

the new challenges, and strengthening the contacts between the two communities as conducive to reunification, in a way agreed to between the United States and Cyprus.

The last UN-led attempt, which took place in Crans-Montana in 2017, aimed to achieve a just and viable solution to the near 47-year division of the Republic of Cyprus, ended without reaching an agreement because of Turkish intransigence. Instead of helping to provide stability by promoting a just settlement supported by both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, Turkey continued to insist on antiquated and obstructive stances, such as its insistence to maintain the Treaty of Guarantee with a right of future unilateral Turkish military intervention.

More recently, during the latest 5+1 informal meeting in Geneva at the end of April 2021, aiming to assess whether there was sufficient common ground for the resumption of the negotiations, Turkey fundamentally changed its official position on the form of settlement of the Cyprus problem, insisting on a "two-state-solution" to solidify its occupation of the island, contrary to UN Security Council resolutions and the stated position of the United States government.

Furthermore, Turkey hinders the humanitarian work of the Committee on Missing Persons (a previous recipient of USAID support) by denying access to areas under its occupation, including Turkish military zones, in order to excavate for the remains of 996 Cypriots still missing (including four U.S. citizens) following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

Congress should call on Ankara to constructively support the reunification efforts, in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolutions calling for a bizonal, bicomunal federation, as well as for a solution that embodies the full respect of the principles and laws of the European Union, of which Cyprus is a member state. The new state of affairs ought to safeguard that a reunified Cyprus would have a single international legal personality, a single sovereignty and a single citizenship. Finally, AHI welcomed Secretary of State Antony Blinken's testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on March 10, 2021, where he stated "American diplomacy will be fully engaged" on the issue of a Cyprus settlement.

AHI is also concerned with energy security. AHI contends the U.S. must continue to support the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus to explore and develop the resources within its EEZ free of any third-party interference and to underscore the importance of avoiding any actions that escalate tension. As mentioned, Turkey's threats in Cyprus' EEZ endanger U.S. companies. In addition, Turkey's illegal actions in Cyprus' EEZ raise tensions and security concerns, hindering any real chance for the resumption of settlement talks.

International Military Education & Training (IMET)—Greece and Cyprus. AHI recommends FY2022 funding for Greece's IMET program at \$1.5 million and the Republic of Cyprus's IMET program at \$500,000. The recommended funding levels are in line with the authorization of appropriations passed in The Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act. For Greece, the country experienced 11 fiscal years (FY2006–FY2017) of a steady decline of its IMET funding levels. It resulted in the drastic decrease in the number of Greek military students participating in the program. An investment of \$1.5 million in FY22 will help address that 11-year decline in funding, but more investment is needed to make up for "lost time." For the Republic of Cyprus, which received its first IMET program funding in FY21, it is

critical to continue this investment in FY22. It will be the next step in a series of positive developments since the Statement of Intent that the U.S. and Republic of Cyprus signed in November 2018. Since then, Cyprus has assigned a defense attaché to the Embassy in Washington, the Cyprus Center for Land, Open-Seas, and Port Security (CYCLOPS), an innovative security site that has been partially funded by the U.S., is scheduled to begin operations in January 2022; and the U.S. implemented a partial lifting of an arms prohibition on Cyprus. The U.S. must fully and permanently lift its arms prohibition on Cyprus and remove Cyprus from the list of countries to which arms sales are prohibited under International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and calls for appropriations language to direct this of the U.S. Department of State.

The IMET program advances the professional military education of the Greek and Cypriot Armed Forces. It enhances interoperability with U.S. forces, and in Greece's case, NATO forces. Through the training of Greek and Cypriot military and noncommissioned officers in a multitude of professional military education and technical courses in the U.S., IMET offers strong U.S.-Greece and U.S.-Republic of Cyprus mil-to-mil relations. It is an effective and wise investment toward a key component of U.S. security assistance. It also helps the U.S. because it contributes toward the strengthening of U.S. security interests in an important part of the world by training and promoting the professionalization of the Greek and Cypriot Armed Forces.

Thank you for the opportunity to present them in our written testimony to the House.

IN HONOR OF COLONEL RALPH
PUCKETT, JR., USA (RET.)

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2021

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my personal congratulations to an extraordinary man, leader, soldier, veteran, and true national treasure, Colonel Ralph Puckett, Jr. USA (ret.). On Friday, May 21, 2021, Colonel Puckett was awarded the Medal of Honor, our Nation's most prestigious military award, by President Joseph R. Biden for his valiant and commendable service to his nation. A dinner congratulating him on this momentous achievement will be held at The National Infantry Museum in Columbus, Georgia on Friday, June 18, 2021 at 6pm.

Before receiving this momentous honor, the Tifton, Georgia native had already established an impressive career in the U.S. military. Colonel Ralph Puckett, Jr. graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1949. Assigned as an Infantry Lieutenant to occupation duty in Japan, he volunteered for the Eighth U.S. Army Ranger Company when the Korean War began. On November 25, 1950, the then-First Lieutenant began a multiday operation with the Eighth Army Ranger Company, a company of 51 U.S. and nine South Korean soldiers, against a plethora of Chinese troops on Hill 205. During the initial daylight assault, Colonel Puckett exposed himself to enemy fire, rallying pinned down U.S. troops to advance and take the hill from its defenders. In the following hours, temperatures dropped, and the Chinese attempted to retake the hill

and Col. Puckett radioed in an artillery strike to stop the enemy's advance. Over the course of six brutal enemy attacks, Colonel Puckett incurred severe wounds on his left shoulder, feet, thighs, and buttocks. Although severely injured, he was still able to command his company and call on artillery to avert enemy attacks, before being carried to safety by two of his troops.

Colonel Puckett was originally awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions at Hill 205, but John Lock, a retired U.S. Army officer, and assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy, discovered Colonel Puckett's story and believed it met the criteria to be awarded our nation's most prestigious military award, the Medal of Honor. In 2003, Mr. Lock began the strenuous process to have Colonel Puckett's initial award upgraded to the Medal of Honor. After being met with unforeseen opposition, Lock submitted a petition for an upgrade to the Army Award Corrections Board. In 2020, the petition for Colonel Puckett was approved, and on Friday, May 21, 2021, Colonel Puckett was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Joseph R. Biden for his valiant and commendable service to his Nation.

During his 22-year career, Colonel Puckett received several illustrious awards and commendations for his outstanding leadership and heroic actions in the line of duty and on behalf of his fellow servicemen. To date, he has received the Distinguished Service Cross twice, along with two Silver Stars for valor, two Bronze Star Medals, and five Purple Hearts. Similarly, in 1992, he became one of the first people to be inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame.

Former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm once said that "Service is the rent that we pay for the space that we occupy here on this earth." As one of our nation's most decorated military heroes, Colonel Puckett has paid his rent many times over and continued to give a prodigious amount of love and service back to his community following his military service. As a retiree, Colonel Puckett has remained actively involved with military affairs, including as a volunteer with the Ranger Brigade as well as serving as an executive with Outward Bound, a nonprofit educational organization that exposes students, especially those from cities, to wilderness settings.

Colonel Puckett has accomplished many things in his life, but none of these would have been possible without the grace of God, and the enduring love and support of his wife, Jean; and their children, Martha and Thomas.

Madam Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 730,000 residents of Georgia's Second Congressional District, in recognizing and commending Colonel Ralph Puckett, Jr. USA (ret.) on receiving the prestigious Medal of Honor and his lifetime of service to his community and his nation.

REMEMBERING REVEREND
DOCTOR MARCUS GARVEY WOOD

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2021

Mr. MFUME. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to commemorate the life of a gentle

Reverend Wood, who I knew as “my mother’s favorite cousin,” was one of seven children born to Frank Wood, a hardworking carpenter born into slavery, and Julia Wood, a dedicated and giving homemaker. They lived modestly on a family farm in Gloucester, Virginia. With nothing more than 25 cents and a commitment to serve, Reverend Wood entered adulthood at the age of 17. It did not take him long to begin his spiritual journey. He preached his first sermon as a senior in high school and shortly thereafter, became licensed by the church to preach in 1937. By the Grace of God, Dr. Wood was ordained as a Baptist minister only 3 years later.

Reverend Wood devoted most of his life to serving the community around him. An inspiring leader, he was pivotal in community service and played a key role in the 1960’s Civil Rights Movement in Baltimore, marching alongside his noteworthy former classmate and lifelong friend, Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr.

Reverend Wood and I share the same undergraduate alma mater, Morgan State University. By the end of his academic journey, Reverend Wood had obtained two bachelor’s degrees, a master’s degree in divinity, and was bestowed the high honor of receiving a “Distinguished Alumni Award” from Crozer Theological Seminary. He was the last surviving member of his class at Crozer Theological Seminary—where he met Dr. King—to begin what was to be a personal connection to both Dr. King and his legacy.

Reverend Wood carried what he learned from his academic pursuits and his peers into a career of visionary leadership and public service. From launching innovative techniques like opening solar-heated and ADA accessible church facilities, to developing the Providence Adult Day Care Center, no stone could be left unturned. He spread his love around the world and traveled to countries like England, Scotland, Russia, and Ireland to attend religious conferences. He made room to dedicate time to developing food programs, an AIDS ministry, prison outreach, and a committee for the homeless. He maintained memberships to different organizations, boards, and agencies such as the Baltimore Urban League, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, the NAACP, and many more.

Reverend Wood’s wife of 69 years, the former Bessie Pendleton, died in 2017. He leaves to mourn his passing a brother, Dr. Garnett Wood; daughter, Jeanetta James; son, Marcus G. Wood; and grandchildren Kevin Brown, Darrell Brown-Bey, Monica G. Wood and Melissa G. Wood Bartholomew; as well as two great grandchildren and a number of nieces, nephews and cousins.

Madam Speaker, in closing, Reverend Wood disavowed any trappings or pretensions and lived his faith in God. He did not suffer fools lightly and was one of a kind. He was, as they say, “the Real McCoy.” Reverend Doctor Marcus Garvey Wood left a memory with every person he interacted with, including myself. May his soul forever rest in peace.

MRS. JOSEFA FLORES 14-YEARS
OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2021

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Josefa “Josie” Flores who is celebrating 14 years of service to the people of Texas Congressional District 12 on June 22, 2021.

Josie was born a first generation American in Grand Prairie, Texas. She has a servant’s heart and a strong commitment to her faith and family. She is never flustered and has been a beacon of hope in my office and my district for the last 14 years.

At 17, Josie joined the United States Army. Her 11 years of military service included a tour of duty in Bosnia, which she describes as one of her fondest memories. Upon returning to her husband, Jose, and firstborn son, Dee, Josie continued serving members of the armed forces in the fleet and family support center. Shortly after her second son, Leo, was born, Josie came to my office as a bilingual caseworker where she has been assisting constituents ever since.

Josie is not just good at her job; she is the best at her job. People from all over the world contact my office in hopes of having Josie pick up their case because they know that if there is a way to do it, Josie will get the job done. Josie often says her job is to help people and helping people is what she loves to do. No matter the stresses involved, she does all in her power to help every individual or family that reaches out. Her passion for others has carried her on to be a successful caseworker with a wealth of knowledge that few, if any, can match. In addition to helping constituents, Josie is a resource for others in the congressional casework community. She mentors’ caseworkers from all over the nation, sharing her experience and passion. The respect she has earned is a direct reflection of the work and dedication she has demonstrated to my office for the last 14 years, and during her entire 25 years of public service.

Josie will always provide an ear to listen or a shoulder to lean on. She is a sounding board for my staff and a lighthouse for my constituents. I have been beyond blessed to work with this incredible woman during my time in Congress, and I am forever grateful for her service to our nation. May her light never extinguish.

On behalf of Texas’ 12th Congressional District, I offer my congratulations and best wishes on this special occasion.

JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ALMA S. ADAMS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, as one of the original sponsors of Juneteenth legislation in the House, I am proud to stand with my colleagues in voting to make Juneteenth a national holiday.

Juneteenth is a celebration of freedom, of our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Of emancipation instead of dehumanization. Of a message that made its way from Washington to Texas, freeing women and men upon its sight.

It is our history, a reminder of deeds darker than death or night, and a debt unpaid that must still be made right.

On this Juneteenth, I encourage all Americans to reflect on the long walk to freedom, that took Union soldiers from sea to shining sea. Though we’ve travelled a long way, that walk continues today.

And while I am overjoyed to send this legislation to the President’s desk and make it the law of the land, the work continues.

When Congress made MLK Day a federal holiday in the 1980s, it didn’t end the economic injustice that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought against his entire life.

In fact, the gap between rich and poor has only widened since then.

So as we celebrate this victory for our history, we must remember that while Juneteenth marked a victory over slavery, it was only the start of our fight for voting rights and equal justice under the law.

That fight, that long march to justice and equality and equity will not be over until we have fully protected the right to vote for all Americans, guaranteed equal justice under law, and achieved equitable treatment that repays the debts of past wrongs.

Madam Speaker, thank you for joining me in celebrating Juneteenth, thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make it a federal holiday . . . and never giving up the faith.

God bless.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CAREER
OF JEFF VANDELEEST

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2021

Mr. GALLAGHER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the career of retiring President and CEO of Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Jeff VandeLeest.

During his 25 years at Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Jeff VandeLeest served as Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President, and finally President and CEO of the organization. Mr. VandeLeest’s dedication and commitment to Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin and the people it serves is truly remarkable.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. VandeLeest’s leadership and knowledge lead to the expansion and long-term success of the organization. Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin is a non-profit, human services agency that offers more than 35 programs to people within Northeast Wisconsin during challenging periods in their lives. In 2019 alone, under the leadership of Mr. VandeLeest, Family Services was able to assist over 18,000 children, families, and individuals through some of life’s most challenging transitions.

For 25 years, Mr. VandeLeest has upheld the mission of Family Services; to protect, heal, and care. Throughout his 25 years with Family Services, the organization has grown exponentially. Mr. VandeLeest has been an