

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO BENJAMIN RAMEY

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart as I include into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the Obituary for Benjamin Ramey. Ben's father, Dave Ramey, is a dear friend who worked for me for 24 years and was my Chief of Staff for most of that time. I remember when Ben was born and how incredibly proud both Dave and Jen were to have a son and sibling for their daughter, Maddie. Ben was well-liked, funny, kind, smart and a bit mischievous. He will be missed beyond measure.

On Saturday, November 16, 2024, we will celebrate the life of Ben Ramey and remember the joy and goodness he brought to so many lives. We will also mourn the loss of such a bright young man and lend our shoulders to Dave, Jen and Maddie as they navigate a world without their dear son and brother. May the outpouring of love and support provide some measure of comfort to the broken hearts of the Ramey family.

Benjamin Gregg Ramey was born in Rockville, MD on May 14, 1997. In his beautiful 27 years of life, he touched many lives with love and light. He graduated from Rockville High School in 2015 and went on to study marketing and business analytics at the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. He graduated in 2019 with his BA.

After a long and difficult struggle with various illnesses, our beloved Ben died by his own hand early in the afternoon on Saturday, October 12th.

He is survived by his parents, Jennifer and David Ramey, his sister, Maddie Ramey, eight aunts and uncles and eight cousins.

Ben was hilarious, Ben was so smart, Ben felt things deeply. Ben loved his friends and they loved him back. Ben was the cherished "Bub" of his family, the jokester, the sneaky and beloved baby of the family. Ben loved music, Ben taught kids how to play tennis. Ben loved sleeping late and Ben had a gigantic head that his cousin Will once said must contain two brains. It is, of course, impossible to summarize his life in this little box. His memory will live on in the stories we tell about him and in the moments that have not yet happened, but will happen, where we will wish more than anything that he was there, and he will not be.

He charged us not to remember him by his struggles but rather to Live . . . in Love and Light.

He lives now in Heaven, in peace . . . caressed by pure love and pure light.

CELEBRATING THE HEREFORD INLET LIGHTHOUSE 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse located in North Wildwood, South Jersey. The Hereford Inlet has served as a beacon of safety since the 17th century when it was first used by whalers to draw in and prepare their catch. Through the course of time, the need for a lighthouse became more apparent due to the high number of shipwrecks, so the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse was built and first put into use on May 11, 1874. This remarkable structure was designed by Lighthouse Boards Chief Draftsman, Paul J. Pelz, who later went on to design the Library of Congress here in Washington, D.C. Over the years, the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse has stood the test of time despite many tides, storms and hurricanes threatening to tear it down and eliminate the assurance it has provided mariners over the years, but it continues to stand strong. Currently, the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse is managed by the City of North Wildwood's Historical Commission, who are an excellent group of volunteers from the local community that have done a tremendous job maintaining the appearance of the magnificent building. Known as one of the most important structures on the Five Mile Beach of South Jersey, it continues to operate as a navigational aid and is open to the public to learn about its history, take in the ocean air, and walk the beautiful gardens to the seashore. Happy 150th Anniversary to the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse and here is to 150 more.

May God bless the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse and God bless the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING CARL WILLIAM "WILL" RUSH

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Carl William "Will" Rush's bravery to save an American flag from burning during the anti-Israel protests at Union Station.

On Wednesday, July 25th, several anti-Israel protests erupted around Washington D.C. in reaction to Prime Minister Netanyahu's address to Congress. Outside of Union Station, protesters vandalized the Christopher Columbus Memorial Fountain with pro-Hamas graffiti and profanity. Additionally, American flags were lowered and replaced with Palestinian flags. Once the American flag was replaced, the crowd doused it in lighter fluid and

set it on fire. During the chaos, Will grabbed the American flag from the ground and was then chased by a large group of people. Will's courage to stand up for the American flag was an incredible display of patriotism and bravery.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing Will's actions during these disruptive and violent protests. I hope that his courage will inspire other Americans to stand up for their flag and country. May God bless Will and his family in all their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OF MAJOR BRENNAN RANDEL

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my deepest gratitude for the service of Major Brennan Randel to my office and the United States Congress. As a Department of Defense Fellow, Brennan conducted himself with the utmost professionalism, assisting my office on a number of crucial legislative issues to include appropriations, defense policy, military construction, veterans affairs, and energy, water, and environmental issues.

By managing our office's appropriations for four separate accounts, Brennan developed a unique understanding of the federal budgeting process. Through his efforts and advice to me, the House Appropriations Committee supported my request for funding for an emergency operations center in my district and programmatic funding for several of my constituents' priorities.

Beyond his work on appropriations, Brennan took the initiative to expand his knowledge base and contribute above expectations. While defense fellows typically only cover the defense and veterans affairs policy portfolios, he asked to take on the energy, water, and environment portfolio. When Brennan discovered that the biannual Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) was due for reauthorization, he developed a plan to reach out to local stakeholders to determine how I could best advocate for our district. He then started working with community leaders and other members' staff and achieved great results; three of my requests were included in the House-passed WRDA bill, including a provision that a bipartisan pair of representatives joined my office in supporting.

Another one of Brennan's great qualities is his ability to manage a project from start to finish. When Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough came to Georgia's 2nd District for a VA clinic grand opening, Brennan took on the assignment of planning a town hall event in conjunction with the clinic grand opening. He worked with the Secretary's team to ensure the event met everyone's expectations, secured a venue, planned the event, and helped send invitations to local veteran leaders. Brennan's hard work set the stage for me

• 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.

to host local elected leaders and local veterans service organization leaders together in an intimate discussion with the VA Secretary.

Throughout his time in my office, Brennan exemplified intelligence, diligence, compassion, and a joyful spirit of public service in all that he did. He was also lovingly supported by his wife Elizabeth, and his three children, Eva, Roman, and Maeve. They were integral supporters of his success, and I am equally grateful to them.

Following his time in my office, Brennan went on to work as a Congressional Budget Liaison for the United States Army, where he continued to make innumerable contributions to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian, and me, in extending our best wishes to Brennan and his family as he transitions to a new assignment and expressing profound thankfulness to him for his service to our great Nation.

SUPPORTING H.R. 82, THE SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT OF 2023

HON. PRAMILA JAYAPAL

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, on November 12th the House of Representatives took an important step by passing H.R. 82 and eliminating two harmful provisions that unfairly deny workers, their spouses, and their children the Social Security benefits they deserve. These provisions—the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) penalties—unfairly target Social Security benefits earned by public service workers, including teachers, police officers, firefighters, and hundreds of thousands of federal retirees.

WEP unfairly penalizes retirees who have spent careers in public service but who have also paid into Social Security at some point. More than 6 million public employees are or would be affected by WEP and around 800,000 Americans would have benefits reduced or eliminated by the GPO. Social Security keeps millions of seniors, children, disabled individuals and their families out of poverty, which is why it is crucial that Congress act to remedy these penalties. That is why I voted for H.R. 82.

That is also why I cosponsor Rep. JOHN LARSON's Social Security 2100 Act, which would repeal WEP and GPO while providing the appropriate pay-for measures needed to strengthen and preserve Social Security. The Social Security 2100 Act would improve Social Security's Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) so it reflects the inflation experienced by seniors, cuts taxes for middle-income beneficiaries among other important measures, and do so by ensuring millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share of Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes.

Conversely, H.R. 82 would fully repeal WEP and GPO without a pay-for. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that this would move up the date of insolvency for the combined Social Security Trust Funds. Given that the President-elect and House Republicans are unwilling to support commonsense

solutions to strengthen Social Security, it is crucial that we work to prevent benefit cuts for Social Security recipients, especially our most vulnerable citizens.

Congress must achieve the goals of protecting American federal workers while also preserving the crucial benefits that all Americans are entitled to through Social Security. H.R. 82 would cost the Social Security Trust Fund \$200 billion over 10 years, and it is imperative that Congress act to fill in this gap.

I urge the Senate to address H.R. 82's pay-for shortcomings as this bill moves forward.

FRIENDSHIP UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, Friendship United Methodist Church in Buena, New Jersey has done an outstanding job spreading the good news of Jesus for over 200 years. This extraordinary place of worship has been standing in the same place it was back in 1808, when it became one of the first Methodist Episcopal churches in the area. In the early days of South Jersey and the United States, there were not many places to worship, but the dedicated followers of Jesus Christ made sure that the people of Buena, New Jersey had a place to fellowship with their Lord. The church has endured hardships through the years and even had to close its doors at one point, but with the commitment from the ancestors of some of its original members, the house of God once again reopened in 2010 and has stood strong ever since. To this day, it is the oldest known church structure that is still in use by its congregation, and it looks forward to many more years of bringing people close to God and remembering the history of Christianity in South Jersey.

God bless Friendship United Methodist Church and God bless the United States of America.

HONORING CARLOS LEON'S CAREER IN SERVICE

HON. VERONICA ESCOBAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor El Paso County Commissioner, Carlos Leon, a lifelong El Pasoan, who has dedicated his career to serving El Paso, Texas for over four decades.

Commissioner Leon began his career in 1974 with the El Paso Police Department, where he served for three decades. As a captain, he championed community policing, the law enforcement policy of fostering strong relationships between law enforcement and residents that builds trust and creates safer neighborhoods. In 1999, he was appointed Chief of Police, leading El Paso to its first national recognition as the safest city in America.

Commissioner Leon's dedication continued with his election as County Commissioner for

Precinct 1, where he has served three terms. I had the privilege of working with Commissioner Leon on the Commissioners' Court, witnessing firsthand his passion for a responsive, efficient government. He was instrumental in creating a County Administration Office to streamline and professionalize county operations, expanding healthcare access through University Medical Center clinics, and championing a \$15 minimum wage for all County employees.

It is my privilege to honor Commissioner Carlos Leon for his decades of dedicated service to the citizens of El Paso County. His leadership in public safety, infrastructure, access to healthcare, and economic equity has left a lasting impact on our community. I extend my heartfelt gratitude for his years of service and wish him and his beloved family, the very best in his well-deserved retirement.

CONGRATULATING THE ST. ELIZABETH HORNETS, THE MISSOURI CLASS 1 SOFTBALL STATE CHAMPIONS

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the St. Elizabeth Hornets softball team for their remarkable achievement of capturing the Class 1 state championship. Their commanding victory over Gallatin in the title game, with a final score of 11-1, is a testament to their hard work and extraordinary talent.

Under Coach Oligschlaeger's leadership, the Hornets showcased consistency and greatness by going 30-2. What makes winning 30 games even more impressive is that they played most of their games against schools in larger classifications. When postseason play began, the dominance continued. They astonishingly outscored their opponents 78-7.

This championship adds to the legacy of the St. Elizabeth softball program, marking the fifth in its history. The continued success of this program is an excellent example of what happens when a community comes together to embrace and support its school.

I extend my sincerest congratulations to St. Elizabeth's players, coaches, staff, and fans. The shared effort of hard work, determination, and perseverance has brought honor to the school, town, and Mid-Missouri region. This St. Elizabeth softball team season shows what can be achieved when a community comes together to support a common goal.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2024

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from votes on November 13, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted: NAY on Roll Call No. 459, and NAY on Roll Call No. 460.