

After graduating in 1975 with a degree in history, Don initially planned to teach and coach high school students. Instead, he embarked on a remarkable career in law enforcement when he joined the York County Sheriff's Department, becoming the agency's first narcotics officer.

Over the course of more than two decades, Don rose through the ranks to become chief deputy and played a pivotal role in establishing the narcotics division in 1979 and the special weapons tactical team in 1989, where he served as commander.

Throughout his career, Don continued to pursue professional excellence, graduating from the Southern Police Institute at the University of Louisville in 1981 and the National Academy in Quantico in 1991.

In 1997, following his retirement from law enforcement, Don became the corporate security director at Bowater Pulp and Paper Company, where he served until 2013.

Even while managing these demanding roles, Don remained a dedicated coach and mentor, volunteering as a Dixie youth baseball coach for over 24 years, and leading a high school travel baseball team for a decade. Don has consistently shown a commitment to all the people around him.

In 2014, Don was asked by his pastor to serve as director of pastoral care at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Under his leadership, the ministry has expanded significantly to include programs such as the Stephen Ministry, Grief Share, and a comprehensive pastoral care team. These initiatives, staffed by volunteers trained and equipped by Don, have provided critical support to countless individuals, both inside and beyond the Westminster congregation. His ministry reflects his heart for service and his love for others.

Don's impact on those around him has been profound. He has given a lifetime of service to his community, his church, and his family. He and his wife, Jan, who retired from the 16th Circuit Solicitor's Office, have raised five sons and are the proud grandparents of ten.

I offer my sincere gratitude to Don for his steadfast leadership and dedicated service. He is a man who truly embodies the creed: "To live is to serve." Winston Churchill once said that there will be a time when doing your best isn't good enough. You have got to do what is required.

Don has done what is required to serve his family, his community, and his God.

Mr. Speaker, the only time that I have seen anyone receive a standing ovation in church for his service, it was this man.

TIMOTHY O'CLAIR AND MENTAL HEALTH PARITY

(Mr. TONKO of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge all of us to demand mental health parity enforcement in honor of a young man that I once represented, Timothy O'Clair.

I first met Timothy when I served in the State Assembly in New York. Timothy played Little League and had a smile and spirit that burned incredibly bright. He played in the chess club and was an avid bowler.

Timothy enjoyed gymnastics, playing the piano, fishing, golfing, boating, and drawing. He enjoyed the outdoors and was an avid animal lover. However, Timothy suffered from significant mental health challenges, and his family struggled along with him, fighting with insurance companies to get him the care he truly needed.

The insurance companies didn't know the Timothy that I knew. Where we all saw an extraordinary little guy in a fight for his own life, the insurance company saw expenses in a ledger book. They put caps on his care and denied coverage for needed mental health treatment. When Timothy received the care he needed, he thrived. However, his family always knew that those caps and denials of coverage were right around the corner.

Things got worse for Timothy. In order to get him the Medicaid coverage he needed, Timothy's parents were forced to legally disown him. Can you imagine being forced to make that decision in your own family? Unfortunately, for Timothy, even that was not enough.

At 12 years old, Timothy completed suicide.

Timothy's memory will never leave me. His spirit inspired me and a number of other committed advocates to write and advance Timothy's Law in New York State, one of the first mental health parity laws in our country.

Specifically, Timothy's Law required parity in insurance plans between mental health and general health benefits.

Passing Timothy's Law gave me the drive to improve the way that we approach mental health care in America nationwide.

To me, that means reducing the stigma for those seeking care, addressing the growing problem of the youth behavioral health crisis, and giving our healthcare professionals the resources they truly need to adequately recognize and address the challenges those who live with mental illness must grapple with each and every day.

It also means ensuring that parity is fully enforced.

At the Federal level, the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 sought to correct the imbalance between the benefits afforded mental health and substance use disorders under group health plans and general medical and surgical benefits typically afforded under such plans.

Mr. Speaker, 15-plus years later, we still are seeing major gaps in access and affordability between mental

health and physical healthcare and the need for better enforcement of this law.

For example, studies show that insured people are nearly four times as likely to go out of network and pay higher fees for mental health care than for physical healthcare. With one in five Americans impacted by mental health disorders, we must do better.

After many years of engaging on this issue and Congress passing more laws to strengthen parity, I was excited to see the Biden-Harris administration push to update the final parity rules which will allow for greater access to mental health and substance use disorder care.

These regulations implemented an update in the law to close gaps and improve compliance with parity, which is critical for the 84.5 million Americans with these conditions.

I had hoped that these rules would finally clarify and strengthen protections, while reducing barriers to treatment for mental health. These rules would have required health plans to make changes when they are providing inadequate access to mental health and substance use care.

These rules would have made clear that plans cannot use more restrictive prior authorization, or other medical management techniques, or narrower networks to make it harder for people to access mental health and substance use disorder benefits than their medical benefits.

These rules would also have closed loopholes and required more than 200 additional health plans to comply with the parity law, providing critical protections to 120,000 consumers.

However, in response to a recent lawsuit, the Trump administration released an announcement that it no longer plans to enforce the 2024 regulations to protect individuals with mental health conditions and substance use disorders from discrimination in health insurance.

Together with 17 of my colleagues, I have written to the Trump administration urging them to reverse course on this senseless decision. We shared our strong bipartisan sentiment that this decision "marks a dangerous step in the wrong direction."

We shared that it is clear that health plans are still consistently violating the law and systematically limiting access to mental health and substance use disorder care. Rather than pausing enforcement or reconsidering the regulations, now is the time to strengthen enforcement and meaningfully provide and protect our constituents from discrimination and improve access to care.

There are so many more like Timothy out there right now suffering and in very real danger of losing access to lifesaving treatment. Instead of denying them that care, let's support enforcement of our mental health and addiction parity laws.

For Timothy and his family and friends, the battle continues to achieve this.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAN WHEELER

(Mr. ROSE of Tennessee was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a true public servant. Daniel Clyde Wheeler passed away just over 2 months ago.

Dan Wheeler, as most people referred to him, grew up in the Crab Orchard community in Cumberland County, an area I am proud to represent here in Congress.

Like myself, Mr. Wheeler grew up on a family farm. That experience led him to become a staunch advocate for our State's growers and producers.

In 1965, he started a long career working for the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation where he served as an agent for Marion County and Sequatchie County. In no time, he was representing an entire region encompassing the Cumberland Plateau and the Chattanooga area of Tennessee.

In 1973, Mr. Wheeler became assistant to the president and director of organization for Tennessee Farm Bureau. By 1980, he took on the role of lobbyist for the Farm Bureau Federation, a role he saw as an opportunity to advocate for his fellow farmers across Tennessee and across the Nation. He later was named chief administrative officer of Tennessee Farm Bureau. His dedication led him to become Tennessee's 32nd Commissioner of Agriculture in January of 1995.

I was blessed to succeed Commissioner Wheeler, who I considered to be a man of great knowledge, as well as a personal mentor.

He formed the first-ever Governor's Council on Agriculture and Forestry in Tennessee, an important step that brought key stakeholders to the table. That, I suspect, will be his enduring legacy, bringing growers and producers into the same room as policymakers. That collaboration continues to have a major impact on our State's leading industry, agriculture. Commissioner Wheeler also served as the Southern United States Trade Association president, where he represented 17 States and Territories.

In 2000, he was named Man of the Year in Service to Tennessee Agriculture by Progressive Farmer magazine.

Commissioner Wheeler helped neighbors outside the agriculture industry, as well. He served the Maury County United Way, the Columbia Kiwanis Club, the Maury Regional Hospital Foundation, and the First Farmers and Merchants National Bank of Columbia, Tennessee, on their board of directors.

He leaves behind a wife of 59 years, Carol; two sons, Jim and David; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

I thank Commissioner Dan Wheeler and honor him for his many contributions to our great State of Tennessee.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOE MOORE

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the incredible life of Joe

Moore, who passed away in late March at the age of 90. Mr. Moore lived a life dedicated to agriculture. I, along with many other current and former Tennessee FFA members, consider him to be a mentor, a role model, and indeed a hero.

The Time magazine cover next to me was published after he was named the FFA Star Farmer of America in 1955. Appearing in the October 24, 1955, issue, it shows a 21-year-old Joe Moore, the only active FFA member to make Time's cover.

At the FFA convention that year, judges were impressed at his farming operation conducted in Jackson County, Tennessee, which I am honored to represent today. He had a net worth at that point of \$37,000, at the time, a great deal for someone of his age in the mid-1950s. At that time he was farming 505 acres, 85 of which he owned personally.

I often say farmers are our Nation's original conservationists. Joe Moore is a shining example of why I believe that to be true. The Time article noted how he incorporated modern farming techniques to combat erosion and improve soil health. He carefully monitored the diet of his livestock to keep them healthy. He showed great attention to detail and inspected his animals closely, which enabled him to detect any health issues early.

Mr. Moore found his success off the farm, as well. He was the owner and operator of the Upper Cumberland Oil Company in Cookeville, which sold and distributed Texaco petroleum products for over 30 years.

He also believed in giving back. He is the original founding board member of the Granville Museum in his home community, served as an elder of the Liberty Church of Christ, and was a longtime supporter of FFA in Tennessee.

He lived a long life alongside his wife, Ann, of more than 68 years. He leaves behind a son, a daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I will end with a quote from Moore from 1955: "Farming is the closest thing to the Lord you can do." I could not agree with him more.

WILDFIRES IN OREGON

(Ms. BONAMICI of Oregon was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a crisis in the American West and across the country. Extreme wildfires now ravage my home State of Oregon every summer, and the threat is growing. I am here today to speak out against cuts to programs that support wildland firefighters and their frontline crews.

For years now, American families in the Pacific Northwest have lived on the edge, wondering if this will be the year they are forced to flee their homes at night with only their children, their pets, and whatever few mementos they

can frantically grab in the moments after the evacuation alert.

I have spoken with Oregonians who lost everything in the blink of an eye; homes, family heirlooms, beloved pets, and, tragically, family members.

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I have spoken with people who demonstrate extraordinary bravery and step into the line of duty as wildland firefighters, sacrificing their safety to protect their neighbors and their communities.

The 2020 Labor Day fires were the most destructive in our State's history. Mr. Speaker, 1.4 million acres burned. More than 4,000 homes were destroyed, and at least nine people died. Smoke filled the air for days throughout the region.

Last year, Oregon saw 1.9 million acres burn, setting a new record.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to set aside political differences on this issue because the danger is spreading. Wildfire season now stretches for much of the year. That threat has reached States that never expected to see megafires. From the scorched hills of Hawaii to smoke-filled skies in New York, this is no longer just a Western States problem. It is a national emergency.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please listen to the American West when we say that this is a crisis that will kill thousands more until we act. Let's work together on real solutions, like investing in wildfire preparedness and providing better pay and benefits for wildland firefighters.

The administration's current plan of slashing volunteer wildfire crews is a disingenuous attempt to cut costs. It is shortsighted and will cause more loss of property and lives.

I stand ready to work with anyone who is willing to take this threat seriously.

FUNDING CITIZENSHIP AND ASSIMILATION GRANT PROGRAM

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the weaponization of our Federal Government and the Trump administration's actions to distort agency missions and cancel valuable grant programs.

In March and again in April, I wrote to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, USCIS, at the Department of Homeland Security regarding a decision they made to abruptly cut funding for the Citizenship and Assimilation Grant Program.

The Immigration and Nationality Act established USCIS to administer immigration benefits and citizenship programs. USCIS oversees lawful immigration into the United States and provides services, including determining eligibility for citizenship, verifying employment eligibility, administering humanitarian programs, and promoting instruction and training on citizenship rights and responsibilities.

As I wrote in my letter to the USCIS, the Citizenship and Assimilation Grant