

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING HOMETOWN HERO
ROBERT PINHOLT

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robert Pinholt, co-founder and CEO of the Coppell-based Claymore Operations, which was founded to prepare active-duty military personnel to transition into civilian life. As a high school student during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Robert felt called to make a difference and joined the U.S. Army upon his graduation. After serving in eastern Afghanistan, Robert returned home and began the strenuous process of readapting to civilian life. His experience helped him realize the need for additional resources for our servicemembers as they transition from active-duty to life beyond service. Founded on the tenets of faith, Claymore's mentorship program is based on the power of three: the mentee (servicemember), a civilian mentor, and a veteran mentor. I want to thank Robert for serving as a guiding light to the great men and women that serve our country.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
OF DR. JOHN MASCIA

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Dr. John Mascia, who has dedicated over 10 years of service as the President of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind.

On January 1, 2013, Dr. Mascia became the 17th President of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, the nation's most comprehensive education and service program for children, adults, and seniors with hearing and vision loss.

Dr. Mascia received his doctorate in Audiology from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. Additionally, he holds a master's degree in Audiology and a B.A. degree in Speech Pathology/Audiology from Hofstra University. Dr. Mascia began his work with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind in January 2005 where he served as Executive Director of the Gentry Facility and Regional Centers until his 2009 promotion to Vice President of Adult Services.

Dr. Mascia has received awards from the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind-Alabama-Grider Award, the Alabama Association of the Deaf Alabama Citizen Award, the Council of Organizations Serving Deaf Alabamians Professional of the Year, the Audiology Foundation of America Professional Leadership Award, and the Joan Fox Memorial Award in Audiology.

Dr. Mascia is married to Dr. Nancy Mascia, and they have three children, Katie, Chris and Annie.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the retirement of Dr. John Mascia and his service to the state of Alabama.

COMMEMORATING THE PUBLIC
SERVICE OF NEIL MCKIERNAN

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Neil McKiernan, an outstanding, diligent public servant who just passed the milestone of 20 years of service in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Second District of Connecticut, which I have the privilege to represent, is the office where Neil worked for 17 of those years, the last 7 as Chief of Staff. Neil recently announced that at the end of September 2023, he is going to begin a new chapter of his life in the private sector and depart this institution where he has done so much good, for so many people, for so many years.

A native of Connecticut, Neil began his journey on Capitol Hill at a young age. Immediately upon earning his college degree from Roger Williams University in Rhode Island in 2003, he moved to Washington, D.C., and joined the Office of Representative LINDA SÁNCHEZ of California, a new member in the House, and immediately demonstrated an aptitude for the complexity of policy work in the Legislative Branch. In 2004, he took a legislative assistant position in the Office of Congressman JOHN LARSON of the First District of Connecticut. Congressman LARSON was a member of the House Armed Services Committee at the time and Neil was given that portfolio, which, given the strong presence of defense contractors in the State of Connecticut, was a huge responsibility. Even at that young age, Neil's work ethic impressed stakeholders in both Washington and back home, showing that he understood the issues and the process of JOHN'S committee work. He performed that job for Congressman LARSON for 3 years before taking a leave of absence in 2006, from the office to head back to Connecticut to help me in my own journey to the U.S. House.

It was in that summer of 2006, I first crossed paths with Neil when I hired him to be 1 of my field organizers during my 2006 House campaign as a challenger for the Second District. He took the risk of leaving Washington, D.C., to support the effort to flip this seat which was recognized by both major political parties as a "toss-up" race. He again continued to prove himself, successfully managing 1 of the most contested precincts in this very contested district. His efforts, along with an army of grass roots supporters from across Eastern Connecticut, delivered a razor-thin

victory margin of 83 votes out of 241,000 cast. It was the closest House race by far in 2006, and Neil's efforts, along with countless other staff and volunteers, made the difference between victory and defeat.

After being elected to represent the Second District of Connecticut, I brought Neil onto my congressional staff. As a freshman, I secured a seat on the House Armed Services Committee and the Seapower and Projection Forces subcommittee. When Neil accepted my offer of employment, he returned to his passion for the extensive portfolio of defense issues of Connecticut as my Military Legislative Assistant, this time with a particular focus on the navy and its submarine fleet.

Mr. Speaker, there are still a few members who remember that in 2007, when I took office, our Navy's submarine program was limping along at a 1 submarine-per-year build rate that was slowly but surely starving our submarine industrial base and the size of the fleet. In 2007, the Navy, for the first time in 50 years, had zero plans underway to advance the next class of submarines. In my first year on Armed Services, the budget from the Bush Administration continued this death spiral, proposing neither an increase in the build rate nor new design work. It was clear to Neil and me that reversing this trend would be hard—particularly as a freshman member of the Committee. But for the sake of our Nation's industrial base and the Navy, we had to use every effort to achieve that change.

So, in my first year on the Armed Services Committee, we boosted Virginia-class submarine production funding through the annual National Defense Authorization Act. The following year, we secured an initial pot of funding to begin design on the next generation of submarines—the Columbia class. Now, more than 15 years later, we have completely reversed the downward course. We are sustaining a 2-per-year build rate of Virginia-class submarines and are now well underway with the construction of the Nation's first Columbia-class submarines.

Of course, much of this national security sustainment centers out of the Second District of Connecticut in the submarine capital of the world, Groton. There, General Dynamics Electric Boat alone has grown to a regional workforce of 21,000—14,400 in Connecticut and 6,600 in Rhode Island—and is projected to hire tens of thousands more over the next decade. That doesn't even take into account the vibrant ecosystem of workforce development pipelines and submarine construction suppliers that have arisen throughout the state. The change in priority in 2023 versus 2007 is astonishing. Submarine construction is now half of the Navy's overall shipbuilding budget compared to less than a quarter 15 years ago. Just in this year's budget alone, \$18.2 billion is allocated for subs—a bigger number than the entire Navy shipbuilding account 5 years ago. Again, Neil has been a central actor in this entire effort. Neil's leadership has helped change the course of U.S.

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

submarine construction programs and provided a vital long-term pillar of economic development for our region. He is a true friend of Connecticut. Now, we have set our sights on evolving the global security net by meeting the pillars envisioned through the AUKUS alliance. That work continues to this day.

Neil has also shepherded endless other projects from idea to reality throughout his tenure in my office—from essential infrastructure work to build a new train station in Enfield, to dredging in the Long Island Sound, to being instrumental in the development of an off shore wind facility at the Port of New London. Lastly, Neil, as Chief of Staff, has been a great leader of my office's team, both in Washington and Connecticut. He is a good listener. He has kept every person feeling respected and engaged, particularly during challenging events for the Hill's workforce, including the pandemic and the insurrection on January 6. The high retention rate of staff in my office is a true compliment to Neil's intelligent, empathetic engagement with a talented, hard-working group that is always focused on a wonderful part of Connecticut.

Mr. Speaker, Neil has been a force for good in the House of Representatives over these past 20 years. His institutional knowledge of Congress, his legislative skills, and his tenacity to serve the people of our district are things I hold closely. I am proud to have watched him grow several generations of our team into the self-sustaining institution that it is today. We owe a great deal of gratitude to the staff who dedicate themselves and put in the legwork to advance our district and national priorities, particularly those who have remained in service to the House for decades like Neil and contribute to the brain power of this body's critical work.

We specifically owe thanks to Neil and his family for their sacrifice to better our country, namely his wife Kristen, whom he met through his career on the Hill, and their children, Caroline and Ellie. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in recognizing Neil McKiernan's storied service and contributions.

CONGRATULATING THE HANOVER
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce on their 100th anniversary.

In 1923, the Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce was founded to represent and promote the interests of local businesses. As Hanover has grown, the Chamber of Commerce has grown with it and now offers a variety of services and opportunities to its members, as well as continuing to advocate for its members' interests.

Out of roughly 7,000 Chambers of Commerce in the United States, less than 2 hundred are accredited by the United States Chamber of Commerce. Even fewer possess a 5-star Accreditation, and the Hanover Chamber of Commerce is one of them. This Chamber offers a diverse list of resources and

events to its members and is always looking for ways to promote local businesses. Its dedication to its members and the businesses it serves truly earned those 5 stars.

Communities across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have benefitted from strong economies due to the hard work of chambers of commerce, and that is especially true of the Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce in Hanover, Pennsylvania.

As they celebrate their 100th anniversary this year, I want to congratulate and thank the staff and the Board of Directors of the Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce for strengthening the economy of Pennsylvania's 11th district. Their commitment to their community is truly inspiring, and I wish them all the best in the years to come.

HONORING HOMETOWN HERO
BENNETT HILLS

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize our Texas—24 Hometown Hero, 9-year-old Bennett Hills from North Richland Hills. At 7 years old, Bennett started dreaming of one day becoming a LEGO master. Now, as a fourth grader at Liberty Elementary, he's one step closer to that dream. He was recently named a finalist in LEGOLAND's '2023 North American Mini Master Model Builder' contest. Bennett was tasked with creating an original LEGOScape that depicted his hometown through the LEGOLAND Discovery Center of Dallas/Fort Worth. He chose to proudly fill it with Dallas' Reunion Tower, Fort Worth's famous Stockyards, cowboys, longhorns, oil rigs, and even construction cranes to represent the growing Dallas/Fort Worth area. He is now one of 13 Mini Master Model Builders from around the U.S. who will represent Dallas/Fort Worth in LEGOLAND's nationwide competition, in hopes of claiming the national title. I want to congratulate Bennett on his hard work and wish him the best of luck at the national competition.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF CATTY
MOORE

HON. WILEY NICKEL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to pay tribute to the distinguished career of Wake County Public School System Superintendent Catty Moore. It's my privilege to recognize her invaluable contributions to the families and students of Wake County and to wish her a happy and well-deserved retirement.

Superintendent Moore received her bachelor's degree at North Carolina State University before earning her master's degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She's currently pursuing a doctoral degree at East Carolina University.

She began her career as a high school French teacher in the Nash-Rocky Mount Public School system, before moving to teach in

Wake County at Enloe High School. She then became the assistant principal of Enloe before moving to Apex High School and finally working as the principal of Sanderson High School. During her time at Sanderson High School, she was awarded Principal of the Year by the Wake County Public Schools and was awarded Regional Principal of the Year by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

She became Wake County Public School System's Superintendent in 2018 and is the first woman and first Latina to serve in the role. She was awarded the Superintendent of the Year by the North Carolina PTA in 2021 for her "steady and focused leadership" throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and was awarded National Superintendent of the Year by Magnet Schools of America in 2022.

Under Superintendent Moore's leadership, Wake County has made significant strides toward ensuring the safety and well-being of its students by conducting a comprehensive school-by-school safety audit, writing the district's first equity policy, and pioneering covid safety protocols in a time of great uncertainty.

I'd like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Wake County Public School System's Superintendent Catty Moore for her years of service to North Carolina and wish her all the best in her retirement from the Wake County Public School System.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and celebrating Superintendent Catty Moore.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF RONALD LEWIS FELTON

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to the late Ronald L. Felton, a true champion of civil rights and social justice, veteran, husband, father and grandfather from Northeast Pennsylvania who has left an indelible mark on the fight for civil rights and social justice through his profound dedication to uplifting the marginalized and advancing equality.

After serving with distinction in the U.S. Air Force, Ron settled into Wilkes-Barre where he worked tirelessly to bring about positive change in the vibrant community. He demonstrated unwavering dedication not only as a devoted family man but also as a committed professional. His tenure as a system analyst at Prudential, IBM, and the Times Leader newspaper showcased his pursuit of excellence.

Yet, it was Ron's role as President of the NAACP Wilkes-Barre Branch 2306 that truly defined his legacy. For an impressive 18 years touching 3 distinct decades, he led with unyielding passion, advocating for civil rights and social justice. His tireless work laid the foundation for lasting change, exemplified by his instrumental role in establishing Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a holiday for Wilkes-Barre City employees and the renaming of Coal Street Park to Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Ron's commitment to honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy and fostering an inclusive community remains an enduring testament to his character.

As the Eastern Sectional Director of the Statewide NAACP, his work transcended our