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FIRING OF TENNESSEE TEACHER

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I was saddened when I read this morning about an incident concerning a teacher and a school board in East Tennessee. Matthew Hawn was fired for teaching about white privilege to his largely white classes of Contemporary Issues students in Sullivan Central High School in Kingsport, Tennessee. Mr. Hawn used both historical and contemporary examples, including the recent trial of Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin for the death of George Floyd. The General Assembly of Tennessee recently outlawed teachers from teaching critical race theory or ideas that any race is “inherently privileged, racist, sexist or oppressive” and backed the law with financial penalties. This sort of legislating is a throwback to an earlier period of intolerance and fear of history and science. Our state’s reputation was stained in the 1920s by the prosecution of Dayton, Tennessee, schoolteacher John Scopes for teaching evolution. I had hoped those days were long behind us. I guess not. Confronting painful periods in our country’s history—such as slavery, segregation, the Trail of Tears, women denied voting rights—will make our students more tolerant, aware and worldly. I am deeply troubled by what has happened to Mr. Hawn and I hope decision makers will restore him to his place in the classroom where he can challenge young minds with new ideas.

HONORING MAJOR HOLLY GRAMKOW

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an essential member of my team who leveraged her military logistics experience to evacuate our Afghan allies to safety, Major Holly Gramkow.

Since 2009, Major Gramkow has been a commissioned officer in the United States Air Force. She’s a graduate of the University of Portland Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps and has over a decade of on-the-ground experience working on F-16, A-10 and C-130J airframes.

Throughout her military career, she has held positions as Fabrication Flight Commander, Aircraft Maintenance Unit Officer in Charge, and Director of Operations; as well as an Exchange Officer position with the Chilean Air Force as their Chief of Propulsion for F-16s. Major Gramkow has also served as an Aide-de-Camp and most recently as Branch Chief for Legacy Fighter Sustainment, Headquarters Air Force. She’s also the Chief Financial Officer for the Logistics Officer Association, a non-profit that supports the professional development of her fellow officers.

However, it is during her time with our office as a Defense Fellow where we’ve seen her re-

lentless commitment to others firsthand. Despite limited previous experience with the legislative branch, she has taken to the work like a natural—leading key initiatives on veterans issues, military supply chains, and the National Defense Authorization Act. Any one of these areas would take up the full bandwidth of a seasoned staffer, but she’s been able to handle the competing priorities with skill and aplomb.

Our team was immensely fortunate to have Major Gramkow on staff when we were called to action and I am beyond thankful that we were able to rely on her skill to lead our effort in evacuating vulnerable Afghans. Despite being 2,000 miles away from Washington, D.C. and nearly 8,000 miles from Kabul at times during our mission, she made a difference at a time when for so many, things looked so grim. Our team owes an immense debt of gratitude to Major Gramkow—with the grit of Rosie the Riveter and the resourcefulness of her logistics officer training, she is truly a living embodiment of the core values of the Air Force: “integrity first, service before self, excellence in all we do.”

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Major Holly Gramkow for her willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in our effort to evacuate Afghan allies from Kabul and support them in their new life. For her efforts to jump into the breach and serve around the clock as staff lead of our operation, and for marshaling the full weight of our office, actions which are in keeping with highest traditions of our military and our Nation, I submit these words—may they stand as a tribute to her dedicated service when the moment called for it most.

SUPPORT FOR HEALTH BILLS

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of seven bills that originated in the Health Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce which I have the privilege to chair. These bipartisan bills address the following: health threats to newborns including stillbirth, newborn hearing loss, and birth defects; improving cardiac care and oral health literacy; providing needed mental health support to doctors and other health care professionals; and improving diversity in the allied health workforce.

H.R. 5487, the SHINE for Autumn Act of 2021 seeks to reduce the impact of stillbirth by increasing research and data collection to address the tragedy of the 24,000 babies who are stillborn in the U.S. every year. I thank my colleagues Reps. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER, LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, MARKWAYNE MULLIN, and KATHY CASTOR for authoring this legislation.

H.R. 5561, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2021 reauthorizes programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders to address hearing loss in newborns. I thank my colleagues Reps. BRETT GUTHRIE and DORIS MATSUI for authoring this legislation.

H.R. 5551, the Improving the Health of Children Act reauthorizes the National Center on

Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. This critical center at the CDC helps advance the health of babies born with birth defects, developmental disabilities, blood disorders and other disabilities. I thank my colleagues Reps. BUDDY CARTER and LORI TRAHAN for authoring this legislation.

H.R. 1193, the Cardiovascular Advances in Research and Opportunities Legacy Act funds NIH and CDC research and public education for valvular heart disease. The bill is named in honor of Carol Leavell Barr, the wife of Rep. ANDY BARR, who died last year of sudden cardiac arrest, and I thank him for authoring this legislation.

H.R. 1667, the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act is named after Dr. Lorna Breen, an emergency department doctor who died by suicide last year. Physicians have the highest suicide rate of any profession, and this legislation provides grant funding for suicide-prevention and peer-support at healthcare facilities. It also helps ensure healthcare professionals can ask for mental health help without facing negative consequences in their careers. I thank Reps. SUSAN WILD and DAVID MCKINLEY for authoring this legislation.

H.R. 3320, the Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act of 2021 establishes a grant program to improve diversity in the physical therapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, audiology, and speech-language pathology professions. I thank Reps. BOBBY RUSH and MARKWAYNE MULLIN for authoring this legislation.

H.R. 4555, the Oral Health Literacy and Awareness Act of 2021 directs the Health Resources and Services Administration to conduct a public education campaign to improve awareness of oral health. I thank Reps. TONY CARDENAS and GUS BILIRAKIS for authoring this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to vote for these bills and I thank the members of the House Health Subcommittee and the bipartisan sponsors of each bill for their good work.

HONORING SCHALK SPIES

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor our man on the ground and a key member of the team during our operation to evacuate Afghan allies from Kabul, Mr. Schalk Spies.

Service is ingrained in Mr. Schalk’s DNA—he served as a captain in the South African National Defense Force, commanding several pathfinder and parachute Special Forces units on missions focused on border protection, surveillance and reconnaissance. Since leaving the military, he’s worked as a security and operations manager with over a decade of experience in private sector risk management for international clients. With his top-notch professionalism and attention to detail, he’s been relied upon time and time again to oversee all aspects of operations and logistics for U.S. government and non-governmental organization stakeholders.

When we needed someone to make sure our MSU-affiliated Afghan allies got to the

right place at the right time, we turned to Mr. Spies to keep them safe. His deep knowledge as a combat rescue medic and survival expert was key to our success—and no doubt reassured frightened men, women, and children as they traveled to the airport to escape the threats to their life. Despite a 25-hour harrowing journey as our buses made their way through Taliban checkpoints and stray gunfire, we didn't lose a single member of our group. Mr. Schalk's dedicated work as their security detail saved lives and for that I am immensely grateful.

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Schalk Spies for his willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in our effort to evacuate Afghan allies from Kabul and support them in their new life. For his assistance in providing security on the ground for vulnerable individuals in Kabul as they attempted to make it through the airport gates and for his actions that kept them safe in their hour of greatest need, I submit these words—may they stand as a tribute to his dedicated service when the moment called for it most.

TRIBUTE TO THE RT. REV. DR.
ALPHONZA AND MRS. HESTER
GADSDEN

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to two people who have dedicated their lives to their church and their community. Bishop Ordinary, Rt. Rev. Dr. Alphonza Gadsden, Sr. and Mrs. Hester Gadsden are retiring after a lifetime of service to the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Bishop Gadsden, a native of St. Stephen, South Carolina, is the son of the late Silas and Leola Gadsden. An honors graduate of Russellville High School, he valued education and earned both a bachelor's degree from Limestone University in Gaffney, South Carolina and a Doctor of Ministry from Erskine University in Due West, South Carolina. Bishop Gadsden went on to receive his Doctor of Divinity from the Commission on Theological Education of the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.

Bishop Gadsden served his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War, reaching the rank of Sergeant and receiving numerous military medals and honors. Bishop Gadsden also served his country with a historic 39-year career in the United States Postal Service: He retired from the Postal Service as the first African American Postmaster in the history of Kingstree, South Carolina.

Mrs. Gadsden is a native of Hemingway, South Carolina and is the daughter of the late Isaac Daniel and Sallie Elizabeth Brown. She graduated from Hemingway High School the year South Carolina public schools desegregated and later earned a bachelor's degree from Limestone University. Following her calling to work with young people, Mrs. Gadsden received an Education Certification from Coastal Carolina University and a Master of Education from Charleston Southern University. Additionally, she pursued a Master of Divinity from Cummins Theological Memorial Seminary in Summerville. Mrs. Gadsden re-

tired as Principal of Kingstree Magnet Middle School in the Williamsburg County School District after 36 years as an educator.

The Gadsdens were both raised in the Christian faith. Bishop Gadsden grew up in the Reformed Episcopal Church, and Mrs. Gadsden was baptized in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Throughout their adult lives, they followed Bishop Gadsden's service in the Reformed Episcopal Church's Diocese of the Southeast.

Bishop Gadsden began his ministry as Vicar and Rector of Liberty RE Church in James-town, South Carolina where he served for 17 years. During his tenure, spiritual advancement and membership increased significantly and the renovations improved the sanctuary and church building.

As a minister in the Diocese of the Southeast, Bishop Gadsden was elected to the Standing Committee of the Diocese, where he served for several years and was later elected to serve as President. As the President of the Standing Committee, he led the Diocese for more than a year after the death of the late Rt. Rev. James C. West and was subsequently elected and consecrated Bishop in the Reformed Episcopal Church on November 17, 2007.

Bishop Gadsden served the Diocese for more than 14 years. Under his leadership, the Diocese added eight Clergy members, reformed its means of financial support, refurbished all its properties, eliminated its debts, and added two additional parishes.

Bishop Gadsden served the National Reformed Episcopal Church in various capacities. As a Clergyman, he was elected to the General Council of the Church and served on the General Committee as a Bishop of the Church. He also served as the Vice Chairman of the General Council until his retirement. On the Ecumenical level, Bishop Gadsden was one of the original organizers and signatories of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) at its inception in 2009. Currently, he serves as Co-Chairman of the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).

When her husband served as pastor/rector, Mrs. Gadsden served as Sunday school teacher, a choir member, and was instrumental in physical improvements at Liberty RE Church. During Bishop Gadsden's tenure as Bishop, Mrs. Gadsden served on the diocesan level as treasurer of the Sunday School Convention, a member of the Missionary Society, chairperson of the Committee on Women's Work, and president of the Ministers' Wives and Widows Alliance. In the National Reformed Episcopal Church, she served on the Doctrine and Worship Committee and on the Committee on Women's Ministry.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to join me in commending Bishop and Mrs. Alphonza and Hester Gadsden for their years of service to the Reformed Episcopal Church and to the community of Williamsburg County in South Carolina. They have fulfilled the biblical directive found in the Book of Micah, "to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

HONORING RICHARD MAC NAMEE

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a member of our team who was instrumental in the safe evacuation of Afghan allies and partners alike, Mr. Richard Mac Namee.

Service is ingrained in Mr. Mac Namee's DNA—as a British Army officer, his service included the Household Division's Scots Guards as well as being an operator and commander in the United Kingdom's Special Forces. He's been deployed to numerous locations around the world, including extended operational tours of duty in Germany, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East during the Operation Desert Storm.

From 2009 to 2011, Mr. Mac Namee was recalled to military service during the U.S. surge in Afghanistan. While the details of his actions as part of a Special Operations Task Force remain classified, they were conducted in extremely hostile environments and were considered pivotal to the success of the campaign being conducted by U.S. and NATO forces. For his command of operations in the interests of national, security, including being seconded to the U.K.'s Security Service (MI5), he was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service.

After retiring from the military, Mr. Mac Namee was appointed as an associate professor at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. His expertise in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, intelligence operations, covert operations, nuclear security and cybersecurity led him to teach graduate classes to aspiring national security professionals.

During our operation to evacuate vulnerable Afghans, Mr. Mac Namee's skills to coordinate the logistics of a caravan into the airport and to help run a second caravan of buses was instrumental to our success. When we were in the thick of it, we relied on his expertise and his determination, and only because of both were we able to prevent our Afghan allies—and the lives of so many others—from being lost.

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Richard Mac Namee for his willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in our effort to evacuate Afghan allies from Kabul and support them in their new life. For his grit and determination to get the caravan of buses set up and going and for his relentless commitment to the mission until it was successfully completed, I submit these words—may they stand as a tribute to his dedicated service when the moment called for it most.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose