

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO TEXAS PERMIAN BASIN HONOR FLIGHT

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 85 Veterans from West Texas who will be visiting our Washington DC this week, sponsored by the Permian Basin Honor Flight. On behalf of a grateful state and nation, we welcome these heroes to the nation's capital.

The Veterans on this Honor Flight are: Daniel L. Acosta, United States Marine Corps (ret.); Daniel G. Acosta, United States Navy; Clinton H. Adams, United States Navy; Philip H. Altman, United States Coast Guard; Mike A. Barker, United States Army; Jack R. Barnes, United States Navy (ret.); Billy E. Barnhill, United States Navy; Emil F. Beck, United States Army; Harvey L. Benad, United States Marine Corps; Kendall L. Benad, United States Marine Corps; William B. Bowlin, United States Army Air Corps; John Brenner, United States Navy; Donald W. Byrne, United States Air Force (ret.); Miguel B. Calderon, United States Army; Herbert L. Cartwright, United States Army; Nat E. Clardy, United States Marine Corps; James S. Cospers, United States Navy; John E. Crosby, Jr., United States Army Air Corps; Stanley W. Cuba, United States Navy; Robert E. Davis, United States Navy.

Roy F. Draper, United States Army; Tharen H. Elcher, United States Army Air Corps; Michael L. Elcher, United States Air Force; Claude C. Firth, United States Navy; Thomas O. Flournoy, United States Army; Daniel R. Frizzell, United States Navy; Joyce O. Funderburk, United States Army Air Corps; Richard W. Galloway, United States Army; Willard B. Gaston, United States Navy; Francisco A. Gonzales, United States Army; Alfred Guardino, United States Air Force (ret.); Manuel Herrera, United States Army; Trisha K. Hildreth, United States Air Force; Walter P. Hildreth, Jr., United States Army Air Corps; Lawrence E. Hill, United States Army; Theodore W. Hogan, United States Army Air Corps; Thomas C. Hogan, Jr., United States Army; Bobbie J. Jackson, United States Army; Joseph E. Johnson, United States Army.

Clay M. Keaton, United States Marine Corps; James M. Kelley, United States Army Air Corps; Tom B. Lewis, United States Army; D.H. Livingston, United States Navy; Russell A. Livingston, United States Navy; Grady D. Lobley, United States Army Air Corps; Malcolm R. Manns, United States Navy; Leonard C. Martinez, United States Army; Raymond G. Martinez, Jr., United States Army; Forest H. Mathews, United States Army Air Corps; John E. May, United States Army (ret.); Joe W. Meek, United States Navy (ret.); Max O. Meek, United States Navy; Michael V. Meek, United States Navy; Tommy S. Mills, United States Army; Travis J. Mills, United States Air Force; Jerry B. Morgan, United States Army;

Ricky W. Odom, United States Air Force; Cecil R. Odom, United States Navy; John D. Oliver, United States Navy.

Douglas R. Peacock, United States Army Air Corps; Leroy W. Pelzel, United States Army; Walter L. Pierce, United States Army Air Corps; Robert R. Pryor, United States Army; David E. Reed, United States Army; Michael E. Rejon, United States Air Force; Joe R. Rickey, United States Air Force (ret.); Curtis C. Rister, United States Air Force; Johnny W. Rister, United States Air Force; Rogelio Robles, United States Army; Heriberto Rubio, United States Army Air Corps; Jonathan H. Ruiz, United States Army; Commodore C. Ryan, United States Navy; Darrell E. Sanders, United States Army; Walter F. Schluter, United States Air Force; James E. Sever, United States Army; Dennis W. Sever, United States Army; Wendell Short, United States Air Force; Vincent T. Sternjacob, United States Army; Steven C. Stone, United States Army.

John P. Stroup, United States Air Force (ret.); Fred J. Stubbs, United States Army; Jack Tarter, United States Air Force; Marion L. Thompson, United States Army; Gilberto R. Torres, United States Army; Herbert O. Walker, United States Army; Joe B. White, United States Navy; Louis C. White, United States Marine Corps; Jobert Williams, United States Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, I am humbled to have the opportunity to meet these brave men and women who exemplify the best of our country. Their sacrifice and commitment to duty to our nation can never be fully repaid, and I hope that when they visit our nation's monuments in Washington DC, the gratitude and respect we have for them will truly be reflected.

Colleagues, please join me in thanking these in thanking these veterans and their families for their exemplary dedication and service to this great nation. I would also like to extend a special thank you to the local communities, all of the volunteers, and Mr. Jack Barnes for their extensive work in organizing this Honor Flight. This trip would not have been possible without all the financial and emotional support of the people who have put in so much hard work and personal time to make sure this trip could be possible.

COMMEMORATING CONSTITUTION DAY

HON. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today, we celebrate Constitution Day—a holiday that falls 227 years after our founding fathers George Washington, James Madison, and their colleagues signed the original Constitution and sent it to the states for ratification. We should all use this important holiday as an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the Founding genera-

tion—who wrote the most durable and successful charter of government in world history—but we should also remember that the Framers only wrote the opening chapter in a much longer constitutional story. And this is precisely what the Framers themselves intended—leaving it up to future generations to use the Article V amendment process to improve upon their handiwork and “form a more perfect Union.”

Perhaps the most important set of constitutional changes occurred after the Civil War, when President Lincoln and his generation ratified a series of transformational Amendments that many scholars have rightly described as our nation's “Second Founding.” As we approach the 150th anniversaries of these key Second Founding Amendments—the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth—it's worth pausing for a moment on this Constitution Day to consider their centrality to America's constitutional story.

The Thirteenth Amendment banned slavery and forced labor—redeeming us from the Founding generation's original sin. Following his reelection in November 1864, President Lincoln worked furiously to convince members of Congress to support the Thirteenth Amendment, eventually securing congressional approval on January 31, 1865. The following day, Lincoln took the unusual step of signing the Thirteenth Amendment before sending it to the states for ratification, calling it a “King's cure” for the evil of slavery.

The Fourteenth Amendment is arguably the most important constitutional provision ratified after the Bill of Rights, enshrining a host of new constitutional guarantees in our nation's charter. It granted U.S. citizenship to everyone born on American soil—a guarantee worthy of special reflection on a day also set aside as Citizenship Day. It protected fundamental rights like free speech from state abuses and ensured due process of law for everyone. Finally, it wrote Jefferson's famous Declaration into the Constitution and perfected it by changing “all men” to “any person.” This universal language guarantees equality for everyone—whether black or white, woman or man, gay or heterosexual.

Finally, the Fifteenth Amendment guaranteed the right to vote free of racial discrimination—beginning the most sustained project of constitutional improvement in American history. This project produced a total of six Voting Rights Amendments that established the right to vote as the most fundamental of all rights in our constitutional system.

Beginning this Constitution Day, we should use the 150th anniversary of the Second Founding to begin a national conversation about its enduring meaning and our nation's unfinished project of living up to the constitutional principles enshrined in its transformational Amendments. While our country has made tremendous progress since that day 227 years ago, our nation's story is not over and together we must continue building on our strong foundation to improve upon our more perfect union.

• 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.