

to, constituents. The research and analysis that CMF performed for the Gold Mouse Awards identified the most innovative and effective web page practices and then shared that critical information with all Congressional offices so they could benefit everyone.

In 2018, Brad's vision for establishing an "Academy Awards" for Congress provided the spark for the creation of CMF's Democracy Awards program. The Democracy Awards, in a similar approach to the Gold Mouse Awards before them, are presented to both staff and members to acknowledge their exemplary use of best management practices, constituent services and transparency. By shining a spotlight on these leaders, the awards showcase their skills and practices for others to utilize and improve on.

Through his tenure at CMF, Brad has carefully stewarded its strong reputation for non-partisan work strengthening the management skills and workplace practices in Congress while building public understanding and trust in the legislative branch. Brad has been a life-long advocate for the institution of Congress, members, and staff and we thank him for his dedication and work on our behalf.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR KAY
PATTERSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2024

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a trusted leader, a tireless champion for civil rights, and a treasured friend. South Carolina State Senator Kay Patterson transitioned on December 13, 2024. His integrity, courage, and wisdom will leave an indelible mark on the State of South Carolina for years to come.

Mr. Patterson was born in Darlington, South Carolina in 1931 and grew up in our shared hometown of Sumter. After graduating from Lincoln High School in 1949 and attending Claflin University, Kay joined the Marine Corps. After his discharge from the Corps, he returned to Claflin and later Allen University through the GI Bill. As a student at Allen, Kay cleaned offices at the South Carolina Statehouse where Black people were forbidden from entering in any official capacity.

Kay graduated from Allen in 1956 and began a public-school teaching career at W.A. Perry Middle School in Columbia where he taught for 14 years. When Columbia schools were integrated in 1970, Kay joined the South Carolina Education Association, where he worked for 15 years, in 1974, Kay was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives from House District 73 representing North Columbia. For the next 32 years, Kay served in the building where he was once forbidden from entering except to clean the offices.

As a Representative, Kay was singularly focused on being a voice for the voiceless. His background as a teacher made him a tireless advocate for public education and South Carolina's children. Eventually, he was selected as a member of the influential House Budget Committee. Kay was excited about this new opportunity, but that excitement vanished when I, among others, urged him to run for

the State Senate in 1984. Reluctantly, Kay eventually agreed to my appeal, and he went on to serve in the State Senate for 24 years, becoming just the second Black member to be elected to the chamber since the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras.

In the Senate, Kay became known for his sharp wit and oratory skills. Though Kay didn't speak on the floor of the Senate often, when he did, everyone listened. He wasn't afraid to discuss difficult topics like race and always believed in speaking up for what he believed in. His courage and wisdom made him a natural leader among his colleagues, who elected him to Chair the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus and the Richland County Legislative Delegation, and to membership on the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees—the first Black man to serve on the board in the modern era.

Kay's proudest legislative achievement was his advocacy for removing the Confederate flag from the South Carolina Statehouse Dome. He introduced his first bill calling for the flag's removal in 1983 and eventually helped negotiate a compromise that saw the flag removed from the top of the dome to the statehouse grounds in 2000. When the flag was fully removed in 2015, it was, in no small part, due to Kay's decades of advocacy.

After his retirement from the South Carolina General Assembly in 2008, Kay continued to serve his community. Kay believed that true leadership involved being an example to those who are destined to follow. Many elected officials in South Carolina have sought his mentorship and many have been inspired to enter public service through his example. A civil rights icon and champion for the poor, Kay was an advocate for all who couldn't advocate for themselves. He was an extraordinary public servant not only for his community, but for the entire state of South Carolina.

I wrote in the Introduction of my Memoirs that, "All of my experiences have not been pleasant, but I have considered all of them to be blessings." I count my experiences with Kay as some of my life's greatest blessings, and he was a blessing to all who knew him. Kay will be sorely missed and may he rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in celebrating the life and legacy of Senator Kay Patterson.

CELEBRATING DR. RACHEL
HARDEMAN

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2024

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my constituent and friend Dr. Rachel Hardeman for her extraordinary antiracist scholarship.

Dr. Hardeman is the founding director of the Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity (CARHE), and the Blue Cross Endowed Professor of Health and Racial Equity in the Division of Health Policy & Management at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Her tremendous work at the Center led to her being named one of TIME's 100 most influential people in the world this year.

Led by Dr. Hardeman, the team of researchers at CARHE has garnered national and

international attention for their research on structural racism in healthcare. TIME specifically recognized Dr. Hardeman's work to address America's maternal health crisis, which has focused on disparate birthing outcomes across race and how police brutality can impact pregnancy and childbirth. Dr. Hardeman is committed to lending her expertise to shape policy that will positively impact our communities for generations to come, including Minnesota's groundbreaking Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act and the federal Momnibus Bill.

Dr. Hardeman has always placed community at the forefront of her work, and consistently partners with stakeholders to better inform her research. A prime example is her long-standing partnership with the Black-owned Roots Community Birthing Center in North Minneapolis which has been instrumental in her research to demonstrate a culturally-centered approach to birth equity that can help address the maternal health crisis we are facing.

This honor from TIME is indicative of Dr. Hardeman's dedication to working closely with community to produce results that are relevant not just locally, but around the country and the world. We are very fortunate to have such a brilliant, diligent, and thoughtful leader in Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District whose work has, and undoubtedly will continue to, lead to better health outcomes in Minnesota and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Hardeman for this recognition and share our gratitude for her invaluable contributions to the fields of health and racial equity.

RECOGNIZING SCOTT COLABELLA:
FOUR DECADES OF HONORABLE
PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2024

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity today to highlight the deep, widespread and heartfelt appreciation shared by many across Ocean County, New Jersey for their extraordinary Ocean County Clerk, Scott Colabella, who will retire at the end of this month after a lifetime of outstanding public service to our New Jersey communities.

Scott is a great American patriot. His story of commitment, dedication and outstanding work on behalf of New Jersey citizens—and his leadership in securing foolproof, reliable elections—belongs in our Nation's congressional record, the official written history of this country since the Continental Congress.

I first met Scott in the early days of my campaigns and congressional service. In fact, Scott was among one of my first congressional interns in my freshman term in the 97th Congress in 1981. Serving in my Washington, D.C. office, Scott proved to be an outstanding worker, assisting me in the delivery of top-notch constituent service and legislative analysis.

After working on Capitol Hill and graduating from Rider University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science, Scott began a career of public service rewarded with promotions, achievements and advancement over the course of the next several decades.

His first stop was an eight-year stretch serving in Governor Tom Kean's Constituent Service Office and the New Jersey Division of Motor Vehicles. Thereafter, for many years, Scott served as the Executive Director of the Ocean County Republican Organization and ultimately, he became the Deputy County Clerk, of Ocean County in January 2004.

As Deputy Clerk, Scott proved his muscle and helped build a program based on a deep understanding of New Jersey election law and its equitable, just application. As such, the people of Ocean County recognized his talents and resoundingly elected him to serve as County Clerk in 2010.

Since 2010, Scott was elected by wide margins three consecutive times—a public affirmation and reward for his steady and exemplary service as a State Constitutional Officer.

When he took the helm as County Clerk, the office had a reputation as a well-run organization, but Scott still worked to find new ways to expand its reach and make it even better. Under his watch, the office processed millions of vote-by-mail applications and ballots and millions more sample ballots. Scott also directed the processing of countless trade names, passports, notary public oaths and veterans' cards.

During his tenure, Scott successfully launched the Property Alert Service to empower the public to monitor any changes made to their property records. He modernized election software to enable the public to monitor election results in real time on the Clerk's website, and he upgraded the electronic e-records system to attain paperless recording of over 70 percent of all mortgages and land deeds and other documents.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Scott met and stayed ahead of the extreme challenges facing county clerks across the state—and he helped lead the way. When voters in 2020 were required under state law to use only vote-by-mail ballots, for the first time ever, he met the task, secured the trust of the voters and achieved a successful election process.

A longtime resident of the Borough of Barnegat Light on Long Beach Island, Ocean County, New Jersey, Scott is moving on to the next chapter of his life.

He will be greatly missed by me and thousands of my fellow Ocean County residents, who have taken great confidence and comfort in knowing Scott Colabella was at the helm, securing free and fair elections in Ocean County.

We thank Scott for his unparalleled public service. May God bless my friend, and bring him added success and great luck in the years ahead.

ADDRESS OF MAJOR GENERAL
PETER ANDRYSIAK

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, inspiring remarks were presented by Major General Peter Andrysiak EUCOM Chief of Staff on December 14, 2024, for the Com-

memoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge at Luxembourg American Cemetery. Americans are grateful for the proven competence of the American military.

Good morning, Grand Duke Henri, Grand Duchess, King Philippe, Queen Mathilde, Prime Minister Frieden, Speaker Claude Wiseler, President Roberta Metsola of the European Parliament, Prime Minister Alexander de Croo, Ambassador Nelson, Secretary Djou, honorable Members of Congress, Ambassador Thomas Barrett, Commissioner Matthew Jones, distinguished guests, allies and partners, and most importantly, to our honored veterans that are with us here today, welcome today this sacred place we gather to honor the legacy of those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. And it's a privilege to stand here among you in this solemn 80th anniversary, a moment to reflect on the courage and sacrifice that secured freedom that we cherish today. 80 years ago, in the depths of the Ardennes winter on the ground that we stand on, bore witness to extraordinary courage and unimaginable sacrifice. Young soldiers faced not only a relentless enemy fire, but also the freezing temperatures and the snow-covered terrain against the possible odds, they stood firm, not just for their own countries, but for the liberty of millions. Their fight was for something greater, a vision of a Free Europe and a better future. And so today as we commemorate their bravery, we reaffirm our gratitude for their sacrifice and the unity that made victory possible. For me, this commemoration is profoundly personal. My parents, like many millions in Europe, endured unimaginable horrors of World War Two. My father, orphaned by the Nazi tyranny when his mother was put in prison, was liberated by the Allied Forces who fought here in the Ardennes. His father, a man I never knew, perished in a concentration camp. My mother and her family were forced out of the Sudetenland and into forced labor camps and eventually granted refugee status in Germany. But the journey was a grueling one, and her father never survived it. Another man that I never had the opportunity to know. So these tragedies, like so many others, were the reality of life under the oppression during the war, yet their liberation and the liberation of millions came at the hands of Allied soldiers that we honor here today. Their courage gave my parents and countless others a second chance. They made it possible for me to be standing here in front of you today. Millions endured similar struggles, and millions owned their liberation to the soldiers who fought here. Their courage changed the course of history, not just for families like mine, but for entire nations. The Battle of the Bulge tested allied resolve under extreme conditions, and in December of 1944 the German Army launched a massive surprise offensive through the Ardennes, creating the infamous Bulge of the Allied front lines. Nowhere was this more evident than at Bastogne, where Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe in the 101st Division held the line against overwhelming odds, encircled and under siege. McAuliffe and his men faced relentless attacks under freezing conditions, and when the Germans demanded surrender, everybody knows the story that McAuliffe his famous statement "Nuts!" The Defiance became a rallying cry for the beleaguered defenders and a symbol of American and Allied determination and victory at Bastogne was marked by a turning point in the battle. It was the end of any German offensive, but it came at a high cost. Over 75,000 were killed, wounded or captured, but their sacrifice endured that the march

toward liberation would continue. The people of Luxembourg endured the occupation, suffering and loss during the war, yet they also witnessed liberation brought by Allied forces who risked and gave their lives in these very fields. Luxembourg has shown remarkable dedication to honoring those who fell here and through the care of this Cemetery and others like it, you remind us of the enduring bond forged between the nations in the crucible of war. And your commitment endures with your with you being your presence here, as these sacrifices are never forgotten. I've had the good opportunity and good fortune to be at a number of the American Battle Monuments, cemeteries, and I'm always in awe of their splendor? They're pristine. They're powerful, you know. And as we stand here, as you look behind me, 5,076 headstones, both Latin Crosses and Stars of David, were reminded of the extraordinary courage and the sacrifice of those who rest here, farmers, factory workers, teachers, students, fathers, brothers, sons and sisters and daughters, and they came from all walks of life, all races, and united for a common cause, the defense of freedom. Each marker is perfectly aligned and oriented westward toward home, a poignant reminder of the enduring connection that these heroes shared with the nation that they fought to protect, even in eternal rest, they faced the families who awaited their return but never got to see them again. The Wall of the Missing on both sides of the tent consists of two walls inscribed with the names of 371 service members whose remains were never recovered. And these walls standing in solemn symmetry symbolize the connection between those who fought and those who remain to honor their sacrifice. And then, though their bodies are absent, their memory endures as a testament to the cost of liberty. And at the center, right, or back here behind us stands the small chapel, a place for reflection and reverence, and the description in their reads their name liveth forevermore. These words serve as a solemn promise that the sacrifices for those who rest here will never be forgotten. This Cemetery and its pristine grounds are solemn and solid markers telling their story. We spare no expense to honor those who perished, providing them with a final resting place fitting of their sacrifice, a place that reflects the magnitude and courage the debt we owe to their memory. And so this sacred place ensures that their sacrifices will be remembered, not just by those that are gathered here today, but by the generations to come. The sacrifices of those who rest here are not relics of history. They are the foundation for the present and the future. NATO built on the unity and determination shown during these battles like The Ardennes remains a cornerstone of peace and security, and then today, NATO's commitment to collective defense and shared values is a shining city on a hill to deter aggression and to uphold freedom secured by these brave men and women. The courage and resolve of these soldiers inspire us all, and still, they challenge us to live up to their legacy by protecting the values they fought for, liberty, unity and dignity for all. I'll close with a quote from President Roosevelt. The light of their sacrifice shall not grow dim with the passing years, let us ensure that their gift of liberty endures for generations. So let us honor their legacy, not only with our words but our actions. Let us strive to live lives worthy of their sacrifice by protecting the freedoms they fought for, fostering unity amongst nations and standing resolute against tyranny in all of its forms. So May their bravery continue to inspire us, may their memory forever guide us toward a better world, Thank you.