

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

OPERATION AMERICAN HEROES

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to speak today about Operation American Heroes, an organization founded in 2009 by Vietnam War Veteran and Houston businessman, John Carlross. Mr. Carlross recognized gaps in government support programs and has been working endless hours to create Operation American Heroes.

Mr. Carlross knows American heroes consist of more than just our warriors fighting overseas. Police officers, firefighters, border patrol agents, and first responders are just a few of the occupations fighting the front lines at home. They all sacrifice to make sure Americans are safe. As Mr. Carlross likes to say, we can give a little for those who have given much and have suffered difficulties and deserve our support overcoming obstacles they may be facing due to their service.

Operation American Heroes provides immediate and long term funding for non-profit organizations dedicated to improving the lives of those who have sacrificed so much to ensure we are safe. Their unpaid Board of Directors works with local businesses to raise these funds. They are proud to cover expenses so one hundred percent of all funds raised go towards immediately helping heroes, or to the foundations endowment which will support many future generations of heroes.

Every year American Heroes are honored during the week of September 11th by Operation American Heroes. Individuals can show their support in a unique way by becoming a "21 Gun Saluter" and business owners are encouraged to donate a small percentage of their sales for the week. Mr. Carlross said, "These brave men and women are the reason that we have the freedom to start, grow and prosper our businesses. It is only right that every business gives a small portion of their success in thanks."

This organization proves, yet again that, in Texas, patriotism is alive and well. Texans honor not only our fallen heroes, but those who have survived.

And that's just the way it is.

LORRAINE AND ELLIOTT PALAIS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, December 28, 2012 will mark 60 years of marriage for Lorraine (Lipsky) and Elliott Palais. They met at New York University Heights in 1950 and lived in the Bronx after their wedding. Elliott served in the United States Army from 1954–1956. Lorraine was able to accompany him at his

assignments, including Salzburg, Austria, and Fort Monmouth, N.J. where she worked in the Adjutant General's Office. They moved to Yonkers in November 1961.

The Palais' are very involved in civic, educational, religious, professional, political, veterans and community activities. Both served as President of Lincoln Park Taxpayers Association where they are now Regents, and as Chairman of the Yonkers Branch of the American Red Cross. Lorraine is President of the Yonkers Police Second Precinct Community Council, serves as Treasurer of an Oil Cooperative and is on the Westchester County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board.

Elliott is an administrator at Fordham University where he directs the Title VI Programs. He is a former Yonkers City Councilmember and is a member of three veterans Posts (two of which he served as Commander) and Secretary of the Yonkers Central Committee of Veterans Organizations.

Both were awarded the Americanism Award by the Central Committee of Veterans Organizations. They are both members of the Kiwanis Club of East Yonkers. Elliott is an Honorary Kentucky Colonel for his service as a consultant to Western Kentucky University.

They have four children, eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren. They attribute their marriage longevity to love, patience, understanding, caring and adversity in sickness and in health.

I am proud to be able to congratulate them for all of their good works for their community and their neighbors. And, like all who believe in love, I especially want to congratulate them on the 60th anniversary of their marriage. They are a shining example to all of us.

RELATING TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. INOUE, A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF HAWAII

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reflection and remembrance of the life of Senator Daniel Inouye.

I was deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Senator Daniel Inouye on Monday; his passing marks the end of an era for the people of Hawaii, for the United States Senate and Congress, and for the country. A public servant from start to finish, Daniel Inouye has left a shining, indelible mark on history that will inspire Americans for generations to come.

His story is simply incredible. Daniel was a medical volunteer during the Pearl Harbor attacks in 1941. Even though the U.S. Army banned people of Japanese descent from enlisting, and even though Executive Order 9066 authorized the internment of roughly 110,000 Japanese Americans, Daniel Inouye found it within himself to be an American patriot.

Soon after the ban on enlistment was lifted, he abandoned his Pre-Med studies at the University of Hawaii and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943. He was a war hero in the truest sense of the term, earning a Medal of Honor for his actions on the battlefields of World War II before his State was even admitted to the Union.

Daniel Inouye was a Lieutenant and Platoon Leader on the battlefield in Tuscany, Italy in April 1945. Even after being shot in the stomach by German machine gun fire, he refused medical treatment and still managed to find the courage to destroy 2 machine gun nests. Nearly losing consciousness from blood loss, he heroically charged a 3rd machine gun nest before having his right arm severed by a German grenade. Somehow, even after these grave injuries, Daniel Inouye still found a way to toss a grenade that destroyed the 3rd bunker.

He remained a proud member of the military until his honorable discharge as a Captain in 1947. He was Hawaii's first Representative in the House, a source of great pride to all Members, past and present.

As Hawaii's first Congressman and, subsequently, as a nine-term Senator, Daniel Inouye embodied the spirit of "aloha" in his work. Serving as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, he worked to strengthen our national security and help veterans access the benefits they've earned.

He was a consistent champion for the interests of Hawaii's people. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with Senator Inouye, and my thoughts are with his family and with the people of his beloved Hawaii, who will always remember him for his leadership and his courage. As a Senator, he never forgot his military roots, and has always been a voice for veterans.

Senator Inouye was a patriarch of Hawaii, and all Hawaiians will long remember his unyielding devotion to the economic vitality, progress, and success of his beloved home State. His fellow Americans will long remember his leadership in protecting our men and women in uniform, strengthening our national security, reaching across the aisle, and investing in a future of prosperity for all.

By his actions, he stood firm for the independence of the Congress, the strength of our democracy, and the values of the American people.

I want to extend my condolences to his wife, Irene, his son Daniel Jr., and the rest of his family as they mourn the loss of a great man.

When asked recently how he wanted to be remembered, Daniel said, quite humbly, "I represented the people of Hawaii and this Nation honestly and to the best of my ability. I think I did OK." I think that I speak for us all when I say that this was quite an understatement for a man who accomplished so much and sacrificed so for this country. And so with heavy hearts, we bid "aloha" to Senator Daniel Inouye—a man whose chapter in American history will live on.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN
CONGRESSMAN WOLF AND THE
ADMINISTRATION REGARDING
THE AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN
STUDY GROUP (APSG)

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, news reports from Afghanistan continue to show that U.S. policy is not working. For fiscal year 2012, the House provided the secretary of defense \$1 million to establish the Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group (APSG). Modeled after the successful Iraq Study Group (ISG), the APSG would be a bipartisan panel bringing together the best and brightest minds to provide solutions on how to assure a successful outcome in this troubled region. I have written President Obama and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta over a dozen times asking that the APSG be established, so the American people will know that every effort is being made to address a faltering U.S. policy at a critical juncture. I submit for the RECORD the first part of a series of letters from August 4, 2010 through September 15, 2011 on this important topic. How can President Obama and Secretary Panetta, who served on the ISG, continue to claim that putting “fresh eyes” on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan is a bad idea? Additional correspondence with the administration between October 3, 2011 and December 13, 2012 will follow tomorrow.

Hon. BARACK H. OBAMA,
The President, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On September 14, 2001, following the catastrophic and deliberate terrorist attack on our country, I voted to go to war in Afghanistan. I stand by that decision and have the utmost confidence in General Petraeus’s proven leadership. I also remain unequivocally committed to the success of our mission there and to the more than 100,000 American troops sacrificing toward that end. In fact, it is this commitment which has led me to write to you. While I have been a consistent supporter of the war effort in both Afghanistan and Iraq, I believe that with this support comes a responsibility. This was true during a Republican administration in the midst of the wars, and it remains true today.

In 2005, I returned from my third trip to Iraq where I saw firsthand the deteriorating security situation. I was deeply concerned that Congress was failing to exercise the necessary oversight of the war effort. Against this backdrop I authored the legislation that created the Iraq Study Group (ISG). The ISG was a 10-member bipartisan group of well-respected, nationally known figures who were brought together with the help of four reputable organizations—the U.S. Institute for Peace, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University—and charged with undertaking a comprehensive review of U.S. efforts there. This panel was intended to serve as “fresh eyes on the target”—the target being success in Iraq.

While reticent at first to their credit President Bush, State Secretary Rice and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld came to support the ISG, ably led by bipartisan co-chairs, former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Two members of your national security team, Secretary of

Defense Robert Gates and CIA Director Leon Panetta, saw the merit of the ISG and, in fact, served on the panel. Vice President Biden, too, then serving in the Senate, was supportive and saw it as a means to unite the Congress at a critical time. A number of the ISG’s recommendations and ideas were adopted. Retired General Jack Keane, senior military adviser to the ISG, was a lead proponent of “the surge,” and the ISG referenced the possibility on page 73. Aside from the specific policy recommendations of the panel, the ISG helped force a moment of truth in our national conversation about the war effort.

I believe our nation is again facing such a moment in the Afghanistan war effort, and that a similar model is needed. In recent days I have spoken with a number of knowledgeable individuals including former senior diplomats, public policy experts and retired and active military. Many believe our Afghanistan policy is adrift, and all agreed that there is an urgent need for what I call an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group (APSG). We must examine our efforts in the region holistically, given Pakistan’s strategic significance to our efforts in Afghanistan and the Taliban’s presence in that country as well, especially in the border areas.

This likely will not come as a surprise to you as commander in chief. You are well acquainted with the sobering statistics of the past several weeks—notably that July surpassed June as the deadliest month for U.S. troops. There is a palpable shift in the nation’s mood and in the halls of Congress. A July 2010 CBS news poll found that 62 percent of Americans say the war is going badly in Afghanistan, up from 49 percent in May. Further, last week, 102 Democrats voted against the war spending bill, which is 70 more than last year, and they were joined by 12 Members of my own party. Senator Lindsay Graham, speaking last Sunday on CNN’s “State of the Union,” candidly expressed concern about an “unholy alliance” emerging of anti-war Democrats and Republicans.

I have heard it said that Vietnam was not lost in Saigon; rather, it was lost in Washington. While the Vietnam and Afghanistan parallels are imperfect at best, the shadow of history looms large. Eroding political will has consequences—and in the case of Afghanistan, the stakes could not be higher. A year ago, speaking before the Veterans of Foreign War National Convention, you rightly said, “Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again. If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which al Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans. So this is not only a war worth fighting . . . this is fundamental to the defense of our people.” Indeed it is fundamental. We must soberly consider the implications of failure in Afghanistan. Those that we know for certain are chilling—namely an emboldened al-Qaeda, a reconstituted Taliban with an open staging ground for future worldwide attacks, and a destabilized, nuclear-armed Pakistan.

Given these realities and wavering public and political support, I urge you to act immediately, through executive order, to convene an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group modeled after the Iraq Study Group. The participation of nationally known and respected individual’s is of paramount importance. Among the names that surfaced in my discussions with others, all of whom more than meet the criteria described above, are ISG co-chairs Baker and Hamilton; former Senators Chuck Robb, Bob Kerrey and Sam Nunn; former Congressman Duncan Hunter, former U.S. ambassador Ryan Crocker; former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, and General Keane. These harms are simply suggestions among a cadre of capable

men and women, as evidenced by the makeup of the ISG, who would be more than up to the task.

I firmly believe that an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group could reinvigorate national confidence in how America can be successful and move toward a shared mission in Afghanistan. This is a crucial task. On the Sunday morning news shows this past weekend, it was unsettling to hear conflicting statements from within the leadership of the administration that revealed a lack of clarity about the end game in Afghanistan. How much more so is this true for the rest of the country? An APSG is necessary for precisely that reason. We are nine years into our nation’s longest running war and the American people and their elected representatives do not have a clear sense of what we are aiming to achieve, why it is necessary and how far we are from attaining that goal. Further, an APSG could strengthen many of our NATO allies in Afghanistan who are also facing dwindling public support, as evidenced by the recent Dutch troop withdrawal, and would give them a tangible vision to which to commit.

Just as was true at the time of the Iraq Study Group, I believe that Americans of all political viewpoints, liberals and conservatives alike, and varied opinions on the war will embrace this “fresh eyes” approach. Like the previous administration’s support of the Iraq Study Group, which involved taking the group’s members to Iraq and providing high-level access to policy and decision makers, I urge you to embrace an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group. It is always in our national interest to openly assess the challenges before us and to chart a clear course to success.

As you know, the full Congress comes back in session in mid-September—days after Americans around the country will once again pause and remember that horrific morning nine years ago when passenger airlines became weapons, when the skyline of one of America’s greatest cities was forever changed, when a symbol of America’s military might was left with a gaping hole. The experts with whom I have spoken in recent days believe that time is of the essence. In moving forward with a study panel, and waiting for Congress to reconvene is too long to wait. As such, I am hopeful you will use an executive order and the power of the bully pulpit to convene this group in short order, and explain to the American people why it is both necessary and timely. Should you choose not to take this path, respectfully, I intend to offer an amendment by whatever vehicle necessary to mandate the group’s creation at the earliest possible opportunity.

The ISG’s report opened with a letter from the co-chairs that read, “There is no magic formula to solve the problems of Iraq. However, there are actions that can be taken to improve the situation and protect American interests.” The same can be said of Afghanistan.

I understand that you are a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln. He, too, governed during a time of war, albeit a war that pitted brother against brother, and father against son. In the midst of that epic struggle, he relied on a cabinet with strong, often times opposing viewpoints. Historians assert this served to develop his thinking on complex matters. Similarly, while total agreement may not emerge from a study group for Afghanistan and Pakistan, I believe that vigorous, thoughtful and principled debate and discussion among some of our nation’s greatest minds on these matters will only serve the national interest. The biblical admonition that iron sharpens iron rings true.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

P.S. We as a nation must be successful in Afghanistan. We owe this to our men and women in the military serving in harm's way and to the American people.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA: I write today concerning the U.S. mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan. My amendment, which gives the secretary of Defense the authority to establish an Afghanistan/Pakistan (Af/Pak) Study Group, was included in the House-passed FY 2012 Defense Appropriations bill. I pressed for the amendment because I believe fresh eyes are needed now to examine the situation on the ground and the overall U.S. mission.

I envision the Af/Pak Study Group being modeled after the Iraq Study Group (ISG). Both you and your predecessor Bob Gates served on the ISG and know better than most the benefits it provided after three years of fighting in Iraq. Now that the U.S. is in its 10th year in Afghanistan, I believe a similar effort is necessary.

Before he was appointed as ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker supported creating an Af/Pak Study Group, along with Ambassador Ronald Neumann and Jim Dobbins from the RAND Corporation. American men and women are fighting and dying in Afghanistan. If we are asking them to put their lives on the line daily, I believe we have an obligation to provide an independent evaluation of the U.S. mission. We owe our military forces nothing less.

I do not have the answers. But as you know, there is a movement building in Congress in favor of pulling troops out of Afghanistan. An amendment offered by Rep. Jim McGovern earlier this year to the National Defense Authorization Act to accelerate U.S. departure from Afghanistan was narrowly defeated 204–215. If six members had changed their vote, the amendment would have passed. I have talked to several members who voted against the McGovern amendment who are seriously concerned about the war in Afghanistan and could change their vote if the situation on the ground does not improve rapidly.

I also believe it is critical that Afghanistan be examined in tandem with the facts on the ground in Pakistan. It is clear that in order to be successful in Afghanistan, we must have a clear understanding of how Pakistan is influencing U.S. operations. Just look at the recent news from the region. Hamid Karzai's half-brother was murdered and his funeral bombed, Karai advisor Jan Mohammed Kahn was murdered, and militants attacked and laid siege to the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul. The enclosed article printed recently in the Washington Post states, “. . . optimism and energy vanished long ago, gradually replaced by cynicism and fear. The trappings of democracy remained in place . . . but the politics of ethnic dog fights, tribal feuds and personal patronage continued to prevail.”

The men and women serving in Afghanistan deserve to have fresh eyes look at this region as soon as possible. With House passage of the Af/Pak amendment, I ask that you use your authority as secretary and move quickly to create this study group. I have discussed my amendment with John Hamre at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and he has offered to coordinate the group with professionals with a wide range of expertise.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this important initiative

and look forward to working with you to ensure we are successful in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
*Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA: I want to follow up on my previous letter regarding Afghanistan policy and bring to your attention a book I am reading, *The Wars in Afghanistan*, discussed in the enclosed Washington Post book review. Its author, Ambassador Peter Tomsen, is a veteran of the Foreign Service and has an impressive background in the South Asia region. If you have not read his book, I highly recommend it to you. The Post review concludes: “This long overdue work . . . is the most authoritative account yet of Afghanistan's wars over the last 30 years and should be essential reading for those wishing to forge a way forward without repeating the mistakes of the past.”

After three years of the Iraq war, the formation of the Iraq Study Group garnered the support of Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Rice, and Joint Chiefs General Pace. Our military men and women have been putting their lives on the line in Afghanistan every day for 10 years, seven years longer than when the decision was made to create the ISG to provide the independent assessment needed for U.S. policy in Iraq. I believe we owe it to our brave soldiers to focus now with fresh eyes on the target in Afghanistan.

I have spoken with Ambassador Tomsen about a framework for moving forward in Afghanistan, and he would be happy to meet with you and your team to discuss his breadth of experience there. I urge you to take him up on his offer.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
*Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA: I want to draw your attention to the enclosed letter I received from retired Marine Corps General Charles Krulak regarding an Afghanistan/Pakistan (Af/Pak) Study Group.

General Krulak makes an important point that we cannot be successful in Afghanistan if we do not address the ongoing tensions and frequent hostilities between Pakistan and India. I again ask you to take the language in the FY 2012 Defense Appropriations bill and use your authority to create the Af/Pak Study Group. Every day we delay is another missed opportunity to successfully address U.S. policy in South Asia.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to discuss this important issue.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY LEON PANETTA: I know you care deeply about the men and women in uniform fighting in Afghanistan. That's why I am disappointed that no one from your staff has contacted former Ambassador Peter Tomsen, an expert on Afghanistan, to meet with him, as I requested in my letter to you of August 1 (enclosed).

Ambassador Tomsen's new book, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, is receiving positive reviews,

including the enclosed review in the recent edition of *Foreign Affairs*. The review praises the book as providing an in depth description of the social structure of Afghanistan and the mistakes repeated by numerous foreign countries that have tried to help establish military and political cohesion in the country. The review states, “Whether one agrees with Tomsen, however, there is no denying that his descriptions of Afghanistan's society and politics are a valuable foundation for any discussion of how the country should be governed . . . Given Tomsen's track record, Americans should give a respectful hearing to his call for a thorough policy reformulation—something beyond tweaks to troop numbers and counterinsurgency tactics.”

I believe this book should be required reading for you and your team at the Pentagon. Ambassador Tomsen is ready and willing to lend his expertise to this important effort and I again ask that you or your staff meet with him.

Leon, I renew my call that you use your discretion as secretary and create the Af/Pak Study Group. We owe it to the men and women serving and the families and spouses at home to ensure we have the correct strategy. After 10 years of fighting, it is time to have a fresh set of eyes examine U.S. strategy. Far from a sign of weakness, creating an independent Af/Pak study group would show the Nation that we are doing everything possible to achieve our goals in this region.

I would welcome the chance to speak with you on this matter.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA: It was good to be with you at the Pentagon on Sunday to honor the lives lost there 10 years ago in the 9/11 attacks. I want to congratulate you on a moving ceremony that showed reverence to the Pentagon employees and the passengers of American Flight 77 that perished on that awful morning. I appreciated your comments and those of Admiral Mullen. Several of my constituents died at the Pentagon and the first U.S. service member killed in Afghanistan was my constituent. I thank you and all those who have served in public office and in uniform in the 10 years we have waged war against global terrorism.

As I waited for the program to begin on Sunday, I saw you and former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and was struck by a vivid memory from 2005 of the events surrounding the Iraq war. We were three years into the war, the security situation in Iraq was deteriorating, and our soldiers were dying every day. As a member of Congress who voted to send our troops to fight, I believed I had the added responsibility to make sure the administration was receiving the best advice possible on our Iraq strategy.

So I proposed creating the Iraq Study Group (ISG) made up of experts outside government to bring what I called “fresh eyes” on the target. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, Secretary Rice, and NSC Chairman Hadley all came to see the value in the ISG. By your participation, I think it is fair to say you also saw its benefit, and I greatly appreciated your outstanding service on the bipartisan panel. You and the other Democratic members who gave your time during a Republican administration exemplified the true meaning of service to your country.

We are now into the 10th year of fighting in Afghanistan and the challenges we face there continue. In 2001, I was the first member of Congress, along with Rep. Joe Pitts, to

visit Afghanistan after the U.S. invasion, against the wishes of the Defense Department. We saw firsthand the devastation that the Taliban had visited on Kabul as well as the remnants of the U.S. Embassy that was abandoned in 1979. I have also traveled to Pakistan and seen the difficulties that country faces combating the Afghan Taliban and other terror groups. Despite the current conditions, all my experience in this region tells me that success is possible if we formulate the right strategy to deal with both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

As with the ISG, I believe fresh eyes are needed now to examine U.S. policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The security situation continues to erode as evidenced by coordinated insurgent attacks on heavily fortified U.S. and NATO compounds just this week. The Taliban still finds safe haven in the tribal wilderness of Pakistan and the ISI actively funds terrorist groups.

Given these and other concerns on the ground in Afghanistan, I continue to be puzzled why you, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary Clinton are not supporting the Af/Pak Study Group idea in the same manner that Secretary Rumsfeld and other Bush administration officials supported the ISG. Having the experience of serving on the ISG and now serving as Secretary of Defense with a Democratic president (who I acknowledge inherited the war in Afghanistan), you are in a unique position to make this group a reality. The authorization and funding for the Af/Pak Study Group in the House-passed Defense Appropriations bill gives you the authority to create this group today.

I have to tell you that I continue to be disappointed that your staff has yet to contact former Ambassador Peter Tomsen to discuss his book, *The Wars of Afghanistan*. His book provides insightful information on the tribal structure of both Afghanistan and Pakistan and the political allegiances that underlie all actions in the region. I believe his knowledge and experience in this region would be invaluable in formatting future policy in South Asia. I respectfully ask again: please take advantage of his work and meet with him as soon as possible.

Leon, I don't have the answers on Afghanistan. Perhaps current U.S. strategy is the best way forward. But we owe it to the men and women in uniform who have served and continue to serve there—some paying the ultimate sacrifice—to know definitively. I continue to believe that fresh eyes from outside government focused on assessing the situation is the prudent action to take. I ask that you take the advice of those who support an Af/Pak Study Group, including Jim Dobbins, General Charles Krulak, Ryan Crocker, who I spoke with prior to his appointment as ambassador to Afghanistan, and other prominent Americans with experience in this region.

I believe it would be a sign of strength to appoint a study group and let the American people know that the administration is willing to examine all possible policies to achieve a successful outcome in this troubled region.

Best wishes,
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

LAMONT MEAUX—HARD CORE
TEXAN

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, service to God and country are the most honorable accomplishments and contributions that a person can make in life. Those who choose the path are the few, the bold, the brave, and the courageous. Today I am proud to honor decorated soldier, successful business owner, and devoted family man Lamont Meaux for his work on behalf of his country and his community.

Lamont Edward Meaux has known the cost of service to one's country since the day he was born. On September 2, 1945, his father Clifton Meaux, who was serving his country in the United States Navy at the end of the Second World War, received a telegraph with 6 simple words that would change his life forever: "Son born, Mom and baby ok." This sense of purpose and sacrifice would go on to define Lamont's life.

As a young child, Lamont's family moved from Beaumont, TX, to the Winnie-Stowell area of South East Texas. Farming is the main economic activity in the area, and Lamont would learn at an early age that he possessed quite the green thumb. Before the age of 10, he was growing and selling tomatoes for 17 cents a pound. He is still happy to share his secrets with anyone who will listen. Lamont would also spend time working in the abundant oil fields across Southeast Texas before graduating from East Chambers High School in Winnie, Texas.

His success growing tomatoes made Lamont a natural fit for Texas A&M University. He was a member of the Corps of Cadets Company C-2, whose motto "Our family is our strength" is very appropriate. As a proud Aggie, Lamont would drive his "Old Blue" car to as many football games as possible, both home and away. He would earn his BS in Industrial Distribution in 1968 and a week later married JoRella White.

Upon graduation, the United States was entrenched in the Vietnam War. Knowing that he would be called to duty, Lamont did all he could to protect his family while he was gone. He worked for a few months at an engineering firm in Dallas and even sold his Texas A&M Senior Boots. Senior Boots are the most prized possession of any Aggie. In May of 1968, as a member of the United States Army, he left for Fort Benning in Georgia for Officer's Infantry School. The next year he took off to Panama to train at the Jungle Operations Training Center to prepare him for conditions unlike anything he could see in Southeast Texas. His grandsons love to hear how he was taught worms and bugs and jungle survival.

Lamont was then ready for deployment as 1st Lieutenant of the United States Army's 199th Light Infantry Brigade. While he was being transported to his assignment in Vietnam, Lamont was asked if he knew the average life span of an Infantry Lieutenant in "The Country." He was shocked to hear "27 seconds" but continued on, determined to serve his country to the best of his ability. Lt. Meaux fought in the hot steamy jungles of Vietnam

against America's enemy. He doesn't talk much about what he saw. He does remind those at home that a lot of good men served with him. Some returned. Some returned with wounds of war. Some did not return. According to a man who served under him, Lamont "was a good soldier's officer who cared and felt for his men, but still served his country as an officer and a gentleman." He was known as a leader who would do anything to protect his men.

When Lt. Meaux returned to America he, like most Vietnam veterans, was treated badly by Americans who did not serve America. In February of 1970, Lamont would be discharged from the United States Army with numerous honors. He was awarded a National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Second Oak Leaf Cluster, and two Over Seas Bars. When asked why he did not put in for the Purple Heart, Lamont responded that there were others he sent out in the jungle that came back with more serious injuries. One souvenir he was proud to bring home was a telegram with the same 6 words that his father brought back: "Son born, Mom and baby ok." They would have 3 sons before the marriage ended in 1994. Those sons were Edward, Terrell, and David. Lamont would remain a member of the Army Reserves through 1974.

The heroic service Lamont made during his time in the Vietnam War lined him up for a promotion to Captain, but his heart belonged to his family back in Southeast Texas. He returned home and took up what was natural to him—farming. For the next 25 years, he would farm rice, wheat, soy beans, and milo, at one time up to 3,000 acres. Mr. Speaker, I probably represent more rice farmers than any other member in Texas. Let me tell you, rice farming is hard intense working of the land.

Lamont Meaux's ingenuity was not confined to the battlefield or the farm. In 1976, Lamont saw the need for some corrugated metal drainage pipes on the farm. Thinking big, he ordered a train load, used what he needed and sold the rest to the other farmers in the area. This is the beginning of Seabreeze Culvert, Inc. Lamont would eventually start designing his own drainage control structures, turning Seabreeze from a simple agricultural dealer to a respected creative solution provider for industrial, environmental, commercial, and municipal areas. He would go on to create Seebreeze Chemical, Inc., to provide cheaper products for the local farmers as well as raising chickens as Seabreeze Farm.

Lamont is a vital part of the community as well. He is a member of the Winnie Chamber of Commerce, Society of Professional Engineers, Texas Farm Bureau, and Corps of Cadets Association at Texas A&M. Meaux is Master Chairman for the Beaumont A&M Club, board member of the East Chambers Agricultural Historical Society, and committee member of the Regional Advisory Council of the General Land Office. Lamont is a past member of the American Rice Growers Association, American Soybean Association, and American Rice Growers Exchange.

A lifelong interest in politics paid off for Lamont in a much unexpected way. In 1997, Hazel, a staffer working on Kay Bailey Hutchison's U.S. Senate campaign, heard about a former Aggie much like herself that was very politically minded. They met at a Beaumont A&M Club meeting in 1997 and hit

it off instantly. They bonded over the Aggies, and whiskey, and politics, and the rest, as they say, is Texas history. Hazel gave Lamont the birthday present of a lifetime when they married on September 2, 1999.

Lamont Meaux has dedicated his life to serving his country and his community, and they are both better places because of him. Lamont Meaux is as Texan as they come. He is vocal, opinionated, and a hard core patriot that never forgets honor, duty, country. I am honored and privileged to call Lamont Meaux a close friend. Thank you Lamont Meaux for serving our nation and the great State of Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING JEFF DOUGLASS, WINNER OF THE GOVERNOR'S 2012 INNOVATORS UNDER 40 AWARD

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate Jeff Douglass, winner of the Governor's Innovators Under 40 Award. Mr. Douglass is the founder and CEO of Cybis Communications, a creative technology and communications company based in Orlando, Florida.

Mr. Douglass, a graduate of the University of Central Florida, founded Cybis Communications in 1995. Recruiting new clients solely by word of mouth, Mr. Douglass has emphasized a personal approach to each project and today serves as not only the CEO but also as Cybis Communication's Executive Producer, focusing on creative and live event productions. By 2006, Cybis was producing events for such prestigious customers as the White House and the Office of the President.

The Governor's Innovators Under 40 Award is one of Governor Rick Scott's 2012 Innovators in Business Awards, which are designed to recognize outstanding contributions toward growing and diversifying Florida's economy. The Innovators Under 40 Award is presented to Florida residents under the age of 40 who own or lead a Florida company with annual revenue of \$1 million or more, and who have created at least 10 jobs since January 2011.

Through Mr. Douglass's direction, Cybis has expanded and recently relocated to a design and production studio in downtown Orlando. Mr. Douglass is to be congratulated for the hard work and dedication he has demonstrated and for the contributions to Florida's economy that this award signifies. He is deserving of this recognition. May his work inspire others to follow in his footsteps.

HONORING KATRINA ANN KELLEY

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Katrina Ann Kelley, a dedicated public servant whose service to the House of

Representatives and the National School Boards Association spanned 28 years.

Katrina Ann Kelley was born on September 29, 1960, to William and Joan Kelley, in Galesburg, Illinois where she was raised along with six beloved siblings. She graduated Galesburg Sr. High School in 1978 as member of the National Honor Society before heading to Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, for a Bachelor of Arts in social work.

Katrina joined the staff of Congressman Lane Evans in 1984 as a District Caseworker in his Illinois office; then made the move to Washington, DC to become a Legislative Assistant. Later, Katrina served as a Legislative Assistant and a Legislative Director for Representative Charles A. Hayes of Chicago. Katrina loved her years "on the Hill" where she made many lifelong friends and brought her compassion for constituent service to every position. Katrina had immense respect for Congressman Evans and the late Representative Hayes and considered each of them personal mentors and lifelong friends.

Katrina took her comprehensive legislative knowledge and understanding of urban issues to the National School Boards Association, NSBA, where she served as the Director of Urban School District Advocacy, and later as the Director of the Council of Urban Boards of Education, CUBE, until her departure in 2012. Katrina helped to shape the CUBE program as a critical component of the National School Boards Association, touching over one hundred urban districts and millions of children in the United States and the Virgin Islands. Katrina's work helped urban school leaders find solutions to challenges at the local level and to improve their policy-making effectiveness, leading to improved outcomes for children. Katrina deeply believed in increasing the opportunities for all students, particularly low income and minority students.

Katrina passed away with her sisters at her side on October 9, 2012. I stand here today to honor Katrina Ann Kelley for her legacy of service to the citizens and students of the United States.

TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUED LEASE OR EVENTUAL CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF FORT WAINWRIGHT MILITARY RESERVATION IN FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to continue the conversation on how to preserve and protect an important neighborhood in Fairbanks, Alaska from eventual destruction.

In 1987, the Army entered into a Section 801 build-to-lease housing contract for 400-home community on seventy-six acres of land. These homes, consisting of three, four, and five bedroom units, a maintenance and leasing facility, associated roads and parking areas, landscaping, eighteen playgrounds, and a central heating system including 39 boiler houses, are an important source of housing for military families and the local area. This group of

homes is more than just housing or a neighborhood, it is a community.

The housing lease for this Section 801 contract expired in 2007 and the ground lease is scheduled to expire on June 26, 2018. Without an extension of the ground lease, the 400 houses must be removed from their current location no later than 180 days following the expiration of the lease. The most likely outcome of this situation is a complete demolition of these properties.

Currently, these 400 houses are nearly 100% occupied (99% in August of 2012) which is an unbiased testament to the value of these houses. Additionally, the four and five bedroom units are a valuable but very limited resource for the large number of military families with multiple children stationed in the area. In fact, seeing the value of these homes to both the military community and the local tax base, several community leaders and interests have written to me over the past couple of years to express their support for extending the ground-lease under these homes.

While I understand that this is a sensitive issue, it simply does not make sense for 400 high-use and high-value homes to be torn down. There must be a better solution. This bill may not be that solution, but it is a critical step in the direction to finding one.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND ALEXANDER I. DUNLAP

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late-Reverend Alexander I. Dunlap. Born December 4, 1930 to Rev. I.D. Dunlap, an A.M.E. minister, and Elmira McCoy Dunlap, a teacher in the public schools of North Carolina, Rev. Dunlap was the child of parents who loved the Lord and who loved education; each of them was an integral part of the man he was to become.

A.I., as he was affectionately known, lost his father at the early age of 10, yet he was proud to tell everyone that he was raised by a phenomenal woman who helped instill in him a sense of dignity and respect for himself and who told him that "You may be as black as coal but you are just as good as any child God has ever made."

A.I. attended North Carolina A&T University where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. He joined the U.S. Army and served during the Korean War for four years and was honorably discharged. He continued to pursue his love of God and education by attending Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta where he received his Masters of Divinity degree. He also later took courses in Pastoral Counseling at Emory and Duke Universities.

While still a young man in college, A.I. began his civil rights activities organizing sit-ins to protest the college Administration's policies. His love of community and commitment to the equal rights of every man, woman, and child continued to grow from the start of his career with the AME Church. As an Itinerant Elder, Rev. Dunlap travelled to many communities in Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, and finally to Illinois. Wherever he went, he made an impact. A.I. strove to ensure that everyone

he encountered knew Jesus and were treated with the dignity and respect they deserved in all facets of their lives.

During Rev. Dunlap's tenure as an A.M.E. minister, he participated and held positions some examples of his contributions: Special Consultant to the North Carolina Fund, which evaluated community action programs for the state of North Carolina; Faculty member and Vice President of Kittrell College in North Carolina; Chairman, Carolina Ford Fellowship; Chairman, Board of Directors for United Community Action: Director of Direct Action, Chicago's Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Chairman, Chicago Action Committee; Member, Board of Directors, Urban Training Center for Christian Mission; Chairman, 4th Episcopal Mass News Media, A.M.E. Church; Special Consultant to the late Bishop Frederick Jordan, Ecumenical Relations, National A.M.E. Church; Vice President, Danville, VA Ministerial Alliance; member of the Des Plaines Ministerial Alliance; Professor of Urban Programs for the Meadville Theological Seminary, affiliated with the University of Chicago; Director of Social Action, A.M.E. Ministerial Alliance of Chicago.

Although Rev. Dunlap was very involved as a minister, he also found time to become involved in civic and political organizations. Some of these organizations and affiliations included Rev. Dunlap's Charter Membership in the Prince Edward County Christian Association, an organization that placed black pupils in schools after they had been closed to avert integration in Prince Edward county Virginia; Charter Membership in the Danville Christian Progressive Association, an organization that broke down racial segregation in education and employment; Charter membership in the Halifax County Voters Movement that registered 100,000 new voters in eastern North Carolina; Charter membership in the Coalition for United Community Action that helped break down discrimination in the Chicago Construction industry; the First Executive Director and founding member of Black Contractors United; President of the Dr. Martin Luther King Coalition in Chicago; Member of the Chicago Urban League; Chairman of the 2nd Congressional District of North Carolina; Chairman of the Board of Directors of the North Carolina voter Education Project.

While A.I. was busy bringing people to Jesus and helping to create a better world for all, he also had a family. A blind date in Atlanta led him to the love of his life and wife of 44 wonderful years, Margaret Della Princess Esther Lee Dunlap, who predeceased him on October 29, 2004. To that union four children were born: Michele Arnita, Alexander, Jr, Michael Andre and "baby" Barbara Andrea. He was a devoted husband and a generous and caring father. He would often state how people were amazed with all that he did that he had time to have one child, much less four. A.I. loved music and played the trumpet for many years, loved sports (especially basketball), was an avid reader, and an exceptionally skilled poker player.

Through his efforts, A.I. helped open doors to African Americans in construction, education, housing and employment. He was responsible for helping to write some of the first Affirmative Action Programs for companies like Sears Roebuck and Co., Dearborn Park, CNA Financial, and Montgomery Ward to name a few. He sued the City of Chicago for the right

to March in Marquette Park, one of the most segregated neighborhoods in Chicago in the 70s. For the city's failure to provide adequate protections for their peaceful demonstration, A.I. sued the City of Chicago and won his case in *DUNLAP v. CITY OF CHICAGO* (435 F.Supp. 1295 (1977)).

These are just a few examples of the long-lasting impacts that Rev. Dunlap made towards the greater objective of creating a more loving and just society.

While the family of Shepherd A.I. Dunlap will miss him, we do not mourn his death. We are so grateful to God Almighty that he allowed him to be with us for 82 years. He leaves the following persons happy about his life—his children: Michele (Donald), Haughton; Alexander, Jr. (Darlene); Michael (Ophelia); Barbara; grandchildren: Nikhitut, Anjelica, Isaiah, Jillian, Chelsea, great-granddaughter Camia; a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, and a myriad of friends.

CONGRATULATING MAX BROWNE

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an exceptional young man, Max Browne, who was recently named the 2012–2013 Gatorade National Football Player of the Year.

Max Browne grew up in the district 1 represent, Washington's 8th. At 6 feet 5 inches and 218 pounds, he became Skyline High School's star quarterback this year, leading the Spartans to a 14–0 record and a Class 4A state championship this fall. Browne passed for 4,526 yards, 49 touchdowns and just five interceptions.

Max Browne is not only an exceptional athlete; he is an extraordinary human being. While a star quarterback at Skyline High School in Sammamish, Washington, he maintained a 3.50 GPA, was a three-time Skyline High Student of the Month Citizenship Award recipient and volunteered on behalf of Issaquah Parks and Recreation, the Sammamish/Issaquah Young Life ministry and as an intern with G2 Physical Therapy. He has also worked with Generation Joy and raised funds to benefit cancer research.

This is the second Gatorade State Player of the Year award for Max Browne, who broke the state record for career passing yards and completions this year, surpassing Detroit Lions quarterback and Gatorade Washington Player of the Year Kellen Moore. His second award was presented by Seattle Seahawks rookie Russell Wilson, an added bonus to the wonderful honor.

I am incredibly proud of this young man. The Gatorade Player of the Year program recognizes outstanding athletic excellence, academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field. It is an honor to represent him as a constituent, and I know that he will set an example for his teammates for years to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LEONILA VEGA

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on November 19, 2012, the movement to improve direct care jobs lost a fearless and spirited leader when Leonila Vega passed away after battling cancer for fourteen months. As an advocate for direct care workers—the more than four million workers who assist elders and people living with disabilities—Leonila fought to improve wages, access to benefits, and respect for the profession. Born in rural Mexico, Leonila came to the United States as a teenager eager for the opportunity to pursue an education. She taught herself to speak and read English, worked her way through college, and went on to earn a law degree. As a disability rights attorney in Wisconsin, Ms. Vega developed a reputation as a ferocious advocate for the elderly and people living with disabilities. Her cases exposed her to the plight of direct care workers—many of whom are immigrant women—and she saw firsthand the challenges they faced, working long hours for little pay and no benefits, entrusted with the lives of their clients while suffering an alarming lack of respect. Her desire to improve life for these caregivers led her to become the Executive Director of Direct Care Alliance. At Direct Care Alliance, Ms. Vega worked to eliminate the exploitation of direct care workers and its harmful effects on care quality by empowering numerous direct care workers to see the valuable role they play in society. As she said, it was her American dream to help others realize their potential. I admire Ms. Vega's work on behalf of direct care workers, immigrants and people of color, and am saddened that we have lost such a vivacious and dynamic leader.

Among the issues that Ms. Vega championed was the extension of the Fair Labor Standards Act to cover home care workers. Sadly, this essential workforce is excluded from these basic protections. Such poor working conditions hinder recruitment and retention which, in turn, negatively affect the quality of care that millions of Americans receive. Troubled by this injustice, Ms. Vega ensured that the issue remained at the center of Direct Care Alliance's agenda. I was inspired by her passion to improve direct care jobs and introduced the Direct Care Workforce Empowerment Act in 2010 and reintroduced a similar bill—the Direct Care Job Quality Improvement Act in 2011. One year ago, President Obama announced the Department of Labor's proposed rule to extend minimum wage and overtime protections to home care workers. Sadly, Ms. Vega did not live to see the rule finalized, but we will continue to fight to make things right for direct care workers, just as she would have done. The values that Ms. Vega fought to advance—respect and dignity for all people—are ones that everyone, regardless of political affiliation, shares and we must work together to move those efforts forward.

HONORING JAY PIERSON ON HIS
RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mr. Jay Pierson, Floor Assistant with the Office of the Speaker, on his retirement from over 34 years of dedicated service in the House of Representatives.

Jay has been an exemplary public servant who has demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism on a daily basis. His career in public service has been a testament to the importance of unselfish devotion.

I know firsthand of Jay's professionalism from my first day of advising on protocol, and he is always cheerful while providing counsel on proper parliamentary procedure.

As Jay embarks on a new chapter in life, it is my hope that he may recall with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment the outstanding contributions he has made to the United States House of Representatives and the people of the United States of America.

I would like to send Jay my best wishes for continued success in his future endeavors, and may his life be filled with health and happiness.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for rollcall vote Nos. 627 and 628, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE RESCH

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor H. George Resch, who passed away last week. George was a lifelong champion of liberty, sound money, and peace who played a key role in the development of the modern liberty movement. I was privileged to know George as a business associate and a friend.

George was one of the liberty movement's leading experts on the dangers of government control of education. One of his most significant contributions to libertarian scholarship was an essay titled "Human Variations and Individuality," published in the 1974 anthology *The Twelve Year Sentence*. In this essay, George convincingly challenged the popular idea that government must control education in order to ensure "equality of opportunity." As George made clear, because all people differ in their abilities and interests, the only way the state can ensure "equal opportunities" is to prevent any student from excelling.

As important as George's scholarship on educational freedom was, his main contribu-

tion to the liberty movement was his work supporting libertarian scholars—especially younger scholars, who often lacked opportunities available to their peers who were willing to promote statist academic orthodoxy.

George began supporting promising libertarian scholars in the 1950s, when he met Professor F.A. "Baldy" Harper at Robert LeFevre's Freedom School. Harper immediately recognized George's qualities of mind and strong character, and eventually recruited George to work with the William Volker Fund. At the time, the Volker Fund was one of the few organizations dedicated to the development and promotion of libertarian ideas.

At the Volker Fund, George worked with many leading libertarians thinkers of the day to identify books and authors worthy of promotion and support. One of the people George worked with was Murray Rothbard, Ludwig von Mises' heir and the founder of the modern libertarian movement. George and Murray's friendship began when they discussed monopolies. George had heard that Rothbard was developing a theory of antitrust more "radical" than Mises', and wanted to learn more. The conversation resulted in a friendship that lasted until Murray passed away in 1995.

In 1961, George helped Professor Harper create the Institute for Humane Studies (IHS). IHS's goal was to expand the Volker Fund's mission of promoting libertarian scholarship by identifying and supporting young people with the potential to become leading libertarian scholars. George played a major role in helping to sustain and grow IHS in its early years. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that Baldy Harper never would have gotten IHS off the ground without George's help. The thousands of young people who have been introduced to the ideas of liberty through IHS's programs, as well as those who received academic and career support from IHS, all owe a debt of gratitude to George Resch.

In 1965, George helped his friends Murray Rothbard and Leonard Liggio publish *Left and Right*, a journal dedicated to preserving the "Old Right's" limited government and anti-imperialist ideals. As the title suggests, *Left and Right* also sought to create an alliance with the anti-imperialist and anti-corporatist elements found on the left. *Left and Right* was published until 1968. However, its influence is still felt today. The seeds that Rothbard, Liggio, and Resch planted are at last bearing fruit as a new left-right coalition has embraced the ideas *Left and Right* championed. This coalition of libertarians, liberals, and constitutional conservatives is working together to oppose militarism, protect civil liberties, end corporate welfare, and reduce the power of the Federal Reserve.

George also had a successful private-sector career working with Burt Blumert at Camino Coins. Burt and George truly were kindred souls, both tireless promoters and supporters of the ideas of liberty. Burt and George made Camino one of the country's top coin businesses.

George also worked with Burt at the Center for Libertarian Studies. The Center published the *Journal of Libertarian Studies* (among many other projects), the first academic journal devoted to the ideas of liberty. George also helped Burt and Lew Rockwell establish and develop *Lewrockwell.com*, the world's most-visited libertarian web site.

When I left Congress in 1984, Burt and George assisted me in establishing Ron Paul Coins. I worked with Burt and George until I returned to Congress in 1996 and had to end my involvement in the company. Getting to know George was one of the most enjoyable aspects of working in the coin business. You could not ask for a better business partner or friend than George. He never treated anyone with anything less than complete respect. He had a wonderful understated sense of humor, and like our mutual friends Murray Rothbard and Burt Blumert, a Menckenesque appreciation of the absurdities of modern American politics. George also never lost his ability to spot potential young leaders or counsel, assist, and spend time talking to young people interested in advancing liberty. My Legislative Director, for example, benefited from George's advice and friendship.

Mr. Speaker, George Resch's many friends in the liberty movement are deeply saddened by his passing. We are also grateful for all he did to build the liberty movement, and for the example he set for all of us who continue his work of advancing freedom.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN DELEÓN

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the life of a soldier, an inspiring community leader and a dear friend of mine who is no longer with us, Mr. John de León.

John was born in San Antonio, Texas on May 6, 1944. He began his career with the United States Army before going on to serve a long career with the Federal Government. Throughout his career, John was dedicated to community development, civil rights and human rights. As a result of his exceptional work, dedication and professionalism, he received several awards and special recognitions from community organizations and the Federal Government.

Once he retired from the Federal Government, Mr. de Leon went on to serve with the City of Houston, became Chairman of the Harris County Tejano Democrats, and later as Chairman of the U.S. Democrats Abroad in Mexico. Mr. de Leon not only spent his life as a dedicated public servant, but as a loving husband to his dear wife Irene, father, grandfather and dear friend to many. Please join me in recognizing his career of distinguished service and contribution to our great country.

DON'T LET FOREIGN AID FALL
OFF THE FISCAL CLIFF

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as negotiations to avoid the "fiscal cliff" enter the final stages, it is important that we keep in mind the potentially devastating consequences of across-the-board cuts. This is true not only for domestic programs, but also for foreign assistance,

which represents less than one percent of the Federal budget and is one of the most cost-effective ways of protecting our interests across the globe. Today, more than ever, our health, security, and prosperity depend on a world in which basic human needs are met, fundamental rights and freedoms are respected, conflicts are resolved peacefully, and the world's resources are used wisely.

In this regard, I commend to my colleagues an excellent op-ed by Sharon Waxman, vice-president of the International Rescue Committee. Her article in *The Hill*, "Don't Let Foreign Aid Fall Off the Fiscal Cliff," outlines the importance of foreign aid in saving lives and easing suffering for millions around the world.

[From *The Hill*, Nov. 30, 2012]

DON'T LET FOREIGN AID FALL OFF THE FISCAL CLIFF

(By Sharon Waxman)

With the presidential election behind us, attention has turned to the impending "fiscal cliff". By New Year's Day, the Obama Administration and Congress must identify \$1.2 trillion in savings between spending cuts, revenue increases and entitlement reform. Otherwise, most federal programs will be cut by a staggering 8.2 percent.

On the chopping block is foreign assistance, which provides lifesaving aid to millions of vulnerable people, including Syrian refugees fleeing horrific violence and seeking safety and help in neighboring countries. The consequences of having the budget axe fall on foreign aid at this time could be dire.

The Syrian conflict is in its 20th month and displacement into Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq has more than tripled during the last three. By year's end, it's estimated that 700,000 Syrian refugees will be spread out across the region, overwhelming the communities hosting them and fueling a humanitarian crisis.

Last week, I visited a hospital wing in Amman, Jordan, filled with Syrian refugees. There, I met a father from Homs who had been out buying bread when his neighborhood came under siege. Now he is paralyzed from the chest down from shrapnel wounds. His wife and eight-year-old son keep vigil at his hospital bed, day and night. Their alternatives are few. They either move to a refugee camp, a grim prospect as winter approaches, or become part of a massive, underserved and desperate urban refugee population.

Meanwhile, other large-scale humanitarian emergencies have worsened or unfolded in the past year.

An estimated 18 million people are food insecure in Africa's Sahel region because of chronic poverty and crushing drought, and four million children are malnourished. In Mali, conflict in the north, which has caused the displacement of some 400,000 people, has exacerbated its food crisis. Violence in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states of Sudan has forced 175,000 refugees to flee to South Sudan and an additional 65,000 to Ethiopia.

Violence continues to spiral in eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where fighting repeatedly uproots communities, disrupts food production and shuts down health services. And whenever conflict escalates there, so does violence targeting women. Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, a humanitarian crisis has worsened, with unrest and natural disasters uprooting more than half a million people.

All told, more than 44 million people are currently displaced by conflict around the world—the highest number in 15 years.

My organization, the International Rescue Committee, is on the ground in these and other conflict and disaster zones, responding

to pressing humanitarian needs. We see firsthand how foreign assistance is saving lives and easing the suffering of countless people.

The need for the United States to respond to global humanitarian emergencies is increasing exponentially at the very time that across-the-board cuts may go into effect.

While we appreciate the daunting budget decisions ahead, foreign aid represents less than one percent of all federal spending, and non-war foreign assistance has already been cut by 15 percent over the last two years. An additional 8.2 percent reduction in foreign aid will undoubtedly cut the very programs that enable the United States to respond to human suffering and foster economic growth and stability. It will put millions of lives at risk and set the U.S. back years in its effort to lift people out of poverty and reduce dependency. Such cuts would be shortsighted and would not solve America's fiscal woes.

America's continued leadership in foreign policy and foreign assistance is critical, but it cannot happen on a shoe-string budget. The U.S. government must have the right tools at its disposal to conduct effective diplomacy, encourage development and provide humanitarian assistance to effect positive change in areas where it's desperately needed.

In the weeks ahead, we hope the Administration and Congress will reach an agreement that moves America off this precarious fiscal cliff while preserving America's leadership in foreign assistance and its commitment and ability to protect the world's most vulnerable.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, due to a family matter requiring my presence in New Mexico, I was not able to be present for a number of votes on the House floor this week.

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 627, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4606, to authorize the issuance of right-of-way permits for natural gas pipelines in Glacier National Park, and for other purposes, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 628, on motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3193, the Barona Band of Mission Indians Land Transfer Clarification Act of 2012, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 629, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6504, the Small Business Investment Company Modernization Act of 2012, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 630, on motion to suspend the rules and agree to the Senate Amendment on H.R. 3783, an act to provide for a comprehensive strategy to counter Iran's growing hostile presence and activity in the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 631, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6621, to correct and improve certain provisions of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act and title 35, United States Code, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 632, on motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3642, the Theft of Trade Secrets Clarification Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 633, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6672, to reauthorize certain programs under the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to public health security and all-hazards preparedness and response and for other purposes, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 634, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1845, the Medicare IVIG Access Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 635, on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 668, to refer H.R. 5862, a bill making congressional reference to the United States Court of Federal Claims pursuant to sections 1492 and 2509 of title 28, United States Code, the Indian trust-related claims of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma as well as its individual members, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 636, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6655, the Protect Our Kids Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 637, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3564, the Public Interest Declassification Board Reauthorization Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 638, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6016, the Government Employee Accountability Act, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

RECOGNIZING COLONEL MICHAEL J. MEESE

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Colonel Michael J. Meese, Professor and Head of the Department of Social Sciences at West Point. Colonel Meese is retiring January 18, 2013 after over 31 years of long and distinguished service.

As Head of the Social Sciences Department at West Point, Colonel Meese teaches economics and national security courses and leads the 70 military and civilian faculty members who teach political science, economics, and terrorism-related courses. He also leads the Combating Terrorism Center, the Office of Economics and Manpower Analysis, and the Conflict and Human Security Studies Program whose personnel both teach cadets and conduct nationally significant research in terrorism, Army personnel policy, and cultural studies. He serves as the Co-Chair of the Strategic Planning Working Group, developing the 2013–2019 Strategic Plan, which is critical to the long term future of the Academy. Previously he chaired the Academic Excellence Subcommittee of the NCAA Accreditation, which was instrumental to continued intercollegiate athletic participation. He chaired the Superintendent's Planning Team that examined the military program and developed the most significant recent changes to the military program at West Point: The consolidation of military science courses, the creation of the

MX400 Officership course, and the creation of Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT).

Colonel Meese graduated from the United States Military Academy on 27 May 1981 and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery. After being an honor graduate of the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course at Fort Sill, he reported to his first duty assignment with the 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery (later designated 6th Battalion, 8th Field Artillery) at Fort Ord, California. He served as a company Fire Support Team Chief, Battery Executive Officer (during which time his Battery received the Gilmore Award as the best firing—battery in the 7th Infantry Division), Battalion S-1/Adjutant, and Battalion Fire Direction Officer. During this period he assisted with the conversion of the artillery to the Infantry Division (Light) configuration and participated in training deployments to Japan, Panama, Minnesota, Idaho, and other locations in California. In 1985, he attended the Field Artillery Officer Advanced Course, where he was the distinguished graduate, and then was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 6th Field Artillery (later designated 4th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery) in Hanau, Germany from 1985–1988. He served as the Battalion Assistant Operations Officer, interim Battalion S-3, and firing Battery Commander of a 155mm M109A1 SP howitzer battery with a contingency mission in support of the 3rd Armored Division's General Defense Plan in Germany's Fulda Gap. In this position, he was designated as the MacArthur Leadership Award Nominee for V Corps and was selected for early promotion to major.

Colonel Meese attended the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University from 1988–90, earning an M.P.A., an M.A. and completing all requirements for his Ph.D., except the dissertation, which he would later complete coincident with other duties. He was assigned to the United States Military Academy as an instructor and assistant professor in the Department of Social Sciences from 1990–1993, where he taught the advanced economic principles course, microeconomics, macroeconomics, and economics of national security. He was an honor graduate of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and in 1994–1996 he was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. He became the Operations Officer of 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, coordinating the battalion's operations on a no-notice deployment to fight wildfires in Montana and on an NTC rotation. He later served as the Deputy G3 of the 1st Cavalry Division, including commanding the Division Assault Command Post during its deployment to Korea as part of Exercise Foal Eagle in 1996.

The Academic Board selected Colonel Meese as an Academy Professor in the Department of Social Sciences, and he returned to become the Director of Economics in 1996. In 2001, he was selected to become a Professor, U.S. Military Academy, was confirmed by the Senate in 2002, and became Deputy Head of the Department of Social Sciences. Since June 2005, he has served as the Professor and Head of the Department of Social Sciences, U.S. Military Academy.

During over 19 years serving at West Point, Colonel Meese has personally supervised the execution of one of the leading political science and economics programs in the Nation, ensuring that cadets achieve the highest

standards, are enthusiastic about their education, and eagerly anticipate their service in the Army. This includes continually ensuring that the Social Sciences curriculum reflects the changing economic, political, and cultural environment that graduates will face and incorporates the latest teaching in terrorism, national security, and post-conflict studies to better prepare cadets. As a result, every USMA graduate has a core understanding of Social Sciences and over 200 cadets every year studied political science or economics in depth. This study has significantly prepared graduates to anticipate and respond effectively to the uncertainties of a changing technological, social, political, and economic world that they face as commissioned leaders of character in the United States Army. He has exemplified teaching by teaching a minimum of two sections every semester at West Point.

Colonel Meese has inspirationally led the professional development of Social Sciences faculty, supported the research needs of the Army, and advanced the fields of economics, political science, and national security policy. As a result of his leadership, Social Sciences faculty have been routinely included in the ongoing analysis of economics and national security policy issues, both as individuals and through the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC), the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA), and the Center for Human Security Studies (CHSS). He robustly supported scholarship by senior military and civilian faculty who have routinely presented or published papers at least once annually and nearly every military faculty presented or published at least once during their USMA tour. He personally exemplifies scholarship, resulting in over two dozen invited presentations, including testimony to a U.S. congressional committee; twenty book chapters, conference papers, major conference reports, or journal articles; and two full length books: *American National Security and the Armed Forces Guide to Personal Financial Planning*.

At West Point, Colonel Meese has been a critical leader of strategic thought among his faculty, throughout the Academy, and within the Army. This includes his leadership of conferences on topics including: "Toward an Army Officer Corps Strategy," "Bridging the Cultural Divide: NGO-Military Relations in Complex Environments," "The Professional Military Ethic in an Era of Persistent Conflict," "Public Diplomacy: Messages, Process, Outcomes," and "The Army Profession." As a result of these efforts and his ongoing encouragement of dynamic faculty members conducting leading-edge research, the Social Sciences Department has become one of the leading repositories of innovative thought within the Army. In 2006, the Department was recognized for its contributions with the presentation of the Army Superior Unit Award. During 2003–2004, Colonel Meese was the USMA Fellow at the National War College, where he graduated from the National War College while exemplifying teaching excellence on their faculty.

Beyond West Point, Colonel Meese has been called on numerous times to address some of the most challenging strategic political-military problems facing the Nation and the Army. He deployed for a full year from 2010–2011 as the Assistant Chief of Staff for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, where he was instrumental in integrating the 1,500-person ISAF staff working

for General Petraeus to supervise a comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency campaign. In December 2009–January 2010, he deployed to Afghanistan leading a flag officer/ambassadorial interagency team to improve U.S. detention policy and establish Combined Joint Task Force 435. In January–March 2009, he deployed to assist General Odierno and Ambassador Crocker as they developed the "Responsible Withdrawal of Forces from Iraq" plan for the Obama Administration. He had previously deployed to Iraq from June–September 2007, assisting General Petraeus' assessment and testimony; from January–March 2007, to develop "the surge" campaign plan; from June–August 2003 in Mosul, Iraq to help establish governance and stability immediately after the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and from January to July 2002 to Bosnia as the Executive Officer to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations for the NATO Stabilization Force. In sum, he has deployed to combat zones for over 31 months since 2001 in support of ongoing military operations.

In addition to combat deployments, Colonel Meese has assisted the Army's strategic decision making in many other areas. He served as the Executive Director of the Secretary of the Army's Transition Team in 2005; was the co-director of the Department of Defense Panel on Commercialization and Globalization (the Dawkins Panel) in 1999; served as a member of the Defense Science Board Improvised Explosive Device Task Force (2007–2009); and was a member of the 2001 Army Science Board Team developing the redesign of the Army Headquarters staff. He participated in the assessment, training, and education of the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) in 1998 to fundamentally transform the SANDF after their post-apartheid transition of government. He has participated as a presenter, organizer, or author in nine different NATO or Partnership for Peace conferences that have supported effective partnerships with NATO and non-NATO partners.

Colonel Meese's distinguished career reflects the vision, demonstrated leadership, and extraordinary service of a proven leader. His service, unwavering dedication to duty, and the life-long impact he has had on the careers of faculty members and graduates of West Point have contributed immeasurably to the status of the United States Military Academy and to the achievements of Army officers. In fact, I was one of those officers who had the privilege to serve with and learn from COL Mike Meese, and I am at once humbled and honored at this moment to congratulate him on a career of exceptional service to the Army and the Nation. I wish him, Ramona, and their family all the best as they transition to civilian life and continue to serve in other ways.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during the rollcall vote No. 623, on December 12, 2012. I would have voted "no."

HONORING JAY PIERSON ON HIS
RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Jay Pierson, the longtime floor assistant to Speakers Gingrich, Hastert and BOEHNER, who will be retiring at the end of the 112th Congress.

It's fair to say that no one knows more about legislative procedure and the workings of the House than Jay. His retirement will leave an irreplaceable void in the institutional memory of this chamber.

Jay started working in the House two years before my election in 1980 and I have relied on his assistance throughout my time here. In fact, whenever my staff had legislative questions, our answer usually started with the exclamation: "Let's call Jay!" And when you called him, you could always rely on his expert advice.

In addition to his wealth of legislative knowledge, Jay is just an all-around terrific person who is unfailingly helpful and ready with a smile. It is these qualities that earned him the respect of members on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, it is an understatement to say that the Republican cloakroom and floor won't be the same without him. I am grateful for Jay's career of service to our country and wish him all the best in his retirement.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHABAD CENTER OF NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey, Rockaway Township, Morris County, New Jersey as they celebrate their 25th anniversary this year.

Founded in 1988 by a small group of volunteers, Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey has grown into a regional network of social, religious and charitable programs. The Center is built around the acceptance of every individual on his or her own level, regardless of background, affiliation, age or financial status. By blending traditional values with modern day techniques, the Center has been able to touch many lives through Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties.

At the core of the Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey is their educational program, offered through the Chabad Educational Center. Their mission is based on the driving principle that the Jewish education system should focus on character development, spiritual consciousness and selfless devotion to the betterment of humanity.

The Center opened in 2008 to provide innovative educational services and cultural enrichment for all ages. Making up the Chabad Educational Center are the state-of-the-art Early Learning Center, Hebrew School, Hebrew

High, Adult Education Institute and the first Community Mikvah established in Northwest New Jersey. Each of these allows the Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey to bring valuable educational and cultural opportunities to all members of their community.

The Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey also offers Men's and Women's clubs, giving members of their community the opportunity to socialize and perform acts of philanthropy throughout Northwest New Jersey.

Through their educational, philanthropic and community outreach programs, the Center has established itself as a pillar of our local community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey as they celebrate their 25th anniversary.

CECIL SCAIFE VISIONARY AWARD
AWARDED TO AMY GRANT

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, musical genius is commonplace in Middle Tennessee. We see it on the Billboard Top 40, and we hear it in our local gathering spots. We are a community of notable note-makers, and yet there are those who stand a bit taller among the rest of our blessings. I rise today to honor Amy Grant as she receives the Cecil Scaife Visionary Award and is recognized for her contribution to Tennessee's legendary sound.

Amy Grant's music is more than a simple part of our lives. From her light-hearted hits to the notes and scores that wove their way from our darkest moments, Grant's pen continually casts light into our collective soul. Bluegrass, gospel, Christian, and pop all claim a bit of Grant's heritage as she continues to weave all four together into one signature blend. Her music is a part of our Christmas, our Easter, and our seasons in between.

I ask my colleagues to join with me and celebrate Amy Grant not simply for her legendary sound and steadfast commitment to the music industry, but for her graciousness in paving the way for other singers, songwriters, and bare-footed musicians to come along with her. It is fitting, then, that she be awarded the Cecil Scaife Visionary Award, and I appreciate her faithfulness to Nashville. I also appreciate the hard work and support of those who established and continue the Cecil Scaife Business Scholarship. Your devotion to those who pioneer the way for future music legends helps to strengthen our community and the sounds of our home.

DEDICATION OF THE RYAN
WINSLOW VETERANS CENTER

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to announce to this House that the Clay Veterans Center in Center Point in the Sixth District of Alabama has been rededicated as the Ryan Winslow Veterans Center.

The renaming honors the patriotic service of Marine Lance Corporal Ryan George Winslow, who lost his life in Iraq defending our freedoms, and also recognizes his parents, George and Marynell Winslow, who instilled in their son high character and a desire to serve others.

Ryan Winslow, who attended Hoover High School and Jefferson State Community College and belonged to Shades Crest Baptist Church, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in January 2005. Deployed to Iraq with the 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Lance Corporal Winslow performed his duties with great dedication, distinction, and drive despite his young age. Tragically, Ryan suffered fatal injuries during combat operations in Al Anbar Province on April 15, 2006. He died at the age of 19. Ryan's memory is held in high honor, respect, and love by his family, friends, and the many individuals that he touched during a too-short life.

Turning personal loss into a passionate resolve to help others, the Winslows have become great advocates for all soldiers and veterans in Alabama. Marynell Winslow played a lead role in founding Gold Star Families of Alabama to recognize service members who have given their lives in defense of our country and provide comfort to their families. Gold Star Families has recently undertaken a project to build a memorial at the American Village to Alabamians who have given their lives in service to our country since 9/11.

The Veterans Center in Center Point is a special place. Opened in December 2010 by Three Hots and a Cot, a truly inspiring non-profit organization, the center offers safe shelter to homeless military veterans and helps with their transition back to an independent lifestyle. With a staff that includes formerly homeless veterans, the center goes beyond offering housing and meals and provides services such as life skills training, job searches, transportation to VA hospitals for medical appointments, and companionship and stability. It is a model example of the responsibility and duty that we have as a society to assist the veterans who have sacrificed for us.

The tremendous amount of good that has been done and that will be done in the Veterans Center will now serve as a lasting tribute and thank you to Ryan Winslow and his family, and indeed to every serviceman and servicewoman who has given the ultimate sacrifice to defend our great Nation. The name of Ryan Winslow will be proudly born by this sanctuary of hope and recovery.

It is altogether fitting and proper that the U.S. House of Representatives take time to recognize and memorialize this most important occasion.

HONORING JAY PIERSON ON HIS
RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a long-time servant of the House of Representatives, Mr. Jay Pierson, who is retiring after 34 years of advising Speakers, Leaders and Members of Congress.

When the American public tunes into C-SPAN, the give and take of congressional debate might make about as much sense as the floor of the New York Stock Exchange just before the closing bell. Fortunately, the House has seasoned experts—truly dedicated public servants—who keep up with the details of floor deliberation and legislation so that Members of Congress are able to cast their votes without confusion.

One of the people most responsible for ensuring that House Republicans are informed about important legislation is Speaker BOEHNER's Floor Assistant, Jay Pierson. Jay's role can perhaps be compared to that of an air traffic controller, closely monitoring the flow of floor debate and shepherding Members of Congress to their appropriate positions. While an air traffic controller may use a radar scope for guidance, Jay relies on his dog-eared copy of Jefferson's Manual of Rules and 34 years of experience.

A graduate of Westmont College in Santa Barbara, and a recipient of a Master's Degree from Long Beach University and a Doctorate from the University of Maryland, Jay arrived in the halls of Congress about the same time as the C-SPAN cameras. Dr. Pierson's congressional career began in 1978 in the office of the General Clerk. He began working in the Republican Cloakroom in 1979 for the office of House Republican Leader John J. Rhodes, R-AZ.

Over three decades he held positions of member of the House Republican Cloakroom, member of the Republican Floor Staff and Floor Assistant to the Speaker. He was Assistant Floor Manager for Speaker Gingrich, Floor Assistant for Speaker Dennis Hastert, and now Floor Assistant for Speaker JOHN BOEHNER.

For the past decade, Jay has been an invaluable resource to me during floor debate and votes and I will always value his counsel and friendship.

Mr. Speaker, as Jay prepares to transition to retirement, I join with my colleagues here in the House in wishing him the very best. Jay's wisdom and expertise will be sorely missed.

REFERRING QUAPAW TRIBE OF
OKLAHOMA TRUST CLAIMS TO
COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS

SPEECH OF

HON. DAN BOREN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. BOREN. Madam Speaker, the purpose of this statement is to clarify the scope of the resolution before us. It states that it encompasses Quapaw tribal and individual claims "other than the legal claims that are pending in the Court of Federal Claims on the date of enactment of this resolution."

A question arises. If one or more of those currently pending legal claims are dismissed by the Court for lack of jurisdiction, would the dismissed claim be considered "pending" for purposes of this resolution?

In my view, the answer is no. Our intention with the reference resolution is to request from the Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims a report containing findings of fact and conclusions of law concerning the nature, ex-

tent, and character of the Indian-trust related claims of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma and its tribal members for compensation. As the language of the resolution suggests, these claims may be legal or equitable in nature, and exclude only the claims that are already within the jurisdiction of the Court of Federal Claims (including the statute of limitations) and are already pending in the Court of Federal Claims on the date of enactment. If a claim is dismissed as being outside the statute of limitations or for jurisdictional reasons, in my view, it was not pending on the date of enactment.

The intent behind the resolution is to have the Court review and render a final and complete resolution of all such claims—that resolution to occur either in the pending cases under the jurisdiction already granted the Court of Federal Claims by the Indian Tucker Act or else under the terms of H. Res. 668.

IN RECOGNITION OF SERGEANT
SOUTRA

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary achievements of Marine Sergeant William Soutra, Jr in Afghanistan. Sergeant Soutra recently received the Navy Cross, the second highest honor given for valor in combat.

Sergeant Soutra is a resident of Worcester and a 2004 graduate of Worcester Vocational High School, where he played lacrosse, football, and hockey. Sergeant Soutra attended Becker College before joining the Marines in 2005.

Over a two day attack beginning on July 10, 2010, Sergeant Soutra's element leader was mortally wounded by an improvised explosive device. With his unit disoriented, Soutra, alongside his military dog Posha, immediately took charge. Sergeant Soutra, without an interpreter, physically re-positioned each Afghan commando to fire in an accurate manner before repeatedly running through enemy gunfire to lead his 10-man commando unit across 1,100 meters of open terrain, all while "relentlessly" firing his rifle. Additionally, Sergeant Soutra helped carry casualties out of the line of fire while orienting air support from jets and helicopters.

Simply, his actions went beyond the call of duty, saving the lives of Marines, Sailors, and Afghan commandos.

Too often, heroic actions of our military's elite special operations forces, like Sergeant Soutra, go unrecognized. It is simply the nature of their job to take on the most dangerous tasks, with no hope for glory or public acknowledgement.

Sgt. Soutra put his own life on the line without a second thought, not because he expected credit, but because it was the right thing to do to protect his men.

Mr. Speaker, our nation is lucky to have men like Sergeant Soutra serving us. I know that all of my colleagues, constituents, and fellow residents of Worcester will join me in offering our humble gratitude for his actions, and sincere congratulations on his recognition.

HONORING DWIGHT E. RADCLIFF

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sheriff Dwight E. Radcliff on the celebration of his retirement and for his outstanding years of service to Pickaway County and the State of Ohio.

It is an honor to congratulate Sheriff Radcliff on this momentous occasion as the longest-serving sheriff in the United States of America. Serving as the Pickaway County Sheriff since 1965, Sheriff Radcliff has been committed to the citizens of Pickaway County by protecting life and property, preventing and solving crime and responding to all requests for assistance.

Following in his father's footsteps, Dwight became the second Radcliff to become the Sheriff of Pickaway County and the family name has held the office for 78 of the last 82 years. Over the past several decades, Radcliff has had both trying and memorable moments—from living in the county jail with his family to apprehending the rarest of criminals. Because of his great dedication and reputation for law enforcement, Pickaway County is often referred to as "Putaway Pickaway" by local and statewide residents.

On November 6, 2012 his son Robert was elected sheriff and will become the third generation of Radcliff's to hold this office. Dwight is married to Betty his wife of 59 years and is the father of three and grandfather to eight grandchildren, and great-grandfather to two great-grandchildren.

Thus, I join the citizens of the 7th Congressional District in congratulating and honoring Sheriff Dwight E. Radcliff for his many years of dedication and exemplary service to Pickaway County and the state of Ohio, and to extend best wishes to him and his family for much success in the future.

THE MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR
CLARIFICATION ACT

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Mortgage Originator Clarification Act to clarify the definition of the term mortgage originator in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

I support responsible lending policies and consumer protections throughout the home buying process to provide the best products and transparency for consumers. However, the Dodd-Frank Act was hastily put together and crammed through Congress. Unintended consequences of regulations prescribed in the Dodd-Frank Act, if implemented without specific consideration of manufactured housing, could eliminate housing finance options for families seeking to purchase affordable manufactured homes.

Multiple definitions and standards for mortgage origination, such as those in Section 1401 of Dodd-Frank and the Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing (SAFE) Act, are confusing to the manufactured housing industry, consumers interested in buying

manufactured homes, and regulators. In addition, the definition outlined in the Dodd-Frank Act may create unintended regulatory and compliance risks. The current definition of mortgage originator is based on traditional mortgage market roles and does not consider the unique lending model of the manufactured housing market.

I'm introducing the Mortgage Originator Clarification Act to provide clarity in the residential mortgage market with a clear and consistent standard recognizing the unique activities of the manufactured home sales process. This bill will further clarify the definition of mortgage originator so that manufactured homes will remain an available housing option for Americans across the nation.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE
ROSCOE BARTLETT AND THE
HONORABLE DON MANZULLO
FOR THEIR YEARS OF PUBLIC
SERVICE

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to two of my Republican colleagues who were elected in 1992. It has been my honor to serve with both ROSCOE BARTLETT and DON MANZULLO for the past two decades. I am pleased today, to recognize their outstanding service to our nation. ROSCOE BARTLETT has represented Maryland's 6th District and DON MANZULLO Illinois's 16th District.

These two classmates have distinguished records of service. ROSCOE earned his PHD in physiology from The University of Maryland and spent 20 years as a scientist and engineer for the military and NASA. He has 20 patents, 19 of which are held by the U.S. Government for his inventions of life support equipment used by military pilots, astronauts, search and rescue personnel, and firefighters. He has served on the Armed Services Committee since his first year in Congress and he became chairman of the panel's Air and Land Forces Subcommittee for this 112th Congress.

DON has served as Chairman of the Small Business Committee and long championed the cause of America's chief economic generator, our nation's small businesses. He also chaired the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific for this 112th Congress. Before being elected, DON was an attorney and the owner of his own small law firm.

During our service together history should record that upon assuming the majority in Congress in 1995, these two individuals helped bring about remarkable achievements for our country. They helped craft plans that balanced our federal budget from 1997 to 2002 and reformed welfare. They aided our nation in the aftermath of September 11, 2001.

Not only have we been fortunate to have their leadership in Congress they have both, in their family life, set examples for the American People. By their side ROSCOE's wife Ellen and DON's wife Freda have always aided their husband's efforts and supported their Congressional Districts. ROSCOE has ten children, 18 grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. DON's children are Neil, Noel, and Katie.

As these two friends and most accomplished members of Congress depart, I know that my colleagues wish them well and God Speed.

IN MEMORIAL OF CONGRESSMAN
DAVID O'BRIEN MARTIN OF NEW
YORK

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Kentucky, Mr. ROGERS, and I share the sad news of the passing of our colleague, David O'Brien Martin, originally of Canton, New York, who died with his wife Dana by his side on November 20 at his home in Hedgesville, West Virginia, at the age of 68.

Representative Martin is survived by his children, Victoria (Duskas), Kelly (Bridges) and Julia (Bassett); two grandchildren, Jacqueline Victoria and William O'Brien; a stepson Michael McGee, a stepdaughter Kimberly Travis and, shared with his wife, eleven grandchildren and a great-granddaughter. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

Congressman Martin, who was a commissioned officer in the Marine Corps and served in Vietnam, will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery on January 4, 2013.

We had the honor of being elected to Congress with Dave in 1980 as part of the Reagan wave. He served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and on the Armed Services Committee, where he was the senior Republican on the Military Installations Subcommittee and vice chair of the Morale, Welfare and Recreational Panel.

Dave O'B. Martin will be remembered for his indelible footprint on the North Country, where his efforts led to the revitalization of Fort Drum and the reactivation of the Army's storied light infantry division, the 10th Mountain Division. It has been reported that his efforts led to an influx of over \$1.3 billion to the local economy to construct the post.

We also submit for the record an article by The Watertown Daily Times further noting his service to the North Country and the nation.

Dave O'B. Martin served with us for six terms before electing to retire.

Dave enjoyed history, particularly related to the Civil War. He will be remembered for his friendly demeanor and storytelling ability.

We offer our heartfelt thoughts and prayers to Dana and his family.

[From the Watertown Daily Times,
Nov. 23, 2012]

MARTIN, FORMER NORTH COUNTRY
CONGRESSMAN, DIES AT 68

(By Roger Dupuis)

David O'Brien Martin's roots in the north country ran deep. His legacy may run deeper still.

The former Republican congressman, who represented the north country from 1981 to 1993, died Tuesday night at his home in Hedgesville, W.Va. He was remembered by friends and colleagues for his commitment to serving the region, perhaps best exemplified by his efforts to bring the 10th Mountain Division to Fort Drum in the 1980s.

"For those of us in the north country, his work truly changed our lives," said Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh—who,

like Mr. Martin, formerly represented the region in Congress.

Mr. Martin, 68, was with his family and under hospice care when he died, said Steven M. Cary of O'Leary Funeral Service in Canton. The cause of death was not disclosed.

Services are scheduled for next week in West Virginia, followed by calling hours Dec. 3 at O'Leary, 5821 Route 11, Mr. Cary said. Mass will be said Dec. 4 at St. Mary's-Catholic Church, 66 Court St., Canton. Burial plans were not finalized as of Thursday evening, he said.

Mr. Martin served in Vietnam, and was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he resumed his studies upon returning to civilian life. He earned a law degree from Albany Law School in 1973, the same year he was elected to the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators.

Following three years in county government, Mr. Martin rose quickly, serving in the state Assembly from 1977 until the end of 1980, the year he was elected to the first of six terms in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It was just four years later, at the Watertown American Legion post, that Mr. Martin broke the news that the storied light infantry division would be reactivated in Northern New York.

"His incredible effort to revitalize Fort Drum and bring the 10th Mountain Division to our doorstep brought renewed sense of vitality and purpose to the region," Mr. McHugh said Wednesday.

More than \$1.3 billion was spent on construction on the post from 1985 to 1993, during Mr. Martin's tenure in Washington, according to a 2006 Times article.

"He probably did more for the north country than anyone has," said former Republican state Sen. H. Douglas Barclay, Pulaski. "It's a sad day for the north country. He was a great guy, a great friend and a wonderful public servant, both in the Assembly and in Congress."

While in Congress, Mr. Martin was a member of the Committee on Armed Services for 10 years, serving as senior Republican member of the Military Installations Subcommittee and vice chairman of the Morale, Welfare and Recreational Panel, overseeing military commissaries, exchanges and related activities. He also served on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

While Mr. Martin's commitment to the nation and the region loom large, so do the contributions he and his family made to St. Lawrence County. His father, Edson A. Martin, donated the land for SUNY Canton in the early 1960s. The younger Mr. Martin's longtime advocacy was honored by the college in 2006 with an honorary doctorate of laws.

"Congressman Martin was a wonderful supporter of SUNY Canton and the north country," Interim SUNY Canton President Carl C. Schiffner said Wednesday. "He assisted the college in many ways throughout his career, and he dedicated much of his life to furthering the development of Fort Drum, our schools and our communities."

There was life after Congress for Mr. Martin. After deciding not to run in 1992, Mr. Martin became a professor at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., and later an executive with soft-drink trade groups. He founded a government affairs, consulting and marketing firm in 2000.

It was in that role that then-SUNY Canton president Joseph L. Kennedy observed Mr. Martin's clout and camaraderie first hand during a visit to Washington.

"He was just known by everybody. He could walk us through security without

waiting in line," said Mr. Kennedy, who stepped down this fall after 19 years in the post. "I admired his spunk."

SUNY Potsdam also had cause to mourn the former congressman, and to celebrate his accomplishments. Mr. Martin's papers are held in the college archives, "so that all can remember and learn from his life's work," SUNY Potsdam President John F. Schwaller said.

Times staff writer Brian Kelly contributed to this report.

HONORING MICHAEL T. SUMIDA

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor Michael T. Sumida, recent recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal.

It is an honor to join the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District in recognizing Mr. Michael Sumida, whose patriotic work as a Japanese interpreter provided our military with invaluable intelligence and helped bring an end to World War II. As a Japanese American living in Hawaii, Mr. Sumida courageously volunteered his talents to assist the United States military in defeating the Japanese. In the face of racism, Mr. Sumida excelled in acquiring critical enemy intelligence by questioning Japanese prisoners. During his interrogations, Mr. Sumida uncovered the location of enemy troops as well as their plans for attack. The work accomplished by American interpreters was such a valuable asset to military intelligence during World War II that President Truman credited them with ending the war two years prior to the expected end date.

Mr. Sumida currently resides in my hometown of Beavercreek, OH with his wife, Patricia Sumida. It is with great pride along with Ohio's Seventh Congressional district that I honor Michael T. Sumida for his service to our nation.

BUCK RAMBO INDUCTED INTO THE SOUTHERN GOSPEL MUSIC ASSOCIATION'S HALL OF FAME

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, music is in the very fiber of our being, and we are proud to continually showcase the sounds that call Tennessee "home." I rise today to honor one of Tennessee's great sounds as he is inducted into the Southern Gospel Music Association's Hall of Fame.

Buck Rambo started a Gospel singing group in 1960 and quickly set the world ablaze with great harmonies. It would become The Singing Rambos and the group would release over 70

projects, making them a household name in America, Central America, the Bahamas, and Europe. Adding to their bright career, Buck led the group to television where they were central to the early beginnings of many faith-based stations. The Singing Rambos entertained troops at Strategic Air Command Bases, in Vietnam, and in several European military posts. Having hung up his travel hat, Buck now leads a life of service to his faith, his family, and his community.

The very rhythm of our culture, Gospel music lifts and carries us through our darkest moments to our brightest days. The sounds of The Singing Rambos are deeper than the notes on a page: they are hummed into our souls. I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Buck Rambo on his induction to the Southern Gospel Music Association's Hall of Fame.

SPEECH ON DETERIORATING SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST PARTICULARLY FOR RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a speech I recently gave on the deteriorating situation in the Middle East particularly for religious minorities. Increasing violence, targeted attacks and heightened discrimination against Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq and Egypt, combined with longstanding abuses in Afghanistan and Pakistan, are among the many reasons why I introduced H.R. 440, bipartisan legislation that would require the State Department to appoint a special envoy to advocate for religious minorities.

More than a year has passed since the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed this legislation yet, today, both this bill and its Senate companion, S. 1245 are both languishing in the Senate. This is deeply disappointing. Even more disappointing is the fact that the State Department has urged Senator JIM WEBB to oppose this bipartisan legislation and put a hold on it in the Senate.

Time is running out—both in terms of the legislative calendar for this year and in terms of the survival of these communities. Will a special envoy guarantee these communities' protection in the lands they have inhabited for centuries? No one can predict for sure. But I am certain that to do nothing is not an option—lest on the State Department's and Congress' watch we witness a Middle East empty of faith communities, foremost among them the beleaguered Christian community.

Here is the text of my recent speech:

Just one year ago my good friend, the late Chuck Colson was given [the Edwin Meese Award for Religious Liberty] award for his tireless efforts to promote religious liberty and human dignity. His prophetic voice is sorely missed during these trying times for our country. For these are indeed trying

times—times that demand men and women of faith to steel themselves for the challenges ahead. Are we prepared to do so?

I take inspiration from the German Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer who, faced with the tyranny and horror of Nazism gave his very life. And the British parliamentarian William Wilberforce, who labored for decades, against seemingly insurmountable odds, to abolish the slave trade in England—ultimately inspiring abolitionist efforts in America. These are just some of the giants on whose shoulders we stand.

Ecclesiastes 4:1 says, "I saw the tears of the oppressed, and they have no comforter; power was on the side of the oppressor." Oppression has marked the church since its birth. Consider the chilling words of Roman historian Tacitus regarding the early church:

"Besides being put to death they were made to serve as objects of amusement; they were clad in the hides of beasts and torn to death by dogs; others were crucified, others set on fire to serve to illuminate the night when daylight failed— . . ."

Are such trials reserved for the history books? Hardly. Every day, around the world, men and women of faith are imprisoned, beaten, detained, tortured and even killed. And yet such stories receive scant attention in the mainstream media—and perhaps more strikingly, are rarely spoken of from our pulpits. The book of Hebrews enjoins us to "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." Do we suffer with our brethren? Have we in the West ceased to be salt and light? Has our comfort led to complacency? Consider that on our watch a historic exodus of Christians from the Middle East is underway—an exodus fueled by persecution.

A phrase not often heard outside the majority Muslim world is "First the Saturday people, then the Sunday people." The "Saturday people" are of course the Jews. Their once vibrant communities in countries throughout the region are now decimated. In 1948 there were roughly 150,000 Jews in Iraq—today less than 10 remain. In Egypt, there were once as many as 80,000 Jews and now less than 100 remain.

It appears a similar fate could befall the ancient Christian community in these same lands. Iraq's Christian population has fallen from as many as 1.4 million in 2003 to between 500,000 and 700,000. Churches have been targeted, believers kidnapped for ransom, families threatened with violence if they stay. This reality is all the more sobering considering Iraq's significance in Christendom. With the exception of Israel, the Bible contains more references to the cities, regions and nations of ancient Iraq than any other country. The patriarch Abraham came from a city in Iraq called Ur. Isaac's bride, Rebekah, came from northwest Iraq. Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq and his sons (the 12 tribes of Israel) were born in northwest Iraq. A remarkable spiritual revival as told in the book of Jonah occurred in Nineveh. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq as did the account of Daniel in the Lion's Den. Furthermore, many of Iraq's Christians still speak Aramaic the language of Jesus.

In Egypt with the ascent of the Muslim Brotherhood, Coptic Christians,

numbering roughly 8-10 million, are leaving in droves. And the Middle East is far from being the exception. Persecution is on the rise. The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church was earlier this month. Given the picture I just painted, one would think the church in the West would be galvanized. But how many churches marked this occasion with even a passing mention? If the faith community isn't engaged are we surprised when our government leaders turn a blind eye to matters of religious freedom?

Consider the following: Bipartisan legislation to create a Special Envoy position at the State Department charged with advocating on behalf of religious minorities in the Middle East and South Central Asia overwhelmingly passed the House a year and a half ago. But it has remained stalled in the Senate as a result of State Department opposition and the refusal of Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry, rumored to be in the running for Secretary of State or Defense, to even hold a hearing on the legislation.

Day in, day out I have the privilege of meeting individuals who boldly follow Jesus despite unbelievably hostile circumstances. Shabbaz Bhatti, Pakistan's Federal Minister for Minority Affairs, and the only Christian Member of the cabinet and an outspoken critic of his country's blasphemy laws, was one such man. On March 2, 2011 he was murdered, his car riddled with bullets, leaving his mother's house for work. In a video filmed shortly before his assassination, Bhatti appears to sense that the path he has chosen will come with a price.

When asked about the threats against his life, he said, without malice or fear, "I believe in Jesus Christ who has given his own life for us. I know what is the meaning of [the] cross. And I am following the cross. And I am ready to die for a cause." And so he did.

The book of Proverbs tells us to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. . . ." Bhatti can no longer speak. The Chinese bishop under house arrest cannot speak. The North Korean enslaved in the gulag cannot speak. The Iraqi nun fearing for her life cannot speak.

Will we be their voice? Martin Luther King famously said, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." Are we not their friends?

America's Founding Fathers grounded our own experiment in self-governance in the notion that liberty comes from God and that all human life is sacred. As part of this equation, religious freedom was the "first freedom." The ideas set forth in Philadelphia on that hot summer day were simultaneously ancient and revolutionary—they are grounded in historic Judeo-Christian teachings.

Nearly 25 years ago these very ideas were a source of inspiration to the democracy marchers in Tiananmen Square. Ronald Reagan famously spoke of our founding documents as a covenant we made with the world—a promise that transcended time and place. I fear that covenant is in jeopardy.

America's influence is waning. Our once "shining city" appears dim. And we have lost our voice on behalf of the oppressed. And yet, dissidents still seek refuge in our embassies, the persecuted seek safe haven on our shores. To them the promise of American

exceptionalism is no mere philosophical debate; it is the difference between life and death. They cling to the promise even as our own leaders have abandoned it. And so, seeking to preserve that covenant that Reagan envisioned, it falls to men and women of faith to carry the torch—to pray, to advocate, to act.

HONORING JAY PIERSON ON HIS
RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Jay Pierson and his 34 years of dedicated service to the House of Representatives. I have had the privilege of serving in this institution since 1992 and for all of those years I have served with Jay. During that time I have come to know him for his graciousness, patience and helpful nature. His historical expertise and institutional knowledge will sorely be missed.

I would like to thank Jay for his friendship and wish him the best in his retirement. We have all been better served because of his commitment to the House of Representatives and the American people.

The American people will never know the work of individuals like Jay Pierson, who has toiled long hours making certain the Congress and U.S. House function every day for our federal legislative branch.

I especially want to thank Jay who has stayed many nights with me, often until midnight and long after the House had completed its regular business, while I presented my special orders speeches.

The United States House of Representatives will hold a better place in history because of Jay's dedication and long tenure.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF MR. PAT NEFF GRONER

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Groner's roots trace back to Marshall, Texas, where he was the youngest of five siblings. He attended the College of Marshall and graduated from Baylor University. He then joined the United States Marine Corps, and while stationed in Vermont, he met his wife Louise, or as Mr. Groner proclaimed "the prettiest girl in Vermont". Shortly after their marriage, Mr. Groner served with honor and distinction as a pilot in the South Pacific Theatre during World War II. Upon his return, Mr. Groner joined the Vermont Air National Guard and interned at a

Vermont hospital. As a boy, Mr. Groner's father instilled in him the belief that health care is a profession closely connected with faith, and in addition to his passion for flying, his care for others and faith in God never faded.

When Baptist Hospital in Pensacola, Florida was in need of leadership, Pat Groner answered the call, and, along with his wife and their daughter Jodee, moved to Florida. As CEO of Baptist Healthcare, Mr. Groner implemented numerous programs that are now standard operating procedure in hospitals across the country. Baptist Hospital had the first post-operative recovery room in Florida and was one of the first hospitals in the nation to have an intensive coronary care unit, an outpatient surgical care unit, and Life Flight. During his time at Baptist, Mr. Groner also envisioned a place where seniors could enjoy the advantages of a resort lifestyle coupled with quality amenities, services, and health care and the perfect location. Despite working full-time as CEO, Mr. Groner was dedicated to bringing this vision to fruition, and under his leadership, the Pensacola retirement community, Azalea Trace, opened in 1980. Today, it remains a first-class and well-respected adult retirement community.

In addition to his leadership in the American Hospital Association, the Southeastern Hospital Conference, and the American College of Healthcare Executives, Mr. Groner was co-founder and president of the Hospital Research and Development Institute, co-founder of the Voluntary Hospitals of America, Vice-President and Treasurer of Multi-Hospital Insurance Group, and long-time board member for Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Florida. Outside of his contributions to the health care profession, Mr. Groner had an unwavering commitment to serve his community through the March of Dimes, YMCA, Community Mental Health Center, Pensacola Rotary Club, Action 76 Taskforce on Higher Education, Fiesta of Five Flags, and various United Fund organizations. Mr. Groner also had a special interest in education and the State university system, where he served as a member of the Florida Board of Regents.

Mr. Groner's contributions to healthcare and the Northwest Florida community are exemplified by the copious honors and awards bestowed on him. Among his many honors, Mr. Groner was inducted into the Health Care Hall of Fame by the American College of Health Care Executives. He was also awarded the Kiwanis Man of the Year Award, Pensacola Junior Chamber of Commerce Good Government Award, Pensacola Chamber of Commerce Pioneer Award, Freedom Foundation George Washington Medal, and Liberty Bell Award.

There is no question that in his 33 year career as CEO and his many years serving our community, Mr. Groner has made an everlasting impact on Northwest Florida and on the health care profession. To some, Mr. Groner will be remembered as courageous pilot who answered the call of duty during one of our nation's most trying times or as pilot of the

Piper Twin Commanche, Poppa Golf that he flew with his son and frequent co-pilot, Chip; to others, he will be remembered for his contributions to the health care industry; and to his family, he will be remembered as a man devoted to his faith and a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Northwest Florida mourns the loss of a great man, and Mr. Groner's contributions and service to the community and this great nation will not be forgotten. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the exemplary life of Mr. Pat Neff Groner. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers to Louise, Jodee, Chip, and their entire family. He will be truly missed by all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, due to my attending a congressional vigil for the victims of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary, I missed one recorded vote on Monday, December 17. I would like the RECORD to indicate at this point how I would have voted had I been present for this vote.

On rollcall No. 627, H.R. 4606, I would have voted "yea" to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue right-of-way permits for natural gas pipelines within the boundary of Glacier National Park in Montana.

HONORING ROBIN J. COPELAND

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robin J. Copeland, who passed away on October 30, 2011 at the young age of 46.

Robin had roots in West Texas and had a distinguished career in international diplomacy, non-proliferation, and scientific engagement. Her work with the United States Department of Energy, Department of State, the Civilian Research Development Foundation, and liaisons with U.S. Embassies worldwide was carried out under difficult and demanding conditions. Her responsibilities required skills in political science, technical science, and engineering and she was fluent in seven languages.

She was an expert in non-proliferation and contributed in significant ways to the reduction of nuclear weapons in Russia and Libya. In addition to her work on non-proliferation, she also implemented a program that trained Russian doctors with U.S. doctors in Africa to treat and care for those with HIV/AIDS.

Texas Tech University has established the Robin J. Copeland Scholarship to be awarded to undergraduates, graduate, or law students who enroll in the following academic programs of study: 1. Political Science or international law in a supporting area of science or engineering; 2. Science and engineering with auxiliary emphasis in political science or international law or; 3. Programs that demonstrate compelling evidence for application to science and international diplomacy.

Robin was a talented and unique young lady who served her nation well. She was a success in life, because she made a gift of her life.

IN HONOR OF DR. HECTOR HENRY

HON. LARRY KISSELL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. KISSELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true, dedicated leader in my state and in my community, Dr. Hector Henry of Concord, NC. Dr. Henry has served our nation as a Colonel in the United States military, and has served as a member of the Concord City Council for more than 20 years.

Dr. Henry proudly served our nation for decades, and came out of retirement following the attacks of September 11, 2001. He was deployed for combat in both Afghanistan and Iraq, most recently completing a 2009 deployment to Afghanistan. While deployed, Dr. Henry made every effort to videoconference in to City Council meetings, so he would not miss a minute of discussion in his hometown. Dr. Henry has served in the United States military in every conflict since the Vietnam War, a truly remarkable feat.

Still a councilman, Dr. Henry continues his service to the people of the W.G. (Bill) Hefner V.A. Medical Clinic in Salisbury, North Carolina, named in honor of our former colleague of this very chamber, Rep. Bill Hefner. Dr. Henry works as a surgeon, treating many of the veterans that call our district home, and continuing his lifelong service of helping his fellow soldier, and his community.

I'm proud to call Hector a friend and a role model. I sincerely thank Dr. Henry for his tireless devotion to making the city of Concord, and our nation, a better place.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration and respect that I rise today to speak of the lifetime of public service that Dr. Hector Henry has led in our great state. I urge my colleagues to join me in commending Dr. Henry for his service, sacrifice, and ongoing commitment to this great nation.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MARY M. JOHNSON UPON HER RETIREMENT FROM SERVICE AS SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mary M. Johnson on the occasion of her retirement from service as Santa Rosa County, Florida Clerk of Circuit Court.

Mrs. Johnson is a native Northwest Floridian who studied at Harold School and Milton High School in Santa Rosa County, Florida. In 1960, while still a student at Milton High, Mrs. Johnson was hired to work in the Clerk of Court office. After graduating from high school in 1961, Mrs. Johnson joined the clerk's office full time. While working there, Mrs. Johnson

married her husband, Tom, and together they raised their daughter, Lorinda.

Thanks to Mrs. Johnson's acumen and work ethic, she rose through the ranks and quickly became an integral part of the Santa Rosa County Clerk of Court office. Mrs. Johnson served in various capacities for three separate clerks of court, before being elected as Clerk herself in 1994.

Technology had changed many things at the clerk's office by the time Mrs. Johnson decided to run; however, Mrs. Johnson's vast knowledge of procedure and her ability to lead and manage a large staff of 125 individuals was unquestioned. The Clerk of Courts plays a vital role in county government, and it takes a truly committed and capable individual to lead the department and ensure that everything runs smoothly. For 18 years as Clerk of Circuit Court, and 52 total years in the clerk's office, Mrs. Johnson displayed the hard work, dedication and commitment to public service necessary to ensure that the Clerk of Court continued to serve the people of Santa Rosa County. All of Santa Rosa County thanks her for her tremendous service to her community. During her retirement, Mrs. Johnson hopes to spend as much time as possible with her two lovely grandchildren and to spend more time volunteering at her local church.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Mary M. Johnson for her outstanding public service to Santa Rosa County. Mrs. Johnson is a truly committed public servant and has played an integral role in Northwest Florida's community for more than 50 years. My wife Vicki and I wish her all the best in her retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JACK BRESCH

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK-

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am writing to honor the life of John "Jack" Edward Bresch, a long time health advocate who worked with us in Congress to improve our health care system—especially focusing on access to care for lower income children and families. Jack passed away on September 1, 2012 surrounded by family, under the care of hospice, after a brief and courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

I first got to know Jack through his work as a lead lobbyist for the Catholic Health Association. He served as a key component of CHA's government affairs team from 1983 to 2000. A highlight of his time at CHA was to work closely with then First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and her White House team to develop and promote a plan for reforming the nation's health care system. He then went on to work for the American Dental Education Association until the time of his death.

In both of these positions, Jack was a tireless advocate for improving our health care system so that everyone has access to affordable, quality health care. With the dental schools, he was especially focused on improving access to dental care for low-income children. This is a serious problem in our country that was spotlighted by the wrongful death of twelve-year old Demonte Driver of Maryland.

Demonte was on Medicaid and died after complaining of a toothache when his mother could not find a dentist who would accept Medicaid to treat him. While they tried to find a dentist, his infection spread to his brain and he tragically died. Jack didn't want any more Demonte Drivers and he worked relentlessly for improvements in Medicaid to prevent this from happening again. He first helped make some incremental improvements to the law, but was most pleased when the Affordable Care Act became the law of the land—and was upheld by the Supreme Court.

Looking forward, affordable, quality health care will finally be a reality for all American families. And, thanks in no small part to Jack's efforts, pediatric dental care is an essential health benefit that must be covered by qualified health plans.

Jack and I shared a fundamental commitment to social justice, though I must admit that the roots of our commitment developed differently. Jack began his adult life as a Catholic priest and went on to serve as a Navy Chaplain during the Vietnam War. He left the priesthood many years ago, but he never wavered from his steadfast belief in social justice. He carried that forward in his career, his life, and his relationships.

Jack was a common figure to see barge into your office, join a meeting, or run into in the hall. He always had a big smile on his face. If I had to use one word to describe Jack, it would be gregarious. He seemed larger than life and was so full of positive energy.

Jack leaves behind a loving family that includes his wife, JoAnn; his children, Mary Elizabeth, James Richard, and Jeffrey John; and 10 grandchildren who all knew how much their grandfather loved them. He also leaves behind many colleagues and friends who are grateful to his commitment to our nation's health and who will miss him dearly.

Jack's final honor will be buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on January 24, 2013.

TRIBUTE TO TOBY L. FOOTER

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Toby L. Footer (Meckler) who at the age of 70, passed away on Friday, Dec. 14, 2012 after a lengthy illness. She is survived by her husband Ron Footer, son Lee Footer and daughter-in-law Brenda Footer, daughter Alyson Footer, Brother Bill Meckler and sister-in-law Jeanne Van Atta, sister-in-law Sandi Brecher, granddaughter Naomi Footer and many other family and friends. Born in Cleveland, Ohio on May 2, 1942 to Lou and Naomi Meckler, Toby graduated from Ohio State University and worked as a teacher, a dietician and later as a copy editor and writer at the Dayton Jewish Chronicle. She wrote a semi-regular column, "Footnotes," that gave humorous accounts of family life and raising kids in the 1980s. For 12 years, she traveled with Ron to help with his business as a sales representative, a period of time both consider the happiest of their lives. Toby was a fantastic cook and a talented writer and craftswoman. She loved to

laugh and her greatest joy was her family, to whom she devoted her life.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in Toby's memory to the Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation (PO Box 374, Birmingham, MI 48012 or www.clfoundation.org) or Foundation Fighting Blindness (P.O. Box 17279 Baltimore, MD 21297-0495 or www.blindness.org). The family wishes to thank M.D. Anderson, The Ohio State James Cancer Hospital and Gem City Home Care for their kindness and assistance.

We are all saddened by the loss of her presence in this life, but joyful that she is no longer in pain and suffering. My thoughts and prayers go to her family in this time of grief.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I mistakenly voted "no" on the Motion to Recommit on H.R. 6684, the Spending Reduction Act of 2012. I support the Motion to Recommit, which would require that, within 30 days of the enactment of the bill, the Secretary of Health and Human Services publish on the Internet information regarding raised beneficiary costs and provider cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for each Congressional district in the United States. The Motion would also prohibit the major integrated oil companies from claiming certain tax benefits: the domestic production activities deduction, "Last-in, First-out" accounting, and the intangible drilling and development cost deduction.

AMENDING THE FEDERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, as the Ranking Democratic Member of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I rise to address S. 3687, which reauthorizes appropriations for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program for fiscal years 2012 through 2017, among other purposes.

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program was authorized by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in the Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-456). This Act established a new program office within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide administrative and technical assistance to the local management conference, convened under section 320 of the Clean Water Act, for the restoration and protection of Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, as well as provide Federal grant assistance for restoration projects, studies, and public education projects, recommended by the conference for the benefit of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. The initial authorization of the

Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program was \$20 million, annually, for fiscal years 2001 through 2005. This \$20 million annual authorization was extended through fiscal year 2011 in Pub. L. 109-392.

Section 1 of S. 3687 extends the authorization of appropriations for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program through FY 2017, however, at reduced levels. S authorizes ". . . the amount appropriated for fiscal year 2009 for each of the fiscal years 2013 through 2017." According to information provided by EPA, the fiscal year 2009 appropriation for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program was \$978,000. Accordingly, section 1 of S. 3687 reduces the authorization of appropriations for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Program from \$20 million, annually, to \$978,000, annually, for each of FY 2013 through FY 2017.

In addition, section 1 of S. 3687 would establish a maximum 75 percent Federal share grant assistance authorized under the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program. Under current law, there is no statutory cap on the percentage of Federal assistance that can be provided by grants under the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program. According to information provided by EPA, the EPA Region 6 office typically required a 5 percent local match for grants provided under this Program—resulting in a Federal share of 95 percent for grants provided under this authority. Under section 1 of S. 3687, the maximum Federal share of future grants provided under this authority would be reduced to 75 percent, with the remaining share to be provided by local interests, such as local parishes or municipalities.

I am encouraged by the House Republican Leadership's willingness to schedule this bill and allow it to pass by Unanimous Consent. I am hopeful that the Leadership's willingness to move this legislation will enable the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to move forward quickly in the 113th Congress on a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bill. Currently, there are 22 Army Corps of Engineers Chief's Reports awaiting authorization through the WRDA process. These and other critical flood control, navigation safety, shoreline protection, and environmental restoration projects must move forward to ensure the safety of our communities, strengthen our National, regional, and local economies, protect our natural resources, and create jobs.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly endorse the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) conference report. As Chairman of the Small Business Committee, over the past two years, we have held over a dozen hearings on federal procurement issues which resulted in eleven contracting reform bills being voted out of Committee with bipartisan support. At the same time that our Committee was developing

legislation, the HASC's Panel on Business Challenges in the Defense Industry was holding hearings and roundtables examining many of the same issues. I appreciate the leadership of Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. LARSEN in this effort, and I was pleased to be part of one of these roundtables. The Panel and my Committee share a common understanding of issues facing small business participation in contracting and the health of the industrial base, which is the basis for the package of about thirty-five provisions that were included in the House-passed version of the NDAA.

As HASC's Panel and my Committee found, the federal government marketplace is full of great opportunities for small businesses to succeed, if only we give them the chance. The federal government spends over half a trillion dollars each year on private sector contracts; small businesses deserve a chance to compete for the work, because they bring efficiency and cost-savings to the taxpayer and create jobs while doing it.

This year's NDAA makes substantial reforms to small business contracting which will benefit small contractors throughout the Nation and is supported by nearly 30 trade associations. The small business provisions in the NDAA will help make sure existing small business goals are actually met, empower small business advocates, and crack down on fraud. Most importantly, this legislation ensures that small businesses have greater opportunities to compete. Government contracting offers a unique opportunity to invest in small businesses while also stimulating our economy, considering small businesses create the majority of new jobs. The passage of the conference report is a victory for the 27 million small businesses hard at work throughout America.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310,
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the bipartisan conference agreement for the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2013. The conference report authorizes critical resources for our men and women in uniform and the defense of the American people. While I do not agree with every provision in this bill, I'd like to commend the conference committee for including in its report the Israel King amendment which was passed in the House in May 2012.

This bipartisan amendment would improve the coordination of research, treatment, education, and outreach of mental health, substance use disorders, and traumatic brain injury (TBI) among members of the National Guard, Reserve and their families. All Americans have a moral obligation to provide the best care possible to our veterans when they return home after so bravely serving their country.

Mental health and substance use disorders and TBI affect nearly 20% of all the service members who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Even more disturbing is that an

American veteran commits suicide every 80 minutes. This is unacceptable. We must act now to ensure our veterans have the support services and access to care that they deserve.

While many active duty service members return from deployments to military bases and have access to quality mental health services, members of the National Guard and Reserve often return from a tour of duty and transition into civilian life far from military bases and without easy access to the care they need. Members of the National Guard and Reserve who have mental health, substance use disorders, or TBI are more likely to have a difficult time transitioning back into family life and their careers.

And those who do seek care in their community may not always receive the most appropriate and effective treatment options. This amendment would allow the Department of Defense to carry out a pilot program with public-private partnerships based on a competitive, merit-based grant process. We have learned that the government cannot meet the needs of our veterans alone. That is why these innovative partnerships are so critical.

Again, I thank the conference committee for including this important amendment in the final bill. American veterans and their families have already sacrificed so much for our country. I encourage all Members to support this critical care for our veterans which they not only need but deserve. We owe them nothing less.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE
THOMAS T. REMINGTON UPON
HIS RETIREMENT FROM SERVICE
AS OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA
CIRCUIT JUDGE

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Judge Thomas T. Remington upon his retirement after sixteen years as Okaloosa County Circuit Judge.

Judge Remington's career in public service began in 1966 with his commissioning as a second lieutenant in the United States Army. In 1967, he served in Vietnam as an infantry platoon leader with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade. His military badges and decorations include the Combat Infantry Badge, the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars with Combat Distinguishing Devices, and two Purple Hearts.

After his honorable discharge from the Army, Judge Remington served as Assistant Public Defender for the First Judicial Circuit of Florida. In 1971, after being admitted to practice in all State and Federal Courts, he served as Assistant Public Defender for the First Judicial Circuit of Florida. His success in that role earned him the position of Assistant State Attorney for the First Judicial Circuit of Florida. In 1973, he became a partner in the law firm Smith, Grimsley & Remington, P.A. in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. In 1976, he was appointed Acting State Attorney to conduct a special grand jury investigation.

From 1977 to 1992, Judge Remington belonged to the Association of Trial Lawyers of America and the Academy of Florida Trial

Lawyers. From 1980 to 1984, he served on the First Judicial Circuit Trial Court Nominating Commission, and from 1988 to 1990, he served as Chairman of the First Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee. Judge Remington's career as a judge began in 1993, when he became a Walton County Circuit Judge in DEFUNIAK Springs, Florida. In 1996 Judge Remington was elected Circuit Judge for Okaloosa County and has held that position since then, even serving as Chairman of the Okaloosa County Judicial Task Force in 1997.

Without question, Judge Remington's positive contributions to Northwest Florida and to our nation have been immense, and his mark on the judicial landscape will remain for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pride to congratulate Judge Thomas T. Remington on his retirement and thank him for his service. My wife Vicki joins me in wishing Judge Remington; his wife, Dinah Smith; their children, Scott A. Remington, Mary Remington Williams, and Sara (Betsy) E. Hart; as well as their nine grandchildren, all the best.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310,
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great regret that I rise to reluctantly oppose the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Conference Report.

While the final version of the Defense Authorization bill makes many key improvements from the House-passed bill earlier this year, it unfortunately continues to fail the test of balance and funds billions of dollars of unnecessary programs within the Defense Department, while disregarding the caps set forth by the Budget Control Act. As Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. ROGERS, said last year when we passed the BCA, "Tough choices will have to be made, particularly when it comes to defense and national security priorities, but shared sacrifice will bring shared results." Unfortunately, the bill that is before us violates that bipartisan agreement.

In developing its plan for FY2013, the Defense Department conducted a comprehensive review of force needs, capabilities and obligations. Difficult choices were made about which programs to keep and which to cut in order to maintain a fiscally responsible mission ready capability. However, the Conference Report authorizes funding levels above those requested by the president and above the BCA. The measure authorizes \$552 billion in base national defense spending for the current year and \$88.5 billion for the war in Afghanistan—\$1.7 billion above the funding levels requested by the President in his February budget submission and \$6.3 billion above the cap the BCA set last year.

There are many programs contained in this bill that were not requested by the Defense Department. For example, the measure authorizes the establishment of a missile defense site on the East Coast that the DoD says threatens funding for the maintenance

and construction of other more urgent elements of the country's missile defense. The administration has not identified a requirement for a third U.S.-based missile defense site, and has yet to assess its feasibility or cost.

The bill also includes provisions that block the administration's ability to retire aging and unnecessary military aircraft, including eighteen RQ-4 Global Hawk Block 30 drones. As a result, the Defense Department would be forced to operate, sustain, and maintain aircraft that are in excess of national requirements and are not affordable in this budget environment. At the same time, I was disappointed that the Conference Report ended funding for the Medium Extended Air Defense System, or MEADS, a \$3.4 billion missile defense system. The President asked Congress to restore funding for the system, which is being developed in a partnership with Germany and Italy and is viewed as a symbol of transatlantic cooperation.

I remain concerned about potential arbitrary cuts to the civilian workforce at DoD. In particular, there is a provision in the bill that requires a percentage reduction in the civilian and service contractor employee workforces that is proportional to the reduction in military end strength over a five-year period. While I am encouraged that the Conference Report made some changes that will give the Department of Defense more flexibility than existed in the original bill, the final version could continue to compromise the Department's ability to appropriately size its workforce to meet the mission workload requirements and its readiness and management needs. As the Defense Department stated, ". . . even during these periods of constrained defense budgets, we must ensure that we have the sufficient number of federal civilian personnel to meet the support needs of our military forces.

I am also disappointed that an amendment was stripped from the Conference Report which would have banned the indefinite military detention without charge or trial of Americans and lawful U.S. residents on domestic soil. Americans and permanent residents of the U.S. who are detained in the United States should be granted the right to be tried in the civilian justice system. We can and must protect our national security without jeopardizing our fundamental rights and freedoms.

I do, however, support several measures included in the final version of the NDAA. I was pleased that nearly \$480 million was allocated for U.S.-Israel missile defense cooperation, including \$211 million for Iron Dome, reaffirming the U.S.-Israel ties on missile defense. I also support the inclusion of an amendment offered by Senator SHAHEEN, which allows Department of Defense funds to be used to allow female service members to choose to terminate a pregnancy in cases of rape.

In addition, I was encouraged that the Conference Report proposed to enhance protections for contractor-employee whistleblowers who blow the whistle on waste, fraud, and abuse on DOD contracts and the contracts of civilian agencies. Furthermore, I support the bill's critical human rights provisions, including new requirements to monitor overseas subcontractors for human trafficking.

Despite the inclusion of these important measures, the fact remains that the FY2013 Defense Authorization Bill departs significantly from the spending levels set forth in the BCA last year. It is in violation of a bipartisan

agreement and understanding that in order to get our fiscal house in order we have to make tough decisions on defense and non-defense spending alike. For those reasons, I cannot support this legislation.

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING
AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN STUDY
GROUPS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I submitted for the RECORD extensive correspondence I have had with the Obama Administration regarding the importance of creating the bipartisan Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group (APSG). Today I submit for the RECORD the remaining correspondence I have had from October 3, 2011 to December 13, 2012. The very fact that President Obama and Secretary Panetta will not create the APSG is a disgrace.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 3, 2011.

HON. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA, I am disappointed that your staff was unable to meet with Ambassador Peter Tomsen to discuss his book on Afghanistan and Pakistan. While I understand that both you and Mr. Tomsen have busy schedules, I fear you and your staff may be missing pertinent information and insight that could help devise a successful strategy in South Asia.

You only need to read the headlines to see the erosion in our relationship with the Pakistani military and intelligence services. Recent comments from retiring chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Mullen have described how the Pakistani military and Inter Service Intelligence agency actively cooperate with two of the most deadly terror networks sowing the seeds of destruction and chaos in Afghanistan. Ambassador Tomsen's book, *The Wars of Afghanistan* provides detailed information on the tribal structures and the realities of Pakistani involvement with terrorist groups. I sincerely hope that you and your staff will read his book.

I have also enclosed a column Mr. Tomsen wrote for the most recent edition of *World Policy Journal*. I hope you and your staff will find the piece informative.

The situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan grows more dire nearly every day. I again ask that you use your authority to create the Af/Pak Study Group. We owe nothing less to the men and women making the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that we have a long-term strategy for success in the region.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 17, 2012.

HON. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense, Washington DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA, As I am sure you are aware, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 contains language providing your office with \$1 million to assemble the Afghanistan/Pakistan (Af/Pak) Study Group. I request that you do so immediately.

The Los Angeles Times reported last week (article enclosed) that the most recent National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) paints a very bleak picture of the war in Afghanistan and the future of U.S. operations in that region. It reflects concerns that I have expressed in numerous letters to you over time, especially the importance of understanding Afghan tribal and political structures and the Pakistani military and intelligence services actively cooperating with two of the most deadly terror networks in the region.

Given this stark assessment from our own intelligence community, the need to create the Af/Pak Study Group is clear. The Af/Pak Study Group's analysis and recommendations could bring needed clarity to current and future U.S. military and diplomatic operations. You supported the Iraq Study Group and lent your considerable expertise to that effort, so I am perplexed as to why you do not similarly support the Af/Pak Study Group.

Your November 3, 2011, letter to me stated that coalition troops are making progress against the Taliban and other militants and that progress is being made on our relationship with the Pakistani government and military. I have enormous respect for the men and women serving our country in South Asia and acknowledge that our troops are performing their mission with bravery and resolve; however, the NIE appears to contradict your assessment.

Also enclosed is an article by the Hudson Institute's Nina Shea discussing how Hussain Haqqani, the former Pakistani Ambassador to the United States is facing possible charges of treason for his alleged involvement in "Memogate." Shea asserts, "There is every reason to believe that the real reason Haqqani is being targeted is that he is a prominent moderate Muslim, one of the few remaining in Pakistan's government." Shea goes on to point out that Haggani was personal friends with two men, Punjab governor Salman Taseer and Pakistan's Federal Minister of Minority Affairs Shabbaz Bhatti, whose lives were cut tragically short last year as a result of their outspoken critique of Pakistan's draconian blasphemy laws.

Increasingly we see a trend in Pakistan of moderating voices being marginalized and altogether silenced. While I appreciate that you are "working hard with Pakistan to improve the level of cooperation" so that terrorist and militant groups no longer find safe haven in the country—I am afraid the complexity of the evolving situation in Pakistan necessitates more.

The NIE's assessment could lead to support for the war in Afghanistan eroding among the American people and I feel the same sentiment will soon permeate the halls of Congress. If the president has simply decided that U.S. involvement will end in 2014 and that no further U.S. strategy is needed, he should clearly state that this is his policy and be forthcoming with the American people. If President Obama has not made a final determination on U.S. strategy going forward, I ask again, what harm can come from a group of independent experts using their experience to offer solutions for long-term success?

Following 9/11, I have supported U.S. military actions in the War on Terror. I want to see our soldiers, diplomats and Foreign Service personnel return home with their heads held high, knowing they all played a crucial role in establishing stability in South Asia where countries no longer pose a threat to our national security. I firmly believe that you can help ensure this happens by using the money made available to you to create the Af/Pak Study Group. Establishing this

panel quickly will show the American people that the Obama Administration is willing to consider all possible options to achieve success in this volatile region.

I urge you to take these steps immediately before support for our mission in Afghanistan further erodes.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 10, 2012.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense, Washington DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA: I am sure you are aware of the enclosed article by Army Lt. Col. Daniel Davis that recently appeared in the Armed Forces Journal regarding the status of our mission in Afghanistan and the capabilities of Afghan National Army (ANA) forces. I am deeply troubled by the conclusions reached in Col. Davis' assessment and believe that it further underscores the importance of immediately creating the Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group.

Col. Davis' piece tracks closely with the latest National Intelligence Estimate's assessment of current and future conditions in the region which I referenced in my January 17 letter to you (enclosed). These two assessments, coupled with the February 4 United Nations report showing that Afghan civilian casualties are increasing and the 2011 Red Team study by NATO on fratricide by ANA forces on coalition troops, lend credibility to the growing belief that U.S. strategy in South Asia is not going well.

In the interest of the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines serving—and in many cases dying—in Afghanistan, I implore you to immediately establish the Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group. As I have referenced in previous letters to you, Congress has provided the funding for this panel and under the law, you can select its members.

While reasonable people can disagree on specific policy options, I find it difficult to understand why the Obama Administration would not embrace a panel of five Democrats and five Republicans (modeled on the Iraq Study Group on which you and former Secretary Gates served), who love their country more than their party, putting their expertise to work and offering constructive recommendations to achieve our mission.

We owe it to the men and women serving in uniform—and the families supporting them—to have the best possible long-term strategy for success.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

P.S. I know you care deeply about our service members serving overseas and that you and your team are doing what you think is best for our country. But I believe any objective observer would agree we need fresh eyes on the target.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, August 17, 2012.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA, I received the enclosed letter from General Martin Dempsey on your behalf. I find it difficult to understand how General Dempsey can write that, “. . . we have made steady progress in developing Afghan security forces and do not support diverting resources to establish the APSG [Afghanistan Pakistan Study Group]” when twice this week we have seen Afghan

forces murder U.S. troops. On August 14, the enclosed Washington Post article detailed the tragic news that three U.S. Marines were gunned down by an Afghan police officer after sharing a meal with him. Just this morning, The Washington Post reported that two more troops were murdered in Farah Province. News reports indicate that 37 U.S. troops have been murdered by Afghan security forces in 2012 alone. With all due respect, how can you state that Afghan security forces are making, “steady progress” when they continue to gun down our forces?

Given these continuing incidents, I am perplexed at how you can continue to hold the belief that spending \$1 million to study our strategy in South Asia is “diverting resources.” The funding for the APSG was included in Public Law 112-74, yet the Obama Administration has not exercised the authority made available in this law to establish the panel. As I have reminded the public numerous times, you served on the Iraq Study Group, which was successful. I do not know if the APSG would achieve similar results, but I simply cannot understand your reasons for opposing its creation if success is possible.

One of the Marines killed in these recent attacks, Gunnery Sergeant Ryan Jeschke, lived in my congressional district before enlisting in the Marines. His death, along with the other Marines and countless other service members murdered by Afghan forces, highlights the failure of the Obama Administration's strategy to ensure the safety of our own troops, not to mention the safety of the Afghan population. I am saddened that another American Marine has given his life for a war that the administration is trying its best to ignore. I cannot remember the last time President Obama spoke publically about his strategy for protecting the Afghan population from the Taliban and insurgents, or responded to murders like that of Sergeant Jeschke, or provided his definition of long-term success or our ability to achieve it.

Leon, our nation is at war and this administration has not made it a priority. Our fighting forces deserve to know that their sacrifices are understood and honored. Sergeant Jeschke was on his sixth tour of duty overseas, a reality faced by many troops and their families. Until this administration places the appropriate emphasis on the war in Afghanistan and educates Americans about our goals, Marines like Sergeant Jeschke, his fellow Marines and other U.S. troops will continue to die silently, with only a mention in The Washington Post and a folded flag from the commanding officer for a grief-stricken family.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

P.S. Leon, just yesterday, seven more of our troops were killed when their helicopter crashed in Kandahar Province. It is sad that you will not use the funds available to you for the APSG.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 7, 2012.

Hon. BARACK H. OBAMA,
The President, The White House, Washington DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Two weekends ago, many Americans celebrated Memorial Day with a visit to the beach, the pool or possibly a neighborhood cookout. But for some this annual holiday was far more than simply a long weekend. Rather it was somber remembrance marked by a profound sense of loss for the son or daughter that never came home or the parent that never met their child.

Our nation has been at war for 11 years now—the longest in our history. As such, these grim realities hit close to home for many families, not to mention the less obvious but still devastating impact of prolonged separations, life-altering injuries, divorce, post traumatic stress syndrome and even suicide.

These challenges are set against the backdrop of precipitously declining public support for the war effort, an increasingly bleak picture on the ground in Afghanistan and pervasive national confusion about our overall aims and if they are attainable.

For these and countless other reasons, I began pressing your administration in August 2010 to convene a bipartisan, independent Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group (APSG), modeled after the Iraq Study Group (ISO), to serve as “fresh eyes” on the target and conduct a comprehensive analysis of U.S. strategy in the region. This group would have been charged with putting forward policy options for your consideration, and perhaps just as significantly, would have fostered a national conversation about the war effort: Why are we there? What are we aiming to accomplish? At what cost? What are the consequences of failure?

Before proposing this idea I spoke with a number of knowledgeable individuals, including former senior diplomats, public policy experts and retired and active military. At that time, many believed our policy was adrift and all agreed that an outside group was needed. Ryan Crocker was among those dignitaries who embraced the idea, prior to taking on his current post as U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan.

I believed then, and continue to believe, that a group of the caliber of the ISO would have served this nation well on a matter of utmost national security and interest. Despite repeated correspondence and even legislative action (the FY 2012 Defense Appropriations bill included language directing the Secretary of Defense to convene an Af-Pak Study Group and provided the necessary funding to ensure the group's viability) your administration has repeatedly failed to act. I have been particularly puzzled by your intransigence given that prominent members of your administration served with distinction on the ISO, including Defense Secretary Leon Panetta.

Further, in a 2006 interview, you signaled, as a U.S. senator, support for the ISG and its recommendations. When asked by CBS News reporter Harry Smith whether, if you were president, you would take seriously the group's recommendations, you answered, rather emphatically, “I would take these recommendations very seriously.” And yet, now you are president, and such a group could have easily been formed, with bipartisan support, and could have offered recommendations outside of the scope of what your own advisors were putting forward, which may have profoundly altered our strategy and ultimately our course in Afghanistan. And still you failed to act.

In light of your recent announcement at the NATO summit in Chicago that “the Afghan war as we understand it is over,” it is abundantly clear that your administration is immovable and has no intention of pursuing the Af-Pak Study Group, as Congress directed. That said, I remain deeply troubled by what appears to be a pattern of politicization of national security matters of the highest magnitude.

On May 29 the New York Times reported that David Axelrod, your political advisor and chief campaign strategist, repeatedly attended high-level national security meetings related to terrorist drone strikes when he worked at the White House. The article noted “David Axelrod . . . began showing up

at the ‘Terror Tuesday’ meetings, his unspeaking presence a visible reminder of what everyone understood: a successful attack would overwhelm the president’s other aspirations and achievements.”

This revelation is in keeping with the reporting of Bob Woodward in Obama’s Wars. Woodward indicated that discussions of the war strategy were infused with political calculations. Woodward also wrote of an administration that “wrestled with the most basic questions about the war . . . What is the mission? What are we trying to do? What will work?”

These are questions that demand answers and could have been taken up by an Af-Pak Study Group. But I venture that such a group would not have factored politics into their calculus. Was that a consideration in your decision to disregard congressional intent as it relates to the Af-Pak Study Group?

Our men and women in uniform have fought bravely and served with distinction in Afghanistan and will continue to do so until they are called home. Any shortcomings in our strategy or overall vision for success are not their burden to bear. As too often happens, they have found themselves at the mercy of the latest political winds blowing through Washington. And I have been deeply disappointed that, as president, you appear to have allowed these political winds to drive the war strategy.

It is not at all certain what will unfold when U.S. troops exit or significantly decrease in number—there are varied sobering scenarios, including the Taliban once again seizing the reins of power; a destabilized and nuclear armed Pakistan; Afghanistan as a haven for international terrorists. Only history will tell. But I believe one thing is clear: your administration missed a golden opportunity when, for two years, it failed to convene an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group to provide an independent, outside analysis of the most pressing national security matter of your presidency.

Best wishes,
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 13, 2012.

Hon. BARACK H. OBAMA,
The President, The White House, Washington DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: This week, the New York Times reported on the bleak state of affairs in Afghanistan. Citing a Pentagon report, the article stated, “The assessment found that the Taliban remain resilient, that widespread corruption continues to weaken the central Afghan government and that Pakistan persists in providing critical support to the insurgency. Insider attacks by Afghan security forces on their NATO coalition partners, while still small, are up significantly: there have been 37 so far in 2012, compared with 2 in 2007.” Given this disturbingly dreary assessment, I remain deeply disappointed that you have refused to use the money provided by Congress to appoint the Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group (APSG) to review United States strategy.

The report’s stark assessment of Afghan capabilities is all the more discouraging, given the recent comments of Afghan President Hamid Karzai. As you may know, in a recent interview, President Karzai blamed the insecurity in Afghanistan on the United States and our NATO countries, saying, “Part of the insecurity is coming to us from the structures that NATO and America created in Afghanistan.” It is appalling that President Karzai would make such statements, given the enormous sacrifice made over the last 11 years by coalition forces.

With your policy faltering and the Afghan president blaming us for all the ills in his country, it perplexes me that you refuse to use appropriated dollars to establish the APSG. More than 2,000 service members have been killed since fighting commenced in 2001. Many service members have served four or more tours in multiple theaters, yet you refuse to use money authorized by Congress to convene a panel that could offer solutions that could decrease the number of U.S. casualties. In fact, both your current and former Defense secretaries served as members of the Iraq Study Group, so they both know the success it achieved and that similar results could be produced by the APSG.

In addition to the strategic failure of your policy, the most recent report from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) documented numerous incidents of U.S. aid money being wasted through graft, corruption and mismanagement. In just one example, the SIGAR report notes that an Army sergeant pleaded guilty to approving fake documents that allowed \$1.5 million worth of fuel to be stolen. While I am sure your administration takes the SIGAR reports seriously and is trying to address the problems raised, at the same time you are actively ignoring policy resources that could provide valuable insight and possible solutions to these and other problems.

I find all the arguments your administration officials have used to oppose the creation of the APSG to be woefully insufficient. In his November 5 letter to me, General Martin Dempsey claims that using the \$1 million authorized for the APSG would be an unwise diversion of resources. Yet in May, the media reported that more than \$800,000 had been spent to fly your secretary of defense to his home in California many weekends, a figure that now likely exceeds \$1 million. I do not know if this was an arrangement you made specifically with Secretary Panetta before he accepted the job, but the money spent flying him to and from California could have more than paid for the APSG.

The wasted money cited by the SIGAR report, as well as the money spent flying Secretary Panetta back to the comfort of his home in California, would provide more than enough resources to establish the APSG. Do you believe that flying Secretary Panetta home every weekend—a luxury certainly not provided to a service member on their fifth tour of duty—is a better use of taxpayer money than getting the best minds in our country to provide “fresh eyes” on U.S. policy in this troubled region? As public officials, we have a solemn duty to protect those we order into combat. For the sake of our forces in theater and the safety of our nation, I once again implore you to use the money available to create the APSG.

As I have stated many times, I do not have the answers on how to assure a successful outcome in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, I firmly believe that the APSG could provide insight into the problems plaguing the region and ways that we can better protect national security for decades to come.

Best wishes.
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE JACK R. HEFLIN UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM SERVICE AS CIRCUIT JUDGE IN OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Judge Jack R. Heflin upon his retirement after 24 years as Circuit Judge in Okaloosa County, Florida.

In his first years after his graduation from Indiana University, Judge Heflin worked as a purchasing agent for Bell Telephone Labs and Western Electric Company. His career in public service began in 1967 with his commissioning as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force. He served in uniform until receiving an honorable discharge at the rank of captain in 1971. Subsequent to his service in the Air Force, he attended law school at the University of Florida, earning his Juris Doctor in 1973.

Judge Heflin entered private practice upon being admitted to the Florida Bar in 1973 and specialized in the areas of commercial law, family law, bankruptcy law, and general practice. He has maintained a focus on domestic violence since 1973. In 1988, Judge Heflin was appointed to serve as Circuit Judge for Pensacola and has served in his current role as Okaloosa County Circuit Judge since 1991.

Without question, Judge Heflin’s positive contributions to northwest Florida and our nation have been immense, and his mark on the judicial landscape will remain for years to come. Northwest Florida is a better, safer place because of his service.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pride to congratulate Judge Jack R. Heflin on his retirement and thank him for his service. My wife Vicki joins me in wishing Judge Heflin; his wife, Linda; and their daughters, Heather, Hillary, and Harmony, all the best.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. ROB BISHOP

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, In a perfect world, I would have preferred that language offered by Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator LEE on detainees and habeas corpus would have prevailed in this final conference agreement.

However, when carefully comparing and analyzing both the House and Senate language on detainees clarifying the rights of habeas corpus, I believe that both versions clearly are a step forward in preserving and protecting citizen’s civil liberties against any implied powers of the Executive branch. Both provisions make clear that every U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien have their full habeas corpus rights intact.

There are many members on the House side which have worked hard and tirelessly on this issue. In particular, I would like to thank the gentleman from Texas, Mr. GOHMERT, who served with distinction as a federal judge prior to coming to this body and has a keen understanding of the legal implications and interpretations of statutory language. He, along with Mr. RIGELL and Mr. LANDRY, have been instrumental leaders in working with all sides of this issue and helping to come up with compromise language which moves us forward in a positive way.

This language is not perfect, but it moves us in the direction we need to go. We should continue to work on this next year.

RECOGNIZING ERNIE LEE MAGAHA FOR HIS SERVICE AS THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER FOR ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Ernie Lee Magaha for his service as the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller for Escambia County, Florida. For more than fifty-five years, Mr. Magaha has served the people of Escambia County with constant professionalism and an unwavering commitment to service.

Mr. Magaha is a native northwest Floridian and a graduate of Century High School. After graduating from Century, Mr. Magaha enlisted in the Army and served our nation with honor and distinction in the South Pacific during World War II. In 1947, Mr. Magaha was honorably discharged from the Army, and he enrolled at Auburn University, where he graduated with a degree in Economics in 1950.

After graduating from Auburn, Mr. Magaha returned to northwest Florida, where he married his wife, Lucile, and together they raised their two sons Ernie Lee, Jr. and James. In 1951, Mr. Magaha was hired as the Florida State Auditor in Escambia County. He worked in this position in the State Comptroller's Office until 1956, when he decided to run for elected office. Mr. Magaha's commitment to public service was evident to the voters of Escambia County, and in 1957 he took office as the Clerk of the Court.

When Mr. Magaha was elected as the Clerk of Court, there were only three employees. Escambia County and the Clerk's office have grown immensely in Mr. Magaha's fifty-five years in office. Today, the Clerk's office serves a population of nearly 300,000 citizens. Thanks to Mr. Magaha's constant leadership, the Clerk's office has maintained an excellent service record and is an integral part of the northwest Florida community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ernie Lee Magaha for his years of outstanding leadership and service to Escambia County. My wife Vicki and I wish Mr. Magaha and his family all the best.

INTENT TO VOTE YES ON H.R. 3197

HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 646 for H.R. 3197, I mistakenly voted "no" when I intended to vote "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM GRIFFIN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I was ill with the flu and missed seven votes: on Tuesday, December 11, 2012, rollcall vote No. 620; on Wednesday, December 12, 2012, rollcall vote No. 621, rollcall vote No. 622, and rollcall vote No. 623; and, on Thursday, December 13, 2012, I missed rollcall vote No. 624, rollcall vote No. 625, and rollcall vote No. 626.

If I had been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall Vote No. 620 (Approval of the Journal). I also would have voted "aye" for each of the following: rollcall vote No. 621 (H. Res. 827 Previous Question), rollcall vote No. 622 (H. Res. 827), rollcall vote No. 623 (H.R. 6190), rollcall vote No. 624 (H.R. 4310, On Motion to Instruct Conferees), rollcall vote No. 625 (H.R. 4310, On Motion to Its Permit Closed Conference Meetings), and rollcall No. 626 (H.R. 4053).

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF ANNE BODENSTEIN UPON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA OFFICE OF SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the retirement of Anne Bodenstein after an extensive career of service to the citizens of Santa Rosa County, Florida.

Ms. Bodenstein's career with the Office of Supervisor of Elections began in 1992, when she volunteered and dedicated her time as a poll worker and as Polling Place Coordinator. Her involvement with the electoral process continued and she was selected to serve as Inspector, and later as Clerk in her local precinct.

Her commitment and strong work ethic were recognized by many, including Governor Jeb Bush, who appointed her as the Santa Rosa County Supervisor of Elections to fill the remainder of her predecessor's term. Her abilities were also recognized by the Santa Rosa County electorate, who eventually elected her to the Office of Supervisor of Elections, a role which she has held since January 2005.

While serving as Supervisor of Elections, Ms. Bodenstein led a permanent staff of six and orchestrated upwards to 500 Election Day employees. She also oversaw the implementa-

tion of four separate voting machine upgrades during her tenure.

Ms. Bodenstein is truly an exemplary public servant with numerous commendable accolades, including 1996 Santa Rosa County Employee of the Year. The Northwest Florida community is grateful for the integral role she has played in our electoral process.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Anne Bodenstein for her exceptional public service to Santa Rosa County. My wife Vicki and I wish her all the best in her retirement.

A VOTE FOR SPEAKER BOEHNER'S PLAN B IS A VOTE FOR TAX INCREASES

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, last night we hoped to have proof that Republicans can raise taxes. Speaker BOEHNER's Plan B not only raised taxes on millionaires, but on working families too. Yet, Grover Norquist, tax lobbyist and self-appointed Emperor of Taxes, proclaimed that Plan B does not violate his "no tax increases pledge." Sorry Grover, it does, and conservative groups know it.

Heritage Action, Club for Growth, Citizens United, Tea Party Express and others all agree that this bill raises taxes, and oppose it for exactly that reason.

We were hopeful that Speaker BOEHNER decided to send a message to Grover Norquist that his tax pledge days are over—every Republican that would have voted for the plan would break the pledge by voting to raise taxes. Norquist's pledge was ridiculous to begin with. Presidents Reagan and Bush both said they wouldn't raise taxes, but did because it was the responsible thing to do.

Unfortunately, last night the Republican caucus failed to stand up to their misguided ideology on tax increases. At the last minute, Speaker BOEHNER pulled the bill because it didn't have the votes. Rather than take a difficult vote, the Speaker showed us, yet again, that the House Republicans cannot deal with the problems of this country.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF INOVA LOUDOUN HOSPITAL

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Inova Loudoun Hospital, which celebrates 100 years of serving Loudoun County this year.

Inova Loudoun Hospital first opened as "Leesburg Hospital" on June 5, 1912 in a rented house on Market Street by Mr. P. Howell Lightfoot, Dr. William C. Orr, Dr. John A. Gibson and Mr. Horace Littlejohn. In 1997, due to the growing population in Loudoun County, "Loudoun Hospital" expanded and moved to the Lansdowne location where it currently exists today. The hospital again grew

to meet Loudoun County's emergency care needs with the opening of the Cornwall Emergency Department in 2003.

Today, Inova Loudoun Hospital is a 183-bed "advanced acute-care hospital" on two campuses, which offers a variety of specialties and employs over 1,500 people. In 2011 the hospital provided care for 12,010 inpatients, 66,953 emergency room visits, 2,637 births and a wide range of outpatient and ambulatory services to our community. In the summer of 2011, Inova Loudoun announced that it is once again expanding to better serve the Loudoun community with a redevelopment project to upgrade patient convenience, technology and building design.

I have had the privilege of working with Inova Loudoun and its excellent staff many times over the years. It is a wonderful organization and I have long been impressed by the hospital's commitment to serving our community and making health care more accessible for Loudoun residents.

I congratulate Inova Loudoun Hospital on reaching this remarkable milestone.

RECOGNIZING HELEN GUETTLER McENTYRE UPON HER RETIREMENT FROM SERVICE AS WASHINGTON COUNTY, FLORIDA TAX COLLECTOR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Helen Guettler McEntyre upon her retirement after forty-two years of dedicated service to the citizens of Washington County, Florida as Tax Collector. Mrs. McEntyre is a Florida native who was born in Fort Pierce. As one of sixteen children in a large, loving family, she was taught the value of hard work and honesty in all she did. The strong foundation of principles she gained as a child contributed to the way she operated as Tax Collector—with integrity and dignity.

Mrs. McEntyre began her lifetime career in public service on October 1, 1970. Throughout her forty-two year career in the Tax Collector's Office, she worked tirelessly to ensure efficiency and success for Washington County. Her final accomplishment before retiring was implementing driver's license services from the Collector's office, which further reflects her willingness to improve services for the citizens of Washington County. Mrs. McEntyre is truly an exemplary public servant, and Northwest Florida is grateful for the integral role she has played in our community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am honored to recognize Helen Guettler McEntyre for her exceptional public service to Washington County. My wife Vicki and I wish her all the best in her retirement.

MEDICARE IVIG ACCESS AND STRENGTHENING MEDICARE AND REPAYING TAXPAYERS ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1845, a combination of two common-sense Medicare reforms that would improve access to intravenous immune globulin (IVIG) home infusion for beneficiaries with primary immunodeficiency diseases while streamlining the process for repayments to the Medicare Trust Fund.

While the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 sought to ensure that patients needing IVIG therapy could receive their infusions at home, the current policy does not cover the items and services necessary for providers to administer it in the home. As a result, access to home infusion is limited and seniors who rely solely on Medicare have no choice but to receive their treatments in the hospital, a more risky environment for immune deficient patients. The Medicare IVIG Access Act would create a three-year demonstration project that would study coverage of the items and services needed to administer IVIG home infusion.

This legislation is fiscally responsible, paid for through the inclusion of the Strengthening Medicare and Repaying Taxpayers (SMART) Act. The SMART Act would sensibly reform the Medicare Secondary Payer system, increasing the likelihood of and speed up reimbursements to the Medicare Trust Fund. This is a win-win—beneficiaries and companies will be able to resolve their claims faster and the Trust Fund will be strengthened through a more efficient repayment process.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

VOTE EXPLANATION ON THE CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, on December 20, 2012, I inadvertently cast a "yes" vote for this bill. I intended to vote "no."

There is no question that this legislation contains some important provisions that will benefit our troops and their families, including a small (1.7%) pay raise, special pay and bonuses (such as special retention pay for aviators, nurses, etc.), additional funding for family housing and support services, and other helpful measures. I was pleased that the final bill included a provision I authored that creates a permanent National Language Service Corps within the Defense Department.

The NLSC currently exists as a pilot program that has recruited more than 1,800 members. To date, Corps members have worked with the Department of the Navy, the National Security Agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other fed-

eral agencies. For instance, the NLSC provided translation and interpretation support services to the U.S. Army Pacific for counter-insurgency training in Thailand. Far too few Americans can speak or understand foreign languages, and as a result, we are hampered in participating in global commerce and in defending our national security. The permanent establishment of the National Language Service Corps is a meaningful step toward helping our government meet its foreign language needs.

Unfortunately, this bill fails to address some key issues of concern to my constituents.

For example, the bill continues funding for an exo-atmospheric kill vehicle—a provocative and destabilizing system that will waste millions more on our failed national missile defense effort. The bill perpetuates a bloated nuclear weapons complex that does not enhance our security and in fact compromises our non-proliferation efforts. Worse, the bill continues to fund our combat operations in Afghanistan, instead of restricting the use of those funds to withdrawal-related operations only. There is simply no reason—military or political—for us to continue the war in Afghanistan. In the broadest sense, this bill continues the acquisition programs and policies that have been in place for decades. This bill does nothing to fundamentally reshape and downsize our armed forces. It continues Cold War weapons acquisition programs that have no place in a 21st century where the threats are vastly more diffuse and dispersed. For all these reasons, I cannot support this bill.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Ranking Member SMITH and Chairman McKEON in reaching an agreement on the proposed Air Force structure changes for FY13 in the conference report on H.R. 4310. Since the Air Force's original proposal in February, I, along with a number of my colleagues in the Massachusetts delegation, have been concerned over the future of the 102nd Air Operation Group within my district. The work of these Guardsmen at the historic Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod is critical in supporting active duty Air Force members in a joint 24/7/365 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance mission. The work that is completed at Otis has the direct impact of saving the lives of Americans overseas, and it is all done locally, in a cost-effective manner. Not many Guard bases have the training or infrastructure to support such concentrated day to day activities, but the men and women of Otis greatly contribute to Massachusetts' widely understood reputation as the "brain state" through their education and specialized training. Their work is further supported by an extensive network of communications infrastructure and technology. Otis is also a part of the larger Massachusetts Military Reservation, which employs an efficient State and Federal base model to share responsibilities, labor, and costs associated with the base among the

Air Force, Air Guard, Army Guard, Coast Guard, and the Department of Homeland Security. It would have been a sad turn of events and complete waste of national resources and defense assets if this unit were to be eliminated. For this reason, I was pleased to learn that after numerous letters and meetings with both Air Force and Air National Guard officials, the Air Force came to the same conclusion in regard to the loss of these men and women. Following a careful review of its original proposal, the Air Force updated its recommendations in November and included the restoration of 141 positions within the 102nd Air Operations Group. This conference report will now bring this recommendation to life and grant not only the heroes at Otis with the job security that they deserve, but our Nation with the adequate defense that it has been promised.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the conferees for their work in regard to a small provision that will have a big impact on the descendants of the over 5,000 African-American patriots who fought for independ-

ence and freedom during the Revolutionary War. This provision will authorize the National Mall Liberty Fund to establish a memorial in Washington, D.C. to honor the service and sacrifice of these brave men and their families. Massachusetts alone was home to 31 percent of the 5,000 known African American soldiers. Only 1,174 of the 1,550 are connected by birth, enlistment, or residence to a municipality, including 60 patriots from 10 towns in Barnstable County in my district. Sandwich (17), Falmouth (12), Barnstable (9), and Harwich (6) had the highest numbers. Many more could be unaccounted for and are awaiting discovery. I am confident that through the establishment of this fully-funded memorial many more heroic tales surrounding the African-American Revolutionary War heroes honored will come to light and further contribute to our Nation's history and legacy.

Finally, the conference report includes the reauthorization of the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) program, which is composed of the FIRE and SAFER grant programs. As the

Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Committee's Oversight, Investigations and Management subcommittee I have witnessed firsthand the impact of these grants in improving the equipment and training of career, volunteer, and combination fire departments. Many fire departments throughout the Commonwealth, particularly in Fall River and New Bedford, where aging, industrial infrastructure remains particularly prone to fires, rely on these funds. Just this summer, I was able to work with my delegation to help secure a SAFER grant for Fall River Fire Department, which reinstated the jobs of 79 firefighters. A number of fire houses across the country are now waiting for a new round of funding to keep their doors open to the communities that they protect. This reauthorization is the first step in helping to do this, but I urge this body to act swiftly in setting aside the appropriate funding for the AFG program to keep the firefighters who risk their lives each day, employed and ready to assist.