

There was a brief break in America's hard-line approach when, in December 2014, President Barack Obama announced a loosening of the embargo and the normalization of relations. President Trump reversed course and rolled out many of the past, failed sanctions against Cuba, plus some new ones.

Those have included restricting Americans' travel to officially approved group trips with cultural organizations, ending the allowance for American cruise ships to dock in Cuban ports, plans to reduce to \$1,000 the amount of money that Cuban-Americans can send to Cuba every three months, and allowing United States citizens to sue foreign companies over the use of property expropriated by the Castro government (a provision suspended by Republican and Democratic administrations since it was passed in 1996).

By the White House's own admission, these policies will reduce by half the number of American tourists visiting the island. That number last year was 600,000. American tourists had been helping to support the private restaurants, shops and the approximately 20,000 Airbnb's that have sprung up in recent years.

Support for Havana from the regime in Venezuela, another target of the Trump administration, has been halted, compounding Cuba's economic troubles.

Shortly after he was inaugurated as president of Venezuela in 1999, Hugo Chávez, threw the struggling Cuban economy a lifeline, sending 100,000 barrels of oil a day, half of which the Cuban government sold on the world market for hard currency. As partial payment for the cheap oil, Cubans provided intelligence and military support to Mr. Chávez and to his successor, Nicolás Maduro, to help them consolidate their corrupt, autocratic project.

But as Venezuelan oil production plunged in recent years, and global prices fell, Cuba's life-support system dried up to between 20,000 and 50,000 barrels per day, as of April.

The Trump administration has seen the weakness of these two economies as an opportunity to push for regime change in both countries.

The first target was Mr. Maduro, hoping his fall would bring democracy to his country and thus bankrupt the Cuban regime, finally bringing it to its knees. Now, as administration officials face their failed, overhyped efforts to topple Mr. Maduro, they have changed their focus: they are blaming Cuba for Mr. Maduro's survival—rather than Mr. Maduro for the Cuban government's survival.

Cubans—and the Cuban leaders—have been through worse. American restrictions on trade and travel to Cuba are minor compared to the difficulties they faced after the collapse of the Soviet Union, during which the Cuban economy contracted by more than one third. Even then, with food, electricity and hope all in short supply, the Castro government survived.

Today, Cuba's leadership, under Raúl Castro's handpicked successor, Miguel Díaz-Canel, is once again rallying the island nation's citizens to tighten their belts, for example by promoting hutia, a local rodent, as a source of protein. And other authoritarian powers, like China and Russia, are more than willing to throw even just a bit of economic help, and lots of anti-American ideological support, which didn't exist during the post-Cold War period.

The Trump administration's strategy will fail, as it has in the past, and ordinary Cuban citizens will continue to bare the brunt of a misguided American policy. When will American leaders finally learn the lessons of history?

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN L. SHAFER,
P.E., RECIPIENT OF THE MILWAUKEE WATER COUNCIL'S THIRD ANNUAL "WATER WARRIOR OF THE YEAR" AWARD

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Kevin Shafer, the long serving Executive Director of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) and a recent recipient of the Milwaukee Water Council's third annual "Water Warrior of the Year Award," which is given to acknowledge those in the water industry who advance the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) education.

MMSD provides wastewater treatment reclamation and flood management, among other services, for about 1.1 million customers in 28 communities in the Greater Milwaukee Area.

The award acknowledges Kevin's dedication to growing MMSD's internship program which provides students with hands-on learning experience to inspire and educate students about future water-related careers in areas such as water quality protection, laboratory services, engineering, construction and sustainability. According to the CEO of the Water Council, "When it comes to supporting and nurturing our next generation of water professionals we always know that Kevin will say an emphatic yes when we ask him to do more."

For over 25 years, MMSD has grown its internship program which now hires 25 students every summer. For example, during the summer of 2018, MMSD worked with the Water Council to place two African-American junior engineering students from Tuskegee University to work as interns with a goal of increasing the number of African-Americans pursuing water as a career. This is just one of several efforts by MMSD to invest in and develop a diverse water workforce in the Milwaukee area.

Kevin Shafer has served as executive director of MMSD since 2002. Throughout his career at MMSD, Kevin has helped to make the utility a leader when it comes to the adoption and use of green infrastructure, has been instrumental in efforts to transform MMSD's stormwater management system, and continues to foster innovative means of protecting the District's water supply.

Prior to this position, Kevin worked in the private sector at an international engineering firm and spent six years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Currently, Kevin is a Chair on both the United States' Water Alliance Board of Directors and the Water Council Board of Directors. Kevin was formerly President of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

It is an honor to recognize Kevin Shafer for his dedication to the residents served by MMSD and in being an innovative water industry leader who is constantly trying to find new ways to deal with the challenges facing MMSD. I applaud the high level of professionalism and service that he has brought to MMSD and have no doubt he will continue to serve our community in the same distinguished manner as he has done throughout his career.

IN RECOGNITION OF WAHCONAH PARK'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the 100th anniversary of Wahconah Park in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Wahconah Park has been a loyal, magical home for America's favorite pastime since the 19th century, when the game of baseball was first played on its grounds in 1892. Most of the ballpark's facilities, however, including its wooden grandstand, were officially built in 1919—and they have filled with lovers of the game ever since.

Over the course of more than a century, Wahconah Park has hosted numerous Minor League Baseball teams, other professional clubs and affiliates, as well as summer collegiate teams—like the Pittsfield Suns, who currently call Wahconah home. As the Pittsfield Suns' team owner Jeff Goldklang has said, baseball is about history, and it's about memories. Wahconah Park is certainly steeped in both. It is a testament to the game Americans have loved for decades and continues to be a destination for generations of families who come to the Berkshires to watch it come to life. And beyond baseball, Wahconah Park has also played host to various high school sporting events, and alternated into a concert venue at times as well.

Once again, Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate Wahconah Park on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. The ballpark is city-owned and has been integral to the fabric of Pittsfield's community. It represents the longevity, history, and character of not only the Berkshires, but all of western Massachusetts.

RECOGNIZING JERRY SHEA, SR.

HON. CLAY HIGGINS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a pillar of Louisiana, Iberia Parish icon, Jerry Shea, Sr., who recently passed away at the age of 93.

Jerry was born in Louisiana and lived some young years in Texas. He has been a resident of New Iberia, LA, since 1942. After serving three years in the Air Force and graduating from Louisiana State University with a degree in petroleum engineering, he went to work for his father's welding company, Bayou Welding Works. Eventually Jerry and his late brother Edward "Buddy" Shea, Jr. went on to start several offshoots of Bayou, including Bayou Pipe Coating in 1971. Jerry was inducted into the National Association of Pipe Coating Applicators Hall of Fame in 1996 and retired from Bayou in 2000 after providing 55 years of leadership in the family business. In addition to his family business, he served as chairman of the board of New Iberia National Bank during the 1980s.

Despite his business success, Jerry is even more well-known for his commitment and dedication to his community. He and his wife, Harriet, have received numerous recognitions for

their community involvement, including receiving the “Distinguished Citizen Award” from the Boy Scouts Evangeline Area Council in 2001 and the 2013 Leaders in Philanthropy Award from Community Foundation of Acadiana for Iberia Parish. They also founded a scholarship at Catholic High School. Most recently, Jerry was the Grand Marshall of the local St. Patrick’s Day Parade and a former King of the Krewe of Andalusia. In fact, Jerry was so active in New Iberia, people would often refer to him as the “unofficial mayor of New Iberia.”

Jerry’s impact on New Iberia, Louisiana, will never be forgotten and he deserves great recognition. His passing is a true loss to his family, his community and to Louisiana.

Jerry and his bride, Harriet, have six children, 21 grandchildren, and 33 great grandchildren. I join his family in mourning his passing and celebrating his life.

HONORING RECIPIENTS OF THE INAUGURAL THIRD DISTRICT YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, today I honor five individuals and businesses from Nebraska for receiving the Inaugural Third District Young Entrepreneur Awards.

Throughout the 75 counties of the Third District, entrepreneurs and innovators are working hard to grow opportunity in our state.

In May, I called for nominations as part of a new initiative to recognize the young individuals, businesses, and organizations in the Third District who strengthen their communities through fresh ideas, hard work, and entrepreneurship.

Papa Moon Vineyards of Scottsbluff began in 2007 as a grape growing hobby for the Massey family, and has since evolved into an absolute passion for grape cultivation and craft-wine production. Over the next several years, their passion evolved into a family business. Named for the moniker the youngest Massey family member gave his grandfather, winery owner Jim, it has truly become a family project. The Masseys opened their tasting room in 2018 to share their passion for viticulture and love of winemaking. They are a proud family-owned farm winery, with a focus on the cultivation and production of high quality product.

Upstream Farms of Albion, is led by brothers Matthew and Joseph Brugger. They work every day to bring new meaning to the phrase, “Farm to Table.” The Bruggers co-founded Upstream with the goal of establishing better rural communities. They saw few opportunities for young people to become involved in agriculture, and wanted to create a business that would inspire young agriculturalists and entrepreneurs to pursue their passion in a rural community. To demonstrate their desire to embrace their vision, Upstream is more than just a traditional farm. Upstream strives to demonstrate diversification through action, offering services in agronomy, technical innovation, resale of market ready produce, and angus products.

Striv Inc. of Henderson, is led by Taylor Siebert. He discovered his passion for sharing

stories when he started the Heartland Beat, an online blog and newsletter, to reach out to alumni of Heartland Community School. This experience inspired Taylor to explore other avenues for schools and their alumni to create and share content. This discovery process led to the founding of Striv Inc. in 2012. Today, Striv Inc. has taught hundreds of students the necessary skills to provide high quality streaming access and coverage of school events and activities for their schools and communities. The business currently provides educational and streaming services to over 100 school districts in Nebraska. Ever the innovator, Siebert has never stopped creating. The purpose of his latest development, “Class Intercom,” is to help school districts more effectively utilize social media to maximize connection, promotion, and information sharing in their communities. Taylor could have created his internet-driven business in any state in the country. He chose to come back to Nebraska, back to his hometown, and invest his talents in training tomorrow’s leaders and creating a better version of the, “The Good Life.”

The Medina Street Vault Coffeehouse & Bistro of Cairo is owned by Jenna Schweitzer. Through the experiences of her high school job as barista, owner Jenna Schweitzer realized her life’s passion was coffee. She knew she wanted to open her own coffee shop, and to attempt to share her passion with her hometown. In 2017, thanks to Jenna’s vision, hard work, and the support of her family she opened her coffee shop and bistro in a former bank building in Cairo, and strategically selected her food and drink menu to ensure she complemented, and supported other local businesses. Schweitzer feels The Vault has become an experience area residents turn to when they want a place to meet their friends, relax, and lose two or three hours in conversation. Her goal of creating a family-centered environment to share her passion with others has become a reality.

Game On of McCook is owned by Cody Dame. Thanks to a 2007 submission to the Hormel Business Plan Competition permanently changed his professional direction. Winning the business plan competition allowed him to transition from owning his own traveling videography and disc jockey service to pursuing his passion of building a community through creating a fun and experiential environment for all ages. Quickly growing from a 1,000 square foot retail space to a much larger location in the community of McCook, Cody has expanded into the communities of North Platte, Kearney, and Grand Island as well. Game On has become a successful regional retail business, committed to strengthening the communities in which they are present.

I am proud to recognize each of these award winners today, and I thank them for their many contributions to Nebraska.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MITROVICH

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I mourn the passing of my friend, my neighbor, and San Diego icon: George Mitrovich.

I often joked that one of the reasons I ran for office was so that George could introduce me at events. He was a dynamic and articulate speaker with a velvet voice. It was always an honor to be introduced by him.

During the debate leading up to a vote on the Affordable Care Act in 2009, I held a town hall meeting with constituents to hear their thoughts. I knew interest in the meeting was very high and there would be a big crowd.

I thought to myself, who do I know who could control a large, feisty—possibly angry—group of people. Of course the answer was George. When I asked him if he wanted to take on the challenge, he said he was delighted.

More than 1,200 people attended that town hall and people were fired up. With his commanding presence, George deftly moderated the event—kept folks in line and the proceedings on course.

It is virtually impossible to travel around San Diego and not see George’s impact. He was on just about every board and every commission. What an incredible amount of boundless ideas and endless energy he had. And he kept it up until his final days.

It wasn’t just San Diego that benefited from his talents. George was active in causes and events in many cities around the country.

George was a writer, a public speaker, and an athlete. But mostly, he was a trusted and loyal friend.

Above all, I send condolences to his loving family.

It is safe to say that San Diego won’t see the likes of George Mitrovich again.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF HILARY A. DAVIS, WOMEN’S CONGRESSIONAL POLICY INSTITUTE 2019 CONGRESSIONAL FELLOW ON WOMEN AND PUBLIC POLICY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Hillary A. Davis, Congressional Fellow with the Women’s Congressional Policy Institute on Women and Public Policy. For the past 7 months, Ms. Davis has been working as a research and writing associate.

Ms. Davis is a native of Tampa, Florida, and chose to follow in her godmother’s footsteps and attend the historic Fisk University in Nashville, TN. There she majored in Political Science, and while at Fisk, Ms. Davis established herself as a servant leader by being elected to serve on the Student Government Association and as chapter president of Fisk’s collegiate chapter of NAACP. Upon graduating from Fisk, she returned to Tampa and began a career as a human resource professional in the information technology industry. Ms. Davis also holds a Master of Public Administration from Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, LA.

Throughout her time on the Committee, Ms. Davis has displayed a high degree of professionalism and personal commitment to providing staff valuable insight and information. In all of this, Ms. Davis has demonstrated benevolence, vitality, and enthusiasm, which has helped all of us enormously.