

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. KENNY MARCHANT**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 23, 2020*

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, after consulting with physicians about traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic, I was not able to make it to Washington for this vote, but I would have voted YES on the Senate Amendment to H.R. 266. Our local small businesses are facing unprecedented circumstances due to the COVID-19 crisis, with many struggling to keep all of their employees on payroll. The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) was a solution passed unanimously by the House just a few weeks ago, providing loans that keep Americans employed across the country. It was no surprise that demand for these loans was high, but it was a surprise to see members of Congress hold up more funding for the PPP over partisan political demands. I am glad to see my colleagues on the other side of the aisle finally bring up this vital bill for a vote today to provide the relief that so many businesses and workers need. Estimates already predict that this additional funding will keep over 103,000 workers on payroll.

Unfortunately, the Speaker's push for the creation of a new select committee to conduct oversight of the response to COVID-19 is another attempt to use taxpayer dollars to fulfill partisan goals. There are already eight different mechanisms in place for the House to exercise oversight over the response to this virus, making this new one completely redundant. It is clear that this committee is intended to score political points against the President rather than improve our pandemic response. If that is the goal, it should be funded by their campaigns, not by American taxpayers. That is why I would have voted NO on the Resolution Establishing a Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis.

DOUBLE DOWN ON HEALTH TIES  
WITH ISRAEL**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 23, 2020*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, we are fortunate our alliance with Israel has never been stronger with the leadership of President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Amid international lockdowns and cancellations due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the U.S. and Israel quietly marked a major milestone in our militaries' bilateral defense relationship. For the first time ever, on March 29 U.S. and Israeli F-35s trained together in Israel in a combined air-power exercise dubbed "Enduring Lightning." Despite coronavirus-related cancellations across the globe, this exercise over Israeli skies illustrated the strength and endurance of the military cooperation between our two nations. Our militaries have worked together for years to fight the threat of terrorism and defend our way of life from those that seek to threaten it. Today, as we all face the universal threat of COVID-19, it's time we en-

sure that our cooperation with our friends in Israel relating to public health is as prioritized as our strong defense ties.

It's no surprise that defense has long been at the forefront of our bilateral cooperation with Israel. But our collaboration with Jerusalem spans all sectors of our society and our government-to-government collaboration on public health goes back decades. In 1985 when the Department of Health and Human Services signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Israeli Ministry of Health. The MOU provided for the exchange of information between the two countries, joint training and education, conferences, and collaborative projects.

But our bilateral work on public health is certainly not limited to government-to-government cooperation. The nature of cooperation between the United States and Israel, in every field, is based on the deep respect, friendship, and affection between Americans and Israelis. Just last month, the Israeli pharmaceutical company Teva announced it will donate more than six million doses of the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine sulfate to hospitals across the United States. More than ever, we can appreciate person-to-person friendships as evidenced by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) so ably led by President Betsy Berns Korn and Chief Executive Officer Howard Kohr.

It is no secret that for years Israel has been at the forefront of breakthrough scientific research and technology. Just last week, the Galilee Research Institute in Israel announced it was on the cusp of developing a vaccine for the coronavirus, with estimates that it could be ready within a few weeks and available within 90 days. The Israel-based company Pluristem developed a placenta-based cell therapy treatment that has shown a 100 percent survival rate among severely ill COVID-19 patients and has just begun treating American patients days ago. During this crisis, Israel has also developed new, more affordable methods of producing ventilators and personal protective equipment that could change the way we respond to epidemics in the future. As we move forward in the fight against COVID-19, we would be wise to double down on our health cooperation with Israel. There is no doubt that our two countries will benefit from information sharing related to the virus' spread, treatment, and containment.

I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to support deepening our health ties with the Jewish State. As Ranking Member of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I work closely with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to prioritize the U.S.-Israel relationship. I'm grateful to be the lead Republican with Chairman TED DEUTCH (D-FL) on H.R. 1837, the United States-Israel Cooperation Enhancement and Regional Security Act which among other things seeks to deepen our collaboration with Israel on health issues.

The bill calls for close collaboration with Israeli institutions on research and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, with which Israelis have, unfortunately, had a lot of experience given their current security situation. It also authorizes and funds a bilateral cooperative program with Israel for the development of health technologies, including artificial intelligence, biofeedback, and kidney care. Importantly, the bill, which passed the House of

Representatives in July of last year, also includes language support for setting up a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regional office in Israel to facilitate joint work on critical issues relating to health. Last November, I was grateful to co-lead a letter with the Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, ALCEE HASTINGS, to HHS Secretary Alex Azar underscoring that the establishment of an FDA office in Israel, "would facilitate collaboration in life-saving research and is a natural step for strengthening the special relationship between our countries."

There has never been a better time to invest in robust bilateral health cooperation between the United States and Israel. Victory against the Invisible Enemy will require close collaboration with partners across the globe, especially with true friends like Israel. It's time we deepen the ties between Washington and Jerusalem for the sake of global public health.

## SHANE COLLIN BRASHERS

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 23, 2020*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Shane Collin Brashers for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Shane Collin Brashers is a 10th grader at Mapleton Early College High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Shane Collin Brashers 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 Shane Collin Brashers for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

THANKING THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TOLEDO MEDICAL CENTER MO-  
LECULAR SPECIALISTS**HON. MARCY KAPTUR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 23, 2020*

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the tireless efforts our caregivers and healthcare professionals are exciting patriotically to combat coronavirus. Those on the frontlines are bravely caring for sick patients. Those behind the scenes are working to find a vaccine or expand testing of the virus. Today in particular, on a day when Congress has recommended to pass additional legislation to heal our nation and unlock the mystery of COVID-19, I want to recognize the seven female molecular specialists at the University of Toledo Medical Center who have been instrumental in bringing in-house testing capabilities to our city and Northwest Ohio: Heather

Byrd, Michelle Lewandowski, Nicole Ortiz, Heather Kvale, Holly Mohon, Shauna Rasor, and Ji-Youn Yeo.

Not many hospitals have a molecular department, but UPMC does. Thanks to the work of these highly trained women specialists, and the UPMC lab capabilities, COVID-19 testing was made available for our entire region and results dropped from an 8 day wait period to just 48 hours. And the lab is poised to invent even better results with the research funds Congress has passed.

These swift test results have had a priceless impact on the lives of people in our community. Quick test results help us identify sick patients, get them the care they need, and prevent further spread. Their work brings our community great pride in their accomplishments at the precious labs of UPMC. I will continue to support their efforts at UPMC as the country works to ratchet up production and make widespread testing more available.

In the difficult circumstances Americans find ourselves in, hope must not be forgotten. The rays of hope we see in our researchers and caregivers' dedication to heal and find solutions to this virus serve as a reminder of the resiliency of our community and the strength of America as a whole in an interdependent world. Today, America thanks you—the Toledo Rocket women of science—who helped bring testing to our region. To quote Abraham Lincoln—you are "the better angels of our nature."

[From the Blade, Apr. 1, 2020]

#### HOW UPMC SPECIALISTS WORKED SWIFTLY TO BRING CORONAVIRUS TESTING TO AREA

(By Brooks Sutherland)

Around the same time the United States reported its first case of coronavirus, molecular specialists at the University of Toledo Medical Center had already begun discussions to bring in-house testing capabilities to its pathology lab.

It was that foresight that paved the way for coronavirus testing capabilities at UPMC, the former Medical College of Ohio hospital, under a U.S. Food and Drug Administration Emergency Use Authorization, to sprout in just weeks.

Testing in Lucas County previously took up to eight days for results to finalize even as concerns around the global pandemic continued to heighten and the number of confirmed cases skyrocketed nationwide.

But today, the lab at UPMC can test up to 180 samples a day and returns take 48 hours or less. That quick turnaround is possible thanks to efforts from molecular specialists such as Ji-Youn Yeo and Heather Kvale and a handful of others at UPMC, according to Cynthia O'Connell, the administrative director of the medical center's pathology lab.

"We have a molecular department, and not many hospitals do," she said. "So we have a lot of specialists and they worked tirelessly to make this happen."

Understanding its impact during a health crisis, Ms. Kvale added: "We really wanted to bring this in house, so it would reduce the turnaround time for our patients."

"I'm really glad that we're able to decrease that time so that people don't sit there in limbo," she said.

But in order to bring testing capability to UPMC, the molecular diagnostics specialists had to validate a testing kit to show it was accurately providing results. Thankfully, the lab was already equipped with the correct machine and the kit before they became in short supply.

In order to validate testing, lab workers collaborated with Beaumont Health, which is

based in Royal Oak, Mich., and the Ohio Department of Health to gather known positive and negative specimens which were in turn used to test accuracy.

Ms. Yeo's expertise in molecular genetics then helped the lab modify the test to keep employees safe during the process, Ms. Kvale said. But that modification then had to be validated, she said.

"She's really brilliant," Ms. O'Connell added of Ms. Yeo.

Ms. Yeo declined to be interviewed, but in a prepared statement said members of the pathology team "worked fast together," to put all the pieces in place to bring testing to northwest Ohio.

Dr. James Willey, a UT professor who specializes in pulmonary medicine, said Ms. Yeo trained and performed her thesis in his National Institutes of Health-funded lab, where she learned lots of unique skill sets.

"I'm proud of all those guys," he said. "This is really important."

Dr. Thomas Blomquist, deputy coroner at the Lucas County Coroner's Office, helped set up the molecular diagnostics lab and hired Ms. Kvale and Ms. Yeo. He said the two "deserve a ton of credit," and said he was proud that the specialists were able to fend off any challenges that stood in the way of bringing testing to the area.

"Molecular testing is really critical for society," he said. "It allows people to have quick results so they can be quarantined as quick as possible to prevent the spread. This is going to have a huge impact."

#### HEROES IN THE WUHAN VIRUS PANDEMIC

##### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, in the midst of the national emergency being successfully faced by President Donald Trump and Vice President MIKE PENCE, there have been so many citizens stepping forward to help fellow neighbors in need. I am grateful to recognize heroes who are making a difference.

Journalist Kara Gormley Meador has initiated highlighting innovative citizens efforts to address the Wuhan Virus with former S.C. Revenue Director Burnie Maybank of the Nexsen-Pruett Law Firm. There is free streaming at [www.buzzpodcast.com](http://www.buzzpodcast.com). The first conversation was with President Lou Kennedy of Nephron Pharmaceutical where she explained retooling her operation almost overnight to respond to the virus. She has been welcomed to the WVOC Radio in the Midlands with Gary David and Christopher Thompson.

Dale Hatchell and Elizabeth Burt of Lexington have organized Support a Nurse to provide "Light of Love" care kits to nurses on the front lines. These kits are donations of nutritional and immunity products with a support message helping the Dorn Veterans Administration Hospital, Lexington and Prisma hospitals, and Department of Juvenile Justice.

Talk radio host Kevin Cohen has been relentlessly providing important updates for the Midlands of South Carolina, fulfilling his goals on The POINT promoting charities and local events.

Halsey Cook, Chief Executive Officer of Milliken & Company of Spartanburg is continuing the visionary tradition of the late Roger

Milliken. Milliken & Company of Spartanburg is developing the manufacturing process for a new nanofiber with antiviral properties.

Scott Gottlieb of the American Enterprise Institute in The Wall Street Journal (April 12) has thoughtfully presented a plan to reopen the economy for jobs with companies diagnosing coronavirus cases in the workplace. He understands healthy citizens need a healthy economy.

Ambassador Andre Haspel of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has thoughtfully forwarded encouragement to members of the Congressional Caucus of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The alliance of the Netherlands and the United States is strong and appreciated to defeat the Wuhan Virus.

General Milford Beagle, Commander of Fort Jackson, with Army Chief of Staff Major General James McConville have been pro-active to protect the lives of new recruits and the dedicated personnel at Fort Jackson. The installation trains nearly 50 percent of all Soldiers and more than 60 percent of all women entering the Army each year.

Cecil Staton, President and CEO of the Asian American Hotel Owners of America, with Vice President Chirag Shah have worked tirelessly to promote the gruesomely impacted hospitality industry. AAHOA is the largest hotel owner's association in the world with 20,000 members owning half of hotels in America.

Walgreens Drug Stores with the dedicated staff in West Columbia is appreciated for featuring "Thanks to our frontline heroes". On Saturday, first responders, law enforcement, doctors and nurses will receive 30 percent off Walgreens brands and 20 percent off other brands. Drug stores, grocery stores, convenience stores and grocery stores, truckers, and other essential enterprises have been vital services for communities.

#### SAMANTHA LIEGGI

##### HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Samantha Lieggi for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Samantha Lieggi is a 10th grader at Northglenn Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Samantha Lieggi 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 Samantha Lieggi for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.