

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ANGIE WOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Angie Wood. Angie was a leader in Illinois who touched the lives of countless people. She was someone who empowered the people around her and was an inspiration to everyone she met.

She was quick to invite new friends to dinner and was always there to help someone in need. Angie embodied selfless devotion to her family, her community, and her country.

Everyone knew Angie as a patriot because of her love for our Constitution and her devotion to serving our country. She organized women's constitutional luncheons to teach people about our history, our rights, and our freedoms. She firmly believed that knowledge is power, and she was devoted to our Founding Fathers' vision of self-government.

Angie's patriotism was not merely something she talked about. It was something she lived out every day because of her love for God and country.

At her core, Angie was a Christian whose faith in Christ was evident to everyone around her, and she sought to carry the love of Jesus into the world. She organized Bible studies and was always first to offer prayer. She was sure to remind her friends about the peace and comfort that comes from the Lord. Angie would remind people that the only hope for our Nation and the world is Jesus Christ.

Angie's legacy will continue to inspire everyone who knew her. She exemplified servant leadership, and her patriotism, optimism, and faith will be lived out by the people whose lives she touched. No matter how the future looked, Angie would always say that the best is yet to come.

Now, I want to read one of her favorite passages from Philippians: Whatever happens, keep living your lives based on the reality of the Gospel of Christ. Then, when I come to see you or hear good reports of you, I will know that you stand united in one spirit and one passion, celebrating together as conquerors in the faith of the gospel. Then you will never be shaken or intimidated by the opposition that rises up against us. Your courage will prove to be a true sign from God of their coming destruction.

I pray that her memory will serve as an example to us all.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for a moment of silence.

SUPPORT FOR AMERICAN HOSTAGES AND DETAINEES ABROAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, as a co-chair of the Congressional Task Force

on American Hostages and Americans Wrongfully Detained Abroad, I rise in support of the Conference Report to Accompany the National Defense Authorization Act.

In the past decade, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of Americans taken hostage by rogue states and bad actors who are trying to leverage civilians to get what they want.

Right now, according to the Foley Foundation, there are currently at least 64 Americans held hostage or wrongfully detained in countries overseas. They are held in 16 different countries and territories.

Now, more than ever, we must keep up the drumbeat to bring these individuals home. That is why I am so heartened that the NDAA includes two of my bills to support and assist Americans wrongfully detained abroad and their loved ones fighting to get them safely back home.

First, the U.S. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee Day Act designates March 9 as Hostage and Wrongful Detainee Day and requests that the President issue a yearly proclamation urging Americans to observe this day in remembrance for those held hostage.

The bill also requires the Hostage and Wrongful Detainee flag be flown at the Capitol, the White House, and numerous other Federal buildings.

These families need our support. These families need the Nation's attention. These families need this legislation. By designating a day and a flag to be flown on Federal property, we will bring much-needed awareness to the plight of these Americans and the heartache of their families.

In addition, I am so very pleased to see that the NDAA includes the Supporting Americans Wrongfully or Unlawfully Detained Abroad Act. Families of the wrongfully detained often spend thousands and thousands of dollars traveling back and forth to Washington to advocate for the release of their loved ones and to work on their safe return home.

This bill would help families defray these costs by providing financial assistance to cover the costs of travel to and from Washington, D.C., including travel by air, train, bus, or other transit, as well as covering lodging expenses.

These families who are already dealing with the detention of a loved one shouldn't have to worry about going broke or spending a life savings because they are working alongside the Federal Government to do what is right. This bill will help ease that financial burden.

Finally, when detainees return home after years of wrongful detention, we must do more to ensure that they have the resources they need to return to normal life. They have often been stripped of employment, housing, and life as they knew it before they were taken hostage.

We must remember that the wrongfully detained have been imprisoned of-

tentimes for years, if not decades, which is wrong. They may come home, but they won't necessarily come home to a job. We cannot let these individuals fall through the cracks when they return. We need to help them return back to society.

That is why I am so proud that this bill will also seek to make available physical health services, mental health services, and other support, including providing information on available legal or financial resources for up to 5 years following the release of a detainee.

We need to make sure that these individuals have the physical and mental health assistance that they need to recover from unspeakable trauma.

While nothing can give back the years that our adversaries or the time that our adversaries have taken from these Americans, we have a responsibility to help them get back on their feet.

I sincerely thank the other co-chair of the American Hostage and Americans Wrongfully Detained Abroad Task Force, Mr. FRENCH HILL from Arkansas, for working with me on both of these bills.

I also pay recognition to the families of the hostages, particularly the family of my constituent, Paul Whelan, who is about to hit 5 years wrongfully detained in Russia. We are continuing to shine a light on Paul and demand and call for his release from the Russian Government.

To those held hostage, Congress stands behind you. Congress continues to work alongside our ally, Israel, in calling for the return of the 138 hostages currently still being held in Gaza.

HONORING DEAN DALE GREENE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dean Dale Greene of the University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, a role in which he has served since 2015.

After decades of service to UGA and our great State, Dean Greene will retire at the end of this year. Dale is an accomplished man. He is a graduate of Louisiana State University, holds a master's degree from Virginia Tech and a Ph.D. from Auburn University.

□ 1045

He joined the UGA faculty in 1986 and has served our school and this State in so many ways since.

Dale currently sits on the board of trustees for the American Forestry Association and has been on the board of directors for the Georgia Forestry Association since 1992. He was appointed by two Georgia Governors to the State Board of Registration of Foresters, first in 2004 and then again in 2010.

In 2007, Dean Greene received an Outstanding Research Award from the Society of American Foresters, the Herick Award for Superior Teaching, and was later inducted into the Georgia Forester's Hall of Fame.

His accomplishments don't end there. In 2008, Dale became a UGA senior teaching fellow and, in 2011, received the Georgia Forestry Association's Wise Owl award.

These are just a few ways that Dale Greene has been recognized for his outstanding service to the State of Georgia, countless students, and the field of forestry.

Mr. Speaker, as my friend embarks on his next chapter of life, he must know that his leadership has built a strong legacy. The Warnell School has grown and become so successful with him at the helm.

I thank him for all he has done, and I wish him continued success in his retirement. Go Dawgs.

THIS SHOULD NOT BE NORMAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as southern Nevada is reeling in the wake of a horrifying mass shooting at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

We remember Jerry Chang, Patricia Navarro-Velez, and Naoko Takemaru. All three of these faculty members were killed last week at work in the middle of the day while teaching our next generation of leaders.

Once again, 6 years after Las Vegas witnessed the Nation's deadliest mass shooting, our community is coming together to mourn another entirely preventable loss of life this week when four more people were shot and killed in the northwest valley.

As we pick up the pieces of these tragedies, our community is once again asking why. Why do we continue to accept these atrocities as normal? Why do we tolerate this violence when we have legislation before us that could save lives and stop the next tragedy before it is too late?

Mr. Speaker, I have a son in college. He is a freshman. I worry every day about the possibility that a tragedy like this would strike his campus. For many parents in my community, that worry became a reality last week. They saw texts and tweets with the breaking news that every parent in this country has come to fear: an active shooter at their child's school.

Students were instructed to run, hide, and fight. That is not normal. For our kids, this reality is even more traumatic—the sound of gunshots, barricading classroom doors, everyone hiding under their desks, silence, not knowing whether the next person to walk through that door is someone to save them or a murderous assailant. That is not normal.

Let's not forget the resulting emotional trauma that will plague everyone involved for years to come.

We are all incredibly grateful for the quick action of the first responders, the University Police Services, and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, who all bravely prevented that day from becoming even deadlier.

Like so many mothers in this country, I am angry, and I am exhausted. This has become a reality for far too many Americans for far too long.

Last week's shooting at UNLV was the 80th shooting at a school this year, a year that has broken the record for mass shootings and claimed the lives of over 40,000 children, parents, and neighbors. That is not normal.

On that same day that we lost three of our own in southern Nevada, Senate Republicans were busy blocking legislation that could prevent another tragedy. Students, faculty, and university staff were hiding for their lives, cowering in fear, while Washington politicians were cowering behind the gun lobby that refuses to support policies demanded by an overwhelming majority of Americans.

That should not be normal.

Nevadans are tired of it, and so am I. We cannot and should not continue to accept this violence. Weapons of war on our streets are not normal. Barricading classroom doors is not normal. Parents being afraid to send their children to school, from kindergarten to college, is not normal.

I don't want to hold another vigil. I don't want to hold another moment of silence. What I want to do is I want this institution, which Nevadans sent me to help fix, to stop accepting this violence and to end this sick cycle of inaction.

Mr. Speaker, I am not naive enough to think that we can't prevent every shooting, but, God, please, let us at least get caught trying.

Mr. Speaker, I am begging my colleagues and anyone who is listening to consider why we have accepted this for so long. Please, let's honor these victims with action.

SALUTING EDWARD J. "DOC" MCGANN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to salute a good friend, a gentleman with one of the biggest hearts I have ever met. Doc McGann was a piece of the very community that I grew up in back home on Long Island in a small village called Island Park.

Back home in Island Park, one of the beacons of our community is our local firehouse, and Doc McGann served that fire department for 72 years. He served as chief of our department from 1963 to 1964 and had the opportunity to serve every rank in that department. Even in his elder years, he was a calm voice, someone who gave the younger members advice on how to serve their community.

He was active in our Church of Sacred Heart.

He was the executive leader of the Island Park, Lido, Point Lookout Republican Committee. In that capacity, in 1980, he was one of the architects that sent an unknown guy from a small village of 6,000 people by the name of Alfonse D'Amato to the United States Senate.

Mr. Speaker, 42 years later, he helped send another guy from a village of 6,000 to the United States House of Representatives, that being me.

He was married to his lovely wife, Gerri, for 66 years. He leaves behind four children: Danny, Kevin, Kerrie, and Jackie. He is the proud grandfather and great-grandfather of beautiful children.

Today, I salute Doc McGann. When he died just less than a month ago, a piece of Island Park died with him.

RECOGNIZING BRIAN SULLIVAN ON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Brian Sullivan, the president of the Nassau County Correction Officers Benevolent Association.

After a long and storied career in the Nassau County Sheriff's Department, Mr. SULLIVAN has retired, leaving behind a legacy of excellence.

Brian Sullivan was appointed as a correction officer in Nassau County in 1988, marking the beginning of over 35 years of service. Brian Sullivan worked his way through the ranks of the department, ultimately achieving the rank of captain in 2022.

Throughout his time in corrections, Brian Sullivan served in a multitude of positions, including the Behavioral Management Unit, which comprised some of the most dangerous inmates in custody in our county.

In addition to safeguarding the public from violent offenders, Brian demonstrated his leadership among colleagues and was elected in 2002 to serve as a delegate of his union. As he did in his uniformed career, Brian rose through the ranks of the union, having been elected first as a delegate, twice as the union's first vice president, and then twice as president of the organization.

In his tenure as union leader, he was wildly successful and managed to help pass several laws at the State level to protect pensions and death benefits for Nassau County corrections officers.

Brian's work both safeguarding the people of Nassau County and advocating for his brother and sister correction officers is worthy of great praise. I am honored to recognize the incredible career of my Nassau neighbor and friend.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Brian Sullivan the best in this next chapter, and I know he will continue being a selfless community servant wherever life takes him. I wish him the best of luck in his retirement.