

HONORING CAPTAIN SCOTT T. FARR'S TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS OF SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Navy Captain Scott "Topper" Farr for his twenty-eight years of faithful service to our country.

In May of 1992, CAPT Farr was commissioned as an Ensign and proceeded to Pensacola, FL for flight training. After earning his gold wings, he flew both the EA-6B Prowler and EA-18G Growler jets operationally, practicing his specialty of electronic warfare. His responsibility was protecting U.S. and coalition aircraft from the threat of surface to air missiles, as well as soldiers, Sailors, airmen and Marines on the ground from improvised explosive devices. His dedicated service through eight deployments, 3,409 flight hours and 669 carrier landings on eight different aircraft carriers was responsible for countless American and Allies' lives saved during Operations Southern Watch, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Unified Protector.

In addition to commanding Electronic Attack Squadron 140 and the Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet, his ultimate assignment was as the Director of the Navy's House Liaison Office. In this job, he both represented the Navy to most House members and oversaw the numerous congressional and staff delegation trips that we annually execute across the globe. These crucial trips are beneficial for members and staff to achieve a deeper understanding of the issues facing our Navy and its Sailors, as well as strategic issues facing our nation. It was on these CODELs that I came to know Topper for the good-natured and stalwart professional that he is.

Two events that highlight Topper's work ethic and professionalism immediately come to my mind. The first was an extremely successful bi-partisan CODEL across Australia from Perth to Alice Springs to Sydney. Topper handled all of the logistical and diplomatic tasks flawlessly in what the Australian embassy noted was the largest group of House and Senate members to visit Australia since World War II. Second was an anti-submarine focused CODEL of NATO countries. During both of these CODELs, it wasn't CAPT Farr's superb planning or execution skills that most impressed me and my colleagues. It was his ability to substantively answer questions from members on a wide range of military issues. This knowledge was no doubt based on his impressive record of service and simply stated, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Navy are better off due to his service.

As CAPT Farr embarks on a new chapter in life, it is my hope that he may recall, with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment, the outstanding contributions he has made to the United States Navy while attached to the Office of Legislative Affairs. I would like to send him, his wife Melanie, daughter Kathleen and one of a kind dog Gracie, my very best wishes for continued success in his future.

ONGOING TRANSATLANTIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight my recent efforts to engage with our allies across Europe to address the current political turmoil in Belarus and seek a way forward.

On September 23, I joined a video call of the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA), where I serve as Chairman of the Committee on Political Affairs and Security. Joining us for the discussion were the Head of the Belarusian delegation to the OSCE PA, Mr. Andrei Savinykh, and the leader of the Belarusian opposition and former presidential candidate, Ms. Svetlana Tikhonovskaya.

Ms. Tikhonovskaya shared with us the long struggle of the people of Belarus for their rights under President Alexander Lukashenko's 26-year authoritarian rule. The fraudulent presidential election on August 9, in which Lukashenko claimed he "won" with over 80 percent of the vote, led thousands of Belarusians across the country to come out into the streets. They risk physical harm and imprisonment to demand free and fair elections and the release of political prisoners. Unfortunately, these individuals have been met with brute force from the authoritarian regime. They continue to injure and detain protestors, journalists, and even bystanders on a massive scale. Instances of torture in detention have been reported, and some have been killed. Lukashenko is clearly afraid for his political future. In another desperate move, he recently held an illegal, early "inauguration" in an attempt to consolidate his illegitimate power.

I strongly condemned Lukashenko's violent repression of Belarusians and express solidarity for their desire to choose their own leadership in a democratic and transparent manner and to exercise their fundamental freedoms without fear of violent repercussions or harassment. During our meeting, I noted two particular cases that we in the United States are watching closely. U.S. citizen Vitali Shkliarov, who was in Belarus visiting family, was unjustly detained in July and languishes in a Belarusian prison since the end of July. We are concerned for his welfare and I called for his release.

I also mentioned that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Minsk-Mogilev, Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, has been denied re-entry to Belarus after a visit abroad, even though he is a citizen. He has openly criticized the government's use of violence against peaceful people, including the detention of priests and clergy, and we fear that this too is a political act on the part of Lukashenko and an infringement on religious freedom.

The future of Belarus belongs to its people, and, as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has emphasized, this path should be "free from external intervention." Indeed, my colleagues in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly understand that it is not our place to choose the leadership of Belarus, but to use the unique role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as

a representative body to foster authentic dialogue, prevent and resolve conflict, and hold each other accountable. As an OSCE participating State, Belarus has an obligation to abide by the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, including those on human rights and fundamental freedoms. I am pleased that 17 participating States of the OSCE, including the United States, have invoked the Moscow Mechanism, which will establish a mission of independent experts to look into the particularly serious threats to the fulfillment of human rights commitments in Belarus. The report that the mission issues will hopefully offer us greater insight into the situation in Belarus and recommendations for future actions.

It is a privilege, through the U.S. Helsinki Commission, to represent the United States Congress in the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE. The Parliamentary Assembly provides Members of Congress with a unique, bipartisan opportunity to work with our friends and allies to help resolve pressing global issues while promoting our shared values. Because the Parliamentary Assembly includes representatives of Belarus and our European allies, it is uniquely suited to address the human rights and security implications of the moment in Belarus.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in calling for an end to violence and mass detentions in Belarus and recognizing the importance of continued Congressional engagement with the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF BILL VERNER

HON. AUSTIN SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, today I rise in recognition of Bill Verner, Executive Vice President of the Georgia EMC. After decades of dedicated service, Bill is retiring from his position at the Georgia EMC on the 40th anniversary of beginning his career in the electric cooperative industry.

Bill began his career with Carroll EMC while working his way through college. He joined the Georgia EMC in 1984, began working in government relations in 1986, and was appointed to lead Georgia EMC's efforts in the state legislature and regulatory arena in 1996.

His strong beliefs in the cooperative's principles are evident in his years of dedicated service representing EMC's interests in the Georgia General Assembly, Congress, and state and federal agencies. Having worked with Bill personally, I have seen firsthand the level of expertise and commitment that has made him an invaluable asset to the cooperative. His hard work, leadership, and deep understanding of America's most successful public-private partnership, the electric cooperative business model, has benefitted EMC members throughout Georgia.

Bill's career is marked by his many contributions to Georgia EMC and the 41 EMCs across the state. His tenure over the past four decades with Georgia EMC makes him one of the longest-serving employees in the association's eighty-year history. In today's age, it is a rarity to find the combination of character, ability, and commitment that Bill exemplifies.

On behalf of the Eighth Congressional District of Georgia, I would like to thank Bill for his service to our state's electric cooperatives and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE CAREER OF CAROL BRICK-TURIN

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize the remarkable career of Carol Brick-Turin. After 12 years, Ms. Brick-Turin is retiring as the Executive Director of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council.

Carol originally moved to Washington, D.C. to join the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where she worked on public policy issues for more than a decade. A graduate of Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural economics, she was recruited to join the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and served as a diplomat in Brussels, Belgium in the U.S. Mission to the European Community. She was the first married female to serve as an Agricultural Attaché in the history of FAS.

Carol attended the Foreign Service Institute, completed a study program taught by faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary and attended the University of Tel-Aviv in 1973—both before and after the Yom Kippur War. Having raised her children as Zionists, she now has three grandchildren who were born in Jerusalem, in addition to her two granddaughters in Miami.

As the JCRC's Executive Director Carol has adroitly mobilized and engaged Miami's Jewish community on many levels. She has led our citizen activists in building relationships with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, key to the success of the pro-Israel movement and the national agenda supported by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. We have worked together to address a multitude of issues facing our community—from the scourge of anti-Semitism and senseless gun violence plaguing our schools and places of worship to ensuring we maintain our strong U.S.-Israel relationship.

Carol's commitment to Miami's Jewish community and the state of Israel is exemplary, and I am proud to call her my very good friend. I will miss her guidance and wisdom, but our loss is her husband Alan and her family's gain. I wish her a hearty Mazel Tov on her retirement and am grateful for her invaluable work.

HONORING THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH VIRGINIA

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the City of Falls Church, Virginia. The City of Falls Church has recently been ranked

the 3rd healthiest community in the United States in 2020 according to the U.S. News Healthiest Communities Report.

Falls Church received nearly a perfect score for measurements including population health, education, and a perfect score for local economy—the highest score for economic health in the nation.

Settled more than 300 years ago and situated less than 10 miles from the Capitol, Falls Church has had a front row seat to many of the nation's most historic moments. Tradition holds that a copy of the Declaration of Independence was read from the steps of The Falls Church, the city's namesake, in 1776.

Please join me in honoring the City of Falls Church for achieving such a monumental accomplishment.

MR. NAT O'DAY BIRTHDAY RECOGNITION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Nat O'Day, a North Texan and military veteran, as he celebrates his 90th birthday on September 27, 2020.

Nat spent 20 years of his life serving in the U.S. Army achieving the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He served overseas in South Vietnam, Korea, Japan, and Germany. Nat played a pivotal role in the modernization of our nation's military as he operated a communications system at over 52 sites across the world and tested flight equipment that is now used as today's standard. During his military service, Nat married the love of his life, Lynn, and they enjoyed over 60 years of marriage together. They raised three wonderful children, Robin O'Day Dettmer, Steve Ray O'Day, and Tim James O'Day.

Nat has dedicated his life to our nation and his community in Fort Worth, Texas. Following his retirement from the Army, Nat worked for the City of Fort Worth for over 25 years. He was a devoted volunteer, spending over 20 years and thousands of hours volunteering at the Fort Worth Symphony, the Van Cliburn Foundation, and Bass Performance Hall, where he and Lynn shared their love of music. He also volunteered every Tuesday for 20 years at the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport helping travelers navigate the airport. Nat also dedicated his time to the Cook Children's Hospital, where he was rightfully named Volunteer of the Year. Nat is committed to helping the people of 12th District of Texas, and his business cards that read "Volunteer Extraordinaire" sum up his dedication and devotion to North Texas.

I had the great honor and pleasure of having Nat as an advisor on military affairs and as the Chairman of my military academy nomination board. I could not have done it without Nat's commitment and enthusiasm. I am grateful to know and celebrate Nat O'Day. Our Nation and my district wouldn't be the same without his decades of selflessness and dedication.

On behalf of the 12th District of Texas, I offer my congratulations and best wishes to Nat on his very special birthday.

HONORING BARBARA TURK

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Barbara Duncan Turk of Radford, Virginia, who passed away on September 16, 2020 at the age of 87. She was a faithful servant of her community who worked to improve it in a variety of volunteer roles.

Barbara was a native of Reading, Pennsylvania, and a graduate of Southern Seminary in Buena Vista, Virginia. She was married to her late husband, James Turk, a Virginia state senator and U.S. District Court Judge, for 59 years until his death in 2014.

Improving Radford and helping the people who lived there was her life's work. Among the organizations she devoted her time and attention to were the Radford Women's Club, Radford Community Hospital/Carilion New River Valley (NRV) Medical Center Volunteer Program, Radford Rotary Club, and the NRV Community Chorus. Radford University benefited from her activity on the Board of Visitors, Foundation Board of Directors, Arts Society, and Athletic Association, just a few of the numerous ways she supported the university's mission. As a devout member of First Baptist Church, she sang in the choir and frequented Sunday services and Wednesday dinners. Barbara also served on her alma mater's Board of Directors and on the Board of Directors for Saint Alban's Foundation and Carilion Hospital.

Barbara's activities did not detract from her commitment to her family, including her children Ramona Gravley, James Turk, Jr. and wife Allison, Judge Robert "Bobby" Turk and wife Laura, Mary T. Prince, and D. Michael "Mick" Turk and wife Barbara; fifteen grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. I would like to extend them my condolences on the loss of this generous and service-minded woman.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CENTENNIAL OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV)

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Centennial of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) on September 25, 2020. I want to celebrate and commend DAV for reaching a momentous milestone: 100 years of virtuous and important work.

The honorable undertakings of DAV do not go unrecognized. DAV Founder Robert Marx saw a gaping hole in society that veterans continued to fall through: underfunded medical care and services. This led him to create the non-profit, empowering veterans to live with respect, dignity, and with access to the support they deserve.

Now, with over 1,000 chapters, DAV continues to make strides for veterans and their families. DAV has supported numerous veterans from giving them rides to medical appointments to assisting with benefit claims to