

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the life of Jane Sheats and wishing her a joyous 80th birthday.

RECOGNIZING THE FOUNDERS OF  
OUTSMART OFFICE SOLUTIONS,  
GEORGE PIEPER AND DAWN  
ACKERMAN

**HON. ADAM SMITH**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the founders of OutSmart Office Solutions, George Pieper and Dawn Ackerman, for being honored with the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce's 2012 LGBT Supplier of the Year Award. George and Dawn have dedicated themselves and their careers to creating and strengthening an economy that fosters equality for all people.

George and Dawn founded OutSmart Office Solutions in 2007. They brought a combined twenty-three years of experience to provide office products that are environmentally sustainable and built a business that expands opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender business owners.

As a certified Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender-owned Business Enterprise (LGBTBE), OutSmart Office Solutions partnered with Office Depot to distribute office furniture and supplies. Office Depot's Tier One Supplier Diversity Partnership enables OutSmart Office Solutions to provide the highest quality products and top-notch service to corporations and individuals while promoting workplace diversity.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize George Pieper and Dawn Ackerman. Businesses like OutSmart Office Solutions play a vital role in stimulating our economy and ensuring equality for all members of our communities.

HONORING BRUCE PETERSON

**HON. HEATH SHULER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of my congressional staff who have served with me over the past six years while I have been in office. A Member of Congress' most important responsibility is to provide exceptional constituent services and my staff is second to none in providing the best assistance to everyone in our district. I take great pride in the work that each one has done on my behalf and on behalf of everyone in the 11th Congressional District of North Carolina.

Each District staff member has shown a strong sense of dedication in meeting the needs of each and every one of our constituents. They often go well beyond the call to make sure each constituent is treated fairly and respectfully by our government agencies and that they receive appropriate resolution. I owe a debt of gratitude to each one of them for the support and friendship which they have shown me while I have served in Congress.

Bruce Peterson served as my first District Director. In this key role, Bruce was the driving force behind establishing every detail of our district operation. Bruce's knowledge of local government and officials proved invaluable as we developed relationships and methods for providing top-notch services to folks across western North Carolina. Bruce used his extensive background as a school administrator to help develop the excellent constituent services that our office has been recognized for during these past six years of service.

Bruce should be proud of the service he has provided to our district and country. It has been an honor to serve with him and as I retire from office I wish him the very best in the future. Western North Carolina is a better place because of his efforts and I will cherish the memories of serving with Bruce and the team by my side.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Bruce Peterson for his hard work on behalf of all of western North Carolina and to wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO THE SACRAMENTO  
JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS  
LEAGUE

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Sacramento Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, and congratulate the chapter as they celebrate their 17th annual community awards dinner.

Through their long history, the Sacramento JAACL has been dedicated to advancing the civil rights of all Americans, deterring hate crimes across the Nation, and helping to lead the Japanese-American community to social and economic equality. On Thursday, November 15, 2012, the Sacramento Japanese American Citizens League will host its 17th annual community awards dinner.

During the dinner, the Sacramento JAACL will honor: the Sacramento Japanese United Methodist Church, one of the oldest Japanese-American congregations in Northern California; the Sacramento Senator Lions Club, a civic organization that provides its members with opportunities to serve the community through fundraising and hands-on projects; and the Sakura Minyo Doo Koo Kai, a troupe that performs traditional Japanese folk song and dance. These three organizations and their members have worked diligently to serve the community, teach others about the history of Japanese-Americans, and help preserve the Japanese culture. They stand as organizations that truly embrace the dinner's theme of "Bunka Isan," helping the community honor the lives of their ancestors and celebrating their own lives as Americans.

During the dinner, the Sacramento JAACL will also honor my friend and colleague, California Assemblywoman Mariko Yamada. Mariko has dedicated her life to serving the public in many capacities: working as an investigator for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office for Civil Rights; as a member of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors; and now representing her constituents in the California State Assem-

bly. She has had tremendous success in the California Assembly, passing landmark bills that imposed greater criminal penalties on assailants that abuse the elderly and disabled, provided increased housing and employment opportunities for our veterans, and reformed government policies to protect consumers from negligence and fraud. Mariko has made California and our Nation a better place for all, and is truly worthy of tonight's honoring.

Mr. Speaker, I hereby recognize and commend the Sacramento Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League and their honorees for their continued service to Sacramento, California and our Nation. I ask all my colleagues to join with me in wishing them continued success and support as they work to protect the civil rights of all our citizens, and preserve the history of Japanese-Americans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MIKE PENCE**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent on November 15, 2012, and missed rollcall votes 605, 606, and 607. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 605, 606, and 607.

HONORING ERIN "DOTY" GEORGES

**HON. HEATH SHULER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of my Congressional Staff who have served with me over the past six years while I have been in office. A Member of Congress' most important responsibility is to provide exceptional constituent services and my team is second to none in providing the best assistance to all in our District. My Washington, D.C. office is also tasked with researching, processing, analyzing, and making recommendations on an infinite number of reports, policies, and legislation. I could not ask for a more talented or dedicated team, and I take great pride in the work that each staff member has done not only on my behalf, but also on behalf of the 11th Congressional District of North Carolina and the United States.

My team has shown a strong sense of dedication to meeting the needs of our constituency. I owe a debt of gratitude to each one of them for the support and friendship they have shown me during my six years of service in the Congress.

A very special thank you goes to Erin "Doty" Georges, who is the longest serving staff member in my Washington, D.C. office and has been a member of my team since day one. After contributing to my first campaign's victory, Erin took on a number of portfolios and responsibilities in my Washington office, excelling at each and eventually rising to the influential position of Legislative Director. Erin has served as a trusted advisor on a broad range of issues, but none more so than health care policy. In this, Erin is regarded as one the best and most capable among her

colleagues, and her expertise was critical to my active participation in the great health care reform debate of 2008.

As Legislative Director, Erin has done an outstanding job leading and mentoring the legislative staff, all of whom hold her in the highest regard and trust and respect her guidance.

Erin is one of the most loyal and dedicated legislative staff members on Capitol Hill. She has proven her talents and capabilities again and again over the years, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside her and blessed to call her a friend.

Erin should be proud of the service she has provided to our District and country. It has been an honor to serve with her and as I retire from office I wish her the very best in the future. Western North Carolina is a better place because of her efforts and I will cherish the memories of serving with Erin and the team by my side.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Erin "Doty" Georges for her hard work on behalf of all of Western North Carolina and to wish her continued success in her future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. JAMES C.  
BOLAND

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. James C. Boland, who is being honored as the Mayo Society of Greater Cleveland's Mayo Person of the Year.

Founded in 2004, the Mayo Society of Greater Cleveland is a forum for information and activities of interest to individuals of Irish descent, particularly those with ancestral ties to County Mayo. Its members are dedicated to promoting cultural, charitable, scientific and/or literary exchanges between the United States and Ireland, with particular emphasis on County Mayo, including but not limited to research into the life and times of Irish immigration to America and the study of Irish and Irish-American history.

A native Cleveland, James Boland has a long and storied history in the Northeast Ohio community. He is a graduate of John Carroll University and later earned degrees with George Washington University and the Harvard Business School. He served with the U.S. Army before joining Ernest & Young in 1964 for 34 years, when he retired in 1998 as a partner with the firm. Following his retirement, Boland was named the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Cavaliers/Gund Arena Company in 1998 and became the Vice Chairman in 2003; he retired in 2007. Boland has also served on the boards of Developers Diversified Realty Corporation, Invacare, the Sherwin-Williams Company and the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company.

He is not only legendary in the business community, but has also been a philanthropic leader. He has played an integral role in the Leadership Cleveland program since it was established in 1977. He is involved with the United Way, Cleveland Tomorrow, The Ohio Business Roundtable, University Circle, The Cleveland Health and Education Museum, Hawken School, Bluecoats, the Great Lakes

Science Center and the Harvard Business School Club. He has chaired the YMCA Corporate Challenge, the March of Dimes "Walk-a-thon," the Olympic Torch Relay Committee and has played essential role in numerous other events that empower groups in Northeast Ohio.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating Mr. James C. Boland on being named the Mayo Society of Greater Cleveland's Mayo Person of the Year.

IN RECOGNITION OF NORTHERN  
OHIO LEBANESE AMERICAN AS-  
SOCIATION, FADY CHAMOUN AND  
GEORGE CODY

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Fady Chamoun and Mr. George Cody, Ph.D, who are being honored by the Northern Ohio Lebanese American Association.

The Northern Ohio Lebanese American Association (NOLAA) was founded in 1931 as a social and charitable organization. NOLAA's original purpose was to promote an understanding and unity among its members, act as a resource to better the conditions of its members and to foster unity among Lebanese Americans and their families in Cleveland and neighboring cities. In 2005, the Lebanese American Christian Society (LACS) was established in conjunction with NOLAA. Today NOLAA and LACS are dedicated to preserving, enriching, and promoting Lebanese heritage and traditions through cultural, educational, humanitarian and social activities.

NOLAA annually honors those who have made significant contributions to the community. This year's celebration will honor Mr. Fady Chamoun and Mr. George Cody. Mr. Chamoun is the founder and CEO of Aladdin's Eatery and Jasmine's Bakery, a restaurant chain and bakery that specializes in Lebanese cuisine. Mr. Cody serves as the Executive Director of the American Task Force for Lebanon, an organization dedicated to expanding awareness of the economic and political conditions in Lebanon and encouraging U.S. government entities and the Lebanese-American community to provide much needed assistance to Lebanon. Additionally, NOLAA will be paying tribute to their special guest, Mr. Boutros Harb, a member of the Lebanese Parliament.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the Northern Ohio Lebanese American Association, and Mr. Fady Chamoun and Mr. George Cody as they come together to celebrate at the Annual Lebanese Heritage Ball.

HONORING BISHOP GEORGE W.  
BROOKS

**HON. MELVIN L. WATT**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a friend, supporter, mentor and trusted

advisor to me, both spiritually and politically, Bishop George Wilbert Brooks. After 37 years of service, Bishop Brooks will retire as Senior Pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina on December 31, 2012.

A native of Hillsborough, North Carolina, Bishop Brooks moved to Greensboro to attend North Carolina A&T State University where he earned his Bachelor's degree in Industrial Technology. He received a Master of Divinity degree from Shaw University in Raleigh and a Doctorate of Ministry degree from Friends International Christian University in Merced, California. After being licensed to preach the gospel in March 1975, Bishop Brooks moved back to Greensboro to begin his service as Pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Since accepting the call to lead Mount Zion Baptist Church, Bishop Brooks has set an example for community and civic leadership and involvement that others can only aspire to match. In addition to his important religious role as the leader of a dynamic congregation, he is recognized as a leader in community based self-sufficiency initiatives. He also serves on numerous local, national and international boards and has been named among the "Most Influential Persons in the Triad" by The Triad Business Journal each year since 2005.

In addition to his church and community involvement he is a devoted husband of 44 years to Edna Brooks, father of two children and grandfather of five grandchildren.

Bishop Brooks' service to Mount Zion Baptist Church and the Greensboro community is unmatched. He has been a leader and a real inspiration to countless others in word and deed and in other ways that we can only imagine. As I often tell people, he is a "one-of-a-kind guy".

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure my colleagues will join me in wishing Bishop George W. Brooks the very best in retirement, although I'm not about to let him retire from the roles he plays in my life as friend, advisor and mentor. I thank him for all he has done for me and for our community.

HAMAS ATTACKS ON ISRAEL

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 16, 2012*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to this chamber's attention the on-going attacks taking place in Israel.

Over the past several days, Hamas militants in Gaza have launched a concerted offensive against Israel, our partner in peace in the region.

Nearly 350 rockets have landed in Israel from Gaza in the past three days. Three Israelis were killed in a rocket attack on Thursday.

Yesterday and today, warning sirens rang in Tel Aviv, Israel's largest city, for the first time since the Gulf War.

As the right of any country to protect its people from attacks, such as Turkey has taken in recent weeks in response to Syria's civil war, Israel has initiated Operation Pillar of Defense to halt the rockets being launched from Gaza. Israeli Defense Minister Ehud