

women of our farmer co-ops for the valuable time and expertise they put into supporting our farmers and our agriculture industry.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL AG DAY

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of National Ag Day, a celebration of our Nation's oldest and most important industry and the hardworking men and women who put food on our table, clothes on our back, and fuel in our cars.

The number of people in agriculture today is but a fraction of what it was 100 years ago, but the impact of today's agriculture industry is unprecedented. Today's farmer feeds about 165 people, and agriculture remains this country's number one export.

In Kansas, agriculture accounts for nearly half the State's economy, and, in my district, that number is more than 60 percent. For many rural communities, farming and ranching is the sole economic driver.

Kansas is the national leader in agriculture, ranking first in the production of grain sorghum, second in the production of wheat, third for cattle, and fourth in the production of sunflowers. In fact, Kansas is second in the Nation for the total number of acres farmed.

□ 1015

Winters like the one we are currently experiencing at home have highlighted the time and dedication farmers and ranchers have to their land and animals. In Kansas, farmers with livestock are working around the clock to ensure the animals are healthy, warm, and well fed. That means enduring sub-zero windchills, blizzard-like conditions, and middle-of-the-night checks.

While agriculture has become a target of environmentalists who want to discontinue life as we know it in Kansas, I am here today to testify to the great work farmers and ranchers have done to protect and improve our air, land, and water. Farmers are the original conservationists, and continue to find ways to do more with less, while protecting our most valuable natural resources.

National Ag Day is our opportunity to celebrate farmers and ranchers, highlight the impact they have on our communities and country, and remember the thousands of products made possible by their hard work.

Back home, it is a day to introduce thousands of grade school kids to the agriculture industry with fun things like how to milk a cow, gathering eggs, and even flying drones.

I encourage Members to join me today in celebration of National Agriculture Day and take time to thank a farmer.

HONORING JOHN KILZER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today I learned that John Kilzer, a friend, an

important figure in Memphis and in the music community, passed away.

John Kilzer was 62 years old. He was born in Jackson, Tennessee, up the road from Memphis, but he lived most of his life in Memphis.

He was the epitome of what Memphis is about. A lot of times people in Memphis call us grit and grinders, and the city is the city of grit and grind. It comes from the basketball team, the Grizzlies.

John's life was Memphis and John's life was grit and grind. He was a high school All-American basketball player who went to the University of Memphis, then Memphis State, and played basketball. Didn't play it that well, but he played it. He was on the team; a good outside shooter and a scrapper.

He got interested in other things and he had some demons with him too. Those demons came along maybe from his father, who was an alcoholic, and it caused John to have problems with abuse of drugs and alcohol as well. It interfered with his basketball career, interfered with his music life, but he never let it keep him down. He came back. He came back every chance he could.

He came back as a musician who was signed by David Geffen, had two albums by Geffen, one song that made the top ten, and songs recorded by Maria Muldaur, Rosanne Cash, and others.

He became a minister and he had a series of ministries in St. John's United Methodist Church in Memphis. It was called Recovery Ministry, where he had other musicians come and join him, and they performed for folks who were having trouble with addiction, gave them a concert every Friday and helped them on the road to recovery.

He never forgot people, especially little people. He made a big difference.

For a man from Jackson, Tennessee, who was a tall guy who played basketball, to become a musician and become a minister and a writer: quite a life.

He was influenced by Reverend James Lawson, a hero of the civil rights movement, whose simple presence at a Calvary Church Lenten service influenced John to get back into ministry.

He had a ministry degree and a Ph.D. in ministry as well that he got in London, England.

He was influenced in music—which he dabbled with but wasn't very good—by Teenie Hodges, a guitarist for Al Green. He came over to see the basketball team and saw a guitar in John's room. He took up with John and taught him the finer points of music, songwriting, and guitar playing, and John did good at that, but what John did best was helping his fellow human being.

He never gave up. He always saw hope and opportunity. And he thought in universal terms.

So when I read about my friend, John, dying, the first thing I did was go around to try to find his CD in my

condo. Most of my CDs are in Memphis, about 1,000 to 1, but I looked around and couldn't find John's CD. It must be in Memphis.

So I thought, maybe I can talk to my friend Alexa, see if Alexa can help me. I said, "Alexa, play me some John Kilzer." And Amazon Music had John Kilzer, about eight or nine songs in there, including a song he wrote with Kirk Whalum, a great saxophonist and a legend in Memphis and in the music scene, called "Until We're All Free". We are not all free until we are all free. It is a great song.

So if you have a chance, if you have got Alexa as a friend, ask her to play you some John Kilzer. It is good music.

CONGRESS MUST MEET ITS CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart as another individual has lost her life on U.S. Highway 12 in my home State of Minnesota, in fact, right in my neighborhood.

U.S. Highway 12 is the road we drive to get to and from our hometown of Delano, Minnesota. This is one of the most dangerous stretches of road in our State. The highway has actually been called the "Corridor of Death."

On March 2, 2019, Marleena Anna Dieterich, an 18-year-old from Delano, Minnesota, lost her life in another crash on this highway.

Marleena was a student at Delano High School, a member of our hometown, and a young life with so much promise. We lost her far too soon.

Today I rise to remember the life of Marleena, to remember that she was an honor student, a black belt in Taekwondo, and was planning to major in biomedical sciences and minor in premed. Her life held endless promise.

This accident, like so many on U.S. Highway 12, was tragic and senseless.

Over the years, some improvements have been made to portions of U.S. Highway 12, but until massive improvements are made to the most dangerous stretch of this highway, tragic accidents will continue to occur.

Since the beginning of 2019, just 2 months, 14 crashes have already occurred on that stretch of the highway leading into Delano in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District. More must be done, and quickly.

While we are committed to working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Highway 12 Safety Coalition to ensure that Minnesotans can travel safely and securely on this road, I am inviting our Transportation Secretary Chao to visit us and see firsthand some of our most desperate transportation needs in Minnesota.

At the Federal level, Congress must start to exercise its obligation under Article I of the Constitution to dedicate and direct Federal funds to build,

maintain, and improve our Federal highways, especially lifesaving safety improvements.

Together, we can find a solution to the safety hazard that U.S. Highway 12 poses, and together, we will.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MINNESOTA WHITECAPS

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, this March, during the National Hockey League's Gender Equality Month, I want to congratulate the Minnesota Whitecaps for making it to the National Women's Hockey League playoffs.

Not everyone can play professional sports, but everyone can participate at some level. Sports are a great training ground for life. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, how to handle adversity are all important to the development of productive, contributing citizens in a civil society.

Professional women athletes play a large role in the development of girls hockey in communities across the country, but especially the Minnesota hockey community.

We are lucky to have inspiring players turn coaches that mentor the next generation of female hockey players and great Americans.

I know the entire Minnesota hockey world is proud of the Whitecaps.

Congratulations on your success, and good luck in the playoffs.

HEALTHPARTNERS RECOGNIZED FOR SERVING THE UNDERSERVED

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize HealthPartners for receiving the 2019 CMS Health Equity Award from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

This award recognizes organizations that demonstrate an exceptional commitment to serving the most underserved individuals among us.

HealthPartners has locations throughout Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District, which I am honored to represent in this Congress.

HealthPartners is committed to eliminating healthcare disparities for those with language, cultural, and other barriers.

I am pleased to congratulate this outstanding company for receiving this well-deserved award.

I hope other healthcare providers will take note of the small changes that can make a big difference in eliminating bias in the distribution of healthcare services.

SUPPORTING STATE AND LOCAL TAX DEDUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, tax day is approaching on April 15, and I again rise to state my support for the State and local tax deduction.

There were many positive aspects to the tax bill that I voted against.

I support reducing the corporate tax rate, but it should not have been done

by increasing personal taxes on any hardworking middle-income Long Islander in my district.

The \$10,000 cap that was made to the SALT deduction was a punch in the gut to middle-class taxpayers in my district.

There were positive aspects, as I said, of the tax bill: expanding the medical expense deduction, preserving education and student deductions, doubling the child tax credit, the AMT changes.

And as I stated, changing the corporate tax rate helps make the United States more competitive globally, to improve our business climate, to help create more jobs, but it should not be done by raising taxes on the personal income side.

I have been working closely with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to address this issue. I have been working with Democratic Representative JOSH GOTTHEIMER of New Jersey. I cosponsor legislation between PETER KING, a Republican, and TOM SUOZZI, a Democrat, H.R. 257. NITA LOWEY introduced a bill that I cosponsor, H.R. 188.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues in this Chamber to work together to address this important issue, because it is important to deliver tax relief to all Americans.

Now, I do have an important message, though, to the Governor of New York, the mayor of New York City, those who are running State and local governments in States like mine. The reason why our State and local tax deduction was as high as it was is because our State and local taxes are as high as they are.

So everybody needs to look in the mirror and figure out what we can do to do our part, because all levels of government need to deliver tax relief.

My home State of New York has some of the highest taxes in the entire country. It is ranked as the second worst State in the entire Nation to do business. You couple that with the loss of the SALT deduction, and it has only sped up the amount of businesses and individuals who are choosing to leave our State.

It was very upsetting to see an effort by elected officials, some here in Congress, others in the State legislature to push away 25,000 good-paying Amazon jobs that would have been coming to Long Island City.

Now, we all must do our part. The State and local tax deduction has been around in some way since, you could say, Abraham Lincoln's administration. He used the State and local tax deduction to help keep this union together and fight the Civil War.

It was a tough debate a little over a year ago now when the tax law was passed through both Chambers and signed by the President, but next month, as April 15 approaches and people have to pay their taxes, they are going to be seeing less in their return, many will be seeing less in their return where I am from. Some will be getting more, and that is great.

I didn't oppose this bill because all of my constituents were going to see a tax increase. It was that too many were going to see a tax increase.

Now, all, when they are getting their tax return need to understand that throughout the year, money was added to their paycheck because of a change in the way that taxes were calculated with withholdings through the year. So that is something else to factor in when trying to figure out the impact of the tax bill. Again, some people will be seeing less that they owe, others will be seeing more.

In this Chamber, in the halls of the New York State capitol, in the halls of State capitols everywhere, in city halls, in county and town governments all throughout America, we all need to do our part to deliver tax relief.

□ 1030

Because at all levels of government, really, it is not a revenue issue that has been leading to the situation that we face as a country and in our local governments. It has been an expenditure issue.

Whether you could save a dollar, a million dollars, a billion dollars, wherever you can find money to save, we need to get better at how we tax and spend the people's money. We need to spend it as if it is our own.

Mr. Speaker, there is a message here to my colleagues in this Chamber. I ask for their support of this legislation, multiple bills that have been introduced. I make that plea to the Senate, to the administration, and also to all those representatives of State and local governments responsible for the fact that the reason our deduction was as high as it was, was because our State and local taxes were as high as they were. But we need to do our part here in this Chamber.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN RALPH HALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on March 7 of this year, 6 days ago, we lost our colleague Ralph Hall.

Ralph's journey among us here in Congress and our world started on May 3, 1923, in a town called Fate, Texas. Never in American history has a town of birth been more appropriate for a man than Fate, Texas. Ralph's life was all about fate, great faith, and God.

As fate would have it, Ralph left Fate and moved to Rockwall when he was 3 years old. He started working there at a local convenience store.

As fate would have it, guess who showed up? Bonnie and Clyde, the notorious killers on a rampage throughout Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, that part of our country. They gave Ralph a 25-cent tip—a quarter—big money in those days. He was so excited, he showed his boss the quarter and noticed a newspaper lying there on the