

roles, Lieutenant Colonel Tobola showcases his commitment by organizing MOAA's monthly membership meetings, special events, and the pivotal annual fundraiser. This fundraiser, under his guidance, has provided over \$140,000 in educational scholarships and supported Reserve Officer's Training Corps students in both high schools and universities throughout Waco.

For his enduring dedication to his nation, both in military service and beyond, and his embodiment of the MOAA's motto of "Never Stop Serving," it is with great admiration and respect that I present the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation to retired United States Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Vincent J. Tobola, Jr.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOLANO IRRIGATION DISTRICT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Solano Irrigation District on their 75th anniversary of serving our community.

Seventy-five years ago, the Solano Irrigation District (SID) sought to secure irrigation water from the Solano Water Project. This marked the beginning of a journey filled with challenges, achievements, and the steadfast pursuit of excellence. Since then, the district has played a pivotal role in providing vital resources to our community.

Today, the Solano Irrigation District stands as a cornerstone of our region's prosperity, delivering 141,000 acre-feet of irrigation water to over 59,000 acres of irrigable land. Not only does it supply bulk untreated water to a population of more than 300,000, including the cities of Benicia, Vacaville, Fairfield, and Vallejo, but it also treats and delivers drinking water to Suisun City, ensuring the well-being of our residents.

Unlike many other districts, SID does not need to import any water for its customers, thanks to its foresight in securing valuable water rights and access through 'The Solano Project.' This forward-thinking approach has made our district financially stable and well-managed, providing cost-efficient services while maintaining stable water rates.

Furthermore, the innovative spirit of the Solano Irrigation District is exemplified by the hydroelectric power plant at the base of Monticello Dam, a pioneering project that has set a remarkable precedent for local agencies across the United States.

The Solano Irrigation District has not only been a guardian of water resources but also a catalyst for progress and growth in our community. Its tireless efforts have made SID into a beacon of excellence, ensuring a prosperous future for Solano County.

Mr. Speaker, the Solano Irrigation District has been serving our residential and agricultural communities faithfully for 75 years.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROSE MARIE MCCOY, PASTOR EMERITUS

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2023

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to pay my deepest respect in tribute to a wonderful woman of God, Dr. Rose Marie McCoy, who passed from this earthly realm to her heavenly home on September 13, 2023.

A wife, mother, grandmother, pastor, caregiver, community role model, missionary and counselor, Dr. Rose Marie was born on September 24, 1951, in Robbins, Illinois to parents Samuel Sr. and Jennie Eliza Merle Evans. Having accepted the Lord Jesus Christ in the Spring of 1976, Rose Marie dedicated her life in service and selfless devotion to others throughout the Chicago metropolitan area.

Rose Marie met and married the love of her life Dr. William McCoy, over 57 years ago. Together they shared a love that withstood the test of time and created a strong family that will carry on their unique legacy. Rose Marie was steadfast in her commitment to the Lord, living each day as a living sacrifice that I am certain was holy and acceptable unto God, as her reasonable service.

You may be asking how I know Dr. Rose Marie McCoy so well and in response, I'd say that I've known her and her husband Chief Apostle Dr. William McCoy for decades upon decades. I have worked alongside Drs. Rose and William McCoy throughout Chicago's southside in an effort to improve the lives of our neighbors, friends, children, and other vulnerable populations in our community.

Dr. Rose Marie McCoy's enthusiasm for life and her dedication to others also showed in her work on behalf of the Brothers Keeper Outreach Church, which she co-founded with her husband. Additionally, Rose Marie was instrumental in development of the Brothers Keeper Community Resource Center and the International Pentecostal Assembly Ecumenical Faith and Community Action Network.

Collectively, Rose Marie's efforts and dedication to faith-based community social services has helped change the lives of countless individuals for the better. In fact, I would posit that perhaps all of our lives have been made better off simply by our interaction and association with pastor, Dr. Rose Marie McCoy along life's journey. To know Rose Marie, was to know genuine love, faith and service. May this beautiful soul rest with the Lord in peace.

To her family, including her husband Chief Apostle Dr. William McCoy and her children Victoria McCoy-Salter, Vanessa McCoy-Pulphus, Debracia McCoy Jones, Major Lee McCoy, and Otis McCoy, all of whom she leaves to carry on her works and love, I extend my sincerest condolences on your loved one's transition. I am truly grateful to Dr. Rose Marie McCoy, Pastor Emeritus for her tremendous contributions to so many in Chicago, Illinois, and our Nation. May God bless her, her family, and all of us.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPACT OF THE IMPENDING GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2023

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the impact of the impending government shutdown on communities in my district that are experiencing the worst flash flooding since Hurricane Ida, which killed more than 40 people across the state. As we are in the middle of House Republican infighting that is jeopardizing the ability to keep the government open, our federal government's ability to serve the American people is threatened. Essential services from government agencies and employees pay will be affected as many face furlough and uncertainty about retroactive pay. In New York State, the Governor and Mayor have declared a state of emergency, but they cannot look to the federal government at a time when funding is uncertain.

Right now, in New York City, highways are closed, vehicles are stranded, subway trains have stalled, utility infrastructure is flooded and damaged, and many New Yorkers on the way to work and school have had their daily routines severely impacted. At a time like this we look to the federal government for resources, but Congress has not passed legislation to replenish the FEMA disaster relief fund, which is the primary pot of money the agency uses to respond to storms. Republicans refusing to work with Democrats and pass a clean Continuing Resolution are failing to support communities recovering from disasters during hurricane season. The Continuing Resolution Republicans have proposed hurts FEMA's readiness by neglecting the pressing need for additional disaster relief funds to address existing shortfalls and prepare for unforeseen future disasters. Due to climate change, storms have intensified and become more frequent across the country resulting in a record number of billion-dollar disasters to date. The importance of the FEMA disaster relief fund cannot be understated and the ability to deploy resources and funds by keeping the federal government open is even more critical.

Constituents in my district in Brooklyn and Queens living in single family homes and public housing complexes will be dealing with the impact of intense flash flooding for days after the storm passes. My constituents deserve a functioning government, not a shutdown. As communities vulnerable to flooding continue to bear the brunt of climate change, a government shutdown will leave New Yorkers and state and local government without critical assistance. Republican's refusal to fund the government will wreak havoc on New York's ability to recover from these floods in the days and months to come.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2023

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition of H.R. 4665, Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024.

This bill makes devastating cuts to our foreign assistance and will undo years of progress in the areas of humanitarian aid, bolstering our national security, and combatting the effects of climate change. With this bill, House Republicans have completely abandoned our country's leadership on the global stage and made our country and other countries around the world susceptible to destabilization.

This bill eliminates U.S. support for climate adaptation, sustainable landscapes, and clean energy programming. Climate change is an existential threat to every single one of us—and this bill does nothing but bury our heads in the sand. These divestments will not only be devastating to our environment, but also to our national security. Cuts to climate programs will leave the Department of Defense more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Without adequate funding to address the climate crisis, people around the globe will be driven from their homes, unable to feed their families, and will fall deeper into poverty. At a time when a historic number of refugees are fleeing conflict and instability, the United States will turn its back and be unable to respond to and assist our allies.

The majority has authored this bill to satisfy the most extreme among us without considering the real-life consequences for our allies and for the world's most vulnerable populations. This bill zeros out or dramatically cuts several critical peacebuilding funding accounts, which will severely impact the United States' ability to prevent violent conflict, build sustainable peace, and save lives. This bill hurts women and children—codifying the expanded version of the harmful global gag rule, cutting foreign assistance for family planning and reproductive health, and prohibiting funding to the UNFPA, the United Nations reproductive health agency.

Mr. Chair, this bill fails to protect Americans and cedes leadership to our adversaries. With this level of funding, House Republicans are ignoring reality and making it impossible for the United States to engage peacefully and constructively with the international community—all while our adversaries are engaging aggressively. Millions of lives are on the line, and instead of making a serious attempt to address these problems, the majority has injected politics into our foreign policy and have authored a bill that has virtually no chance of passing in the Senate. For all of these reasons, I must vote against H.R. 4665.

RECOGNIZING COLONEL ROBERT SOLENBERGER USA, RETIRED, WITH A CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2023

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to present retired Colonel Robert I. Solenberger, United States Army, with the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation. He is the epitome of the U.S. Army's slogan, "Be All You Can Be."

Robert Solenberger was born in 1943 in Oakland, California, earning a bachelor's degree in engineering chemistry from the University of New Mexico in 1965. In the midst of the Vietnam War, a young twenty-five-year-old patriot commenced thirty years of active military service when he enlisted in 1968. While engaged in infantry training at New Jersey's Fort Dix, Robert incurred extensive lung damage, spending months in what was then the Valley Forge Army Hospital in Pennsylvania.

Medically discharged from the Army in 1972, with access to rehabilitation funding, Robert attended medical school at the University of Maryland, obtaining a Doctor of Medicine in 1974, later training in surgery. Ever the patriot, he then applied for a direct commission as a surgeon in the Army Medical Corps; with his acceptance in 1984, and assignment to Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Robert began his final twenty-six years of active duty.

Some of Robert's deployments included Operation Desert Storm with the longest and largest Mass Casualty (MASCAL) exercise; Bright Star 95, for which he would be commended by the Army of Egypt; Ulchi Focus Lens 99 in Korea; supporting USMC forces in Afghanistan in 2002 with the 555 Forward Surgical Team; as well as Kuwait, Honduras, and Panama. Colonel Solenberger held the post of Chief Surgeon at Fort Cavazos in Killeen, Texas—the world's largest military base. Uniquely, he led the surgical team in delivering Conjoined Twins—and the workup leading to the only successful separation in a DOD hospital.

Among Colonel Solenberger's decorations are a Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Ribbon (three stars), Joint Service, Commendation Medal, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and Army Achievement Medal. He received an Order of Military Medical Merit in 1990; the "A" Designator (academic full professor), with pediatric surgery credentials in 1997, and the Combat Medics Badge.

Since retiring from active duty in 1994, Robert continues to mentor future military surgeons through his work with surgical residents at both the VA hospital system at Waco, Texas and the VA's Temple, Texas facility. Adding to his remarkable career is the also remarkable fact that Robert has performed in active military duty and as a hands-on, teaching surgeon with the Veterans Administration despite more than a sixty percent disability rating. Battlefield tested, Robert brings both empathy and inspiration to the Texas veterans he now serves with dedication and compassion.

For his love of country, tireless service and continuing to "Be All You Can Be" it gives me

great pleasure to award retired United States Army Medical Corps Colonel Robert I. Solenberger with the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation.

RECOGNIZING JACK WHITE'S INDUCTION TO THE RHODE ISLAND TELEVISION & RADIO HALL OF FAME

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2023

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the posthumous induction of Jack White to the Rhode Island Television & Radio Hall of Fame.

Residents of Rhode Island and Massachusetts came to rely on Jack's reporting in the Newport Daily News, the Providence Journal, WBZ TV in Boston, the Cape Cod Times, and finally during his time as Chief Investigative Reporter at WPRI TV in Providence.

A native of Pawtucket, Jack was a hard-hitting investigative journalist who never wavered on his principles. During the Watergate scandal, it was Jack's story in the Providence Journal that brought President Nixon's underpayment of federal income tax into national focus and caused the President to respond to a question from Jack's editor with the now infamous five-word phrase: "I am not a crook." That reporting won Jack White a Pulitzer Prize in 1974, cost President Nixon hundreds of thousands of dollars in back taxes, and spurred the practice of Presidents releasing their income tax returns for public inspection. True to his convictions as a journalist, Jack never divulged his source for the Nixon story and even delayed the story by twelve days to stand with striking reporters at the Providence Journal.

After leaving Providence for WBZ in Boston, it was a reporting job at the Cape Cod Times that brought the White family to West Barnstable, and Jack's commitment to his family that kept them on Cape Cod as he commuted back and forth to Providence during his decades at WPRI. His work at WPRI was marked by numerous major investigative stories, multiple Emmy Awards, and earned him the honorary title of "Dean of Rhode Island Journalism."

Sadly, Jack left us suddenly on October 12, 2005, at age 63, leaving behind his wife Beth, daughter Elizabeth, sons John, Patrick, and Timothy, and their families. Jack's son, Tim, followed his father into journalism and can be seen on televisions across Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts each week hosting the same "Newsmakers" program that Jack hosted during his time at WPRI.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join the Rhode Island Television & Radio Hall of Fame in celebrating the journalistic accomplishments of Jack White, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Jack's posthumous induction into the Rhode Island Television & Radio Hall of Fame and the impact that his reporting has had on Southern New England and our nation.