

will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Josh has the determination and drive to be successful in anything that he does and his exemplary work with Principal Financial Group is a testament to that. As the Recruiting Manager at Principal Financial Group, Josh is passionate about helping others and utilizes his abilities to place people in the jobs best suited for their professional growth. Josh has donated his time to others through his work with the Animal Rescue League and the PACE Juvenile Center. In all aspects of his life, Josh is an example of the hard work and service that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Josh in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Josh on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING FORMER SENATOR STEPHEN M. BREWER FOR BEING NAMED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank former State Senator Stephen M. Brewer for his 26 years of service in the state Legislature and to congratulate him on being recognized as Citizen of the Year by the Mount Wachusett Community College Foundation. Senator Brewer retired last year after 26 years of service in the state Legislature. Most recently, he served as Chair of the powerful Senate Ways and Means Committee. Senator Brewer is a giant; someone who looked out not only for his constituents and his community but also for Massachusetts. For 26 years Senator Brewer was a champion for Central Massachusetts. While I know his wife Valerie and daughters April and Audrey are happy to have him home, it's safe to say that we will miss his leadership in the State House. I can think of no one finer to receive this year's Harold E. Drake Citizen of the Year award for his service to the Commonwealth and to the constituents he represented over nearly three decades of public service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 16; Tuesday, March 17; Wednesday, March 18; and Thursday, March 19, 2015, I was out on medical leave for surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 113 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 647),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 114 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 648),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 115 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 876, as amended),

"No" on roll call vote No. 116 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 138),

"No" on roll call vote No. 117 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 138),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 118 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1191, as amended),

"No" on roll call vote No. 119 (on agreeing to the McKinley Amendment to H.R. 1029),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 120 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 1029 with instructions),

"No" on roll call vote No. 121 (on passage of H.R. 1029),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 122 (on agreeing to the Edwards Amendment to H.R. 1030),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 123 (on agreeing to the Kennedy Amendment to H.R. 1030),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 124 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 1030 with instructions),

"No" on roll call vote No. 125 (on passage of H.R. 1030),

"No" on roll call vote No. 126 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 152),

"No" on roll call vote No. 127 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 152),

"No" on roll call vote No. 128 (on passage of S.J. Res. 8), and

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 129 (on approving the Journal).

TRIBUTE TO ALEXANDRA REBELES

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Alexandra Rebeles attends Foster High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: in your opinion, why is it important to be involved in the political process?

AN UNDENIABLE DUTY

"One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors."—Plato

The American political system is an extremely complex system that impacts the lives of every single citizen who lives in our great country. Whether it's a presidential election or an election for local lawmakers, participation is essential in order for the system to be efficient and fair. A failure to vote or a choice to be ignorant in such important matters has severe consequences. Every election that takes place in the United States has a large degree of determining if a law will be passed or if a candidate will take the steps needed in order to create a better

country and system. In a situation like a presidential election, every single vote carries great significance and could alter which candidate will win. In my opinion, it is ironic how you see various Americans who have not voted protesting over laws, representatives, or presidents they do not agree with. The majority of the protesters will admit they did not vote but still feel the need to protest. How can you protest a law or principle if you did not even care enough to vote in the first place? I think those who choose not to vote need to take a look in the mirror and realize they are doing our country a disservice. Participation is the first step in order to create a better America that can serve its citizens in more efficient ways.

I have a firm belief that ignorance towards politics creates a veil that clouds the mind and leads to apathy and a lack of participation in political procedures. Ignorance in global and American affairs is one of the reasons why various people don't know or care about politics. Education in these subjects or matters greatly alters the ways a mind perceives political events. For example, watching an evening news program like the NBC Nightly News or the ABC World News can inform a viewer on the political matters plaguing or helping our country. Education can make a huge difference.

Awareness of political matters is imperative in order for this country to keep moving forward. Without any input from citizens, how can our elected officials suggest legislation that could help America in the long run?

ALEX LOW

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alex Low for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alex Low is a 10th grader at Pomona High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alex Low is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alex Low for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING J.R. GALLEGOS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pleasanton City Councilman J.R. Gallegos on the occasion of his retirement after twenty-three consecutive years of service to the people of Atascosa County and the City of Pleasanton.