

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE BOATING LAW ADMINISTRATORS

**HON. BEN CHANDLER**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 29, 2010*

Mr. CHANDLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, NASBLA, a Lexington, Kentucky based nonprofit organization.

Recreational boating is one of our Nation's most popular pastimes, with an estimated 78 million recreational boaters in the United States and nearly 13 million recreational vessels registered. In my State of Kentucky alone, there are nearly 200,000 registered boats and hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians who enjoy this great recreational activity.

In 1958, Congress passed the Federal Boating Act, which authorized the states to take over specific boating safety functions. This, in turn, led to the creation of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, NASBLA, in 1960. NASBLA is a national, nonprofit association of state officials responsible for the development and implementation of state boating programs.

NASBLA's mission is to strengthen the ability of state and territorial boating authorities to reduce death, injury and property damage associated with recreational boating and ensure a safe, secure, and enjoyable boating environment. NASBLA addresses its mission by fostering partnerships among and between the states, the Coast Guard and others, crafting model boating laws, maintaining national education and training standards, providing members with critical knowledge and skills, assisting in the homeland security challenges on our waterways, and advocating for the needs of the state boating programs before Congress and federal agencies.

The number of recreational boating fatalities has declined by more than half since 1970, thanks in part to the increased use of life jackets, cooperative boating safety education, enforcement efforts between the Coast Guard and state governments, and safer vessels and equipment manufactured in accordance with Coast Guard standards. Continued emphasis on accident prevention can reduce recreational boating fatalities still further, and in particular, deaths by drowning which remain the leading cause of recreational boating fatalities.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating and recognizing the accomplishments of this Kentucky nonprofit, which in its 50 years, has significantly contributed to the safety of this popular pastime for all Americans.

COLONEL JEFFREY A. "TANK" KOCH RETIRES AFTER 22 YEARS SERVICE WITH THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

**HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 29, 2010*

Mr. McKEON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to COL Jeff "Tank" Koch on the occasion of his retirement from the United States Air Force.

I have had the pleasure of working with Colonel Koch on a number of occasions during his tenure here in the House, and have greatly appreciated his professionalism, knowledge, and dedication, which I know has benefited me personally, as well as numerous other members, and countless staff.

So it goes without saying that Colonel Koch's professional achievements are numerous, but I know would be the first to state that none of them would have been possible without the love and support of his wife and family. Throughout Colonel Koch's service to our country, his wife, Tracey, has been his mainstay and a selfless partner. Her balance and calm has seen their family through multiple moves to military bases within the U.S. and overseas. Together with their children, Caleb and Abby, the Koch family has endured the challenges and sacrifice of family separation and relocations. Each member of the Koch family has made a significant contribution to the U.S. Air Force and our great Nation.

Colonel Koch has led an enviable career. After receiving his commission through the Reserve Officers Training Corps at Troy State University in 1987, Colonel Koch proceeded to numerous distinguished assignments. With his new pilot wings and assignment to the A-10 Thunderbolt fighter jet, Colonel Koch served in the 92nd Tactical Fighter Squadron at RAF Bentwaters, UK flying 37 operational combat missions over Northern Iraq in direct support of Operation PROVIDE COMFORT. With help from the 92nd's armed reconnaissance and close air support missions, thousands of starving Kurdish refugees received life-sustaining food and supplies.

After this, Colonel Koch served as an instructor pilot at the U.S. Air Force Academy, returned to the A-10 to fly missions in Korea, and instructed at the same Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training program he completed earlier in his career. Colonel Koch also served as flight commander in the 358th Fighter Squadron, executive officer for two commanders of the 12th Air Force, and Chief of Offensive Operations at the AFSOUTH Combined Air and Space Operations Center. He also served as a Presidential Advance Team Agent—and a Capitol Hill Fellow for Congressman Jim Gibbons of Nevada. This successful arc continued with a stint in the Air Force's Programs Directorate as the Chief of the Joint Strike Fighter Programming office and command of the 557th Flying Training Squadron. These successful milestones were recognized with assignment to one of DoD's most challenging senior developmental education opportunities, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Following ICAF, Colonel Koch received a follow-on assignment back to the Pentagon as a Senior Readiness Analyst for the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness.

Perhaps the most challenging assignment was his final one as Chief of the Air Force House Legislative Liaison Office. This seasoned aviator and Command Pilot with more than 3,000 flight hours in five different aircraft has been a trusted and articulate voice for the Air Force on Capitol Hill.

Colonel Koch has excelled throughout his distinguished career and I am honored to pay tribute to this Airman. Madam Speaker, on behalf of Congress and the United States of America, I thank COL Jeff Koch, his wife Tracey and their children, Caleb and Abbey, for their service to our country. I wish them Godspeed, and continued happiness as they start a new chapter in their lives.

A TRIBUTE TO THE INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES FOR THE KENTUCKY OFFICE FOR THE BLIND

**HON. BRETT GUTHRIE**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 29, 2010*

Mr. GUTHRIE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Independent Living Services for the Kentucky Office for the Blind.

Independent Living Services is a rehabilitation program administered by the Kentucky Office for the Blind and provides a broad range of services. They value self-determination and encourage individuals to learn skills that will allow them to achieve their desired level of independence.

In September of this year, the Independent Living Services will celebrate 30 years of dedication to helping individuals throughout the commonwealth with vision impairments achieve their maximum level of independence.

Through the effective leadership of the Office for the Blind and the dedication of Independent Living Counselors, thousands of Kentuckians have realized their goal of greater independence in their homes, communities and workplaces.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 30th anniversary of the Independent Living Services and thank the individuals who have committed so much of themselves to help ensure all Kentuckians are given the resources they need to succeed.

NAZARETH DER TAVITIAN: A GENOCIDE SURVIVOR STORY

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 29, 2010*

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to memorialize and record a courageous story of survival of the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian Genocide, perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, resulted in the death of 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children. As the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau documented at the time, it was a campaign of "race extermination."

The campaign to annihilate the Armenian people failed, as illustrated by the proud Armenian nation and prosperous diaspora. It is difficult if not impossible to find an Armenian