

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING BILL LYNCH

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Lynch, for receiving the title of Sonoma City Alcalde in 2023.

Mr. Lynch has dedicated his life to the people of the city of Sonoma, California. During the Vietnam War, Mr. Lynch served in the U.S. Navy. Upon his return home, Mr. Lynch was a volunteer firefighter and served on countless boards and commissions. Mr. Lynch has devoted himself to the city of Sonoma for decades.

Mr. Lynch worked as the publisher of the Sonoma Index Tribune for 40 years, carrying on a 128-year family legacy of running the city paper. Throughout his career in journalism, Mr. Lynch developed numerous relationships throughout the city. He faithfully reported on the issues that were important to the people of Sonoma, even when it made him unpopular with the City Council. In 1998, Mr. Lynch wrote a story about a resort that was to be built in the city, which led to a citywide protest to prevent the completion of the deal. Although it sometimes made enemies, Mr. Lynch was never afraid to stand up for what he believed to be in the best interest of his community.

Mr. Lynch has also given back to Sonoma in many other ways in addition to his profession. He started the Youth Soccer Program and formed a committee to establish the modern Vintage Festival which celebrates the rich wine history in Sonoma Valley. He also worked on several committees which raised money for the Boys and Girls Club and is instrumental in raising funds to keep Sonoma Valley Hospital's doors open.

Mr. Lynch is a family man, with a heart as "big as his community". For all his years of public service, Mr. Lynch does not ask for awards or honors, but is happy to work behind the scenes for the good of our community.

Mr. Speaker, it is evident that Bill Lynch has devoted his life to our Sonoma community. I am proud to call Bill my friend. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

HONORING THE MERITED SERVICE AND PROMOTION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL BRIEN PURCELL HORAN

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a lifelong friend and fellow public servant, Brien P. Horan, who has just been promoted to Brigadier General on the military

retired list of the state of Connecticut. On March 20, 2023, Brigadier General Horan invited me to join Major General Francis Evon, Commanding General of the Connecticut National Guard and Adjutant General of Connecticut, in pinning on his new rank at the promotion ceremony. This milestone event occurred at the William O'Neill State Armory, the headquarters of the Connecticut National Guard in Hartford, Connecticut, just adjacent to the State Capitol. Becoming a general officer represents not just a promotion, but recognition of his lifetime of service to our nation, at home and overseas, and to our state, which I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating.

Born in 1953 to Arthur and Eileen Horan, Brien was raised in the Hartford area where he was infused with a family tradition of public service. His father, a World War II veteran, was also an officer on the military retired list of Connecticut, as was his grandfather, a veteran of the Spanish-American War who was commissioned an infantry officer of the Connecticut National Guard back in 1899. Brien's father was a longtime aide to Abraham Ribicoff, Connecticut's Governor and U.S. Senator, and for several years ran the latter's Connecticut Senate office, where he was in charge of constituent services. His mother Eileen was for more than 20 years the registrar of voters in the Town of West Hartford, re-elected many times and recognized across the state for her expertise in election law. I first befriended General Horan as fellow altar boys at St. Timothy's Church in West Hartford in 1965 and as classmates at Northwest Catholic High School. Our long friendship gave me an opportunity to witness how deeply ingrained his parents' work as public servants affected his future desire to serve our nation. After high school, he earned a bachelor's degree from Amherst College, spending a year of college at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, where he honed his fluency in the French language. After college, our educational paths crossed again, at the University of Connecticut's School of Law, where we both received our law degrees, mine in 1978 and his in 1979.

After law school, Brien was commissioned as a reserve officer in the Army JAG Corps. In 1981, Captain Horan transitioned to active duty and served in West Germany for two years as a military prosecutor. Then from 1983 to 1985, he was in charge of the legal section of the U.S. Defense Attaché Office at the American Embassy in Paris. After completing 4 years of active duty in Europe, he would remain in the Army Reserve as a judge advocate officer for another 26 years, including 10 years as a Colonel.

As a Colonel, he was for several years the senior Army Reserve judge advocate assigned to U.S. Army Europe. Before that, from 2000 to 2004, he was the commander of the Army Reserve's JAGC unit for the six New England states, the 3rd Legal Support Organization in Boston. He directed the 3d LSO's provision of legal services to thousands of New England reservists mobilized after the 9/11 attacks. During Brien's command tenure, General Eric

Shinseki, the Army Chief of Staff, chose the 3d LSO as one of only two Army Reserve units to receive the prestigious 2002 Army Chief of Staff Award for Legal Assistance. Before his promotion to Colonel, Brien also served as an international law faculty member at the JAG School in Charlottesville and as a judge advocate in the Army's Criminal Law Division at the Pentagon. He was awarded numerous decorations, including the Legion of Merit and four Meritorious Service Medals.

In addition, Brigadier General Horan had a long association with the Connecticut Military Department, including attachment to the Connecticut National Guard, service in the state military, and appointment as a Colonel Aide-de-Camp to the Governor.

In civilian life, Brien managed to alternate his private law practice with public service. He was long a partner in the Hartford law firm of Robinson & Cole and also was a vice president in the law department of The Hartford, one of the state's leading insurance carriers. But in the late 1980s, he worked as a Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. State Department, with diplomatic assignments at our embassies in Kingston, Jamaica and in Paris. And at the end of his legal career, he returned to public service, as a U.S. Administrative Law Judge sitting in New Haven, Connecticut. He retired as a judge in November 2020.

Mr. Speaker, heartfelt congratulations are in order to Brigadier General Horan and to his sons, Nick and Doug, on his promotion to this high state rank and for his long military service. To that end, Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in recognizing Brigadier General Brien Horan's long and distinguished service to our Nation and to my State.

RECOGNIZING THE LATE JAMES "KUCH" KUCHWARA FOR HIS SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, Today I honor the late James "Kuch" Kuchwara for his military service and his lifelong service to his fellow veterans as commander of VFW Post 25. Kuch passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, March 4, 2023.

Kuch, the son of the late John and Rose Kelly Kuchwara, was born and raised in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Scranton Technical High School with the Class of 1968. Answering the call of duty to serve his country, Kuch enlisted in the United States Army, serving during the Vietnam War. Following his honorable discharge from the Army, he worked in the construction and contracting industry. For more than 30 years, he was employed as a crew leader for the Pennsylvania American Gas and Water Company.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

He was a proud member and president of the local IBEW Union for UGI and a member of the masonry union.

Kuch is best known around Scranton as the commander of the General Theodore J. Wint VFW Post 25, one of the oldest VFWs in the country. He led this very active VFW post of more than 500 members in both social, ceremonial and community service endeavors. He has been at the helm of many of the post's initiatives, like hanging hometown heroes banners along streets in North Scranton, recruiting younger veterans to join his post and getting a bridge named for General Wint, a brigadier general and the post's namesake. Kuch and VFW Post 25 have championed one of the City of Scranton's most ambitious veterans' recognition projects, a 7-foot-tall and 33-foot-long granite monument with the names of nearly 1000 Scrantonians who died in battle.

Kuch has been a long-time dedicated supporter of veterans' issues from all angles. Just last year, he stood by me as I announced the Camp Lejeune Justice Act. Men like Kuch have taught me a great deal about what it means to be an American and a public servant.

I am humbled to join with Kuch's family and friends, VFW Post 25 and the entire community in honoring the life and service of this American patriot. He leaves behind an indelible legacy and his honor, integrity and steadfast leadership won't soon be forgotten.

HONORING ANITA GRANT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Anita Grant, who is retiring after 31 years of service to Lake County as a member of the county's legal counsel.

An Iowa native, Ms. Grant started her career with Lake County, California, in 1992 as a Deputy County Counsel. She quickly stood out as an exceptional attorney, oftentimes working with county officials on issues, like criminal justice and civil rights. Her hard work and preparation as a litigator were essential in ensuring strong representation for the interests of Lake County at the local, state, and federal levels of the legal system.

Ms. Grant's commitment to public service was unrelenting, especially during election years where she would provide an unbiased review and explanation of the ballot propositions that have appeared in front of Lake County voters. She also helped with the operation of ballot counting equipment to make sure all votes could be quickly and accurately counted. She also provided special training to officials on navigating through the complex set of laws and regulations that they had to adhere to while running elections.

Ms. Grant's leadership, legal expertise, and dedication have made her an indispensable member of our community. She always maintained an open-door policy for county officials who wanted to hear her advice and legal guidance on important matters. Her commitment could be seen in her strong work ethic as she rarely missed work, forfeited vacation leave, and worked on weekends and holidays to get the job done despite the heavy workload she faced.

Ms. Grant's legal work as County Counsel has helped the residents of Lake County by supporting the county's financial well-being. Her assistance in supporting better financial circumstances for Lake County has also helped the county afford to reliably provide necessary services for its residents.

Mr. Speaker, Anita Grant has been an indispensable part of Lake County's community for the past 31 years and her service will be fondly remembered as she heads into retirement. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

CELEBRATING WAYNE WEBBER'S SERVICE AS A VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTER FOR THE BELLEROSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroic accomplishments and career of Wayne Webber.

Nearly 3 decades ago, Mr. Webber moved to Bellerose Village with his wife of 35 years and 2 kids: Sarah and Merrie. On top of being a decorated fireman, Mr. Webber worked as a Medical Technician for 33 years.

Mr. Wayne Webber has been a member of the Bellerose Volunteer Fire Department for 28 years on Long Island. Throughout his time there, Wayne has moved up the ranks, holding many different positions, which is a testament to his character and dedication to serving his community.

Mr. Webber has managed a variety of programs and initiatives, both in corporate officer positions and Firematic officer positions. Within the corporate office, Mr. Webber was the Secretary, Treasurer, and Vice President and is now the current President. While working as a Firematic officer, Mr. Webber served in every single position: 1st and 2nd Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Chief, and Chief of the Department from 2002 to 2007—right after September 11.

While bravely serving the Bellerose community, Mr. Webber managed a variety of programs and initiatives that are vital to the Department. Mr. Webber was responsible for developing, supervising, and conducting 40 fire drills within a year. These drills incorporated all phases of training that are essential in preparing for the next incident. As Chief of the Department, Mr. Webber is the Incident Commander for four weeks of training at the Nassau County Fire Academy for Bellerose firefighters and three other fire departments. Mr. Webber was appointed in 2019 as the Bellerose Village Fire Commissioner and currently holds the position.

As an Ex-Chief of the Island Park Fire Department, I understand the importance of Mr. Webber's contributions to the Bellerose Fire Department and the surrounding community. Wayne's long career is inspiring to other firefighters and his neighbors, but more importantly, Wayne embodies the characteristics of an excellent fireman.

On behalf of New York's 4th District, I am esteemed to recognize his astounding career and his brave service as a firefighter. I wish Wayne a bright, healthy, and exciting future.

CELEBRATING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF ROBERT CORNETTI

HON. RICHARD McCORMICK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to Robert D. Cornetti of Roswell, Georgia, "Bob," to his friends.

Mr. Cornetti served in the United States Marine Corps during the Korean War, where he received the Good Conduct Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal with Three Bronze Stars, and the National Defense Service Medal.

On April 27, 2023, Mr. Cornetti celebrates his 90th birthday. I want to extend my congratulations, and the best wishes of Congress to Bob and his entire family for this special occasion.

May America and my great State of Georgia be forever blessed with patriots like Robert Cornetti, and may God give him many happy returns.

HONORING ROBERT BLATTNER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Robert "Bob" William Blattner, who passed away on February 2, 2023, after 67 remarkable years of life.

Bob was born in Erie, Pennsylvania to Bill and Mary Blattner. He spent his early childhood in Walnut Creek, CA, and moved to Pittsburgh, PA in 1964. Bob attended Yale University, where he studied medieval European history and captained the swim team.

Bob began his career of service as a reporter after receiving his master's in Journalism from University of California Berkeley. He wrote for the Sacramento Union, the Daily Press of Newport News, Virginia, and the Sacramento Bee.

In 1994, Bob began working as an education consultant, helping public school districts and county offices navigate the intricacies of school finance. In 2006, he founded Blattner & Associates, which lobbied lawmakers on behalf of public schools. Bob was also a frequent resource for reporters seeking insight on complex education stories and regularly hosted high school students to offer them a glimpse of life inside our state's Capitol. On Fridays, Bob could be found walking the halls of the Capitol in shorts and flip-flops explaining that "the members aren't here anyway".

Bob was married to his beloved wife Ann for 30 years, and is survived by their sons, Jack and Robby, and his brother John. Those who knew Bob will remember him smiling. He enjoyed spending time and energy on the things he valued: music, good food and drinks, history, time in the water, and above all else, his friends and family.

Bob was a compassionate public servant with a great sense of humor, and his upbeat attitude was contagious. Mr. Speaker, it is fitting and proper that we honor and thank Robert "Bob" William Blattner for his life of service to our grateful community.