

city from stagnation to restoration. He has the ability to solicit assistance from his constituents while working in tandem with his fellow mayors, county executive, state and federal officials, bringing an era of cooperation to Eastern Jackson County. His style of leadership is embedded in civility, compassion and understanding, rare characteristics in today's political climate. His departure will leave his city in a far better place after his twenty years of public service, twelve years on the City Council and eight years as Mayor.

As Mayor Reimal fondly gave his final state of the City address at the Independence Chamber luncheon, he shared how he witnessed the evolution of his city with personal memories as he and his city grew, evolved and matured. In 1948, during Don's formative years, he grew up in an Independence that encompassed only 3.3 square miles; but by 1975, he had witnessed the city's expansion to 78 square miles. During those years, Don met and fell in love with his wife, Jo, and together they committed themselves to each other, their family and their city. Don, more serious in nature, and Jo, with her outgoing bubbly personality, would serve as the first family of Independence with a deep appreciation for the city's rich heritage and a profound sense of responsibility.

As Independence evolved, there came a slow shift to the city's center of commerce and activity causing the older historic parts of the city to fall into slow decay. Since 1994, in his capacity as Councilman and later as Mayor, he helped to lead the effort to revitalize the area that President Harry S. Truman called home. Under his influence, the Independence Historic Square has had a rebirth due to the restoration of old historic buildings into new and vital centers for its citizens due in great part to Don Reimal working in cooperation with his constituents.

Today, as you visit the old square, you will find the Chicago Alton Depot that opened in 1870 saved, in great part, due to Don and Jo's efforts. The Truman Memorial Building stands tall, restored while Don was City Councilman. Don had worked with State Representative Franklin to obtain funds for the then-named Soldier and Sailor Memorial Building, built after World War I, with the support of local veteran, Harry S. Truman. The building was renamed the Truman Memorial Building, where today's soldiers have been welcomed home and an area in the building has been designated the Veterans Hall, designed for the Veterans' Video Project with recordings housed in conjunction with the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project.

In addition, the Palmer Junior High was converted into the highly recognized Palmer Center for those over 50. These renovations, along with the Roger T. Sermon Community Center, were the cornerstone to the beginning of the Independence Square revitalization. The final piece was added when the Jackson County Historic Truman Courthouse was renovated and rededicated on September 7, 2013, eighty years after Harry S. Truman dedicated the same building. Don had worked for years to find a way to save this wonderful building where Judge Harry S. Truman served Jackson County.

Don's personal touch has had lasting impacts, as he respectfully listened to his constituents, providing support and encouragement to projects that would serve as stepping

stones for further neighborhood stabilization. He was rarely deterred, but would just try another way to accomplish his goals for the city. In 2007, the voters approved a school district change that would expand the Independence school boundary on the western side of the city and annex seven schools. Don and the city knew that they could provide a better opportunity for the students and bring families back to that part of the city. The Mayor worked with a prominent group of local citizens to upgrade an area known as the Norledge Place Redevelopment site, also in the newly expanded school area. HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan visited the site in 2011, praising the work of the community and city for using NSP funds and working with private and local funds to transform a depressed area into a site of remodeled and rebuilt homes. With much needed improvements for transportation, a new transit center was built and the IndeBus lines were developed to provide better access for the citizens of Independence.

During his time in office, Mayor Reimal helped to shepherd the continued economic growth along the I-70 corridor and the Little Blue Parkway. With the closing of older outdated hospitals, Center Point Hospital opened in 2007, and in 2012, Children's Mercy East opened in the expanding eastern part of the city. Don has never been deterred from criticism if he believed in what he was doing. He supported new shopping areas, the Greater Independence Business Incubator, fought to have the new Genealogy Library built in Independence, and an Independence Event Center that is the home of the Mavericks hockey team and the Comets soccer team. Mayor Reimal has brought excitement to Independence as both teams are of championship caliber.

His accomplishments are far too many to list, but we can all learn from Don's amazing ability to work with people of all political persuasions and interests. He is deeply admired, well respected and will be sorely missed because he truly cares for his city and the constituents that he was elected to serve. I will remember him as a quiet man whose heart and mind is always in the right place.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to join me in saluting the Mayor of Independence, Don Reimal, for a lifetime of dedicated service, and wishing him and his Jo a wonderful retirement.

**HONORING THE NORTH AMERICAN PROFESSIONALS AND ENTREPRENEURS COUNCIL FOR ITS 2014 INNOVATION CONFERENCE AND ITS COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING A STRONG AND INNOVATIVE AMERICAN ECONOMY**

**HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 28, 2014*

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the North American Professionals and Entrepreneurs Council (NAPEC) on the occasion of its 2014 Innovation Conference. Drawing many of its volunteers and organizers from the suburban Chicago district that I represent, NAPEC demonstrates a commitment to fostering innovation and supporting the entre-

preneurs and startups that will increasingly define our success in the 21st century.

Lacking the necessary support, too many of our brightest entrepreneurs' ideas and innovations never get off the ground. Dedicated organizations like NAPEC and the volunteers who make them great—many of whom come from the Tenth District—are helping these young innovators go from startup to step out to success.

Organizations like NAPEC play a key role in building and maintaining the infrastructure and networks our innovation economy needs. I am grateful for the tremendous work of NAPEC, and I look forward to many more years of supporting innovation and ensuring our economic success.

From a successful 2014 Innovation Conference to all of its work throughout the year, NAPEC is hard at work trying to kickstart our economy and accelerate our startups.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION**

**HON. GARY C. PETERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 28, 2014*

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday April 2, 2014 I was not present for 3 votes. I wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been present to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 152, I would have voted "nay;" had I been present for rollcall No. 153, I would have voted "nay;" had I been present for rollcall No. 154, I would have voted "nay."

**TRIBUTE TO HONOR FLIGHT OF OREGON**

**HON. GREG WALDEN**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 28, 2014*

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 52 World War II veterans from Oregon who will be visiting their memorial this Saturday in Washington, DC through Honor Flight of Oregon. On behalf of a grateful State and country, we welcome these heroes to the Nation's capital.

The veterans on this flight from Oregon are as follows: Don W. Bohnert, U.S. Army Air Force; Wallace F. Burton, U.S. Army Air Force; Walter D. Haines, U.S. Army Air Force; Glenn V. Koch, U.S. Army Air Force; Ernest A Meyer, U.S. Army Air Force; Orvin J Sletten, U.S. Army Air Force; Robert H. Walton, U.S. Army Air Force; Thomas L. Warren, U.S. Army Air Force; Miles R. Barfield, U.S. Army; Chelsey T. Barton, U.S. Army; John C. Bates, U.S. Army; Donald L. Freeman, U.S. Army; Theodore P. Geck, U.S. Army; James C. Hickey, U.S. Army; Cordino Longiotti, U.S. Army; Richard M. Macdougall, U.S. Army; Benjamin D. Morrison, U.S. Army; David Ha. Packard, U.S. Army; Albert V. Panacy, U.S. Army; James B. Ragsdale, U.S. Army; Robert J. Resner, U.S. Army; Gordon P. Rutter, U.S. Army; Raymond O. Sims, U.S. Army; Arthur N. Sorenson, U.S. Army; Charles W. Weeks, U.S. Army; Howard L. Abbe, U.S. Navy; Fred A. Carneau, U.S. Navy; Gail D. Cox, U.S.