

Through my work in Washington, I have had the privilege of bringing books from the Library of Congress to many libraries across Pennsylvania's 13th District.

But many libraries are facing real challenges in simply keeping their lights on. That is exactly why I introduced the Community Passport Services Access Act.

This legislation takes a practical, commonsense step to help libraries remain viable community hubs by allowing the libraries to continue offering passport services, bringing in needed revenue, expanding services for residents, and reinforcing their role as a one-stop resource for the public.

This bill is about keeping library doors open.

HONORING DON SCHLITZ

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker:

You got to know when to hold 'em
Know when to fold 'em
Know when to walk away
And know when to run
You never count your money
When you're sitting at the table
There'll be time enough for counting
When the dealing's done.

If you recognize those words, which most Americans would, they are the words of "The Gambler." "The Gambler" was performed successfully by Kenny Rogers, but it was written by Don Schlitz.

Don Schlitz was 23 years old when he wrote that song. He was one of the greatest songwriters of our time. He passed away last Thursday night in Nashville, Tennessee, at the age of 73.

He was a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, the Songwriters Hall of Fame, the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, and he won two Grammy Awards. He had three Country Music Association Awards for Song of the Year and was ASCAP's Country Songwriter of the Year for 4 consecutive years.

What a career he had.

Among his 25 hits that hit number one were, of course, "The Gambler" by Kenny Rogers; "Forever and Ever, Amen" by Randy Travis; "When You Say Nothing At All" performed by both Keith Whitley, who made a hit out of it, and so did Alison Krauss; "Forty Hour Week" by Alabama; "One Promise Too Late" by Reba McEntire; "He Thinks He'll Keep Her" by Mary Chapin Carpenter, who cowrote the song with Don; "Strong Enough to Bend" by Tanya Tucker; and "On the Other Hand" by Randy Travis.

He had his first major hit with "The Gambler" in 1978. He was 23, and he had come to Nashville after going to Duke for a while. He wanted to be a songwriter, and he came to Nashville with \$80 in his pocket. That was the first song he wrote that ever got recorded. Bobby Bare did it first. It didn't sell

enough or well, and then finally Kenny Rogers got it, and it has become one of the greatest songs we know in history.

That song would win him both the Song of the Year at the Country Music Awards and the Country Song of the Year at the Grammy Awards.

He was also a friend of mine. He was a wonderful human being with a big heart. He used to call me his Congressman even though he lived in Nashville, and I was in Memphis.

I was honored by that appellation, and I will take it for the rest of my life as a great honor.

He served at the Room in the Inn helping people who were homeless. He just had a big heart.

He leaves his wife, Stacey, who is a sweetheart; his daughter, Cory; his son, Pete, and a brother and a sister. He leaves behind a great legacy and a great history of country music and songs that move the spirit.

May God bless my friend Don Schlitz.

RECOGNIZING ARKANSAS MISSION OF MERCY DENTAL CLINIC

(Mr. HILL of Arkansas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary work of the Arkansas Mission of Mercy dental clinic and its executive director, my good friend, Dr. Terry Fiddler of Conway, Arkansas.

For more than 20 years, including just last weekend, Arkansas Mission of Mercy has provided free, high-quality dental care for families who would otherwise go without.

Each year in Conway, hundreds of Arkansans line up in the early morning hours, some arriving before 3 a.m., for the chance to receive care.

Throughout these annual clinics, Mission of Mercy has served more than 28,000 patients and delivered over \$23 million in free dental services across our State.

This effort is powered by more than 800 volunteers, including dozens of dentists, hygienists, and medical professionals who give their time to serve their neighbors.

Dr. Fiddler and the Arkansas Mission of Mercy are not just restoring smiles. They are restoring dignity, health, and quality of life for thousands of Arkansans.

I thank Dr. Fiddler and his team for their years of service to our State.

IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL LITERACY

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the importance of financial literacy. April is National Financial Literacy Month, and it is worth pausing to recognize why it matters so much to our families.

Every day, Americans make decisions that shape their financial future: how to save, how to budget, how to plan for the unexpected. These choices have lasting consequences, and yet, too many people navigate them without the right tools or knowledge.

As a former community banker and investment adviser, helping Arkansans

understand their finances and plan for a secure future was one of the most rewarding chapters in my career.

The basics are simple but powerful. Live within your means. Save for that rainy day. Take advantage of compound interest. Plan ahead.

It is never too early or too late to learn about financial literacy. If you don't know where to start, reach out to your local bank, financial adviser, or financial planner in your community.

When Americans have the confidence and knowledge to manage their money well, they are better positioned for long-term success.

HONORING JOHN PURIFOY GILL

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and extraordinary legacy of a true Arkansas leader, John Purifoy Gill, who passed away last month at the age of 89.

John was a decorated marine, retiring as a lieutenant colonel, and a distinguished attorney who helped shape Arkansas law for decades.

From serving as a delegate to the Arkansas Constitutional Convention to leading the Arkansas Bar Association, his impact on our legal community is lasting and profound.

But John's leadership extended well beyond the law. He was a historian, a preservationist, and a storyteller, who dedicated his life to capturing the spirit of the Natural State.

His books, his work with our State Parks Commission, and his deep involvement in historic preservation ensured that Arkansas' story would be told and long remembered.

I had the privilege of working closely with him to honor Scipio A. Jones where John's research and advocacy were instrumental in placing this foundational and incredibly important attorney's portrait in the Little Rock post office that now bears his name.

John was a dear friend and a trusted voice. I loved our collaboration in historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and public service.

He leaves behind not just an extraordinary professional legacy but a loving family, a stronger Arkansas, and a standard of service that will continue to guide us.

HONORING ALAN GREENSPAN

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize that last month on March 6, Alan Greenspan celebrated his centennial, 100 years old.

Most Americans know him well as the man who ran the Federal Reserve for nearly 20 years, through four Presidents, historic prosperity, and he was witness to more than a few financial crises on his watch.

□ 1215

Often called the Maestro, he was confirmed as Fed Chairman on August 11, 1987, just 2 months before Black Monday, the largest single-day percentage decline in market history.

The next morning, the Fed issued a one-sentence statement: "The Federal Reserve, consistent with its responsibilities as the Nation's central bank,

affirmed today its readiness to serve as a source of liquidity to support the economic and financial system.”

It was short, calm, and unambiguous. Markets stabilized, and the crash did not become a depression.

That was Greenspan: precise under pressure and deliberate when others were panicking.

He went on to navigate the savings and loan crisis, the Gulf war recession, and the dot-com boom and bust.

My best wishes for his centennial, and my best wishes to his family.

GROTON, CONNECTICUT: SUB-
MARINE CAPITAL OF THE
WORLD

(Mr. COURTNEY of Connecticut was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to draw the attention of the House to another milestone in the extraordinary history of the Submarine Capital of the World, Groton, Connecticut, where this Saturday, USS *Idaho* (SSN-799) will be commissioned. *Idaho* is the 26th Virginia-class attack submarine delivered to the U.S. Navy, and the seventh such vessel built by the U.S. submarine industrial base in the last 4 years.

It is a technological marvel, weighing 7,800 tons, and the product of a workforce at the Electric Boat shipyard that has 26,000 hardworking, talented people.

Building a submarine is an extremely complex enterprise. Submarines operate in an environment that does not support human life, with a crew of 135 sailors. The boat is powered by a nuclear reactor and is armed with an arsenal to carry out its mission of deterrence. This is so important to our national security. Needless to say, there is no margin of error in its construction.

The good news is as the output of the Virginia-class program has grown, the proficiency of a new generation of shipyard workers has accelerated over the last 10 years, and the submarine quality scores by the Navy during submarine sea trials have steadily improved. In the case of USS *Idaho*, the Navy recorded the highest test scores in the history of the Virginia program.

Mr. Speaker, this successful commissioning is happening at a time when the volume of production is also hitting historic highs and hiring has been growing over the last 10 years.

This poster, produced by the U.S. Navy, depicts the volume of submarine construction tonnage in the U.S. starting in 1952, to my far right, through the present and into the future of 2054.

The orange bar represents tonnage in 2026, which is on par with the peak of high-rate production in the midst of the Cold War. There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that Groton, Connecticut, is the Submarine Capital of the World, full stop, period. It is not, as some are trying to say, trying to reclaim its title.

Indeed, after *Idaho*'s commissioning on Saturday, EB and its teaming partner, Huntington Ingalls Industries, are hard at work delivering USS *Arkansas* (SSN-800), which is now in the water performing sea trials, and USS *Utah* (SSN-801), which I visited in Groton with Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Daryl Caudle a few days ago, and soon to be floated off to join *Arkansas* for at-sea testing. They will be the 27th and the 28th Virginia-class submarines to be delivered to the fleet as soon as the end of this calendar year.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, Groton is the yard where the first Columbia-class SSBNs, the USS *District of Columbia*, is in the final stage of production and assembly. Columbia submarines weigh 21,000 tons, 2½ times the size of a Virginia. Once again, the EB workforce defied the skeptics and naysayers when the Navy announced that delivery of that boat is being moved up to calendar year 2028 from 2029, which was the Navy's prior plan.

As ranking member of the Seapower Subcommittee on the House Committee on House Armed Services, I cannot overstate how extraordinary it is to have a first-in-class of a program's delivery date moved forward rather than back.

The strong momentum at the Groton yard and its sister shipyard at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, received another round of good news when EB recently announced its hiring goal for 2026. The overall goal is 8,000 new workers in 2026: 3,400 in Rhode Island and 4,600 in Groton. The plan will take the workforce from 26,000 to over 30,000 for the first time since the 1980s.

Once again, the skeptics and naysayers are scoffing at this goal, but as someone who has been directly involved in the adult job training programs and helping equip career and technical schools, as well as regular comprehensive high schools, with apparatus to run metal trades curricula, I have no doubt that Groton will meet its goal.

Indeed, 1 week ago, EB held a job fair in Waterford, Connecticut, expecting perhaps a few hundred visits. Instead, 1,800 people showed up. They had to cut off the line a few hours into the event because the H.R. staff was so overwhelmed.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday at the USS *Idaho* commissioning, the head of Naval Reactors Admiral Bill Houston, the successor to the Father of the Nuclear Navy, Hyman Rickover, will deliver keynote remarks, and it will be a proud moment for the ship's commanding officer, Commander Chad Guillerault, his crew, and their families.

It will also be a strong reaffirmation at the Groton Submarine Base, America's oldest submarine base, that the men and women who work at Electric Boat have, once again, demonstrated to our Nation and the world that Groton is still and always will be the Submarine Capital of the World.

PEDAL FOR IMPACT

(Mr. BEAN of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we all know why a bicycle can't stand up by itself. It is because it is too tired. We also go through life being too tired sometimes, but for two married veterans in northeast Florida, they are overcoming being too tired because they, Mr. Speaker, are on a mission.

Ashton and Casey Kroner are undertaking an amazing journey. This June, they will leave Green Cove Springs, Florida, and travel all 737 miles here to Washington, D.C., to advocate for change on bicycles.

They call it Pedal for Impact. Casey is currently battling cancer. His journey reflects what too many veterans experience: a health system that should work better. His story is not about blame but about awareness, urgency, and getting this right for the next veteran.

Mr. Speaker, veterans face higher cancer risks due to toxic exposures, yet screenings still rely largely on age rather than exposure history. That gap leads to delays, difficult treatments, and outcomes we can and must improve.

Ashton and Casey are seeking solutions. As they ride through Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia, they carry a simple message: Screen earlier, detect sooner, and save lives.

In a town where we talk about moving the needle and where we all talk about leadership, they show us that moving the needle is sometimes accomplished by moving the pedals and shifting into high gear.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes we are all too tired, but Ashton and Casey show us that this is no moment to squeeze the brakes. We must keep moving forward for our veterans and in the fight against cancer.

Godspeed on their mission and journey.

Pedal on, Ashton and Casey.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Pastor Chad Weeks, Russell Baptist Church, Green Cove Springs, Florida, offered the following prayer:

God of Heaven and sovereign Lord of the nations, we come before You in this