

am proud to share in the celebration of Special Operations Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Edward Gallagher's military career and as he and his family step into the next chapter of their lives, I ask my colleagues in this chamber to join me in wishing the Gallagher family fair winds and following seas.

IN HONOR OF JAMES PURTEE,
CITY MANAGER

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, after 31 years of public service, Palmdale City Manager James "Jim" Purtee announced his retirement effective at the end of 2019. Jim began his diverse career in public service with the City of Simi Valley in 1988. He spent over 27 years working for several city departments in Simi Valley and was involved in improving access to affordable housing, ensuring continued economic development, and contributing to city planning efforts. In addition, Jim spent his free time doing community services.

In July 2012, Jim was named as the City of Simi Valley's Assistant City Manager, where he was responsible for intergovernmental relations and served as the City's public information officer. While serving as the Assistant City Manager, Jim obtained S&P rating upgrade of AAA for the City of Simi Valley. He sponsored a \$5 million citywide investment in replacing technology services and turned a \$2.4 million budget deficit to a \$2.4 million budget surplus in just three years. Jim took the lead on working with city departments to complete a biogas fueling project for the City's transit buses and implement a \$15 million energy savings and production project. During his time in public service, Jim managed a \$160 million investment portfolio and increased investment returns by 400 percent over the benchmark and earned an additional \$9.7 million on City funds over a six-year period. Jim was instrumental in securing \$780,000 in grant funding to invest in citywide energy efficiency programs and oversaw countless affordable housing programs to benefit thousands of families.

In October 2015, Jim became the City Manager for the City of Palmdale. While serving as City Manager in Palmdale, Jim amassed a number of significant achievements and successes. As City Manager for the City of Palmdale, Jim obtained an S&P rating upgrade to AA- and engaged in community partnerships, which contributed to reducing the City of Palmdale's Part 1 crime rate by over 40 percent in just 5 years. Under Jim's leadership, the City of Palmdale was named as the 44th Safest City in the US, was ranked in the top 15 percent of fiscally responsible cities in California and as a top 25 city in the U.S. to Live the American Dream.

Jim implemented initiatives to assist thousands of families in obtaining safe, decent, and affordable housing. He carried out fiscal and legislative actions that provided over \$100 million in positive fiscal impacts to communities and worked on cutting edge sustainability projects such as waste to energy, groundwater recharge, and acquisition/conversion of 18,000 Streetlights to LED.

During his career, Jim served on multiple boards governing water, transportation, medicine, and regional planning. He served on the League of California Cities Fiscal Transparency, Revenue and Tax, and City Manager Committees. Jim supported the success of Air Force Plant 42 through maintaining strong relationships with all stakeholders. Jim worked tirelessly to ensure Palmdale, California will be California's High Speed Rail connection to the Western U.S. and partnered with academic stakeholders to educate and train the next generation of aerospace employees.

Jim obtained over \$300 million in grants, tax credits, and other financial resources to invest in transportation, housing, water, energy, and quality of life improvements for the City of Palmdale. He oversaw the development of strategic plans for increasing access to public arts, encouraging economic development throughout the city, and restoring air service to Palmdale. While serving as City Manager, Jim invested in local parks, building the City of Palmdale's first dog park, developing new City parks, and improving existing parks.

Jim was honored by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the premier local government leadership and management organization, at its annual conference in Baltimore earlier this year for his significant contributions and achievements in the advancement of local government administration for 30 years.

An avid supporter of military veterans, Jim has volunteered countless hours with local veteran organizations. He is also an advocate for supporting mental health programs, especially with our local youth population, and has also served on the Board of Directors for Palmdale Regional Medical Center. Jim holds both a bachelor's and master's degrees from California State University, Northridge, and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education for senior executives in state and local government program.

Jim has been happily married for the past 33 years to Tina, whom he has known since high school, and they are the proud parents of four children: Erika, Elyssa, Ariana, and Ethan.

REGARDING THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S TARGETED KILLING OF MAJOR GENERAL QASEM SOLEIMANI, HEAD OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARD

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committees on the Judiciary and on Homeland Security, I rise to address the Trump Administration's targeted killing of Qasem Soleimani, head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard, and the impact of this decision on American national security interests and the safety of American armed forces personnel and civilians in the region and around the world.

The decision to kill Major General Qasem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, may have rid the world of a major architect of terror but leaves unanswered the critically important question of why the action was taken at this time.

In addition, we do know whether the action taken was the product of a carefully developed geopolitical strategy developed after extensive discussion within the national security apparatus of the short and longterm consequences for the security of the region and our nation and its people.

Similarly, we do not know whether it was taken in consultation and agreement with our regional and international allies; and whether there is now in place a strategy to ensure that the action taken does not lead to a greater escalation of tensions between Iran and the United States or in the worst case, another war in the Middle East placing at risk the lives and safety of millions of persons.

Qasem Soleimani appears to be the apparent mastermind behind last week's attack on the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.

Soleimani as long-time chief of the Quds Force, the elite special forces battalion of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), assisted Syrian strongman Bashar al Assad slaughter hundreds of thousands of his own people in the Syrian civil war.

Soleimani also incited the Houthis in Yemen's civil war and oversaw the brutal killing of hundreds of Iraqi protesters recently demonstrating against Iranian influence in their country.

Iran's Quds Force, under Soleimani's leadership, has long been suspected by the U.S. Government of involvement in a 2011 plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States.

According to the U.S. Department of State, Soleimani was responsible for the 608 Americans killed by Iranian proxies since the 2003 inception of the war in Iraq.

But Qasem Soleimani was more than a military leader, he was a highranking political leader, second only in power and influence to the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In fact, Soleimani was regarded as a future president of Iran.

It was foreseeable that the killing of Soleimani by American forces was likely to invite retaliation by Iran putting at risk American military and civilian personnel, as well as its allies in the region and across the globe.

That is why it was essential that the Administration have in place a sound and well-considered and meticulously developed strategy for managing disputes with Iran.

That does not appear to be the case.

There is no evidence that the Administration consulted with Congress or the Gang of 8, no evidence that it enlisted or even consulted our allies in NATO or the region, no evidence that the Administration has a working and well-functioning national security council apparatus.

This is a critical Pottery Barn failure in dealing with the Middle East for as former Secretary of State Colin Powell stated before the Iraq War, "If you break it, you bought it."

Iran Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has vowed that a "harsh retaliation is waiting" for the United States as a consequence of the action taken yesterday by the Administration.

It is imperative that the Administration have in place a strategy to counter and deescalate any Iranian response and have in place measures to protect the safety of Americans residing or travelling abroad and to protect the security of the homeland.

We must be prepared and ready because the assassination of Qasem Soleimani has the potential to be the most consequential assassination of a political leader since the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Carl

Ludwig Joseph Maria of Austria, the heir presumptive of the throne of Austria-Hungary in 1914, which set in motion the Great War.

The decision to send American men and women into harm's way is the most consequential decision the Constitution vests in the President and the Congress.

That is why the Administration must consult with and seek and secure from Congress authorization to use military force (AUMF) against Iran.

Any vote on an AUMF for engagement with Iran must be preceded by meaningful, substantive, and thoughtful dialogue and robust debate.

Members of Congress must be apprised of all facts material to the decision and have access to relevant documentation, classified and otherwise, and afforded the opportunity to meet in small groups and in secure locations with senior members of the Administration's national security team who can answer detailed and pointed questions and provide requested information.

The Constitution wisely divides the responsibility of deciding when to use military force to protect the nation and its interests between the President and the Congress, the representatives of the American people.

The war in Iraq taught this nation the importance of having accurate and reliable information when deciding whether to use military force and the painful costs in lives and treasure of acting precipitously.

We cannot and dare not repeat that mistake.

That is why it is essential that all Members of Congress have access to the relevant information and the responsible Administration officials before any vote to authorize the use of military force be scheduled.

IN HONOR OF OXFORD WINNING THE AHSAA CLASS 6A FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the Oxford High School football team for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 6A football championship.

The Yellow Jackets defeated Spanish Fort 14–13 in the championship game on December 6th played at Jordan-Hare Stadium at Auburn University. After an exciting game, the Yellow Jackets secured their victory in the final minute of the 4th quarter.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Oxford High School, the coaches, the players and all the Yellow Jacket fans on this exciting achievement. Go Yellow Jackets.

REMEMBERING LISA POWERS COOPER

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay a heartfelt tribute to Lisa Powers Cooper,

wife of my good friend and former Tennessee State Senator Jerry Cooper, who died last Friday at her home in McMinnville. As chief of the Consumer Services Division of the Tennessee Public Utilities Commission since 2009, Lisa Cooper showed her dedication to public service. As a law student over seven years, she showed her perseverance, graduating from the Nashville School of Law in 2009 while working full time. But as the inseparable wife of Jerry, she showed the kind of love and support that inspired all of us who knew them. Their marriage was bigger than the sum of its parts and showed that two really can become one. As a valued friend, Lisa was always supportive of me when I served in the state Senate and since I have been in Congress. She often offered wise counsel over the phone, but also sent her love and prayers. A graduate of Trevecca Nazarene University, Lisa worked in government relations before going into state government, all while raising a family and doting on her grandchildren. I want to express my deep condolences to Jerry; Lisa's parents, Larry Powers, Sr. and Linda Pritchett; her daughter Holly and her husband Ward Bushart of Nashville; stepdaughters and their spouses Elisa and Barry Luna, Sally and Mike Pack and Faith and Chase McGee; her grandchildren; her extended family and her many, many dear friends and colleagues. She lived a good, virtuous and remarkable life and will be missed.

RECOGNIZING CHYANNE THOMAS AS CONSTITUENT OF THE MONTH

HON. MIKE LEVIN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, this Holiday season, I am proud to recognize Chyanne Thomas, a postal worker from Vista, as my Constituent of the Month. Chyanne is a hero for two children, their families, and our entire community.

Chyanne's vigilance while on her regular delivery route resulted in the identification of two children who had been reported missing. Her quick and caring response allowed these two local children to be safely reunited with their concerned families.

When Chyanne spotted Abby, a 15-year-old with autism, she sprang into action. She used the skills she had learned in a previous job working with children with disabilities to keep Abby calm and safe until police arrived. Two weeks later, Chyanne saw a missing 4-year-old girl alone during her route and didn't hesitate to approach her and make sure she was okay until police and her parents arrived. Without Chyanne's awareness, compassion, and quick action, these two kids might still be missing.

I launched a Constituent of the Month to recognize individuals in the 49th District who have gone above and beyond to help their neighbors and support our community. I know the families of those two missing children would agree that Chyanne is well-deserving of this recognition. I am proud to recognize her as my Constituent of the Month.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ENSURING CHILD HEALTH COVERAGE COMPENSATION IN DIVORCE ACT OF 2019

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Ensuring Child Health Coverage Compensation in Divorce Act of 2019. This bill would require that when a court directs a non-custodial parent (including a stepparent) to provide health insurance to a child, the other parent can get reimbursed directly from the insurer for any out-of-pocket medical expenses for the child incurred by such parent, regardless of the source of insurance.

Typically in a divorce, one parent is court-ordered to provide health insurance for the child to prevent the child from going uninsured. However, the other parent may pay for out-of-pocket medical expenses for the child that are reimbursable by the insurer. Under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, group health insurers are required to directly reimburse a parent who pays for reimbursable out-of-pocket medical expenses when the other parent has been court-ordered to provide health insurance for the child. However, other health insurers are not required to directly reimburse the other parent.

This bill would provide the same requirements for all health insurers to ensure that the parent who pays for the out-of-pocket medical expenses is reimbursed.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MASTER SERGEANT DOUGLAS WONACOTT

HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Master Sergeant Douglas Wonacott of the U.S. Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne).

MSG Wonacott enlisted in the United States Army in 2000 and he has served with great honor and distinction in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) throughout his entire career. As a special operations flight medic with the famed Night Stalkers, MSG Wonacott provided life-saving medical treatment for scores of U.S. soldiers who were wounded in combat operations. Time and again he demonstrated peerless courage under enemy fire as he sought to provide emergency care for the wounded—even when a helicopter he was providing medical care on was shot down by enemy fire in Iraq.

MSG Wonacott served with distinction and valor in the War on Terror, with over a dozen deployments to Iraq in a decade of conflict, as well two deployments to Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom. In the course of his deployments, MSG Wonacott took part in Operation Red Dawn, a crucial mission which culminated in the capture of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.