

support the size of the communities and the bases at the time. Over the decades, both the civilian and military populations have outgrown the current roads providing base access to the gates.

The Defense Access Road Program exists to support communities in precisely this situation, enabling the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and service branches to pay for maintenance, upkeep, or upgrades of roads surrounding military installations. This ensures communities hosting bases have the infrastructure needed to support national security and civilian use. Certain roads surrounding Travis and Beale Air Force Bases are currently designated under the Defense Access Road Program. My legislation would designate the remaining access roads for each base under the program. It is necessary for the DOD to provide for maintenance and repairs as DOD use of the access roads continues and increases, to reduce the financial burden on the State.

As the Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I continue to work on proactive investments to support national security while also ensuring that communities around our military bases have the support they need. I plan to make these Defense Access Road designations a major priority for the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2024.

Travis and Beale Air Force Bases and Sierra Army Depot and the surrounding areas must have the world-class infrastructure needed to carry out their mission. The legislation I reintroduce today would ensure just that.

HONORING THE NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WOODBRIDGE CHAPTER 1270 ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 10, 2023

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Woodbridge Chapter 1270 on its 50th anniversary. The Northern Virginia region is home to tens of thousands of federal employees and many retirees who have chosen to stay in the region. Throughout their careers, these dedicated civil servants have given their time and effort to serve their fellow Americans, and NARFE has consistently provided them with coordinated support.

Founded in 1921, NARFE is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the earned pay, retirement, and health care benefits of federal employees and retirees as well as their spouses and survivors. Woodbridge Chapter is one of more than 800 NARFE chapters nationwide, with members located in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Panama. In Virginia, there are a total of 298,000 Federal Employees and Retirees.

The Charter for the Woodbridge Chapter was issued April 10, 1973. Today, the Chapter membership is over 200 with another 250 national members residing in the Woodbridge jurisdiction. Chapter members have had a

strong voice in many national and local legislative issues affecting federal retirees, senior citizens, and the public at large. Currently, the chapter has several members participating at high levels within the Virginia Federation of NARFE and at Headquarters, including the First Vice President, Treasurer, the Chair for National Legislation, and an Area Vice President. The Woodbridge Chapter is often recognized for its leadership.

This chapter has supported Alzheimer's research for many years through various fundraising events, especially its Fashion Shows in years past. On October 26, 2012, Woodbridge Chapter 1270 was recognized in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD by Congressman GERRY CONNOLLY for raising \$16,552 for Alzheimer's disease research in 2011 alone. Over the years, the chapter has raised more than \$100,000 for Alzheimer's research and is consistently recognized by the NARFE National Office and the Virginia Federation for its efforts. Nationally, since 1983 the NARFE organization has raised more than \$15 million for Alzheimer's disease research. The chapter is also a strong supporter of Prince William County's Action in Community Through Service (ACTS) organization through annual food drives and individual contributions.

In the past the chapter has participated in the annual Dale City 4th of July parade and has offered paper shredding events for the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Woodbridge Chapter 1270 for 50 years of dedicated service to Northern Virginia's federal employees.

Individuals in this organization are the lifeblood of our federal government, and I am grateful for their service and proud to represent so many of the outstanding individuals in this organization. I wish them the best for their anniversary and continued success in future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 10, 2023

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the University of North Texas Men's Basketball team for winning the 2023 National Invitational Tournament. Starting in 1916, the UNT Mean Green have a rich history. However, this year's accomplishment on the court is arguably the most exciting and meaningful.

On March 30, 2023, led by Coach Grant McCasland, the team completed their remarkable 31–7 season with the school's first ever NIT Tournament Championship. In doing so, the Mean Green successfully battled through five successive games, starting with dominating wins over Alcorn State and Sam Houston. They then advanced to the tournament semifinals with a chilling overtime win over Oklahoma State. The team then showed its grit to hold Wisconsin scoreless for over nine minutes in closing-out a final-four victory for the chance to redeem a Conference USA Tournament loss to the University of Alabama-Birmingham. They completed the run with a 68 to 61 NIT Championship game victory.

Led by NIT Most Outstanding Tournament Player Tylor Perry, Kai Huntsberry and Aaron Scott stepped-up to record double-digits as UAB unsuccessfully struggled to limit Perry on the court during the championship. Ruben Jones stepped-up with scoring and rebounds at critical points throughout the tournament, complimenting Moulaye Sissoko's domination of the backboard in each game and highlighted with his double-double in the victory over Wisconsin. A team accomplishment, the postseason opportunity and victory could not have happened without critical individual contributions throughout the season from Abou Ousmane, Jayden Martinez, Matthew Stone, Tyree Eady, Rasheed Browne, Christian Moore, Grayson Allo, Chris Morgan and Arsh Mattu.

The historic NIT Tournament Championship victory underscored the original strength of UNT's Conference USA schedule and set a new standard at a critical time for UNT's national profile. UNT became one of four C–USA teams setting national notice by either winning, or competing in at least the final four of the three major post-season college tournaments, as a final benchmark before moving up to join the American Athletic Conference this Fall.

The accomplishment is bittersweet, as it also marks the last game that Coach McCasland will be at the helm of the squad. UNT's President Dr. Neal Smatresk extended his sincerest thanks and best wishes to Coach McCasland and his family, recognizing that he “. . . has been a great mentor and leader for the student athletes on our men's basketball teams for six seasons, and he has taken our program to great successes including this national championship run in the NIT.” However, a strong foundation has already been set for the next stage, with longtime Assistant Coach Ross Hodge announced as the team's new head coach, ensuring that opponents in the new AAC can expect no relief from the suffocating defense experienced throughout the season by UNT's challengers.

I join Dr. Smatresk, the returning team members, the UNT student body and Alumni in looking forward to the next exciting accomplishment to come. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the 2022–2023 North Texas Men's Basketball coaches and team for representing their school and community so well. Best wishes to the team's seniors as they graduate, and we look forward to another opportunity to celebrate the next exciting year and championship.

TRIBUTE TO LOIS A. O'KEEFE

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 10, 2023

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Lois A. O'Keefe, a public servant, a trailblazer for working mothers, and one of my dearest friends. It saddens me to say that Lois passed peacefully in the early morning of Wednesday, December 21, 2022.

I had the pleasure of knowing Lois for close to 30 years before starting my legislative career in the Wisconsin State Assembly. Lois was involved in the Wisconsin political scene,

as a volunteer, activist, and fighter committed to giving a voice to the voiceless. Lois worked tirelessly for decades with dedication and passion, which still inspires me to this day.

As a Congressional Staffer, she served under two U.S. Senators, Senators William Proxmire, and Herb Kohl, and eventually served the American people in my office. She served nearly 10 years on my staff as a case-worker and then as District Director. Lois' contribution to the Milwaukee community as well as her legacy will continue to inspire future generations of public servants.

Lois' true passion was serving working-class Americans and underinvested youths. She served the labor movement as the Regional Representative of the Secretary of Labor for the Midwest Region in Chicago. During the Clinton Administration, she served under Secretaries Robert Reich and Alexis Herman to help provide better living conditions for Americans. Most importantly she served as a union organizer for the Service Employees Union representing workers who cared for the elderly. She ran a non-profit called REACH, a youth organization for underprivileged kids. She also worked with the Milwaukee Job Corps to start an internship program in my district office. Lois cared about the Americans that are often too forgotten about.

Lois lived the reality that so many women with careers juggling work and childcare issues face. She then returned to school with four children under the age of 14 and earned both a BA in Political Science and an MA in Industrial and Labor Relations. Lois understood the struggle of being a working-class mother and committed her life to helping others who faced similar struggles.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I am honored to pay tribute to Lois O'Keefe. She has helped transform the lives of so many people, including my constituents. The people of the 4th Congressional District, the State of Wisconsin, and the United States thank her for her commitment to service.

SUSTAINABLE BUDGET ACT

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 10, 2023

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, can anyone with any halfway working knowledge of government finances seriously dispute that our federal fiscal house is dangerously out of order?

Our national debt is approaching \$32 trillion, doubling in just the last decade alone, and up some \$3 trillion in just the two years since I last introduced my Sustainable Budget Act in February 2021. More directly, our debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP), or the measure of our economy's ability to sustain national debt, now stands at 120 percent, doubling since 2000. The fastest-growing part of our federal budget continues to be interest payments on our debt, increasingly outpacing and crowding out critical defense and non-defense spending alike.

In a Congress where we often repeat the platitude that our budget reflects our values, it is disturbing that the main common value re-

flected is fiscal unsustainability ranging to irresponsibility. We need look no further than a mirror for the root cause: our collective inability to face the music of fiscal responsibility and sustainability.

We clearly need help with our collective inability to confront this reality. My Sustainable Budget Act, again co-introduced yesterday with Congressman STEVE WOMACK, is at least a start toward a solution. It would follow the models of Simpson-Bowles and other such independent, bipartisan commissions charged with focusing on our deficits and debt and recommending a sustainable path for an up-or-down vote by Congress.

Our bill is similar to other proposals, including the TRUST Act that I have reintroduced with Congressmen SCOTT PETERS and MIKE GALLAGHER to save our foundational entitlement programs from similar unsustainability. Together, they offer a far better way to tackle our debt crisis than denial, anger, avoidance, diversion and rhetoric. I urge their prompt consideration and passage.

HONORING THE VALOROUS SERVICE OF CW5 BENJAMIN ARPS

HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 10, 2023

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor CW5 Benjamin S. Arps for his remarkable military service and valorous leadership in the War on Terror, and to congratulate him on a well-deserved retirement.

A native of Woodbine, Iowa, CW5 Arps enlisted in the Army in June 1997, marking the beginning of a singularly impressive career of service. After completing One Station Unit Training at Fort Knox, he graduated as a 19D Cavalry Scout. His first assignment was with the 5th Squadron, 15th Cavalry Regiment, where he distinguished himself as a Bradley Fighting Vehicle gunner and instructor. In July 2001, he graduated from the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program at Fort Rucker and was assigned to Bravo Company, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment at Aviano Airbase, Italy. While in Italy, he served as a UH60 Pilot in Command, Unit Trainer, Tactical Operations officer, and Operations Officers.

In January 2005, CW5 Arps answered the call to serve that few will answer. He successfully assessed for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), the most elite special operations night-operating aviation force in the world. Upon his graduation from Officer Green Platoon in February 2006, he was assigned to Delta Company, Task Force, 1st Battalion, 160th SOAR (ABN) at Fort Campbell. Through rigorous preparation, training, and testing, he achieved Fully Mission Qualified and Flight Lead status, and lead as the D Co. Safety Officer and the 1-160th SOAR (ABN) Safety Officer. From November 2014 to January 2017, CW5 Arps served as the 160th SOAR (ABN) Regiment Recruiting Director. Accepting the next challenge in his career, he was assigned to 2nd Battalion where he served as Regiment Flight Lead, ultimately rising to be the Battalion Senior Warrant Officer. He served as the senior warrant

officer for the second battalion for a number of years, multiple combat assignments, many of them classified, and all of them at great risk to his life.

Recognizing CW5 Arps' leadership, he was selected by the US Army Special Operations Command to become the 8th Regiment Command Chief Warrant Officer for the 160th SOAR (ABN). In that position, Command Chief Warrant Officer Arps led every warrant officer assigned to the 160th SOAR, the world's premiere special operations aviation regiment.

After indicating to the Command his intent to retire, CW5 Arps was asked to stay in service for another position. There, he stood up a brand-new office designed to assist special operations aviators transitioning to civilian service. Without hesitation, he said "yes" to becoming the first Officer in Charge for the 160th SOAR (ABN) EXFIL Transition Program.

His 26 year-career has been marked by uncommon valor, honor, and a dedication to excellence on and off the battlefield. He deployed thirty times in support of the Global War on Terror and in several other sensitive, often classified, overseas contingency operations. In all his service, he fulfilled the Night Stalker Creed's mission-focus: to safeguard the honor and prestige of the United States.

CW5 Arps's permanent awards and decorations are numerous and worth recounting: the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal (2 OLC), Air Medal (Numeral 8), Army Commendation Medal (2 OLC), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (3 CS), Iraq Campaign Medal (4 CS), Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal, Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terror Service Medal, Overseas Ribbon (Numeral 2), NATO Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Army Meritorious Commendation, Army Superior Unit Award, Air Force Meritorious Unit Award, Combat Action Badge, and Master Aviator Badge.

CW5 Arps' career exemplifies servant-leadership, a drive to learn, and a relentless pursuit of excellence that should be venerated and emulated by all Americans. No matter what was thrown at him, he always put the mission and his soldiers first. He led with great strength and quiet resolve, commanded high respect, and put his life on the line for his country, his wife of 24 years, and his two children.

We honor his excellence, dedication, fidelity, and courage. As Philippians 4:8 instructs us, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." It is for this reason that we commend and honor CW5 Arps today.

Few answer the call to serve their country, and fewer still serve with as much distinction and honor as CW5 Arps. His service will never be forgotten, and I am proud to represent him and his family in Congress. On behalf of the United States Congress, the American people, and as a fellow Night Stalker, I heartily thank CW5 Arps for his long and distinguished career in service to our great Nation, and I congratulate him on his retirement from military service. Night Stalkers Don't Quit.