six years, Carmen, his two daughters, nine grandchildren, and extended family.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the impressive career of my dear friend, Mr. Gerry Becerra, and the strides he has made for the hardworking men and women in the port industry, and I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in recognizing this outstanding individual.

NABILA NAZEER EARNS STATE DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP

### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Nabila Nazeer of Travis High School in Richmond, TX, who was selected for a scholarship from the U.S. Department of State's Youth Ambassadors study abroad exchange program.

This highly competitive merit-based scholarship will give Nabila the opportunity to focus on civic education and leadership development projects during an exchange program to the Caribbean and South America. During this program, Nabila will develop her foreign language skills, increase her cross-cultural understanding, strengthening her leadership capacity and foster new academic insights and ambitions.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Nabila Nazeer on earning this prestigious scholarship.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. MOHAMMAD SIDDIQUE SHEIKH'S 50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

### HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Mohammad Siddique Sheikh's nearly five decades of service to our great Commonwealth of Virginia.

Mr. Sheikh was born and raised in Gujranwala, Pakistan, before moving to the United States 50 years ago. He came with just \$10 dollars in his pocket, and today he is a very successful businessman living the American dream. Since moving to this country, Mr. Sheikh has served our country as a successful entrepreneur and advocate for the Pakistani American community in the larger Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Mr. Sheikh has also been on several academic boards and business institutions, including George Mason University, one of Virginia's largest public research institutions. He is also the Founder of the Pakistan American Business Association (PABA), a representative body of entrepreneurs of Pakistani-origin. In recognition of his service and commitment, he was appointed as the Chairman of the Council on Diversity formed by the Police Chief of Fairfax County. He served in this position for more than five years.

Mr. Sheikh is a selfless and dedicated leader in the Pakistani American community. He has been a torch-bearer in promoting Pakistan's friendly image in the United States. Mr. Sheikh's servant leadership can be witnessed in his work when he helped create the Muslim Community Center in the state of Maryland and being a leading voice in the creation of Islamic Circle of North America Sunday School for Muslim communities residing in the DC metro area. In the education field, Mr. Sheikh has been a dominate force in promoting connections between higher institutions in Pakistan and the United States. As a member of the Board of Visitors at George Mason University and Pakistan's National University of Science of Technology, he led an effort to create opportunities for National University of Science and Technology faculty and students to study at George Mason University through various programs. He also played an active role in promoting cooperation between GMU and University of Karachi. Today, the two institutions are now working on various initiatives and programs.

Madam Speaker, I have had the privilege to know Mr. Sheikh for many years and count

him as a friend. I ask you to join me in recognition of Mr. Mohammad Siddique Sheikh leadership, passion, and determination in service to our great nation.

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
OREGON RARE PROGRAM

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 25th anniversary of the University of Oregon Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) program. This AmeriCorps program is administered through the University of Oregon's Institute for Policy Research and Engagement and is dedicated to improving economic, social, and environmental conditions in rural Oregon communities.

Since its inception in 1994, more than 600 RARE members have served all 36 counties and more than half of the cities in Oregon, providing much needed capacity and expertise to rural communities. In the past 25 years, RARE members have completed more than 2,000 assessments, plans, and reports for local communities, written more than 700 grants, raised over \$6 million for communities, and recruited more than 10,000 community volunteers who served more than 8.6 million hours. In the last five years alone, communities in my congressional district have benefited from 37 projects and partnerships coordinated by the RARE AmeriCorps Program.

This year, 31 RARE members are working across the State of Oregon to develop and implement community planning, community and economic development, natural resource planning, and community food security/food systems projects. Current projects in my district include a RARE member working with the City of Florence Public Art Committee to select and install two large-scale public art pieces in the Urban Renewal District. There is also a two-year project with the Oregon Coast Visitors Association focused on community-driven initiatives for outdoor recreation, signature events, and culinary and agritourism-related opportunities on the southern Oregon coast.

I am proud to note that RARE AmeriCorps Program partnerships include federal and state agencies and notable non-profit foundations and organizations. The key partners are the Corporation for National & Community Service (AmeriCorps), the University of Oregon, the Ford Family Foundation, the Oregon Food Bank, Travel Oregon, Oregon Main Street, Energy Trust of Oregon, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the RARE AmeriCorps Program on 25 years of service to rural communities in Oregon and to thank RARE for its many vital contributions. I have no doubt these first 25 years of success will serve as the inspiration for the next twenty-five.

CONGRATULATING THE PEARLAND  
HIGH SCHOOL BAND FOR BEING  
SELECTED TO PERFORM IN THE  
ROSE PARADE

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pearland High School marching band, also known as "The Pride of Pearland," for being chosen to perform in the 131st annual Rose Parade.

The band was chosen for a number of reasons, most notably its member's community service efforts, specifically towards hurricane, Harvey relief. The band was one of 16 chosen out of over 100 national and international applicants and the only Texas band selected this year. In addition to community work, the bands are judged based on musicality and marching skills. The band also garnered community support to help raise the money funds needed to pay for the trip to Pasadena, California, for the parade.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Pearland marching band for being chosen to represent Texas at the historical Rose Parade. We are very proud of them and this incredible accomplishment.

CELEBRATING DR. EDNA REHBEIN

**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and work of Dr. Edna Rehbein, Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Texas State University, as she retires after 21 years of incredible public service. With her "can-do" spirit and high-minded vision, she's a model citizen and trusted community leader.

Renown for her expertise in Spanish and Spanish-American Literature, Edna has distinguished herself as a gifted educator and natural-born leader who has made a lasting impact on both her beloved university and the greater Round Rock, TX community. She's always shown tremendous respect and support for both students and colleagues while working tirelessly to make Texas State University Round Rock a world-class educational institution. She was the first director of the campus and started it from a program with just 5 classes that met at a local high school, to the program it is today with over 2,000 students and three state-of-the-art buildings on 101 acres in northeast Round Rock.

Outside of teaching, Edna contributes her expertise to various civic organizations in Central Texas. She represents Texas State University on community boards and organizations, including the Round Rock Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Board, Round Rock ISD Partners in Education Board, and was a founding member of the Round Rock Arts Council. She is also on the Board of Trustees of her alma mater, Randolph (Macon Woman's) College, in Lynchburg, VA, and is active at King of King's Lutheran

Church. Her work to contribute her considerable energies to these worthy causes represent the best of Texas' generous spirit.

Dr. Edna Rehbein's retirement is the richly-deserved beginning of an exciting journey. I join her former students, colleagues, family, and friends in honoring her career, commending her commitment to education, and wishing my friend nothing but the best in the years ahead.

IN APPRECIATION OF THE WHITE  
TANKS ROTARY CLUB AND  
YOUTH4TROOPS

**HON. PAUL A. GOSAR**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my appreciation to the White Tanks Rotary Club and the Youth4Troops organization, who are coming together to prepare and package goods to be shipped to our service members deployed overseas and for homeless veterans.

This event brings together two groups dedicated to serving our military members and inspiring patriotism in fellow youth, and across generations by volunteering on behalf of service members and veterans everywhere. This event is intended as an expression of gratitude toward the many sacrifices that these military members make in defense of liberty in America and around the world. The White Tanks Rotary Club has made good on its mission to serve others, promote integrity and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace.

I commend the participants, the White Tanks Rotary Club and Youth4Troops, for coordinating and hosting this event.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND  
CAREER OF AMBASSADOR MAR-  
ION H. SMOAK

**HON. MICHAEL WALTZ**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 23, 2019*

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service and career of Ambassador Marion H. Smoak as he celebrates his 103rd birthday. Ambassador Smoak has dedicated many years to public service and embodies the principles of a true servant leader.

Ambassador Smoak earned a bachelor's in English and History from The Citadel in 1938. He went on to receive a law degree from the University of South Carolina Law School in 1941. After receiving his law degree Ambassador Smoak served in the Army as a Judge Advocate and was stationed in Berlin, Germany and New Caledonia, Japan with the 11th and 82nd Airborne Divisions. Following his tour abroad, he became a law professor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Upon leaving his position at West Point, Ambassador Smoak continued to serve in the Army as a Legislative Liaison Officer right here in Washington, D.C. During his service, he assisted in drafting legislation and performed liaison duties both with Congress and