

States values their efforts and will keep human rights at the center of our relationship.

The United States has taken important steps to demonstrate that that we hope to build a common future with Vietnam built on cooperation, development, and peace. In recent years, we have maintained a robust program of bilateral aid to Vietnam because it is in our national interest and it is in the interest of the people of Vietnam.

But Vietnam cannot reach its potential as a nation if its people are denied basic rights. And sadly, the government of Vietnam is taking the country backwards in terms of human freedom. These two bills make clear that a good relationship requires progress on this critical issue.

CELEBRATING 90TH BIRTHDAY OF  
ALVAR "AL" EDWIN SPERRING

**HON. JEFF DENHAM**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 11, 2012*

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a beloved veteran, Alvar "Al" Edwin Sperring on his 90th birthday. Alvar was born in San Francisco, California on September 18, 1922. He is the youngest of five brothers, born to John Edward Sperring and Anna Emily Sperring.

Mr. Sperring's parents moved to Sonoma, California during his early childhood, where he attended local schools and graduated from Sonoma Valley Union High School in 1940. Upon graduation, he went to work for the Pacific Telephone Company in San Francisco as a lineman working throughout Northern California and Nevada.

Alvar was drafted into the United States Army on January 30, 1943, in San Francisco, California. He applied and was accepted for the Aviation Cadet School. He graduated from Pilot School on May 22, 1944, with the rank of Second Lieutenant at Stockton Field, Stockton, California, Class 44-E.

On May 28, 1944, he married his high school sweetheart, Alyda Bernadette Picchi, at St. Edward's Church in San Francisco, California. Together, they raised four sons: Roger, Robert, Ronald, and Randall. He is proud of his six grandsons and six great-grandchildren.

Mr. Sperring's first Air Force assignment was at Muroc Army Air Base in Lancaster, California for B-24 Liberator Bomber Pilot training. In 1945, he served overseas with the 38th Bombardment Squadron stationed in Guam in the Pacific Theater. He was honorably discharged on April 3, 1946, with the rank of First Lieutenant and remained in the U.S. Army Air Force Reserves until November 1963.

Alvar returned to his former employment with Pacific Telephone Company in San Francisco and was promoted to Line Foreman. In 1950, he was transferred to Lodi, California. Lodi had transitioned to a dial system, and he was instrumental in achieving that endeavor. He retired in 1983 with 42 years of loyal and dedicated service in various supervisory capacities.

Alvar is a sixty-year member of The American Legion, active member of International Order of Odd Fellows, Telephone Pioneers, Past Big Sir of Branch 18 Sons in Retirement and one of the early founders of the Lodi Boys and Girls Club. He is a long-time member of the Woodbridge Golf and Country Club, where he plays golf three times a week.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Alvar E. Sperring and expressing our congratulations on his 90th birthday. Best wishes to him and his family for continued success, happiness, and good health in years to come.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF  
SEPTEMBER 11TH

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 11, 2012*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, today, we remember those lost eleven years ago on September 11, 2001. We also remember the extraordinary acts of bravery and heroism performed by courageous passengers and crew on United Flight 93, by the first responders who rushed into burning buildings, and by the thousands of nameless volunteers who provided assistance on that terrible day.

We think, too, of our troops around the world who stand in harm's way, many of whom enlisted in the days and weeks that followed the attack on our country. And of those troops we have lost, and who paid the ultimate price for our liberty.

For millions of Americans, September 11th serves a day of solemn reflection. For others, it has become a day of community—gathering together in remembrance and in service. No matter how we choose to remember, ours is a tribute that is a deeply personal one.

We lost a great deal on that tragic day, but America also revealed herself to be resilient, and more unified and determined than ever.