rights of their citizens are observed, and I know that leaders like Mr. Crafts in Huntingdon take that responsibility seriously.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank Mr. Crafts for his leadership and service to Huntingdon Borough and congratulate him on being appointed to this commission.

## HONORING TECHNICAL SERGEANT PATRICIA SALAZAR

### HON. DEBRA A. HAALAND

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Ms. HAALAND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Technical Sergeant Patricia Salazar, who retired from the New Mexico Air National Guard on December 2, 2018 as a Master Sergeant after 25 years of distinguished service. Throughout her accomplished career, Technical Sergeant Salazar played many valuable roles in defense of our state and our nation. A native of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Technical Sergeant Salazar graduated from St. Michael's High School in 1980. She received an athletic scholarship from the College of Santa Fe and graduated in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminology. She went on to receive a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration from California State University, Long Beach in 1986. After completing her graduate degree, Technical Sergeant Salazar returned to her home state and attended New Mexico State Police Training Academy. She then enlisted in the United States Air Force and completed her training in 1993.

Technical Sergeant Salazar began her tenure with the New Mexico Air National Guard's 150th Security Forces Squadron at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, she helped develop and initiate emergency evacuation plans for senior Pentagon leadership. In 2003, she transitioned to the New Mexico Army National Guard's 1209th Medical Detachment. From 2009 to 2011, Technical Sergeant Salazar was stationed in Kosovo and supervised a team of field medics during deployment and field operations. In 2012, she returned to Kirtland to serve with the New Mexico Air National Guard's 150th Special Operations Wing.

My predecessor, Representative Lujan Grisham, had the pleasure of meeting Technical Sergeant Salazar in 2017 when she worked with the Air Force to ensure that her father, Staff Sergeant Joe Salazar, received the medals he earned while serving our nation in World War II. He served with the 497th Bombardment Group of the Army Air Forces from 1942 to 1945, earning several honors including a Bronze Star. Mr. Salazar was also a role model for his daughter when she enlisted and during her service overseas.

Madam Speaker, I want to salute Technical Sergeant Patricia Salazar for her 25 years of service to New Mexico and the United States. It is hard-working, service-minded individuals like her who continue to make our state and our nation so great. I wish her the best of luck.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR TRANSATLANTIC ENGAGEMENT (LITE) ACT

### HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Leadership Institute for Transatlantic Engagement (LITE) Act—a bill that will create an institute to assist in strengthening ties with our allies, protect democratic institutions, and support inclusive and visionary leadership on both sides of the Atlantic.

In my capacity as Chair and in the leadership of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the U.S. Helsinki Commission, for over a decade, I have led hearings and other initiatives on international election observation, good governance, and democratic backsliding as part of our continued commitment to the underlying principles of the Helsinki Final Act adopted by the 57 North American, European, and Eurasian countries that make up the region of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Last Congress these activities included a hearing series entitled, ''Human Rights at Home'', hosting young OSCE parliamentarians in the U.S. Congress to discuss how we can strengthen their political inclusion to advance peace and security efforts, and commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Transatlantic Minority Political Leadership Conference and Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network that have been pivotal in strengthening inclusive and strategic international relations over the past decade.

These activities have identified numerous challenges in western leadership and countries—including my own—that are putting our democracies and the transatlantic partnership at risk. For instance, a 2020 Pew Research study found that in 11 of the 57 countries that make up the region of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), approximately half of those surveyed are dissatisfied with the way democracy in their countries is functioning with high rates of dissatisfaction in Italy, Greece, and the United States. Internal domestic challenges including economic decline, the rise of antiestablishment political parties, the weakening of the rule of law, increased migration, and heightened security concerns are only some of the sources of dissatisfaction. Continuing racial and other disparities in wealth, health, employment, education, justice, and other sectors have also led citizens and others to question whether democracy delivers.

To renew confidence in the shared values that underpin Western democracies and the transatlantic partnership, we need to bolster initiatives that restore faith in democratic institutions. This includes identifying and strengthening the roles leaders can play in ensuring laws are equitable, transparent, and enforced; elections are free and fair; and that rights and protections are equally extended to all in their constituencies. And our efforts must include those that have long been excluded from fully participating in our society.

As such, the LITE Act establishes an institute to assist Western countries in living up to democratic ideals and restoring faith in democracy, by equipping transatlantic policymakers with legislative, communications, conflict resolution and other leadership tools to strengthen democratic institutions in their societies and the transatlantic relationship. Given demographic change on both sides of the Atlantic, LITE will cultivate inclusive and intergenerational solutions to current challenges with the goal of empowering diverse individuals across generations with the knowledge, tools, opportunity, and access to fully participate in their democracies. In addition, LITE will support strategies that reunify communities by assisting leaders in building resilience against the exploitation of community grievances that can lead to dangerous divisions in our societies.

The LITE Act therefore complements and provides an essential tool for executing President Biden's Executive Orders on racial equity and addressing discrimination and plans to reengage with our European allies and hold a Democracy Summit.

I hope you will join me in supporting LITE to strengthen our democratic future and the transatlantic partnership.

## HONORING MELANIE RHINEHART VAN TASSELL

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my Chief of Staff, Melanie Rhinehart Van Tassell, for a decade of service to me and to the people of California's Fifth Congressional District.

Born in Santa Cruz and raised in Antioch, Melanie attended high school and college in the East Bay, graduating in 1996 with dual degrees in Political Science and Business from the University of California, Berkeley. She went to work in the litigation consulting industry until 2001, when she left to earn a Master's in Business Administration at New York University's Stern School of Business. Upon graduation, she moved to Washington, D.C. to use her intellect for public service.

Melanie began her career on Capitol Hill as a part-time intern in Congress before being hired as a legislative assistant to Congressman Earl Pomeroy in March of 2004. In just three short years, she took over as his legislative director, overseeing the congressman's policy agenda. After the 2010 midterm elections, I hired her to manage my legislative team at the strong recommendation of Congressman Pomeroy. Within months, she was promoted to Chief of Staff, becoming possibly the kindest, most genuine person to ever serve in such a position.

In my office, Melanie has proven herself to be an effective, charismatic leader and a skilled political operative. Handling issues of the utmost importance to our district, she has taken on a portfolio that spans natural disasters to the Wine Caucus. All the while, she has used her unbelievably positive, infectious personality to make everyone she interacts with feel special.

Despite the long hours involved with leading a congressional office, Melanie carves out quality time to spend with her husband Steven

and their young son Shane, whom she has ingrained with a deep appreciation for two of her favorite things—Disney and stuffed animals. Volunteering as Silent Auction Chair for her son's preschool in Alexandria, she showcased the same tenacity that serves her so well as Chief of Staff. Melanie raised over $20,000 for two consecutive school years, blowing out any record in the school's history.

Madam Speaker, my staff, myself, and the people of our district are deeply grateful for Melanie Rhinehart Van Tassell's expert guidance over these last 10 years. She personifies service, generosity, and leadership, and I am especially proud and honored to have her as my Chief of Staff.

## CARL CERVENY

### HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carl Cerveny of Wheat Ridge, Colorado who passed away on January 27, 2021.

Carl Albert Cerveny was born on October 11, 1929. He attended Columbine Elementary School, Smiley Middle School and graduated from East High in 1947. He then enrolled at the University of Colorado as a second-generation CU student in the business school and graduated with a degree in marketing in 1951.

In 1957, Carl helped to found the Wheat Ridge Optimist Club. Being a founding member was no coincidence, with family and friends frequently describing Carl as one of the most optimistic people they knew. He ran their annual Optimist Pancake Supper for 60 years and served as president of the club twice. In 2010, the Club established the Carl Cerveny Scholarship Fund for graduates of Wheat Ridge High School.

Carl was known and admired for his passion for community service and his dedication to the Wheat Ridge community. He played an active role in enforcing the special election provision of the TABOR amendment in the city. Carl served on the board of the Westridge Sanitation District for 10 years, also serving as its president, and also served on the Planning Commission of Wheat Ridge for 10 years. In 1997, he walked the entire length of Wheat Ridge with his wife, Gretchen, when she ran and was elected the Mayor of Wheat Ridge.

Carl had a separate career running the Scotchman Restaurant in Wyoming. After the closure of the restaurant in 1977, Carl began his second career in real estate. After earning a Broker Certification from the University of Colorado and working for several agencies, Carl owned/operated Carl Cerveny Realty until he retired in 1999. Carl served on the Legislative Committee of the Colorado Association of Realtors and was honored with the Political Service Award by the Jefferson County Association of Realtors in 1991.

Carl was a devoted husband and a loving father and grandfather. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Gretchen, along with their three children and families: daughter Mara Marks, husband Stephen and their son Colby; daughter Carla Rail, husband Anton and their son Jacob, daughter Martha, and son Nathan with his wife Emily; son Chris Cerveny, wife Lorie Chandler and their sons Chandler and Chase. I appreciate and thank him for his lifetime of service to our community.

## IN RECOGNITION OF RAY GHANER

### HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate Ray Ghaner on his appointment to Huntingdon Borough's newly-formed human relations commission.

The goal of the commission is to ensure equal access to employment, housing, and other public services to all people, regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, and other protected categories. Local governments have a responsibility to ensure the constitutional and legal rights of their citizens are observed, and I know that leaders like Mr. Ghaner in Huntingdon take that responsibility seriously.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank Mr. Ghaner for his leadership and service to Huntingdon Borough and congratulate him on being appointed to this commission.

## CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF WORLD WAR II VETERAN, MR. DAVID MCLINTON GREEN

### HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th birthday of Warren, Arkansas native, Mr. David Mclinton Green. Born on February 13, 1921, Mr. Green has lived a life of hard work, perseverance, and service to God and country.

Leaming the value of a work ethic at a young age, his first job was at the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company in Warren. After being drafted into the Army at age 22, Mr. Green served for three years alongside thousands of young men during World War II. This service continued throughout his near 40-year career at local mills and Potlatch Deltic. He and his wife, Lillie Mae Feaster Green, had 7 children, and over their 66 years of marriage, they watched their family grow to include 18 grandchildren, 37 great-grandchildren, and 7 great-great grandchildren.

I take this time today to honor the life of service exemplified by Mr. Green and his family. In his 100th year, he continues to represent the very best of our nation's greatest generation, and I thank him for his significant impact upon the advance of freedom and the American Dream.

## FEBRUARY VETERAN OF THE MONTH, COL. WEYDAN FLAX, USMC (RET)

### HON. KEVIN HERN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. HERN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the First District of Oklahoma's February Veteran of the Month, Col. Weydan Flax, USMC (Ret).

An artillery and communications officer in the United States Marine Corps, Col. Weydan Flax honorably served our nation for 30 years. He served in Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan.

After his retirement, he has faithfully served his fellow veterans and community through his volunteer work with the VFW, and Marine Corps League. In addition to volunteering with veteran organizations, Flax is an active board member for The Center for Individuals with Physical Disabilities.

He answered the call to defend freedom across the globe and sacrificed whatever was necessary in the name of that noble cause. It is my honor to recognize Col. Flax as the First Congressional District of Oklahoma's February Veteran of the Month.

## HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF CATHERINE ''CATHY'' WAGNER OF BURLINGTON

### HON. BRYAN STEIL

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 18, 2021*

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Catherine ''Cathy'' Wagner of Burlington. Cathy was born and raised in Southeast Wisconsin and dedicated her career to serving our Racine County community. Growing up on the family farm, Cathy developed strong values and a hard work ethic that would remain with her throughout her life. Cathy graduated from Burlington High School and later joined the ranks of Rochester Volunteer Fire Company and enrolled at Gateway Technical College to study firefighting and police work.

Cathy Wagner was a dedicated public servant. She served a combined 31 years for the Rochester and Burlington Town Fire Departments. She was a firefighter, an EMT, and became Assistant Chief of the Rochester Volunteer Fire Company. Cathy instilled this passion to service in her two children, who are involved in the Rochester Fire Company.

When her son was born with spina bifida, Cathy enrolled in nursing school to learn how she could better care for him and would go on to obtain a master's degree in nursing. For years, she worked as a registered nurse in hospital rooms where she was able to follow her passion of caring for others.

Cathy passed away on February 2, 2021. She is remembered by her family, colleagues, and friends for her generosity, empathy, and service. Cathy was a valued member of our community and inspiration to many. She is remembered by colleagues at the Rochester Fire Company or being ''the heart and soul'' of the department.