

HONORING KAY GRANGER

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, today, I honor someone who has been more than a colleague. KAY GRANGER has been a trailblazer, a mentor, and a dear friend. As a leader within the Texas delegation, she embodied the best of Texas, and the best of America.

KAY was the first Republican woman to chair the powerful House Appropriations Committee—arguably the most influential committee in the House. The “power of the purse” is no small responsibility, and KAY’s leadership exemplified strength, fairness, and resolve—qualities that defined her career. She has an innate ability to navigate the complexities of governance, always keeping the needs of Texas and the nation at heart.

When KAY talks, people listen. Her voice commands respect because it is grounded in wisdom and a deep understanding of the challenges facing our country. She is warm, endearing, and can guide with kindness, but you never want to cross her—not because she is harsh, but because her strength and pragmatism are unmatched.

As we hand the torch to a new generation, we’re reminded of KAY’s legacy. Her kindness and determination have left an indelible mark on all of us. We will miss her dearly—not just for the work she accomplished, but for the person she is. KAY GRANGER’s legacy is one of strength, grace, and unwavering service to her constituents and her country.

I thank KAY for her unparalleled contributions. Her example inspires us, and her absence will be deeply felt in the halls of Congress.

May we honor her legacy by continuing to lead with the same courage and conviction she exemplified.

RECOGNIZING STATE SENATOR
JANET BUCKNER**HON. JASON CROW**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor State Senator Janet Buckner for her commitment and faithful public service to the state of Colorado.

Senator Buckner has been a resident and leader in our community for decades. Early in her career, she worked with children and family as a speech and language therapist. Senator Buckner worked for decades in medical sales before then serving our community as an elected official and public servant.

After the death of her late husband, Senator Buckner was unanimously elected to serve the remainder of his term representing the people of House District 40. The Honorable John W. Buckner, like his wife, spent much of his life dedicated to educating the youth of the district, as a teacher and principal at Overland High School.

In 2016 and 2018, she was re-elected to continue her service in the Colorado General

Assembly. During then-Representative Buckner’s tenure in the House, she was appointed to serve in leadership as Speaker Pro Tempore. During this time, she helped to pass the historic Equal Pay for Equal Work Act of 2019 to prohibit sex discrimination in the workplace.

In 2020, Senator Buckner was elected to the Colorado State Senate, where she served as the Senate Majority Caucus Chair, Chair of the Education Committee, and as a member of the Finance Committee. During this time, she championed legislation to create the Department of Early Childhood and the Universal Preschool program, bringing resources and universal preschool to all children in Colorado.

Senator Buckner has always put people first and believes in giving all individuals a seat at the table regarding policy and legislative issues. She leads by example with grace, inclusivity, and empathy.

I thank Senator Janet Buckner for decades of dedicated service and commitment to representing her constituents and our community.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF
MIKE McGUIRE**HON. RITCHIE TORRES**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, I want to celebrate Director Mike McGuire’s incredible body of work as he retires from his position as Director of the Mason Tenders’ District Council PAC and from Laborers’ Local 79.

During his 28 years as Director, Mike worked to protect and strengthen safe, local, well-paying union jobs. Mike navigated the competitive New York City construction industry with grace, all while putting the worker before anything else. This passion stemmed from his 44 years in Laborers’ Local 79 where he worked diligently for other members both on and off job sites.

Labor protections and unions are paramount, especially in New York’s most dangerous large industry. Mike advocated his hardest for the safety of the individuals tasked with building our communities. I thank him for all of his amazing work and look forward to hearing about his next chapter.

HONORING KAY GRANGER

SPEECH OF

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a remarkable leader, dedicated public servant, and good friend—Chairwoman KAY GRANGER.

Chairwoman GRANGER’s tenure in public service began long before she came to the United States Congress. From her time as a teacher and businesswoman, to becoming the first female mayor of Fort Worth, she has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to serving her community and her country.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have worked side by side with Chairwoman GRANGER, and her leadership on the Committee has delivered on real conservative priorities. She has led critical policies that have touched every corner of our Nation—from bolstering our national security and supporting our veterans, to investing in American technology and backing rural America, her work here in Congress will continue to help Americans for decades to come.

Her departure from Congress is not just the end of an era for Texas’ 12th District, but a significant moment for all of us who had the privilege of serving alongside her.

As she begins this new chapter of her life, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for her decades of service and wish her the best for all that lies ahead. I thank the Chairwoman for her incredible service to our Nation and the communities across Texas’ 12th District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to physically record my vote on suspensions. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on Roll Call No. 505; YES on Roll Call No. 504; YES on Roll Call No. 503; and YES on Roll Call No. 502.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LAUREN BOEBERT

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. BOEBERT. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 504, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA.

RECOGNIZING JOHN HATTER

HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and express gratitude to a terrific public servant, a trusted advisor to me and so many others, John Hatter. John Hatter, my District Director, has been serving the Hoosiers of Indiana’s Sixth District for over a decade.

John has consistently given my constituents the support they need when dealing with the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense. John is a humble man and a role model for public service.

As this chapter in Congress comes to a close, I am beyond grateful for John, his service, and his friendship. Mr. Speaker, may God bless John.

HONORING THE CONTINUED SERVICE OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DARREN SILL

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Lieutenant Commander Darren Sill, United States Navy, during his outstanding service as a legislative fellow in my Washington, D.C. office this year. Throughout 2024, Darren has played a critical role in supporting my work on the House Armed Services Committee and representing the proud Navy community in eastern Connecticut.

As Ranking Member of the House Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, which has the solemn, critical duty of overseeing much of our Nation's Navy, Marine Corps, and various Air Force programs and policies, his perspective and helpful insights were essential to me and my office's work. Year in, and year out, the Department of Defense's legislative fellowship program brings highly talented individuals to Capitol Hill who provide invaluable benefits to Members of the House and Senate defense committees. Officers, like Darren, bring real-world experience from their time in the classroom at the various academies and experiences from their time serving on active duty. This year, as our subcommittee actively worked to shape our Nation's critical shipbuilding programs, particularly focused on the pursuit to add another Virginia Class submarine to the budget in the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act, Darren provided exquisite judgement in navigating the landscape of crafting such a large and critical piece of legislation.

Darren has also seized initiative in a variety of areas beyond naval affairs that benefit eastern Connecticut. He worked tirelessly to provide insight into our Navy's planned shipbuilding programs, visited with leadership at Naval Submarine New London to discuss ongoing installation and submarine force operations, toured General Dynamics Electric Boat Shipyard, focused on submarine industrial base issues crucial to sustaining the Navy's fleet, and gained first-hand experience in Connecticut's substantial aerospace industrial base. He also used his recent shore assignment as a department head aboard the USS *Texas* (SSN 775) to provide invaluable insight on the Navy's submarine maintenance and sustainment capacity throughout the calendar year, providing a unique perspective on the challenges at our public shipyards. Lastly, he engaged in persistent communication with the embassies of Australia and the United Kingdom to facilitate various engagements in my office and around Capitol Hill and, most importantly, leveraged those relationships as Congress continued oversight of the trilateral AUKUS security agreement.

Darren's work ethic, diligence, intelligence, and first-hand experience as a Submarine Officer made an immediate benefit and memorable impact on my office and subcommittee staff. He was also an energetic, affable colleague to my entire congressional staff, willing to help in small ways and big ways to serve the constituents of Connecticut's 2nd Congressional District. His thoughtfulness on issues

outside of his Navy portfolio were much appreciated by the whole team, and they will be friends for life.

After his Junior Officer tour aboard USS *Scranton* (SSN 756), a department head tour on USS *Texas* (SSN 775), a tour at the Pentagon with N133, and numerous stints in Groton at the Submarine Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, I am thankful for his family's tremendous sacrifice to our Nation and for landing in the District of Columbia for the current phase of their life. Though Darren's presence will be deeply missed by both my personal staff and Seapower staff, I know full-well that he will make his presence known as he heads back to the Pentagon to serve in the Secretary of the Navy's office as Director of White House and Congressional Affairs. I look forward to seeing Darren back in Groton when he attends the Submarine Command Course to prepare himself for command assignments in our Nation's submarine force.

Mr. Speaker, as has also been the case for each of his predecessors that my office has had the opportunity to host, I have benefited greatly from Darren's training and background. This recurring process that the fellowship program fosters, strengthens civilian-military understanding for future leaders of the greatest military in the world, which I believe is a necessary component of a strong democracy. Our Nation is best served at sea and here onshore by officers and leaders of the highest caliber, like Darren. He embodies such qualities and has a promising career ahead in continued service to our Nation, and we owe him such gratitude. To that end, I ask that the House join me in wishing LCDR Darren Sill, his wife Andi, and their two children, Dawson and McKenna, the best of luck in their next life chapter.

RECOGNIZING KAZAKHSTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 33rd Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan's Independence Day, celebrated on December 16, represents the fulfillment of a long-cherished dream: a sovereign nation charting its own course in the modern world. It is a day to honor the heroes who played instrumental roles in achieving independence and shaping a vision of freedom and self-determination for Kazakhstan for future generations.

On December 16, 1991, Kazakhstan declared its independence, officially breaking away from the Soviet Union. The United States, recognizing the significance of this achievement, was among the first nations to acknowledge Kazakhstan's sovereignty on December 25, 1991. Furthermore, the United States demonstrated its commitment by opening its embassy in January 1992 and has consistently emphasized its support for Kazakhstan's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.

Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has emerged as a respected member of the international community. The nation has fos-

tered diplomatic relations, contributed to global peace and security, and driven economic development. The relationship between Kazakhstan and the United States has grown robust and wide-ranging, further strengthened by the Enhanced Strategic Partnership.

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's dedication to political and societal reforms is particularly commendable. Despite external challenges, Kazakhstan has remained a peaceful and stabilizing force in Central Asia, demonstrating its commitment to democracy and civilizational orientation toward the West.

Kazakhstan remains one of the United States' most reliable and trusted partners, both regionally and globally, particularly as an active member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This long-standing partnership underscores the importance of advancing efforts to establish Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR), serving as a pragmatic acknowledgment of the progress Kazakhstan has made and a necessary step to reinforce America's strategic relationship with Central Asia.

Looking ahead, the United States and Kazakhstan are ready to strengthen their partnership through ongoing dialogue, trade, and cooperation on mutual objectives. Together, we remain dedicated to promoting peace, security, and prosperity, both in Central Asia and across the globe.

HONORING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION'S TRIUMPH AT RIVA RIDGE

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 80th anniversary of the 10th Mountain Division's heroic role in the Battle of Riva Ridge.

Eighty years ago, the United States and its allies waged a historic campaign to liberate Europe from Nazi Germany. Pivotal to these efforts, were the brave soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division who embarked on the formidable mission of breaching the German Gothic Line, a 108-mile-long defensive barrier stretching across the Apennine Mountains in northern Italy. Breaking through this line was vital for the Allied forces to advance across Europe and retake control of the continent. The Germans held the strategic high ground allowing them to dominate key terrain, obstruct Allied assaults, and block critical supply routes in Europe. The Allies determined that the only path forward was to scale the ice and snow-covered cliffs of Riva Ridge, which stood thousands of feet above the valley where the 10th Mountain Division was stationed.

The Germans believed these cliffs were insurmountable. However, they underestimated the determination, versatility, and unparalleled skill of the 10th Mountain Division, a regiment composed of elite mountaineers, trappers, and outdoorsmen who trained and were battle-readied in the rugged Colorado Rockies.

In the evening of February 18, 1945, 700 soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division ascended the treacherous, ice-covered slopes of Riva Ridge. Moving under the cover of darkness and a concealing fog, they scaled 2,000