

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.

In 75 years of service, Riviera Presbyterian has shown inspiration and love to whoever walks into the church, regardless of culture and background. Riviera Presbyterian was the first Anglo Presbyterian congregation to welcome a black man into pastoral leadership and ordained the first woman of the Presbyterian Church in South Florida. May the church continue to break barriers while assisting our beautiful community.

I'm deeply grateful to Riviera Presbyterian Church for its hard work and dedication to the Miami community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID P. ROE

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I missed votes on January 29 and January 30 due to joining U.S. Surgeon General VADM Jerome Adams while touring healthcare facilities across the First District. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 29; YEA on Roll Call No. 30; NAY on Roll Call No. 31; YEA on Roll Call No. 32; NAY on Roll Call No. 33; and NAY on Roll Call No. 34.

HONORING MR. RONALD EDWARDS

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of a prominent Civil Rights activist, leader and advocate Ronald Edwards. He truly loved Minneapolis and is deeply appreciated and treasured by the people of Minneapolis.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, during the Jim Crow segregation era, Mr. Edwards had early experiences of racial inequality growing up in the south. Mr. Edwards moved to the Twin Cities with his father, who worked on the railroad. Mr. Edwards always fought against racial inequality and injustices not only for the Black community but for everyone. During his lifetime, Mr. Edwards was the longest-serving chair of the Minneapolis Urban League, was prominent leader for the Minneapolis NAACP, led the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission, and also sat on numerous civic boards and panels. For the past ten years, Mr. Edwards co-hosted a radio program where he used his platform to hold people in power and in the community accountable.

Mr. Edwards was deeply dedicated to his family, friends, and community. He fought passionately for the Minneapolis community and used his tight connections within our neighborhoods to help those in need. I ask that we remember the spirit and passion for equality and justice that Ronald Edwards helped shape in the city of Minneapolis.

HONORING THE CAREER OF TOM NASSIF UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Tom Nassif, as his service as President and CEO of Western Growers comes to an end.

The career of Tom Nassif has been defined by strong consistent advocacy for growers of produce in the western United States. The national discourse on immigration, trade, and water policy has been distinctly shaped by his work for more than four decades.

Tom Nassif received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California State University, Los Angeles and his Juris Doctorate from California Western University, School of Law in San Diego, California.

Nassif has set himself apart by serving in a multitude of prestigious positions. He was a labor attorney for the agricultural industry, and most notably, one of the first attorneys to try a case before the Agricultural Labor Relations Board. In President Ronald Reagan's administration, he was appointed Deputy and Acting Chief of Protocol for the White House. In 1983, he was promoted to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian affairs. After two years, President Reagan appointed him to be his ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco. After his term, he moved on to work as chairman of Gulf Interstate Engineering in Houston. Next, he became managing partner of Aequitas International Consulting, an international business and political consulting company.

In February of 2002, Nassif became President and CEO of Western Growers. In 2013, he utilized his legal skills to help produce an immigration bill that passed in the Senate. Not only that, under his leadership, he assisted with the first time specialty crops received recognition in federal policy, with the passage of Specialty Crop Competitiveness Act as part of an agriculture appropriations bill. He also was a huge contributor for the specialty crop provisions in the Farm Bill. Nassif was named the Western Growers' 2019 Award of Honor in recognition of his unique approach and impact on the produce industry. This is the highest recognition of achievement in the industry.

Tom Nassif has left his mark by advocating for transparency and quality service. Nassif's affinity for protecting farms has directly resulted in laws and programs that will carry on his legacy in the industry. He has commitment to creating programs to address areas like food safety and technology that are state of the art.

Now, Nassif serves on the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee in Washington, D.C. and is one of the three national co-chairs for the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the service of Mr. Tom Nassif and wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

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 29 due to National Guard obligations. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 28; YEA on Roll Call No. 29; YEA on Roll Call No. 30; NAY on Roll Call No. 31, and YEA on Roll Call No. 32.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2020

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the tireless work of school counselors across the country and in the 38th district of California that I am honored to represent. These public servants help develop well-rounded students by guiding them through their academic, social-emotional, and career development.

Humberto Solorio, a counselor at California High School in Whittier, California, is exactly the type of champion students need. Humberto has been a counselor at the school for eighteen years and has been instrumental in the lives of the students he works with in the school and its Business Academy.

He is also a Program Lead for the school's Fresh Air Mentoring program, which is a new creative and strategic intervention program at California High School. The program provides support to at-risk male students. Humberto, along with a team of counselors and teachers, help these students by teaching healthy coping strategies, planning for life after high school, and building authentic and genuine relationships.

Counselors, like Humberto, provide so much for our students. Not only do they help with career and college choices, but they are often the ones who help students cope with serious and common challenges of growing up, including peer pressure, bullying, mental health issues, trauma, disciplinary problems, and more. Unfortunately, the average student-counselor-ratio is 442-to-1 nationally which is almost double the American School Counselor Association recommended ratio of 250-to-1. Our students deserve to have the support of school counselors, and school counselors deserve our support.

That is why I am proud to introduce a resolution to designate the week of February 3, 2020, through February 7, 2020, as National School Counseling Week. I ask that all Members join me in recognizing the extraordinary work and dedication our school counselors have done to better the lives of young students.