

INTRODUCTION OF THE MAJOR GENERAL DAVID F. WHERLEY, JR., DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD RETENTION AND COLLEGE ACCESS ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Major General David F. Wherley, Jr., District of Columbia National Guard Retention and College Access Act (NGRCA). This bill is named for General Wherley, former Commanding General of the D.C. National Guard, who, along with his wife, Ann, and seven others were tragically killed when Metro trains collided on the Red Line on June 22, 2009. This bill would permanently authorize funding for a program that provides grants for higher education to members of the D.C. National Guard, which is under the control of the federal, not the District of Columbia, government. I renamed this bill after General Wherley because he worked tirelessly with me to get funding for the program for many years, and because of his devotion to the youth of the District and to the National Guard.

The NGRCA authorizes an education incentive program, recommended by General Wherley and his successor, Major General Errol Schwartz, to stem the troublesome loss of D.C. Guard members to other units, including National Guards in surrounding states that offer such educational benefits to their Guards. I am grateful that Congress has consistently provided funds for the program at our request, most recently \$413,000 in fiscal year 2020. Permanently authorizing the program is necessary, however, to ensure that D.C. Guard members receive the same treatment and benefits as other National Guard members, particularly those in neighboring states that compete with the District for members and provide these education benefits. Today, the Guard for the nation's capital has a diminished ability to compete for regional residents if membership in the Maryland or Virginia Guards is more economically beneficial. A competitive tuition assistance program for the D.C. Guard would provide a significant and much-needed incentive to help maintain enrollment and level the field of competition. The federal government supports D.C. Guard functions and understands it should support this small benefit as well, because the appropriators have always funded the D.C. Guard program, even without authorization. However, depending on appropriations alone leaves the D.C. Guard program in a tenuous condition at odds with the tuition programs in nearby states. Because the program is not controversial, there is no reason not to permanently authorize funding for these D.C. National Guard education benefits.

I appreciate that the appropriators and ultimately Congress have not hesitated to fund the education benefits for the D.C. National Guard. This support argues strongly for permanent authorization. These small education benefits have not only encouraged high-quality recruits, but have helped the D.C. Guard to maintain the force necessary to protect the federal presence here, including the possibility of a natural disaster or terrorist attack. I am pleased to introduce this bill based on the ad-

vice of Guard personnel, who best know what is necessary.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

TRUTH ABOUT COMMUNISM

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am grateful Dr. Derek W.H. Thomas of The First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, in the weekly First Things (Monday, March 1) newsletter published a tribute for Richard Wurmbrand of Bucharest, Romania. This tribute is a reminder to all Americans of the tragic true inhumanity of totalitarian communism enforced by Soviet Socialists.

THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

THIS SATURDAY . . .

THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

This Saturday, February 29 (it is a leap year), is the anniversary of the arrest and imprisonment of Richard Wurmbrand in 1948. Born in Bucharest, Romania, in 1909, Richard was sent to Moscow as an adolescent to study Marxism. He was pursued by the Soviet secret police, and upon his return to Romania, he became a Comintern for the communist regime. At the outbreak of the second World War, he was converted to Christianity and was later ordained, first as an Anglican and then, as the war was almost over and his country occupied by the Soviet Union, a Lutheran. In 1944, he began a ministry to his Romanian countrymen and to Red Army soldiers. As the Soviet regime began to control churches, Wurmbrand began an "underground" ministry to his people. Within a few years, he denounced communism as incompatible with Christianity. He was arrested on February 29, 1948, while on his way to church.

Richard Wurmbrand passed through several penal facilities and would spend three years in solitary confinement, twelve feet below ground without light or sound (the guards put felt under their shoes). He later recounted that he maintained his sanity by sleeping by day and staying awake at night preaching out loud a sermon to himself.

Wurmbrand was released from prison in 1956 after eight and half years. Warned not to preach again, he continued to serve the underground churches and was arrested again in 1959 and sentenced to 25 years. During this second imprisonment, he was beaten and tortured, including mutilation, burning, and being locked in a freezer icebox. Later, he recounted how his feet were beaten until the flesh was exposed, and then the next day beaten until the bones were exposed.

In 1964, Norwegians paid the Communist regime \$10,000 for his release, and Wurmbrand and his wife would eventually emigrate to the United States. He died in 2001 in California.

During his time in the United States he authored almost 20 books and founded The Voice of the Martyrs, an organization that draws attention to the persecuted church worldwide.

Here is one of Wurmbrand's famous quotes: "I have seen Christians in Communist prisons with fifty pounds of chains on their feet, tortured with red-hot iron pokers, in whose throats spoonfuls of salt had been forced, being kept afterward without water, starving, whipped, suffering from cold—and praying with fervor for the Communists. This is

humanly inexplicable! It is the love of Christ, which was poured out in our hearts."

—Derek W.H. Thomas, Senior Minister.

HOPE RULE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Hope Rule for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Hope Rule is a student at Arvada West High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Hope Rule is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Hope Rule for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassador for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF JUDGE FRED A. PIERANTONI III, RECIPIENT OF THE GREATER PITTSBURGH FRIENDLY SONS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge Fred A. Pierantoni III, who will receive the Achievement Award from the Greater Pittsburgh Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. He will be honored at the group's 106th annual gathering on Tuesday, March 17, 2020.

Judge Pierantoni is a lifelong resident of the Greater Pittsburgh Area. He is a 1976 graduate of Pittsburgh Area High School and a cum laude graduate of Wilkes University with a Bachelor of Science in political science. In 1983, Judge Pierantoni received his Juris Doctorate from Temple University's School of Law in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Following law school, Judge Pierantoni was assistant district attorney in Luzerne County from 1983 to 1988. In 1992, Judge Pierantoni was elected as magisterial judge for District 11-1-5 and has spent 20 years on the bench serving the people of the Greater Pittsburgh Area.

Judge Pierantoni was elected to the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas and began his tenure on January 4, 2012. Since taking the bench, he has been assigned cases in criminal court including homicide, civil trials, and family court. Judge Pierantoni presently serves as administrative judge for the Luzerne County Juvenile Court Division and serves as supervising judge for the Luzerne County Grand Jury. He is also a zone delegate for the

Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges.

Passionate about maintaining the integrity of the legal profession and access to representation, Judge Pierantoni has volunteered his time to legal organizations and courts across the Commonwealth. He was an active member of the Pennsylvania Bar from 1983 until his election in 2012. He is also a past president of the Luzerne County Special Court Judges Association and former statewide president of the Special Court Judges Association of Pennsylvania. He previously served as chair of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Minor Court Rules Committee and was a member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Committee on Race and Gender Bias.

Judge Pierantoni is an active member of many civic organizations throughout the Greater Pittston Area and Luzerne County, such as the Lions Club. He previously served as volunteer solicitor to numerous fire companies, ambulance associations, civic and veteran associations, and youth sports leagues throughout the region.

It is an honor to join the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in recognizing Judge Fred A. Pierantoni III as the recipient of the Achievement Award. He has had a successful career serving his community and the law, and I wish him all the best on this St. Patrick's Day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, this past Monday and Tuesday, I was unavoidably detained in my congressional district and was not present for Roll Call Votes 91 and 92. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: On Roll Call 91, I would have voted AYE, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Res. 410, Encouraging reunions of divided Korean-American families; and on Roll Call 92, I would have voted AYE. On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 1771, Divided Families Reunification Act.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO ENSURE FAIR ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY TO FEDERAL JOBS FOR ALL AMERICANS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill to ensure fair access and opportunity to federal jobs for all Americans.

For close to two decades now, I and many of my colleagues have been fighting to increase diversity in the international affairs and national security sector. I have called for a diversity plan from the Director of National Intelligence, as well as for the Department of State and USAID. Last year, the House Armed Services Committee held a hearing entitled, "Diversity in Recruiting and Retention: In-

creasing Diversity in the Military—What the Military Services are Doing." And only last week, Senators held an event bringing attention to the February Report: "State Department: Additional Steps are Needed to Identify Potential Barriers to Diversity." My colleagues and I have been engaged in these efforts not because they are nice or correct, but because they are what is in the best interest for the survival of our nation.

The U.S. workforce is becoming more racially, ethnically, and otherwise diverse, with estimates that by 2050 over half of the workforce will be made up of Americans from diverse populations. Jobs across our government, whether they are in the military, intelligence, foreign service, health or education sectors, will require that we not only hire, but also retain a more diverse federal workforce to sustain the needs of our country and remain a stable democracy.

To do so, we must have a plan. My bill calls for a government-wide diversity and inclusion plan that ensures that all branches of government are engaged in multi-year strategic planning that recruits, hires, promotes, retains, and supports leadership from America's diverse talent pool in the federal workforce for the good of our country. It also calls for a review of diversity in government contracting and grantmaking, as both are often also pathways to government jobs.

Diversity and inclusion are the underpinnings of democratic societies. It is time that we enforce democratic values by ensuring all segments of our society have equal access and opportunity to contribute to a vibrant workforce that is at the heart of our democracy for the future of our nation.

HALEY SMITH

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Haley Smith for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Haley Smith is a student at Arvada K-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Haley Smith is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Haley Smith for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassador for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF NORTHERN CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Boys and Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County. This important organization is providing vital services to the children and families of this area, and it is good to recognize their work.

The Boys and Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County serves hundreds of youths a year and has six sites throughout Northern Chautauqua County. In 1994, the club was founded as a satellite program of the Jamestown Boys and Girls Club in Southern Chautauqua County. Space in the Masonic building on Central Avenue in Dunkirk was secured for the program and Jim Szwejbka became the first program director.

In 1996, the Boys and Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County was incorporated as an independent club with Lynn Dorler as the first executive director for the club. Since that time, the club has provided after school activities and a positive environment that fosters relationship building, confidence building and a focus on healthy lifestyles through a variety of programs.

The club has had a variety of homes over the years. In 2006, the club moved to former Dunkirk School Number Six on Benton Street, had transitioned to the former St. Hyacinth School on Lake Shore Drive in 2010 and has recently found a new space in the Salvation Army building on Central Avenue.

The work this organization has done in the Dunkirk community and beyond has been instrumental in the lives of so many children and their families. For the past twenty-five years, this organization has become a cornerstone in youth programming in the area and I can't wait to see what they do in the next twenty-five years.

Given the above, I ask that this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations and join me to recognize the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Boys and Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County.

RECOGNIZING TINA BROWN AS THE TEACHER OF THE YEAR FOR DISTRICT 15

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tina Brown of Kennett, Missouri, on being awarded the Teacher of the Year for District 15 from the VFW. Every year, VFW posts throughout the United States honor teachers who promote America's history, traditions and civic education. This year, the award went to a woman from Southeast Missouri who has set a profound example of patriotism and civic responsibility for future generations of Missourians.