

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING KELLY WHEATON
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RE-
TIREMENT FROM THE TRANS-
PORTATION SERVICE
ADMINISTRATION

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Mr. Kelly Wheaton, who is retiring after more than 38 years of faithful Service to our Nation culminating in his service as the Deputy Chief Counsel for Enforcement in the Transportation Security Administration for the past 14 years.

Kelly Wheaton was born in Dallas, Texas, and was raised in a small town in the middle of Tennessee after his father died at a young age. Mr. Wheaton went on to attend the University of Notre Dame on a four-year ROTC scholarship and graduated with honors. After undergrad, he graduated with honors from the University of North Carolina School of Law.

His passion for service and dedication to our country led Mr. Wheaton to the U.S. Army in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. There, he served 23 years and rose to the rank of colonel. He held almost every position in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps and was deployed to Saudi Arabia in 1990, Liberia in 2003, and Afghanistan in 2005. He received numerous accolades and honors throughout his military service, including the Bronze Star for his service in Afghanistan and the Defense Superior Service Medal for his service as the Chief of Staff for the DoD General Counsel.

In 2008, Mr. Wheaton joined the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in the role of Deputy Chief Counsel for Enforcement. As the Deputy chief Counsel, he held authority from the Administrator to address violations of TSA's security requirements. He oversaw the work of attorneys providing legal advice and support in the areas of regulatory enforcement, intelligence, international law, criminal law and internal investigations, and credentialing, vetting, and screening.

From January 2021 until June 2021, Mr. Wheaton was selected to accompany the Administrator when he served as the Acting Secretary and Acting Deputy Secretary. That year his efforts were recognized when he received the prestigious Presidential Rank Award, Meritorious Rank Recipient, an award that was established back in 1978 to honor a select group of career members for a sustained record of exceptional professional achievement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Wheaton on his retirement. I am proud to represent Mr. Wheaton in Congress, and I thank him and his family for his honorable 38 years of service to our Nation with the U.S. Army and Transportation Security Administration.

HONORING THE IMPRESSIVE
SERVICE OF ANDREW O'GRADY

HON. PATRICK RYAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Andrew O'Grady, CEO of Mental Health America (MHA) of Dutchess County, for his extraordinary 30 years of service to those affected by mental illness and addiction in the Hudson Valley.

Andrew has been with MHA of Dutchess County for 23 years and managed the transition of Case Management Services and Mental Health Clinics, from Dutchess County government to MHA and local hospitals. Through his embrace of change and leadership in development, design, and staffing, New York State has had successful major transitions in the human services sector.

Andrew has appeared on both radio and television speaking about mental health in an effort to eradicate stigma associated with getting care.

He has been a leading voice in discussing mental health and addiction in his community and has been recognized locally and statewide for his leadership and commitment.

As President of the NYS Care Management Coalition, Andrew helped grow the annual conference and the Coalition added a new website. Andrew also lobbied for the continuation and modification of the Health Home Care Management system in New York State. He is also a senior adviser to a new whole health support app-based business called PACIFYr.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Andrew O'Grady for his service in fighting for mental health awareness.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 7176, UNLOCKING OUR
DOMESTIC LNG POTENTIAL ACT
OF 2024

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 7176—the “Unlocking our Domestic LNG Potential Act of 2024.”

This bill, H.R. 7176, would substantially weaken the federal review and authorization process for natural gas exports.

Specifically, it removes the requirement under section 3(a) of the Natural Gas Act (NGA) that the Department of Energy first determine liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports be in the public interest before approving export applications to non-free trade agreement countries.

These determinations currently involve a review of the economic impacts, including potential changes to domestic natural gas and electricity prices on consumers and manufacturers.

They also consider the environmental impacts of the exports.

Finally, they consider potential effects on the security of the U.S. natural gas supply.

Instead of maintaining this time-tested and reliable process, this bill assumes that all LNG exports are automatically in the public interest. This is reckless and irresponsible.

By removing a crucial safeguard for American consumers, this bill allows our adversaries, like China, to purchase even more of our energy to use against us.

Multiple analyses have found that increased LNG exports directly lead to higher natural gas prices here at home.

According to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, LNG exports cost American consumers over \$100 billion over a 16-month period.

Over the last five years, doubling our LNG exports has led to natural gas prices more than tripling in 2022.

Expert testimony supports this conclusion as well.

On February 7, 2023, the Subcommittees on Energy, Climate, and Grid Security and Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Materials held a joint legislative hearing entitled “Unleashing American Energy, Lowering Energy Costs, and Strengthening Supply Chains.” At this hearing, the Subcommittees heard testimony from Mr. Tyson Slocum.

In his written testimony, Mr. Slocum detailed how increased LNG exports have raised costs for American consumers, and that loosening the approval process for LNG exports would likely further increase the high prices Americans pay for heating and electricity.

Mr. Slocum also testified that increased LNG exports would further tie American natural gas prices to international natural gas prices, decreasing our economic independence and exposing Americans to increased gas price volatility.

Supporting documents entered into the hearing record further underscored the point that a sudden decrease in U.S. LNG export capacity has historically resulted in a plunge in natural gas prices.

That is not the only problem with this negligent and short-sighted bill.

H.R. 1130 also eradicates existing protections that ensure American LNG is not being exported to rival nations against the public interest.

According to the Energy Information Administration, 13 percent of U.S. LNG exports went to China in 2021—that is over 450 billion cubic feet.

As it stands, this bill is far too overinclusive to be in the best interest of the people.

During both the Subcommittee and Full Committee markups, Democrats introduced reasonable amendments designed to address their concerns.

However, the majority has voted down all such efforts.

• 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.

Democrats have tried and tried again to meet Republicans in the middle on this.

Instead of working with us, however, our colleagues across the aisle have remained entrenched.

Instead of focusing on the welfare of our American people, they are attempting to pass out a giant handout to Big Oil and Gas that will simultaneously enrich many of our economic adversaries.

Many of these companies already enjoy billions in taxpayer-funded subsidies and are taking in recordbreaking profits since Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Republicans may point out that last month, President Biden announced a temporary pause in the Department of Energy's (DOE) approval of LNG exports while DOE completes a public interest analysis.

Importantly, however, this pause only applies to new export applications.

It does not impact currently-operating export capacity or impact capacity that is under construction, and it does not impact capacity that is permitted but has not yet started construction.

DOE's updated public interest determination is an opportunity to take long-overdue action to make sure additional exports are benefitting Americans.

This extreme bill would kill all efforts to ensure that our LNG exports are in Americans' best interests.

I will always stand behind the hardworking middleclass individuals that are the backbone of our society.

As such, I urge my colleagues to do the same and vote no on this reckless and overbroad bill.

HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
ELI TREMONTI AS VETERAN OF
THE MONTH FOR MICHIGAN'S
NINTH DISTRICT

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the valor and contributions of Private First Class Eli Tremonti, who I am honored to select as the Veteran of the Month for February from Michigan's 9th Congressional District. It is with great honor that I highlight the exemplary service and dedication of this true American hero, whose courage and commitment has left an indelible mark on our Nation's history.

Born on December 8, 1923, in Vassar Township, Michigan, to an immigrant family with deeply rooted values of hard work and patriotism, Eli Tremonti was drafted into the U.S. Army Air Forces in 1943, during a pivotal moment in world history. His service during World War II as a B-24 tail gunner in the European theater is a testament to the bravery and resilience of the Greatest Generation.

PFC Tremonti's military accolades reflect his exceptional service and dedication. During his service, he was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, World War II Victory Medal, and the European-African-Middle Eastern Ribbon, adorned with one Bronze Star and one Silver Star, which recognizes his participation in critical battles and campaigns. These include

Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and "Air Offensive, Europe." His accolades as a Carbine Expert and Rifle Marksman were beyond distinction, and also showcased his proficiency and steadfast service in the face of remarkable adversity.

Beyond the battlefield, Eli Tremonti's story is one of love, commitment, and community. Married to his beloved wife Virginia for 65 years, he has exemplified the virtues of loyalty and devotion not only on the front lines but in his personal life as well. After returning from the war, he dedicated himself to his work at Eaton Manufacturing in Vassar, contributing significantly to his local community until his retirement in the early 1980s.

PFC Eli Tremonti's life story is one of heroism, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication to our Nation. His service during one of the most challenging periods in world history reminds us of the profound impact that one individual's courage can have. It is with immense pride that I honor him today as the Veteran of the Month for Michigan's 9th District, a fitting tribute to a distinguished veteran who truly embodies the American Dream.

It is an honor to express my deepest gratitude and respect for PFC Eli Tremonti. His legacy serves as a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by our service members and their families, inspiring future generations to uphold the values of freedom and democracy that define the United States.

VIRGINIA'S FOURTH DISTRICT
BLACK HISTORY MONTH ESSAY
CONTEST—1ST PLACE HIGH
SCHOOL WINNER, ZAHARA FLOWERS

HON. JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following essay by 1st Place High School Winner, Zahara Flowers:

As a student and a future voter, the words of Barack Obama resonate deeply within me. In a world that constantly calls for transformation, it is crucial that we do not wait for others to usher in the change we desire. Instead, we must recognize our own influence and seize the opportunity to become active participants in shaping the future of our communities and our nation. Through a combination of education, advocacy, and civic engagement, we can harness our collective power to effect meaningful change.

Education is the foundation of empowerment. As students, we have a unique opportunity to expand our knowledge and understanding of the pressing issues facing our society. By immersing ourselves in subjects such as history, civics, and social sciences, we gain valuable insights into the root causes of inequality, injustice, and structural barriers. Moreover, education equips us with the critical thinking skills necessary to analyze complex problems and develop innovative solutions. As such, I encourage my peers to prioritize their education and to actively seek out opportunities for learning both inside and outside the classroom.

However, education alone is not enough. We must also translate our knowledge into action through advocacy. This involves raising awareness about key issues, amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, and

holding our elected officials accountable. One way to do this is by engaging in community outreach efforts. Whether it's through volunteering with local nonprofits, participating in protests and demonstrations, or simply having conversations with friends and family, every action we take has the potential to create ripple effects of change. Additionally, we can utilize social media platforms to share information, mobilize support, and build solidarity around important causes. By harnessing the power of our collective voices, we can create a momentum that compels policymakers to take meaningful action.

Furthermore, civic engagement is essential for fostering a culture of democracy and social responsibility. As future voters, we have a responsibility to participate in the electoral process and to exercise our right to vote. This means registering to vote, staying informed about candidates and ballot measures, and turning out to the polls on Election Day. Moreover, we must recognize that our civic duty extends beyond casting a ballot every few years. We must also actively engage with our elected officials, advocating for policies that reflect our values and priorities. Whether it's writing letters, making phone calls, or attending town hall meetings, our voices have the power to shape the political landscape and influence decision-making at every level of government.

In conclusion, the journey toward meaningful change begins with recognizing our own power and embracing our role as change makers in our communities. Through education, advocacy, and civic engagement, we can harness the power of collective action to address the pressing challenges of our time. As students and future voters, we have the opportunity and the obligation to shape the future we want to see. Let us heed the call to action, knowing that the power to create change lies within each and every one of us. As the first Black President of the United States, Barack Obama, once said: "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

RECOGNIZING THE 2024 NORTHERN
VIRGINIA FOOTBALL HALL OF
FAME INDUCTEES AND AWARD
RECIPIENTS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Northern Virginia Football Hall of Fame (NVFHOF) and congratulate the 2024 inductees, youth and high school award winners, citizen volunteers, and scholarship recipients.

Participation in organized sports instills many values that will serve our youth well throughout life, including sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty, and the work ethic developed by striving for success and working together to achieve a common goal.

This year, the NVFHOF recognizes the efforts of players, coaches, officials, and dedicated volunteers from local youth and scholastic football programs, and will induct two exceptional individuals, who have made significant contributions to the game. In addition, the NVFHOF presents several outstanding student athletes with scholarship awards to help defray the cost of college.