

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ON ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the Minority Business Development Agency on this its 45th Anniversary. Established in 1969, the MBDA has worked tirelessly and diligently to promote the growth and global competitiveness of a critical segment of the U.S. Economy, the minority business community.

Why is this important? Well Mr. Speaker it is important because investing in contracts, capital and counseling for our minority owned businesses will yield significant results for minority communities. If we help our minority businesses help themselves, their success will bring sustainable economic growth and trans-generational wealth creation that will transform many of our hardest hit areas.

At the time of the Agency's creation there were only 322,000 minority-owned firms in the nation. Today, that number stands at 5.8 million firms contributing \$1 trillion towards our nation's economy. MBDA has been a significant part of this impressive growth story. Over the last five years in particular, MBDA has helped firms gain access to over \$19 billion in contracts and capital resulting in the creation and retention of nearly 60,000 jobs. These are great numbers, Mr. Speaker and we have to thank the MBDA and its team for their efforts. But we have more work to do.

I thank MBDA for all it has accomplished over the last 45 years. In the coming years, the growth of America's workforce will come from partnerships between the public and private sector. MBDA serves as a bridge connecting government and private resources to leverage existing competencies in service to the growth of the minority business sector. I applaud MBDA's mission and will continue to support it in the decades ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE ORLANDO MUSEUM OF ART

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th anniversary of the Orlando Museum of Art. Since its founding, the Museum has remained committed to enriching the cultural life of Florida and developing inclusive programs that serve every segment of a diverse community.

In 1924, the Orlando Museum of Art began as a small group of artists who met informally to display and discuss their work. They formed the Orlando Art Association, teaching art

classes and arranging exhibits. In 1987, the name was officially changed to the Orlando Museum of Art, and within two years, it was acclaimed as one of the best in the region. The Museum features a dynamic set of collections ranging from contemporary art to Golden Age masterpieces and has hosted various high-profile exhibits.

The Museum has maintained its national accredited status by the American Association of Museums without interruption for over 40 years and continues to provide excellence in the visual arts. I thank the Orlando Museum of Art for its ongoing dedication to advancing the arts in our community.

H. STEVEN SMEDLEY, WEST HANOVER TOWNSHIP FIRE COMPANY NO. 1

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor H. Steven Smedley, a member of West Hanover Township Fire Company No. 1 and the recipient of the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mr. Smedley joined the West Hanover Twp. Fire Co. No. 1 on November 4, 1980 and quickly developed a passion for the fire service. In the 33 years he has been with the Fire Company, he has taken on many important leadership roles including 1st and 2nd Lieutenant; 1st and 2nd Captain; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Assistant Chief; and Deputy Chief. Additionally, he has served as Recording Secretary, Vice President, President and Trustee and fulfilled the duties of an Apparatus Truck Foreman and Chief Engineer for the organization. Outside the fire company, Mr. Smedley has been active in the Dauphin County Fireman's Association, Dauphin County Fire Chief's Association, and the Dauphin County Hazardous Materials Response Team.

Mr. Speaker, for 33 years H. Steven Smedley has devoted his life to West Hanover Township Fire Company No. 1. Therefore, I commend him for his hard work and dedication and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the House Budget Committee and someone who supported the original Biggert-Waters flood insurance reauthorization, I am keenly aware of the need for re-

form in this area. The federal flood insurance program is \$24 billion in debt, and its below-market rates encourage development in environmentally sensitive and flood prone areas.

Having said that, it has also become abundantly clear that the transition to market-based rates under the original Biggert-Waters bill has been unduly onerous for many homeowners, and the pace of that transition is in need of adjustment.

Today's bipartisan compromise attempts to provide that adjustment in the form of greater predictability around rate increases for covered properties, paid for with a surcharge on all policyholders. While there were certainly other ways to address this issue, and I could have supported more reform than appears in this particular bill, I will vote for tonight's compromise in order to move this program forward.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on March 4, 2014, I was unavoidably detained attending to representational activities in my congressional district and thus unable to return in time for rollcall votes No. 91 and 92.

Had I been present I would have voted as follows: On rollcall No. 91, I would have voted "aye" (March 4) (H.R. 3370, Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (Rep. GRIMM—Financial Services)); On rollcall No. 92, I would have voted "aye" (March 4) (H. Res. 488, Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence (Rep. ROS-LEHTINEN—Foreign Affairs)).

JAYSON TERDIMAN, 2014 U.S. OLYMPIC LUGE TEAM

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jayson Terdiman of Berwick, Pennsylvania who represented the United States in the men's doubles and team relay luge competitions in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

Since the age of five, Jayson has been an active member of Berwick's athletic community, playing basketball, hockey, and baseball and running cross-country. He continued to pursue many of these activities during his time at Berwick High School, eventually graduating in 2007 with distinguished honors.

Despite his other athletic commitments, Jayson got his start in luge early, becoming a member of the USA Luge Development Team

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at age 12. His devotion to the sport helped him make the USA Luge Candidate Team and the USA Luge Junior National Team, before earning a spot on the 2014 U.S. Olympic Team.

Jayson has received numerous accolades for his achievements in luge. From 2007 to 2008, he won three Junior World Cup Bronze Medals and the Junior World Luge Championship Bronze Medal. He is also a two-time U.S. Junior National Doubles Champion. In 2008, he was the Norton U.S. Nationals Doubles champion, and he and his doubles partner, Chris Mazdzer, were named the 2008 Luge Team of the Year. In 2010, he won the World Cup Bronze Medal, and he won silver medals in the World Cup Team Relay competition in 2011 and 2013. During the 2014 Olympic Winter games, he placed eleventh in the men's doubles competition with his partner Christian Niccum, and he helped the U.S. place sixth in the team relay.

Mr. Speaker, every four years, our nation sends our very best athletes to represent us in the Winter Olympics. Therefore, I commend Jayson Terdiman for his hard work and achievements as part of the United States luge team, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE BICENTENNIAL
OF THE CITY OF GREENVILLE,
ILLINOIS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Greenville, Illinois, on its Bicentennial Celebration. The city will celebrate throughout the year with a variety of community events, including a Labor Day gala featuring a parade, historic re-enactments and musical performances, a July 4th opening of a time capsule buried in 1990, and the burial of a new time capsule on New Year's Eve with mementos from the year's festivities. The city will also erect a permanent monument within city limits to commemorate this historic occasion.

The City of Greenville was founded in 1815 by pioneer George Davidson and is one of the oldest communities in the state. Throughout its history, Greenville has played host to many important events. Notably, the city served as a key stop on the Underground Railroad, shepherding slaves to freedom from the slaveholding southern states. The city also hosted speeches by Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas during their 1858 campaign for the United States Senate.

Since its founding, the city has grown and now is the home to more than 7,000 residents. Over the past 200 years, Greenville has produced numerous noteworthy individuals. It was once the home of Colorado Governor Job Adams Cooper, Emmy-Winning television producer Robert Brinner and Nobel Prize Laureate Edwin G. Krebs, among others.

I extend my congratulations to the City of Greenville upon this special occasion. It is my prayer that the Lord blesses its residents with another 200 years of health and prosperity.

RECOGNIZING MERNI FITZGERALD
ON THE OCCASION OF HER RE-
TIREMENT FROM FAIRFAX
COUNTY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Merni Fitzgerald on the occasion of her retirement after a long and distinguished career in public service for the residents of Fairfax County, Virginia. For the past 13 years, Merni has been the director of the Office of Public Affairs, serving as the "voice of Fairfax County." Prior to that, she spent 15 years as the public information officer for the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Throughout her career, Merni dedicated herself to keeping Fairfax citizens well informed about the great work of their local government, while promoting engagement in our community. In her role as Director of Public Affairs, she managed external and internal communications for the largest county government in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the National Capital Region. She and her staff provided communications strategy and services for more than 40 county agencies and customer service to residents and visitors.

From routine communications about Board of Supervisors meetings to emergency alerts, Merni ensured Fairfax remained in constant contact with its constituents, and she was instrumental in pushing the County onto social media to foster more opportunities for two-way communications. Whether she was sharing news and information about a notable accomplishment or a natural disaster, Merni was a calm, soothing, and informative voice for the County.

Well-respected by her peers, Merni chaired the Northern Virginia communicators group and a similar committee at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, which encompasses 21 jurisdictions in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. In that role, she coordinated communications for the regional Emergency Preparedness Council, where we worked together for a number of years.

Prior to her current position, Merni served two terms on the Falls Church City Council. She also served as Chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. Her keen political sense, expert communications skills, and firm grasp of the news business has earned her the trust of the elected leadership throughout the region. She was recognized as the Virginia Communicator of the Year in 2000, and in 2007 she was recognized as one of PR News magazine's PR Professionals of the Year for her "untiring service to the community and the media."

I can certainly attest to that. I had the distinct pleasure of working with Merni during my 14 years of service on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. She was a trusted member of our leadership team and helped the county manage numerous crises including: the tragic events of 9/11, which occurred shortly after her appointment as director of public affairs; local anthrax attacks, during which the government center became a screening facility and medical distribution center; the 2002 Washington sniper shootings;

Hurricane Isabel in 2003, which damaged multiple roads and properties across the county and resulted in the loss of drinking water for most residents for several days; the shooting of two police officers outside the Sully District Station in 2006; a dustup over local soup kitchens caused by an over-zealous bureaucracy; the recent record snow storms, which literally shutdown the region for days; and an earthquake in 2011. Interspersed through those events, she coordinated public information about annual multi-million dollar bond referendums and countless Board "presentations."

Most people probably don't know Merni is a published author. Earlier in her career, Merni was an assistant to the Press Officer at the Peace Corps, an agency close to my heart given my international relations background and seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. During her time with the Corps, Merni authored two books for school-age children: one commemorating the Peace Corps' 25th Anniversary and another on the role of Voice of America radio programming in U.S. efforts overseas.

As Merni begins this new chapter in her life, I want to extend my warmest regards to her and her family. I hope she is able to find a suitable new home for the growing collection of nutcrackers that adorn her office at the Government Center, and I have no doubt she will find a way to continue making contributions to our community even in retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Merni Fitzgerald's commitment to public service has set an example that will benefit our community for generations to come. Her accomplishments are truly outstanding and deserving of our sincere appreciation. When I was Chairman of the County Board, we often joked when retirement announcements like this came before the Board that we should not allow such talented and dedicated staff to leave public service, and I certainly wish that was the case here.

I wish Merni the best of luck in her retirement, and I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in expressing our appreciation for her long and fruitful service to the residents of Fairfax County and the National Capital Region.

RECOGNIZING NACDS RxIMPACT
DAY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Sixth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is a special day where we recognize pharmacy's contribution to the American healthcare system. This year's event, organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, takes place on March 12-13. Nearly 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy leaders and pharmacy company executives—will visit Capitol Hill. They will share their views with Congress about the importance of supporting legislation that protects access to community and neighborhood pharmacies and that utilizes pharmacists to improve the quality and reduce the costs of providing healthcare.