

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER
JASON SHUPING

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a hero—Concord Police Department Officer Jason Shuping.

On the night of December 16, 2020, Officer Shuping was among the first law enforcement officers on the scene to respond to an attempted carjacking.

The suspect opened fire, striking Officer Shuping and another first responder—Officer Kaleb Robinson.

Though wounded, Officer Robinson, aged 23-years-old, stood guard over his fellow officer as other officers arrived on the scene and engaged the gunman. Robinson was rushed to the hospital and is expected to make a full recovery.

Tragically, Officer Shuping lost his life, succumbing to the gunshot wound he sustained.

Officer Shuping was just 25-years-old and had been with the Concord Police Department for 18 months.

Prior to joining the department, Officer Shuping graduated from UNC Pembroke and East Rowan High School. He was an athlete in both high school and college, as well as a North Carolina scholar graduate.

Officer Shuping not only leaves behind his loving family, but his entire Concord Police Department Family led by Chief Gary Gacek—an exceptional leader and my friend.

Today, I urge my colleagues to join me in praying for the family of fallen Officer Shuping, as well as for healing for Officer Robinson and the entire Concord Police Department community.

We will never forget the sacrifice of Officer Shuping and all those who put their lives on the line every day to keep our communities safe, as well as the sacrifice of their families.

At this time, I ask my colleagues to join me to honor the life of Officer Shuping.

HONORING PAT RUTHERFORD AS
IOWAN OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Pat Rutherford, an extraordinary seamstress and community volunteer, as our Iowan of the Week. Since March of this year, Pat has dedicated the majority of her time to sewing thousands of cloth face masks she gives away for free so Iowans can better protect themselves from COVID-19. This volunteer effort has now thoroughly become part of her daily life. Her dedication has not only in-

spired others to join in on the mission, but has also generated thousands of dollars in donations to the local food bank at a time when families are experiencing greater food insecurity.

After spotting a woman in the Atlanta airport holding a tissue to her face because she didn't have a proper mask, Pat decided no one should have to resort to such measures during a global pandemic. She returned home and stayed busy during her precautionary quarantine by sewing high-quality fabric face masks people could wash and reuse. Pat put up a public Facebook page where community members could place orders for the free masks, and hundreds of requests came in the first day. It's been nine months since then, and the orders haven't slowed.

For months at the beginning of her effort, Pat was purchasing all the necessary mask supplies and sewing equipment from her own funds and was doing her best to keep up with orders as a solo volunteer. She'd spend hours sewing in the basement each day and place completed masks on her front porch, publicly urging those without a good face covering to come to her home and take what they needed. It was an expensive and time-consuming endeavor, but Pat was determined to keep going. Demand kept up and her efforts caught the attention of many, including Verlaine Faber and Pam West, who now spend several days each week in Pat's basement helping sew and keep up with new mask orders.

As more people learned about Pat's project, neighbors began donating supplies to help out. People would scour garage sales and deliver boxes of fabric to Pat's home. Several others volunteered to help Pat, Verlaine, and Pam finish masks by stitching on the elastic ear loops and sewing pleats. And people began to leave monetary donations when they'd pick up their mask orders. Rather than accept the donations herself, Pat began donating the money to the Grimes Storehouse, the local food bank. The effort has generated somewhere between \$7,000 and \$10,000 in donations for the Storehouse, including \$900 in Fareway grocery gift cards Pat just dropped off to be included in Christmas baskets for families in need.

Pat estimates she and her small band of fellow volunteers have sewn and donated more than 5,000 masks since March. They've filled free orders and made donations to local nursing homes, health care facilities, teachers, a reservation in South Dakota, and beyond. They linked up with MaskHelpers.org, a website used to connect individuals who need masks with those who make masks, in order to expand their reach. They might be taking a short break for the holidays, but they plan to get right back at it at the start of 2021.

Pat is very humble about her efforts this year. She's lost track of exactly how many masks she and her friends have made and of the exact dollar amount she's been able to donate to the Grimes food pantry. Those numbers aren't her focus, nor are the accolades she so rightly deserves for the huge impact

she's made the last several months. All she wants to do is help whoever she can however she can during this heightened time of need. She's very grateful for all the new people she's been able to connect with through the project. This story is a beautiful example of the leadership, altruism, and community spirit Iowans possess. I can't thank Pat Rutherford enough for all she's done to help the community of Grimes, and I couldn't be happier to name her as Iowan of the Week.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF
BISHOP RANCE LEE ALLEN

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Bishop Rance Lee Allen. Bishop Allen passed unexpectedly from this life on October 31, 2020 leaving a widespread legacy.

Rance Lee Allen was born in Monroe, Michigan on November 19, 1948, the middle brother between Tom and Steve. His was born one of twelve children to Thomas and Emma Pearl. At an early age, he showed a passion for both music and preaching. By age nine he was travelling as a preacher in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. After graduating from Monroe High School, he attended Monroe County Community College. On December 1, 1970, Rance Allen married Ellen Marie Groves.

In 1978, Rance Allen was ordained as an Elder of the Church of God in Christ, taking on a position as associate pastor at Monroe's Holiness Temple. In 1985 Toledo's New Bethel Church was founded and Bishop Allen was appointed its pastor, a position he held until his death.

In 1995, Bishop Allen received an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Urban Bible Institute of Detroit, Michigan. In 2011, Bishop Allen was consecrated as Jurisdictional Prelate of the Michigan Northwest Harvest Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction by the Church of God in Christ. In 2020, Bishop Allen earned a Doctorate of Theology Degree from Kingdom University International of Orlando, Florida.

An anointed gospel singer and musician, he founded the Rance Allen Group in 1967 with his brothers Tom and Steve, with Rance as the featured singer and also playing guitar and keyboard. Together for over 50 years, only the coronavirus pandemic temporarily stopped the group's performances. The Rance Allen Group released 21 albums, won six Stellar Awards, 3 Grammy Nominations, and have several other awards to the group's credit.

Well known in the music world, Rance Allen also performed with other music artists including CeCe Winans, Kirk Franklin, Snoop Dogg and Aretha Franklin. In 2015, Bishop Allen received the highest honor of his musical career by being invited and performing at the White House in a tribute to the gospel music tradition

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

hosted by President Barack and First Lady Michelle Obama.

In 1998, The Rance Allen Group was inducted into the International Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Museum. In 2005, Rance Allen was awarded BMI's Trailblazer of Gospel Music Award. In 2009 the Black Academy of Arts and Letters named him as one of the Great Men of Gospel.

Bishop Allen wove his ministry and his music into a tapestry which shone for the glory of God. His was a life well lived, and when he completed his time on earth at age 71, his Lord called him home with the words in Matthew 25:21, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

To Bishop Allen's wife Ellen, his brothers Thomas and Steve, his congregants and countless friends, we hope the memory of this great man brings comfort as his joyous life is celebrated.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on Thursday, December 17, 2020. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: YEA on Roll Call No. 245.

KAZAKHSTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, as a co-chair of the U.S. Kazakhstan Caucus, I rise today to acknowledge Republic of Kazakhstan's Independence Day, which they celebrated on December 16. It's hard to believe that next year will mark the 30th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence. While Kazakhstan still has considerable work to do, especially with respect to human rights and the rule of law, I applaud Kazakhstan for its commitment to democracy and for continuing to take the necessary steps toward a more democratic and free society for all.

Democracy requires constant work and vigilance, and in Kazakhstan, President, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, who assumed office in 2019, has continued to focus on internal reforms which initially began under former President Nazarbayev. These reforms have focused on a variety of different areas including increasing the openness of government and the government's responsiveness to the concerns of ordinary Kazakh citizens. In that vein, Kazakhstan will hold parliamentary elections on January 10, after recently made parliamentary reforms, such as ensuring certain minority party rights within parliament.

As Kazakhstan prepares to turn thirty years old, it is important to reaffirm the United States' commitment to Kazakhstan and to the bilateral relationship between the United States and Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan remains an important ally and partner in Central Asia

and U.S. companies continue to be the largest source of direct foreign investment there. Kazakhstan, a strong partner in Afghanistan, entered into an Enhanced Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century with the United States in 2018, where the U.S. and Kazakhstan agreed to heightened cooperation on political and security issues, Afghanistan and other defense initiatives, terrorism, extremism, rule of law, and human rights.

Additionally, as the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a global public health and economic crisis this year, Kazakhstan has been a leader and valuable partner with the United States. President Tokayev, has shown leadership in global health while working directly with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, which maintains a Central Asian office in Kazakhstan.

Madam Speaker, I applaud Kazakhstan's leadership, its progress, and its commitments to further political reforms that will secure its leadership role in the international community. I am watching with interest as Kazakhstan continues to strive to meet its international commitments to freedom, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. I look forward to continuing to support Kazakhstan in its embrace of democratic standards. I wish the people of Kazakhstan a happy Independence Day and look forward to celebrating the Republic's 30th anniversary next year.

DEPENDABLE EMPLOYMENT AND LIVING IMPROVEMENTS FOR VETERANS ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and the Homeland Security Committee, and daughter-in-law of a beloved member of the Tuskegee Airmen who served our nation so heroically in World War II, I rise in strong support of the Senate Amendment to H.R. 7105, the "Johnny D. Isakson and David P. Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020," which keeps faith with what President Lincoln called our solemn obligation "to provide for them who have borne the battle, and their widow and their orphan."

I support this bipartisan omnibus legislation because it provides support for women veterans, expands benefits for homeless veterans, and ensures servicemembers and veterans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic will be cared for properly and compassionately.

Let me highlight some of the important elements of this most important legislation.

Title V of the bill incorporates H.R. 7105, the Deborah Sampson Act, which the House passed on November 12, 2019, to address inequities and barriers that women veterans face when accessing VA care and benefits.

Deborah Sampson Gannett was a Revolutionary War veteran who served in the Continental Army from 1781 to 1783 and was awarded a full military pension for her military service after years of petitioning Congress.

Specifically the legislation creates a dedicated Office of Women's Health at VA, ex-

pands reintegration and readjustment group counseling retreats for women veterans and their family members, and bolsters call center services for women veterans.

The bill eliminates barriers to care by staffing every VA health facility with a dedicated women's health primary care provider, training clinicians, and retrofitting VA facilities to enhance privacy and improve the environment of care for women veterans.

In addition, the legislation bolsters supportive services by providing access to legal services for women veterans, expanding child care for veterans receiving VA health care, and requiring the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to report on VA's efforts to support homeless or at-risk women veterans.

And importantly, the bill improves access to care and benefits for survivors of military sexual trauma (MST) by expanding MST counseling to former Guard and Reserve members, allowing VA to treat the physical health conditions of MST, and improving the claims process for MST survivors at the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Also included in the omnibus package before are several important provisions that I strongly support, including provisions directing VA to continue providing the disability benefits questionnaires online, streamlining veterans' access to earned disability benefits.

The bill lowers the age at which a surviving spouse may still receive dependency indemnity compensation benefits at the point of remarriage and increases VA's funding cap from \$5 million to \$10 million annually to better assist states, territories and tribal governments in covering the increasing costs of operating and maintaining state-run veteran cemeteries.

I am very pleased that this eliminates co-payments for Native American veterans accessing health care at VA and establishes an Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs to advise the VA Secretary on matters relating to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native American veterans.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation requires VA to review the entire scheduling process—for both in-house and non-VA care—in order to increase veterans' access to timely health care and to remove barriers to VA funding for organizations in need of critical upgrades to keep homeless veterans safe from the coronavirus.

Another important provision of the bill is the expansion of the Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses for Training Providers (VET TEC) program to help veterans and servicemembers transition to civilian life.

In this time where the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of so many Americans, this legislation ensures that servicemembers who contract COVID-19 while serving will be eligible for VA benefits and requires VA to take a more central and active role by developing a plan to address the financial exploitation of veterans.

The legislation requires VA to establish a national protocol for administering medical exams for volunteer drivers providing transportation for veterans who are unable to safely get to and from their appointments.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this legislation assists homeless veterans by improving VA's ability to award grant and per diem program funding to qualified providers of homelessness assistance services, expand HUD-VASH vouchers to veterans with other than honorable discharges, provide legal services for homeless