

service to his fellow veterans, both in northern California and across the United States. Much like his military career, his accomplishments as an advocate for veterans are too numerous to properly list in this format.

He has worked closely with me and my office and others previous to me over the years as an adviser on all things veterans related and as a tireless partner and champion of programs and legislation that can make a real impact to help our veterans thrive.

He was a leader in every sense of the word. John was instrumental in getting a new VA clinic in Redding, whose groundbreaking will be very soon, and started the quest for a veterans' cemetery in Shasta County, both of which have now come to fruition, thanks to his relentless efforts.

John even collaborated with country music legend Merle Haggard, who is a Redding resident, to coordinate a national fishing tournament for combat-disabled veterans to have a chance to get out and relax and enjoy the outdoors with people who they can relate to. For him, it was all part of making the lives of veterans better in any way that he could.

When John discovered that many veterans struggled to obtain legal help, he went back to college at the age of 62 to get a degree that would allow him to serve as a legal assistant to in-need veterans at no charge to the veteran. That is amazing service. That is the kind of person John Cleckner was.

For his impressive track record, both on the battlefield and in civilian life, the Special Operations Center of Excellence at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School inducted John into the Distinguished Members of Special Operations Regiment in 2010.

□ 1045

I know this: Major John Cleckner was an American hero, on and off the battlefield. He devoted his life to his country, and when he could no longer serve his country, he devoted himself to improving the lives of his fellow veterans.

I have seen it firsthand. I consider myself fortunate to have known him as a friend, and I am grateful for the things he helped us—in my office and others—do to accomplish things for veterans in northern California.

John was tough, even a little scary, especially if he thought you weren't being true to what you were saying you would do. But if you were, you wouldn't have a stronger ally than Major John Cleckner in what we pursue to help our veterans, to help our Nation be strong, to be true.

His commitment has only strengthened my own resolve to further some of the initiatives he started and we have helped with and to never stop fighting for our veterans who deserve it.

I thank John for his service, his sacrifice, his dedication. We will miss him in northern California but will ensure

his legacy lives on through our efforts—all of us—to help our veterans, to help our Nation remain strong.

God bless Major John Cleckner, his faithful wife, Doris, his amazing family, and all that he has ever had touch with during his life of service to his nation and to his brothers.

IN MEMORY OF TROOPER DONALD C. BRACKETT

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the life and memory of Trooper Donald C. Brackett, a dedicated law enforcement professional with the Pennsylvania State Police. Trooper Brackett passed away while on duty Saturday morning at the age of 58.

Our Nation just recognized National Police Week, a time to reflect upon and honor the sacrifices made by the men and women in law enforcement. Trooper Brackett was no exception.

A resident of Bensalem, Trooper Brackett served nearly 18 years in the United States Marine Corps and enlisted in the Pennsylvania State Police in October of 2001. He was most recently assigned to the patrol section of Troop T, King of Prussia, and was previously assigned to Troop K, Media, and Troop M in Trevose throughout his distinguished career.

Madam Speaker, Trooper Brackett lived his life in service to our Nation and to our community. He is truly an American hero, and I send my deepest condolences to his wife, Marta, and his children, Gabriella and Brianna.

Trooper Brackett lived his entire life in service to our community. He set the example for our entire Nation to follow.

IN RECOGNITION OF PAUL STEKLENSKI

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a native of Perkaskie in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who is promoting animal welfare through the nonprofit organization he established 4 years ago.

Paul Steklenski, an Army veteran and a network engineer, founded Flying Fur Animal Rescue in 2015. Flying his 1970 Beechcraft single-engine airplane, Paul transports shelter animals, mostly dogs, at risk of being euthanized to rescue groups along the East Coast. To date, Paul estimates he has saved the lives of over 1,300 animals in need.

Paul credits Rick Witt, who helps manage the operations at Doylestown Airport, for the success of this organization. Rick allows Paul to use the original aircraft he used to transport the animals.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the work of Flying Fur Animal Rescue and thank Paul for his work. I encourage all of us to follow his lead of being a voice for the voiceless.

RECOGNIZING BRUSH WITH THE LAW

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize an outstanding nonprofit organization in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, that is serving individuals in need in our community.

Brush With the Law, based in Montgomeryville, was founded as a visual arts program at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility in 2013. The program quickly grew popular and was transitioned into one that helps marginalized individuals trying to re-enter society.

Brush With the Law works with municipalities and small businesses in their endeavors, which involves creation of conceptual art installations to beautify our community. These installations seek to raise awareness for issues important to local residents, such as drug addiction, homelessness, and climate change. The principal goal of Brush With the Law is to bring people together, a vision which we all should applaud.

I would like to recognize the founder and director, Maria Maneos of North Wales, for her leadership and for her work in empowering our community.

MOVE ON FROM THE RUSSIAN INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, on April 18, 2019, my Democratic colleagues were overjoyed. The report on the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election was released. It was two volumes, volume I and volume II. Volume I was 199 pages long, volume II, 182 pages long.

Special Counsel Mueller's report was my colleagues' dream: the smoking gun. Now we can impeach President Donald Trump. The taxpayers spent \$2.5 million so far, but that is a victory.

The folks back home heard this, one ugly thud. There was no collusion and no obstruction.

So why do my colleagues keep the investigation going? Why are they threatening subpoenas, contempt of Congress?

Well, it is because Mr. Putin hacked into our elections with a wide open door given to him by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the DCCC.

Volume I, page 38:

On April 12, 2016, the GRU, the Russians, had gained access to the DCCC computers using the credentials stolen from a DCCC employee who had been successfully spearfished the week before.

A few lines later:

Approximately 6 days after the first hack into the DCCC network on April 18, 2016, the GRU—again, the Russians—gained access to the DNC network via a virtual private network connected between the DCCC and the DNC.

Mr. Putin was not interfering in our elections to help Mr. Trump. The report shows he was motivated by the fact of most of my people back home: He wanted anybody but Mrs. Clinton.

Volume I, page 23:

Here is the main idea: Use any opportunity to criticize Hillary and the rest—except for Mr. Sanders and Mr. Trump. We support them.

It is time for my friends on the other side of the aisle to admit they left the barn door open, and Mr. Putin let those cows out to run free in our elections.

It is over. Let's move on. Join us in doing the people's work. That means issues they care about, like how about having lower unemployment? That is historical right now for Asians, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans. Let's give that a round of applause.

How about energy independence? Yes, our world is clear because of American energy.

How about helping us secure our border? Address the crisis on our border, have an immigration policy that works.

The American people want this. They are sick and tired of investigation after investigation after investigation. It is over. Let's move on.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) for 5 minutes.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Madam Speaker, on June 4, we will celebrate 100 years since Congress passed the 19th Amendment, which correctly recognized women's right to vote.

At that time, only one woman had served in Congress: Jeannette Rankin, in 1916, from Montana. But today, we have more women serving in this Congress than ever before, with 131.

In this proud moment for both women and our Nation's history, we also honor the suffragists who, more than a century ago, paved the way that allows women to take part in this democratic process and that also allows me to stand here as the first woman elected to represent Puerto Rico in Congress.

Because of our territorial status, Puerto Rico has been historically excluded from our national process, including the 19th Amendment ratification process.

Prior to becoming a U.S. territory in 1898, Puerto Rico was a Spanish colony, and people on the island advocated for political equality for women, beginning with a right to education. But it wasn't long after becoming a U.S. territory that Susan B. Anthony advocated for equal political and civil rights for men and women in the new possessions, including Puerto Rico.

This advance in civil rights was one of the first reasons why people on the island began to fight for the conversion of Puerto Rico as a State of the Union.

It was the leaders of the Republican party who first included women's vote as part of their platform, and they also presented legislation to achieve it. As the measure did not progress, our suffragists sought support from national organizations and the United States Congress, which introduced legislation extending women's right to vote in Puerto Rico.

Finally, in 1929, Puerto Rico's Legislature recognized the right to vote, but only for literate women; and in 1935, the right to vote was granted to all women.

These series of events led to the election of Maria Luisa Arcelay, who became the first woman in Puerto Rico to be elected to a government legislative body in 1932.

However, because Puerto Rico is an incorporated territory of the United States, despite being U.S. citizens since 1917, Puerto Ricans cannot vote for the U.S. President, and they are also denied voting representation in this Congress.

While this Congress is legislating to extend benefits to all women, I must raise my voice many times to advocate for these rights to be extended to territories like Puerto Rico that still lack, at a general level, full equality in relation to a State.

Statehood for Puerto Rico will happen. The question is when this Congress will do it.

The end of slavery, the end of segregation, and women's right to vote are just examples of civil rights that took a while to become the law of the land. Statehood for Puerto Rico will follow.

We are still fighting for equal pay, for equal work, for being able to walk safely without fear of sexual harassment, for eradicating gender violence, for having more access to where decisions are made, for having more representation in different fields, such as science, arts, sports, business, and economics.

As we rejoice and celebrate progress in equality for women, I ask my colleagues to be reminded that their job continues and much more remains to be done to achieve equality for all Americans.

That also includes the veterans of Puerto Rico, veterans that lack access to TRICARE Prime options on the island. Instead, only Active Duty servicemembers and their family members have access to TRICARE Prime, specifically TRICARE Prime Overseas.

This also affects the access by spouses and dependents to benefits as their family member serves our country.

Current law dictates that military retirees under the age of 65 in Puerto Rico and the territories are eligible only for TRICARE Standard.

That is the reason I filed H.R. 2171, which seeks to rectify this problem by making TRICARE Prime available to over 29,000 servicemembers in Puerto Rico, who have retired from the Armed Forces, and their dependents.

According to the report by the Congressional Task Force on Economic Growth in Puerto Rico, not having access to TRICARE Prime is one way in which Puerto Rico is treated differently under several Federal programs.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2171.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 1 minute a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend R. Perez Gatling, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

O, Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the Earth.

We give thanks for this day that You have made, and we give thanks for these courageous and committed public servants who You have called and commissioned to be the voices of the people. We are grateful for the freedoms we enjoy in this country, and we are thankful for all of the patriarchs and matriarchs and our uniformed and civilian soldiers who unselfishly sacrificed their lives as payment for this freedom.

I pray that You will endow our legislative leaders with knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and discernment. Give each leader in this Chamber a heart for the people they represent. I pray that through today's proceedings, a more perfect Union will be formed, justice will be established, domestic tranquility will be assured and ensured, and the blessings of liberty will be secured to ourselves and our posterity.

In Jesus' name, amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ESCOBAR led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows: