

I would like to offer my deepest sympathy to the Nobles family and the entire Irwin County community. May you find strength and comfort in remembering the joy Buddy brought to the lives of everyone who knew him.

SGT. PHOEBE R. ORTIZ WINS 2019
USO MARINE OF THE YEAR

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. COOK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the 2019 United Service Organization Marine of the Year, Sergeant Phoebe Ortiz.

Sergeant Ortiz was recognized as the United Service Organization Marine of the Year in December 2019. She joined the Marine Corps in September 2015. In 2016, she completed Recruit Training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina and Marine Combat Training at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. In October 2018, Sergeant Ortiz was one of the first female graduates of the elite Marine Corps Mountain Leaders Course, this course takes place at the Mountain Warfare Training Center within the 8th district. The completion of the course qualified her as an instructor for future participants within the program. She regularly organizes events for the single Marines of her command and volunteers in many community outreach initiatives.

Sergeant Ortiz conducts herself in a manner that reflects the exemplary work of our service members. She is not only an outstanding Marine, but a leader within her community and among her peers. I thank Sergeant Ortiz for her service, dedication, work ethic, professionalism and commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all Americans. Semper Fi.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN
WILLIAM SPRAGUE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the retirement of Captain William Sprague, Fire Captain of the Eastham Fire Department.

Captain Sprague began his career with the Eastham Fire Department in September of 1979 as a call firefighter. In a few short years, he would be appointed an EMT and later a full-time firefighter. Always putting the needs of the community before his own, Captain Sprague played an incredibly crucial role in keeping the citizens of Eastham safe during Hurricane Bob in 1991.

He received his degree in fire science in 1997, and by 2001, after spending 20 years with the department, he was officially promoted to Fire Captain.

Continuing to put his expertise to practice, Captain Sprague joined the Barnstable County

Technical Rescue Team in 2004, where he joined regional partners to ensure the larger community was prepared during emergencies.

Captain Sprague brought considerable positive change and advanced the importance of teamwork both within his department and throughout Cape Cod.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Captain William Sprague and his commitment to ensuring the safety of our community. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing his hard work and dedication as he celebrates his retirement.

HONORING SHERIFF THOMAS
(TOM) ALLMAN

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise with my colleague Representative MIKE THOMPSON to recognize Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman on the occasion of his retirement from a long and distinguished career in law enforcement. Thirty-four years of Sheriff Allman's career were spent with Mendocino County Sheriff's Department, where he provided the County with steadfast and effective leadership through major disasters and emergencies, while simultaneously working tirelessly to make Mendocino County a leader in mental health reform.

Born in Sylva, North Carolina, Sheriff Allman grew up between Northern California and North Carolina. After graduating from high school in 1979, he pursued a career in firefighting with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in San Bernardino County. He returned to Northern California and attended California State University, Chico and the Fire Academy at Butte College. He soon transitioned into a law enforcement career with the Fairfield Police Department in 1982, and joined the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department three years later in 1985.

After his promotion to Lieutenant in 1988, Sheriff Allman made the difficult decision to temporarily volunteer with the United States Department of State as a civilian peacekeeper following the Kosovo War. He served for 12 months as a police presence in 1999, an experience which he has credited with influencing much of his later career, and which began a long history of volunteerism that continued throughout his professional life. He volunteered to support law enforcement efforts following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and traveled with his local Rotary Club to Southern India in the wake of the 2004 tsunami to build an orphanage.

Sheriff Allman was first elected to the office of Mendocino County Sheriff in 2006, and he served continuously until his retirement in December 2019. Sheriff Allman's 13 years of service in that role have provided continuity and stability for the County through major disasters including the catastrophic wildfires in 2017 and 2018 as well as numerous other challenges faced by the County of Mendocino. He has been a tireless advocate for making broad structural improvements to mental

health resources, while prioritizing the difficult work of investigating serious crimes.

Sheriff Allman's legacy and achievements will continue to be felt in Mendocino County through numerous anti-recidivism programs he spearheaded at the County Jail, including a baking program, resume writing course, and a robust General Education Diploma (GED) program. One of his most significant achievements was the passage of a funding measure for the Mental Health Treatment Act, which has raised roughly \$10 million to date. Sheriff Allman will continue to serve on the Measure B Committee as the Sheriff's Designee.

Madam Speaker, Sheriff Tom Allman has shown throughout his long and distinguished career his dedication to public service and the people of Mendocino County. He has drawn from his personal and professional experiences to apply empathy and problem solving for the betterment of the many individuals and groups he has served over the course of his professional and volunteer life. His commitment to the issues that matter most to his community, and his ability to deliver results, are testaments to his skill and his dedication to law enforcement and public service. I hope you will join us and the community, his family, and many friends in celebrating Sheriff Allman's many accomplishments and in wishing him success and good fortune in his future endeavors.

CLARIFICATION OF CO-
SPONSORSHIP OF H.R. 550

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. YOUNG. Madam Speaker, on January 30, 2020, the House voted on H.R. 550, the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2019. This bill originally provided for a Congressional Gold Medal to be awarded to the U.S. Merchant Mariners of World War II in recognition of their service. When this bill was drafted, I was an Original Cosponsor, and proudly supported its passage in the House. Regrettably, I was forced to vote against the bill when it returned to the House. Upon its return, the bill was amended to include language I do not support that would repeal the 2002 congressional authorization for the use of military force (AUMF) in Iraq and a prohibition against the use of military force against Iran.

I am, however, proud to have cosponsored and voted for H.R. 5671, which contained the original language for the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote January 30 due to National Guard obligations. Had I been present, I would have voted "NAY" on Roll Call No. 33, and "NAY" on Roll Call No. 34.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PASSING
OF THE HONORABLE CONRAD
BLETZER

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the life of Conrad “Connie” Bletzer, who served as the Chief Justice of the Newton District Court in Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Born and raised in Brighton, Mr. Bletzer attended Saint Columbkille’s high school and later enrolled at Boston College. During the outbreak of the Korean War, he left his studies to serve his country and enlisted in the United States Army. Upon returning, Connie utilized the GI Bill to continue his studies at Boston College Law School. Graduating at the top of his class, he went on to establish his own law firm, Bletzer & Bletzer, in 1959. In the 1980’s two of his sons joined his law firm and it was there that he would develop a reputation for being a hardworking, fair, and honorable man. In 1990, he moved out of his private practice, and was appointed by then Governor Michael S. Dukakis, to serve as the Presiding Justice of the Newton District Court.

While becoming an extremely successful lawyer, Mr. Bletzer not only excelled in his work but also in his personal relationships with family and friends. A true family man, he was constantly playing hockey or baseball with his children and later his grandchildren. He greatly believed in the positive impact of competitive sports in his community, and served as president of the Brighton Central Little League and even founded the Brighton youth hockey association.

Those who knew Connie knew him as a good man, full of kindness and the desire to help others through the legal system. Mr. Bletzer passed away on the 29th of December, in the comfort of his family and friends, yet his legacy in the Newton community lives on. He is survived by his loving wife, Paula, six children, fifteen grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing his commitment to his local community and the people of Massachusetts.

HONORING N. ERIC WEISS, PH.D.
IN CELEBRATION OF HIS RE-
TIREMENT

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, N. Eric Weiss, Ph.D., a specialist in financial economics, retired from the Government and Finance Division of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) at the Library of Congress on January 3, 2020. In addition to his 15 years at CRS, Dr. Weiss also worked as an economist and econometrician at the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Office of Policy Development and Research for 12 years and the Bureau of Economic Analysis for 3 years, for a total of 30 years’ service to the American people. CRS and the Congress

have lost an exceptionally able and dedicated public servant with his departure.

A native of Massachusetts, Dr. Weiss earned a bachelor’s degree from Cornell University in economics and government; he earned a master of arts and doctorate of philosophy, both in economics, from Washington University in St. Louis. Dr. Weiss began his career teaching microeconomics to MBA and undergraduate students at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and although he left academia for federal service, he returned occasionally to teach at the Institute for Urban Studies at the University of Maryland at College Park and the Department of Finance and Real Estate at the Kogod College of Business at American University. Prior to joining CRS, Dr. Weiss also worked in the private sector, providing data management and programming services to clients such as Fannie Mae and various federal agencies.

Dr. Weiss joined CRS in September 2005 as a specialist in financial economics, initially with a concentration in small business lending. He retooled his research portfolio as the housing finance crisis of 2008 to 2009 developed, bringing his nationally-recognized expertise to the forefront as CRS supported Congress in responding to a range of housing-related policy issues, including the state of the housing and mortgage markets and the effectiveness of federal policies toward home ownership. During this period, he provided targeted analysis for Members and staff on the activities of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, government sponsored enterprises (GSEs) to provide liquidity in the mortgage market and promote homeownership for underserved groups and locations. In reports and memoranda for, and personal briefings with, Members and staff, he provided insightful analysis and detailed information on the costs, benefits, and risks of the GSEs, along with their impact on the housing and mortgage markets particularly after being placed under conservatorship.

During this period, Dr. Weiss worked closely with Congress as it drafted the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010. For legislation and oversight hearings, he briefed Members and staffers on current issues and policy options. Dr. Weiss’s published work for CRS demonstrated a detailed understanding of the complex and significant policy issues surrounding these institutions and their operations, winning him praise and achievement awards from CRS.

In addition to his primary coverage areas at CRS, Dr. Weiss (along with fellow colleague Dr. Edward “Ted” V. Murphy) authored “Congress and Financial Crises,” U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, The Evolving Congress, committee print, prepared by Congressional Research Service, 113th Cong., 2nd sess., December 2014, S. Prt. 113–30 (Washington: GPO, 2014), pp. 325–352, which provided historical documentation of Congress’ responses to financial crises. Dr. Weiss was also active in professional associations, including the American Economics Association, the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association, and Women in Housing Finance. He has been a regular participant in, and contributor to, numerous academic conferences in his fields of expertise.

Away from the office, Dr. Weiss and his wife, Sheila, are the proud parents of two adult daughters—Holly and Andrea. In addition

to having more time with family during retirement, he plans to pursue his numerous recreational, artistic, and social interests, including photography, scuba diving around the world, running, woodworking, and membership in a CRS staff book club.

On behalf of the Members of the Joint Economic Committee, I express my deep appreciation to Dr. Weiss for his many years of service to Congress and the American people. I wish him good luck and Godspeed as he completes his professional career and opens a new chapter in a life of commendable public service and rewarding personal achievement.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. C.W.

MILLER

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. C.W. Miller, who is retiring as the Assistant Chief after 56 years of dedication with Gloucester County Fire and Rescue. Mr. Miller’s compassionate service to the community is not lost on me or the great people of Virginia’s First District.

Raised in Harcum, Virginia, C.W. grew up in a tight-knit community where neighborly love was a way of life. As a motivated and selfless person, C.W. could not resist the call of duty and joined the Fire and Rescue squad in 1964. After over a decade with Gloucester County, Miller’s achievements did not go unnoticed, and was duly elected as the Assistant Chief in 1978. Since his promotion, Mr. Miller continued to ceaselessly serve and contribute to his community by responding to those in need. According to many of Miller’s close friends and colleagues, he is a warm-hearted man with a passion to serve.

Nevertheless, Mr. Miller has worked through thick and thin during his career. His steadfastness and compassion are worthy of admiration and emulation.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I ask that you rise with me in recognizing Mr. Miller’s service and wish him the best. On behalf of Virginia’s First District and myself, we thank Mr. Miller.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF RIVIERA PRES-
BYTERIAN CHURCH

HON. DONNA E. SHALALA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Ms. SHALALA. Madam Speaker, I rise in celebration of the 75th anniversary of Riviera Presbyterian Church.

Founded in 1945, Riviera Presbyterian Church provides a religious home for people of faith from the greater Miami area. As a mission-driven church, Riviera Presbyterian Church strives to help improve its community by maintaining an active outreach program. Advocating for undocumented immigrants, the LGBT community, and environmental protection, Riviera Presbyterian Church is committed to promoting equality for all through social justice.