FOURTH AMENDMENT IS NOT FOR SALE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4639, the Fourth Amendment Is Not For Sale Act.

As Ranking Member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, my priority is our national security and to protect Americans from foreign threats. Our Intelligence Community agencies at times purchase what is known as ''commercially available information'' from data brokerage companies to gather information on foreign spies and bad actors, and to protect America from malign foreign influence. When they purchase this data, they cannot be certain that it is entirely free of any U.S. citizen's information. In order to protect citizens, agencies are already required to take steps to ensure that this incidentally obtained data is removed.

However, these data brokerage companies collect the personal information of Americans through their social media profiles, public records, and other commercial sources. They then sell this information to companies, organizations, or any entity with an interest in collecting data on American citizens—including foreign adversaries like China, Russia, or even cartels. H.R. 4639 would do nothing to keep any of these other entities from exploiting and sharing American's data.

Instead of prohibiting our own intelligence agencies from accessing commercially available information to obtain foreign intelligence, we must take steps to address the broader vulnerability of Americans' data. Congress needs to take steps to protect Americans, not undermine our Intelligence agencies and put the United States at a deep disadvantage against our adversaries.

REMEMBERING COLONEL RALPH PUCKETT, JR., USA (RET.)

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 19, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a loving husband, dedicated father, committed soldier and dear friend of longstanding, Colonel Ralph Puckett, Jr., USA (Ret.). Sadly, Colonel Puckett passed away on April 8, 2024. He leaves behind a legacy of service that will be emulated by many for years to come. A memorial service honoring his remarkable life will be held on April 20, 2024, at the National Infantry Museum Parade Field adjacent to Fort Moore, Georgia.

Colonel Puckett was born on December 8, 1926, in Tifton, Georgia. He graduated from Baylor High School and then enrolled at Georgia Tech before enlisting in the United States Army during World War II. Colonel Puckett graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1949. He was assigned as Infantry Lieutenant for the Eighth U.S. Army Ranger Company when the Korean War began.

On November 25, 1950, during the Korean conflict, the First Lieutenant began a multiday operation with the Eighth Army Ranger Company, a company composed of 51 U.S. and nine Korean Soldiers against a barrage of Chinese Troops on Hill 205. During the initial assault, Colonel Puckett exposed himself to enemy fire, rallying pinned down U.S. troops to advance and take the hill from its defenders. In the following hours, the temperatures dropped, and the Chinese attempted to retake the hill. Colonel Puckett radioed an artillery strike to stop the enemy's advance.

Over the course of the attacks, Colonel Puckett sustained several wounds to his left shoulder, feet, thighs, and buttocks. Despite being severely wounded, he was still able to command his company and call on artillery to avert enemy attacks before being carried to safety by two of his troops.

During his 22-year career, Colonel Puckett received many awards including the Distinguished Service Cross twice, along with two Silver Stars for valor, two Bronze Star medals, and five Purple Hearts. In 1992, he became one of the first people to be inducted into the United States Army Ranger Hall of Fame.

Because of his courageous valor and after many years of efforts on his behalf, Colonel Puckett was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Joseph R. Biden on Friday, May 21, 2021.

Colonel Puckett gave himself to his country and to so many for so long. As such, he is one of our nation's most decorated war heroes. Even after his military service ended, he found a way to give back to those who came after him. He remained very active with military affairs, including volunteering with the Ranger Brigade. Colonel Puckett also served as an executive with Outward Bound, a nonprofit educational organization that exposes students, especially those from cities, to wilderness settings.

Colonel Puckett accomplished much in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God, and the enduring love and support of his wife, Jean, and their children Martha and Thomas.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District in celebrating the life and legacy of Colonel Ralph Puckett, Jr., USA (Ret.). Moreover, we extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all who mourn his loss. May they all be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

RECOGNIZING KEVIN O'KEEFE

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 19, 2024

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the tremendous accomplishments of Kevin O'Keefe, a dedicated community leader in East Midtown Manhattan.

Kevin has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to our community through his roles as the founder and president of the St. Vartan Park Conservancy, the president of the Manhattan East Community Association, a member of Manhattan Community Board 6, a trustee of the Murray Hill Neighborhood Association, a board member of the Stuyvesant Cove Park Association, an advisory board member of the Village Trip, a coach, an entrepreneur, a writer, a husband, and a father.

In these roles, Kevin has led multiple initiatives to increase the quality of life in East Midtown. In 2019, he led a major advocacy campaign to reopen an East Midtown garden and lawn after decades of closure. Since then, thousands of individuals have enjoyed their time inside the now-public green space.

As a member of Manhattan Community Board 6, Kevin led an initiative for members of the public to make presentations to the board to better understand community needs. In this capacity, he also serves as a committee chair and member of the Youth and Education Committee and Health and Human Services Committee.

Furthermore, Kevin's commitment extends to youth sports and education. He is a former all-American athlete who volunteers as a sports coach, heading the track and field program at a local East Midtown school and running ''Swish You Were Here,'' a community basketball net-replacement initiative.

Kevin is also an entrepreneur and accomplished writer. He is the author of the nonfiction bestseller The Average American, which follows O'Keefe's journey to find the nation's most statistically average person. The book has inspired many people to find a middle ground when talking with those with differing views and has earned accolades from former President Barack Obama. In his professional life, he has led New York Sports Tours and other prominent brands and companies.

On April 25, 2023, Kevin was honored at the Samuel J. Tilden Democratic Club's 70th anniversary gala with the Platinum Anniversary Award for Distinguished Service.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that we recognize Kevin O'Keefe for his outstanding service and leadership. His dedication not only enhances the vibrancy of East Midtown but also sets a commendable example of civic engagement and community spirit. We are grateful for his contributions and proud to count him as a distinguished member of our community.