

Madam Speaker, Ken Tucker's tireless work over the past 32 years has made America a stronger more secure nation. I wish Ken the very best as he embarks on this next stage of life.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER AND
SERVICE OF DR. TOM TERRY

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Dr. Thomas F. Terry on his retirement after practicing for 45 years as an optometrist. All but one of those years were spent in White River Junction, Vt., not far from his place of birth in Windsor.

Dr. Tom Terry is a prime example of what another Vermonter, President Calvin Coolidge, said in Bennington in a speech on Sept. 21, 1928. During his speech, Coolidge talked about the state he loved—Vermont: “I love Vermont because of her hills and valleys, her scenery and invigorating climate, but most of all because of her indomitable people.”

Coolidge's description of Vermont and her people are as apt today as it was more than 90 years earlier. While there have been many Vermonters who fit this description, but no one more than Dr. Tom Terry of Wilder, Vt.

He was born in the Connecticut Valley. After graduation from Windsor High School, Dr. Terry graduated from Springfield College with majors in chemistry and physics. He then attended New England College of Optometry and graduated with a doctorate degree in 1975. A year later he returned to Vermont and set up a practice in White River Junction where he continued to serve his many patients, until his retirement on Dec. 30, 2020.

During his years of practice, Dr. Terry developed a major interest in primary and medical eye care, including macular degeneration and glaucoma care. Dr. Terry was also trained as a low vision specialist and worked, as such, with the Vermont Division of the Blind.

Dr. Terry became well-known for his skills, not only in Vermont, but throughout New England and in national optometric councils. He served for six years as President of the Vermont Optometric Association, as well as 17 years on the Board of Optometry for the state. For 27 years, Dr. Terry did service on various American Optometric Association committees as well as nine years as Acting Eye Clinic Chief at the Veterans Administration Hospital in White River Junction. Dr. Terry's deep interest in health care matters also led him to serve for 10 years on the Board of the Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital in nearby Lebanon, N.H.

As much as Dr. Terry enjoyed serving his many patients in Vermont and New Hampshire, he was also instrumental in helping his town and state to promote regional health, economic renewal, and prosperity. In that regard, Dr. Terry was on the Board of Directors of the Mascoma Savings Bank for 18 years, many of which as Chair of the bank's foundation directing charitable contributions to local, regional and state organizations.

My brave state of Vermont may be small, but it is large in its spirit of community and service. Madam Speaker, that is why I take great pleasure in recounting the many commendable attributes and service of my constituent, Dr. Terry for the House and the nation. It clearly demonstrates the work that one individual can do for his town, state and the nation to make it a better place to live and work.

I am pleased to congratulate Dr. Thomas Terry and to thank him for his long service on behalf of our Vermont community. He is one of our “indomitable people.”

HONORING SOUTH METRO FIRE
RESCUE CHIEF JERRY RHODES

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. CROW. Madam Speaker, it is my honor today to recognize the achievements of Jerry Rhodes who is retiring as an Assistant Fire Chief of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District in Colorado's 6th District.

Jerry Rhodes is a proud 8th generation member of the fire service who started his career on August 20, 1974 with the City of Glendale Fire Department. There he served in many critical roles including Paramedic and Assistant Chief of Fire Prevention. His career continued with the Cunningham Fire Protection District in Colorado where he worked his way up to Fire Chief.

Throughout his career, Jerry has served on countless boards and committees to further the efforts of fire and emergency medical services and has given back to the community in so many ways, including his service as adjunct instructor for community colleges and universities. His leadership and outreach with elected officials, community groups, religious institutions, and professional organizations sets the standard for future fire service organizations. Jerry's contributions to the community and fire service have been celebrated through many honorable distinctions and awards.

In 2018, Jerry was instrumental in the consolidation of the Cunningham Fire Protection District, South Metro Fire Rescue, and Littleton Fire Rescue into a single fire protection district that will improve the quality and long-term sustainability of prevention, mitigation, and emergency response services across a community of 287 square miles.

As Jerry Rhodes retires, we want to express our sincere gratitude for his dedication, hard work, leadership, and service he has provided to the citizens and members of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District and to the entire fire service for the past 46 years.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF SHARON PALMER

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to observe and mourn the passing of an

extraordinarily dedicated public servant and fierce fighter for working people, Ms. Sharon Palmer of Waterford, Connecticut. My friend Sharon passed away at her home in Connecticut on Friday, December 4th, 2020. She was 77 years old.

Sharon's life represents the best of Connecticut. A longtime educator, labor leader, and ultimately, Labor Commissioner, Sharon dedicated her life to bettering the education of our children and the circumstances in which we work. She will be remembered as an energetic force to be reckoned with, solid in her values, and strong in her accomplishments.

A lifelong learner, Sharon graduated from East Hampton High School in 1961, earned a Bachelor of Science from St. Joseph College, and a master's in Marine Science from Eastern Connecticut state in 1978. Soon after, she began a passionate teaching career at Nathan Hale-Ray High School in Moodus, Connecticut. She later taught math and science at Clark Lane Jr. High School, and even took her dedication to teaching on an international tour by joining the Department of Defense and teaching our servicemembers' children in Hanover, Germany.

One way or another, Sharon was always a force for good in Connecticut. During her time teaching in Waterford, she started planting seeds for a second career outside of the classroom—still aiming to serve and advocate for others—as treasurer and then president of her local AFT chapter. In her never-ending quest to fight for the betterment of her community, Sharon also became a fervent voice in local politics as a member of Waterford's Representative Town Meeting. Despite constantly taking on new roles throughout her life, she would continue to serve in her municipal government for over 23 years.

In 1989, Sharon grew from her role as a local chapter president and became the first vice-president of AFT-CT. She kept that position for 12 years before she took on the executive vice president position for another two, and then ultimately was elected as President of the state's second largest teacher's union in 2003. She has been one of the most notable union leaders in the state and could often be found testifying at Connecticut's state Capitol in Hartford. It was because of her high profile and her vibrant credibility within the labor community that she was appointed as former Governor Dannel Malloy's first Labor Commissioner. It was only then that she would step down from her leadership positions both in Waterford and as President of AFT-CT. Before retiring from a consecutive 58-year long career, she became a vital part of the state government, acting as a strong, critical voice for the working community and an liaison to local labor organizations.

Madam Speaker, it has been an honor to witness Sharon Palmer's service in action and especially to be her friend. Hers is a proud legacy—one that will continue the good fight for years to come—and I ask that the entire House join me in continuing her legacy by never losing sight of the fight for working families.

HONORING NANCY STERN FOR
HER RETIREMENT FROM THE
EASTERN SHORE RURAL HEALTH
SYSTEM

HON. ELAINE G. LURIA

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Nancy Stern upon her retirement from Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Inc.

For over 20 years, Nancy has led Rural Health as the center's Chief Executive Office. In her time as CEO and beyond, Nancy has exhibited extraordinary passion for the Eastern Shore community and has been a staunch advocate for Community Health Centers nationwide.

Nancy began her career as a health educator, originally working part-time as she raised her young family. She worked in health education for over a decade before taking the role of Director of Human Resources for Rural Health. After three years in this role and another two years as the Director Operations, Nancy was appointed as Rural Health's CEO where she has remained for the last 20 years.

Nancy has been a key figure in Rural Health's growth, modernization, and expansion to meet 21st century standards. Under Nancy's leadership, Rural Health added adult dental and behavior health care to better assist Eastern Shore residents. Nancy also oversaw the Eastville Community Health Center's construction as well as the expansion and replacement of the Onley and Atlantic Community Health Centers respectively. Additionally, she led Rural Health in acquiring a partnership with Kiwanis International for the Chincoteague Community Health Center. In her 20-year tenure, Rural Health's workforce expanded from 100 employees to 300 and increased its budget from \$6 million to \$29 million today.

Nancy's dedication to providing for the health and well being of the Eastern Shore community is truly inspiring. I am proud to honor and recognize her leadership and the role she has played in making our community a better place. Coastal Virginia is a better place because of her efforts.

HONORING TOM BROWN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to congratulate Thomas Brown on his retirement and thank him for his many meaningful years of service to the Sixth Congressional District of Missouri.

Tom has been a crucial member of my team in the House of Representatives for fifteen years, and his impact on Missouri's Sixth Congressional District cannot be overstated. In 2005, Tom joined my team as Chief of Staff, and has since held multiple other titles, including District Director and Senior Advisor. Tom's wealth of knowledge about Missouri and the needs of the constituents in the Sixth Congressional District made him both an effective

leader in the office and an invaluable voice for the district. In the past fifteen years, Tom has made himself known as a true force to be reckoned with, using his wide network of relationships and his unmatched experience in the region to bring real change to Missourians.

Tom's dedication to the people of Missouri is in no way limited to his time on my staff. Before joining our team, Tom served as a Clay County Commissioner, Chairman of the Missouri Lottery Commission, and the Chairman of the Board at Saint Luke's North Hospital. Tom has also served on boards for the Mid-America Regional Council, Tri-County Mental Health, and Synergy Services. His tireless efforts on behalf of Missouri will be felt long after his time on staff comes to an end.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Tom Brown for his commitment to the Northland, Missouri's Congressional Sixth District, and the entire Show Me State. I am honored to have worked with him for the past 15 years and am honored to call him, and his family, my friends and neighbors.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT
OF TOM VANKIRK

HON. CONOR LAMB

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. LAMB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Tom VanKirk, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer at Highmark Health on December 31, 2020.

Mr. VanKirk joined Highmark Inc. in March 2012 following a 41-year career at Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney. In addition to overseeing the acquisition of West Penn Allegheny Hospital System and Jefferson Hospital as well as the formation of Highmark Health in 2013 and its affiliation with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of northeast Pennsylvania in 2015, he has managed the legal affairs of the company and the legal department, and serves on the company's leadership team. He was also instrumental in the formation of Highmark Health's strategic partnerships with Johns Hopkins Medicine and Penn State Health. Mr. VanKirk also serves as the secretary of the board of directors of Highmark Inc. and Highmark Health.

Prior to joining Highmark in 2012, Mr. VanKirk served as Chairman and CEO at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney from 2003 until 2009, and Chairman until 2012, where he provided strategic leadership, client relationship development and attorney recruitment. He also managed the merger of three major law firms into Buchanan. Mr. VanKirk served as COO for 18 years from 1985 to 2003 before becoming CEO at Buchanan Ingersoll. He was a corporate takeover and antitrust trial lawyer and corporate advisor to many Fortune 1,000 companies.

As a community leader, Mr. VanKirk is involved in many civic and non-profit initiatives throughout the Pittsburgh region. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, the Pennsylvania Economy League and Chaired the Pennsylvania Business Council Board. In addition, Mr. VanKirk is a trustee of the University of Pittsburgh, the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, United Way, the Board of visitors of the PITT School of Social

Work, The Carnegie Museum, and on the board of Penn State Health.

Mr. VanKirk and his wife Bonnie have been involved in the founding of both the Hillman Cancer Center and the August Wilson Center, two vital Pittsburgh institutions. He is a graduate of two great Pennsylvania schools. Bucknell and Penn State Dickinson School of Law.

[From Penn State University Newswire]

According to a recent news article looking back on his life and contributions to our community, "When Mr. VanKirk, 1970, attended Penn State Dickinson Law five decades ago, it was a time of tremendous unrest. The civil rights movement and protests against the Vietnam War were peaking, and VanKirk felt drawn to the field of law."

Said Mr. VanKirk of this experience, "I think the law has always been a great place to make a meaningful and lasting impact on society."

On behalf of the constituents of Pennsylvania's 17th Congressional District, I would like to congratulate Mr. VanKirk on his retirement and thank him for his tireless work to enhance the quality of life of our community.

HONORING JACQUIE SULLIVAN ON
HER RETIREMENT AS
COUNCILMEMBER ON THE
BAKERSFIELD CITY COUNCIL

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Bakersfield's longest-serving City Councilmember, Jacquie Sullivan, a constituent and longtime friend. Years ago, I remember calling Jacquie to encourage her to run for City Council. Now as she prepares to retire, I am honored to recognize her legacy and thank her for 25 years of public service to the city of Bakersfield and Kern County.

Born in Bakersfield, Jacquie attended local public schools and later moved north, graduating from Tahoe Truckee High School. Soon after earning her high school diploma, she secured her real estate license and, while raising four children, entered the rental investment industry. In 1993, after the loss of her daughter Joyce, Jacquie, despite her soft-spoken nature, became one of our community's outspoken voices helping to change the stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS. She worked to educate the next generation, drive awareness of the disease, and advocated for more funding for treatments and prevention. Through her advocacy, Jacquie spoke at many Kern County school functions and helped raise thousands of dollars to provide better care for those afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

In 1995, Jacquie was elected to the Bakersfield City Council. As Councilmember for Ward Six, she worked with her colleagues to prioritize neighborhood safety, affordable family living, and promoting prosperity in her ward and across Bakersfield. During her tenure, she enhanced resident quality of life by streamlining building projects, introducing a city framework for emergency funding, and fostering economic growth opportunities for small businesses.

Jacquie's advocacy and legacy, however, is not confined just to the borders of Bakersfield,