

Thanks to the tireless leadership and encouragement from the teams' coaches, staff, families, classmates, and community—these talented young men and women earned a state championship title and all of us across southern Minnesota are incredibly proud to call them our own.

Congratulations to the Mavericks on an unbelievable season.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF LORAIN COUNTY'S BICENTENNIAL

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Bicentennial of Lorain County, Ohio. The perseverance of pioneers and settlers to overcome the challenges faced during the early years of the county's history has persisted throughout the past 200 years. The hard work and spirit shown by generations of county residents have made Lorain County an outstanding example of American ingenuity.

In 1822, the Ohio Legislature enacted legislation creating Lorain County; however, the county became judicially independent in 1824. The original proposed name for the county was "Colerain", but the final name "Lorain" was chosen by Heman Ely, who had previously founded and named the City of Elyria. The county's name is based on the former German and now French province of Lorraine and encompasses roughly 923 square miles. The county is an asset to the great State of Ohio through its many contributions in the fields of manufacturing and agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, by remembering the 200th Anniversary of Lorain County, community members recognize the outstanding achievements, maintain the pioneer attitude, and strive to better their county through the principles on which it was founded. Thank you and congratulations to Lorain County on this significant milestone.

HONORING PRESTON SHARP

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. LaMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very special young man, Preston Sharp, for his passion, commitment, and accomplishments in honoring our nation's veterans.

Preston is a resident of Shasta County, a loving son, and grandson with a heart of gold. His hard work and devotion to honor veterans in our community and our country will be felt for generations.

On Veterans Day in 2015, when Preston was just 10 years old, he visited the grave of his grandfather, a Navy veteran, at a local Redding cemetery. He placed a flag and flowers on his grandfather's headstone to thank him for his sacrifice. As he looked around, he was troubled by the lack of flags and flowers at the gravesites of all the other veterans. With encouragement from his loving mother and grandmother, Preston used that compas-

sion to make a positive change in the world. He set a goal, and in just 5 months, by doing odd jobs and chores, he had earned enough to purchase flags and carnations to honor all 500 veterans in that cemetery in Redding, California. This gratifying success prompted him to set another goal, to honor veterans in all the Redding cemeteries. He began speaking at local groups and organizations who enthusiastically donated to his worthy objective, seeing in this young boy with a passion to honor and appreciate those who served. Soon, Preston was honoring veterans in cemeteries all around our North State, throughout California, and beyond.

Preston has organized the placement of more than one million flags and red carnations on veterans' headstones throughout the homeland. His crusades have inspired citizens in communities across the United States to participate in similar acts of patriotism and respect for veterans by coming out to clean headstones, replace weathered flags and flowers, and say "Thank You" to those that have served our country.

Preston does not just honor our fallen veterans. He often visits veterans at the local veteran's home or takes them out to lunch and enjoys listening to their stories. His goal is clearly to honor and help all veterans in any way possible, as evidenced by his current initiative, to help prevent and spread awareness of veteran suicides, which has become a top priority.

Preston's contagious ambition has spurred him to start other movements like the Flag and Flower Challenge to encourage everyone in the United States, especially youth, to honor veterans in their own hometowns. He also established Veterans Flags and Flowers, a non-profit organization with a vision to "honor veterans across the country" and a mission to "honor veterans every day, not just the holiday". As a teen member of the Sons of the American Legion, Preston helped inspire the Flying Flags for Heroes program and became their national spokesperson.

Preston was invited to the White House and was honored with a seat beside the First Lady during President Trump's inspirational State of the Union Address in 2018. President Trump commended 12-year-old Preston Sharp for "a job well-done" and praised young patriots like Preston who teach all of us about our civic duties as Americans.

Preston has been recognized and is supported by nearly every local club, organization, school, and business in northern California. He has been an honored guest, speaker and advocate at countless events, services, and fundraisers. He has been featured on the History Channel and highlighted social studies curriculum such as Inspire My Kids. He continues to collect accolades around the country for his work such as being awarded the title of Legacy Keeper by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and is allied with the Wreaths Across America program.

Preston's goal was to honor veterans in all 50 States which sent him travelling across the country, meeting veterans, visiting cemeteries, inspiring communities, and sharing the experience of planting flags and flowers along the way. Despite setbacks during the COVID-19 shutdowns, on Veterans Day, November 11, 2022, Preston Sharp officially met his goal by presenting flags and flowers in honor of veterans in all 50 of our U.S. states. Quite a celebrated accomplishment.

Preston is now planning on taking his cause overseas to Normandy for the 80th anniversary of D-Day. He will be placing 17,000 American flags and red carnation flowers at every gravestone, saying each veteran's name out loud, and thanking them for their service.

This young man reminds us that we all have a sacred duty to honor and remember those who served and sacrificed for our nation, no matter how old we are.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HOUSEHOLD GOODS SHIPPING CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Household Goods Shipping Consumer Protection Act. This bill would give the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) more authority to protect consumers from fraud in the interstate transportation of household goods. Specifically, this bill would give FMCSA the authority to assess civil penalties against unregistered shippers and against entities that hold consumers' personal goods hostage, give FMCSA the express authority to reimburse states for enforcing federal consumer protection laws related to the transportation of household goods and establish requirements to ensure that motor carriers, brokers and freight forwarders that seek registration are operating legitimate businesses. Representative MIKE EZELL is co-leading this bill with me.

FMCSA receives thousands of complaints every year from Americans who are the victims of fraud in the shipment of household goods. Fraudsters have launched moving companies with fake 5-star online reviews to draw in customers, intending to overcharge customers or to hold their personal goods hostage until an additional fee is paid. After receiving negative reviews, fraudsters open a new moving company under a new name and a new FMCSA license. FMCSA lacks the authority to prevent and punish these types of fraud.

In 2019, a Department of Transportation Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) ruled that FMCSA lacks authority to assess civil penalties for violations of commercial regulations and registration requirements, including unauthorized brokerage and for failure to return household goods to consumers. Under current law, as interpreted by the ALJ's decision and final agency order, FMCSA may not assess civil penalties for violations of commercial regulations. Instead, the Department of Justice must initiate an action in federal court. This bill would reverse the ALJ's decision and provide explicit authority for FMCSA to adjudicate and assess civil penalties for unfair business practices and consumer protection violations, as well as give FMCSA authority to enforce roadway safety regulations against fraudsters.

This bill would also provide explicit authority to FMCSA to withhold registration from any applicant that fails to provide a valid principal place of business or disclose common ownership with any other registered entities at the time of registration. Household goods carriers, brokers and freight forwarders have registered

with addresses where no legitimate operations take place, often designating their official address as a retail package store, vacant parking lot or business address unrelated to the registered entity. FMCSA already requires motor carriers to designate a principal place of business and disclose common ownership. However, FMCSA may only take enforcement action after the entity is already registered and refuses to cooperate with investigations at the designated address.

This bill would also permit states to use Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program and High Priority program funding to conduct commercial regulatory and consumer protection standard reviews and enforcement actions against household goods motor carriers, brokers and freight forwarders. It would also clarify that states may retain the penalties and fines imposed in proceedings relating to violations of household goods statutes and regulations. These provisions would support states in their efforts to protect the American people from predatory practices.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I had to miss yesterday's vote due to being stuck in traffic. During that time, I was unable to make Roll Call vote No. 219. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: YEA on Roll Call No. 219, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, the Federal Disaster Tax Relief Act.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KEN AXELSON

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ken Axelsson; a World War II veteran and cherished member of the Wanamingo community, who passed away on April 11th, just a week after celebrating his 100th birthday.

Ken graduated from Red Wing High School in 1943, and afterwards—like many in the Greatest Generation—he answered the call to serve his country.

As a combat medic for the U.S. Army, Ken landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day, and was later transferred to the 101st Airborne Division. During the Siege of Bastogne, he and his unit were held captive by German forces for five months before they were liberated by U.S. troops.

When he returned home from the war, Ken married his wife, Billie, and raised their six children in Wanamingo, where Ken was active in the community, working as a carpenter, building inspector, and photographer.

When he wasn't doing what he loved—spending time outdoors—Ken was giving back to those around him. He served on the Wanamingo City Council, while also giving his

time to the volunteer fire department and the Wanamingo VFW.

Ken was a true embodiment of who we are in southern Minnesota. He served his country, put his family first, and was never too busy to lend a hand to a fellow neighbor.

He leaves behind a legacy that will long be remembered. May he rest in peace.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF NAPERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Naperville Fire Department as they mark 150 years of dedicated service across the Naperville community. With more than 200 employees, ten active fire stations, and six consecutive years of international accreditation, the department is an outstanding model of excellence in its field.

Established in 1874 after Naperville's first purchase of firefighting equipment, the department has pursued its mission of responding to calls and promoting public education programs. Over the years, the Naperville Fire Department has evolved to meet the changing needs of the community, adopting new technologies and techniques to ensure the highest level of safety and protection for its residents.

The Naperville Fire Department has played a crucial role in educating the public about fire safety and prevention. Through its various outreach programs and initiatives, the department has empowered residents with the knowledge and skills needed to protect themselves and their families in the event of a fire. This commitment to public education is vital and has undoubtedly saved countless lives over the years.

As we celebrate the Naperville Fire Department's 150th anniversary, let us take a moment to recognize and appreciate the tireless efforts of its employees. Their dedication to the community is truly inspiring, and we are grateful for their unwavering commitment to keeping us safe.

I am proud to represent such a distinguished department, and I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Naperville Fire Department for its outstanding service and dedication to the community in their remarkable 150 years of service.

RECOGNIZING DARREN CORSON'S RETIREMENT AFTER 40 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE IRS

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a notable constituent from my district, Mr. Darren Corson of Newtown, Pennsylvania who is retiring after over 40 years of dedicated service as a Public Servant.

Darren graduated from Temple University with a bachelor's degree in accounting. After graduation, Darren made the decision to de-

vote his career to public service and joined the Department of Treasury's Internal Revenue Service (IRS) where he remained for over 40 years.

During his career, Darren spent time working in many parts of the IRS, including Criminal Investigations Division, Exam, and Problem Resolution. In 2000, Darren joined the Taxpayer Advocate Service after Congress ordered the creation of a Taxpayer Advocate as an independent organization within the IRS.

Since then, he has worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights of taxpayers facing individual and systemic issues. However, after forty years of dedicated government service and leadership, Darren is retiring.

Today, I am proud to recognize Darren Corson as an individual who has devoted his career to public service in an organization that impacts all Americans across the country. We are incredibly grateful for the impact Darren Corson has made throughout his long career at the Internal Revenue Service. As an avid sports fan, he will enjoy spending more time rooting for the Phillies.

We are all incredibly grateful for the positive impact Darren has had through his long career, and we wish him countless blessings during his retirement.

CONGRATULATING PRESIDENT LAI CHING-TE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American people extend congratulations to the Honorable Lai Ching-te on being sworn in as President of Taiwan on Monday, May 20, 2024. His successful 28-year career in politics as Vice President and Premier under President Tsai Ing-wen, Chairman of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 1st Mayor of Tainan, and Member of the Legislative Yuan demonstrates his ability to be a strong leader for the people of Taiwan.

Additionally, the vibrant democracy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has elected Hsiao Bi-Khim as Vice President. During her four terms in the Legislative Yuan, she focused on agriculture and transportation in her district of Hualien, along with championing issues such as gender equality, foreign affairs, and human rights.

My appreciation of the people of Chinese heritage is personal as I am the only member of Congress serving as the son of a Flying Tiger in World War II to liberate China. My father, First Lieutenant Hugh deVeaux Wilson with the U.S. Army Air Corps developed a great affection for the people of China.

Lai Ching-te's presidency extends the rule of the DPP, which China views with skepticism, as the party promotes Taiwanese nationalism and identity, and supports the people of Taiwan's right to decide their own future.

Taiwan continues to face rising threats from China, as almost daily, military warplanes and vessels are sent toward them, many of which crossing the median line in the Taiwan Strait. Sadly, incursions into Taiwan's air defense zone nearly doubled in 2022 and continued at a high pace in 2023 with 1,738 incursions. In December of 2022, 71 Chinese aircraft flew