

International Senior Lawyers Project, which provides volunteer legal services to promote the rule of law, economic development and human rights in developing countries.

Between his legal expertise, dedication to public service, advocacy for human rights and social justice, and broad range of volunteer experience, Mr. Bell embodies the tradition of the "Wise Men of Washington"—in the best sense of the term.

Mr. Speaker, I once again want to congratulate Mr. Bell for the honors accorded to him by the Polish government and to thank him for a long career of service to our nation and the international community.

A TRIBUTE TO ASHLEY HARRIS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ashley Harris for being awarded the Hawkeye 10 Conference Academic All-Conference Award.

Ashley was selected for this honor because of her commitment to academic excellence, maintaining a high grade point average throughout all four years of her education at Creston High School. She also received a 29 or higher on her ACT. Ashley is the daughter of Rod and Becky Harris of Creston, Iowa.

It is with great pride that I represent Iowans like Ashley in the U.S. House of Representatives. I know that all of my colleagues in the House join me in congratulating her for being recognized with this award. I wish her and her family nothing but continued success in the future.

AZERBAIJAN

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call to the attention of my colleagues the 97th Anniversary of the Republic Day of Azerbaijan.

Republic Day celebrates Azerbaijan's declaration of its independence from the Russian Empire on May 28, 1918, becoming the region's first Muslim democratic secular republic in Central Asia.

While that independence was short lived, from 1918–1920, the young Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan made tremendous strides, granting women the right to vote long before most Western democracies and laying the foundation for architecture and formal education for future Azeris.

Two years after independence, Azerbaijan was occupied by the Soviet Union, losing the hard-won independence, and was forced to become a republic in the U.S.S.R. In 1990, as the U.S.S.R. crumbled, Azerbaijan regained its independence from the Soviets after seventy years. On August 30, 1991, Azerbaijan's Parliament restored their nation's independence for the second time in a century, and weeks later, adopted their Constitution.

A valuable international ally, Azerbaijan was among the first nations offering unconditional

support to the United States in the war against al Qaeda, having provided a safe transit route to resupply our troops in Afghanistan. Azerbaijan leads the Central Asian area in regional economic cooperation, and is a crucial in European energy security matters.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in thanking the people of Azerbaijan for their friendship, and in congratulating Azerbaijanis around the world on the anniversary of Republic Day.

A TRIBUTE TO THE BETH EL JACOB SYNAGOGUE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate a great Iowa Synagogue, Beth El Jacob Synagogue in Des Moines, Iowa, as they celebrate the incoming of their New Torah.

Originally formed in 1881, Beth El Jacob Synagogue was created by a group of Lithuanian Jews. The first permanent congregation started in 1885 at the corner of East Second and Walnut Street in Des Moines. Throughout the early 1900s Beth El Jacob called a number of locations in Des Moines home. It wasn't until the mid-1900s that the congregation built their permanent location, the Beth El Jacob Synagogue.

It is with great pride that I recognize Beth El Jacob Synagogue today as they celebrate this momentous occasion. I commend them for their support to the Des Moines community and their commitment to improving the lives of others. I wish the entire staff and congregation nothing but the best moving forward.

RECOGNIZING DR. TRUDY TUTTLE ARRIAGA

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Dr. Trudy Tuttle Arriaga, a supportive, encouraging, and inspirational educational leader and advocate in Ventura, California.

After earning a Bachelor's and Master's degree, teaching credentials, and a Doctorate from the University of Southern California, Dr. Arriaga worked as a paraeducator at Ventura Unified School District for two years beginning in 1974. She returned to Ventura Unified in 1981 to begin her teaching career. She taught special education at Mound Elementary School and from there transferred to Balboa Middle School where she taught general education and the deaf/hard of hearing program. She then became an itinerant teacher specialist at Elmhurst and Loma Vista Elementary Schools. Dr. Arriaga continued her career as a teacher and assistant principal at De Anza Middle School and later became principal at Sheridan Way Elementary School. She also served as principal at El Camino High School and Pacific High School. In July of 2001, Dr. Arriaga became the superintendent of the

Ventura Unified School District, becoming the first woman to serve in the position.

During her tenure as superintendent, Dr. Arriaga was able to enhance the quality of education at the district. Seventeen of Ventura Unified School District's 27 schools have achieved an API score of 800 or above, drop-out rates throughout the district have decreased as attendance rates have increased. She also brought a focus on schools of choice and helped new elementary and middle schools focus on Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), leadership and the arts. Dr. Arriaga also brought a dual language program to the district and greatly encouraged the program. Now, many students are learning new languages and graduating with a multilingual seal.

For over three decades, Dr. Arriaga has dedicated her career to the education and academic success of countless students. She is a passionate advocate for children and continually demonstrates her support and encouragement of students. When making important decisions, Dr. Arriaga considers every angle, striving for the most beneficial solutions.

Following her retirement from Ventura Unified School District, Dr. Arriaga will continue her service and work for students and education at California Lutheran University, where she will soon serve as a full time instructor and as the administrator of the Education Leadership Doctoral and Master's Program. She has also accepted a contract from Corwin Press Publications and will be co-authoring a book on cultural proficiency.

Dr. Arriaga's passion for education for all students is unquestionable, and it is my sincere pleasure to join the Ventura Unified School District in honoring Dr. Trudy Tuttle Arriaga for her 35 years of dedication, passion, leadership and service for the students and community of Ventura. I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO JEFF HARMSEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding heroism displayed by Jeff Harmsen, of Des Moines, Iowa.

In the early morning hours of May 8, 2015, Mr. Harmsen was taking his normal morning commute when out of the corner of his eye he noticed his longtime neighbors home up in flames. Without hesitation, he parked his vehicle and ran to the backside of the home. It was then that he dialed 911 and made his first attempt at alerting the homeowners. He proceeded to pound on the home's door, successfully alerting the owners inside. Because of his heroics he was able to safely rescue his neighbors and their pets without any serious injuries.

I would like to thank Mr. Harmsen for this selfless act and I ask my colleagues to join me recognizing his heroics and bravery. I'm proud to represent Iowans like Mr. Harmsen in the U.S. House of Representatives and I wish him nothing but continued success in the future.

A TRIBUTE TO NEIL MCCOY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Neil McCoy of Villisca, Iowa, for being selected as the recipient of the 2015 Iowa 4-H Hall of Fame Award. Iowa State 4-H and the Iowa 4-H Foundation sponsor the 4-H Hall of Fame recognition award for volunteers and staff who have selflessly given their time and talents in promoting the Iowa 4-H program.

Mr. McCoy has been an active member within 4-H throughout his distinguished career. He served as Page County Boys 4-H President in 1967. After graduating from high school, Mr. McCoy attended Iowa State University and returned to Page County to farm with his father. That is when he began volunteering with the 4-H program. He is a Page County Honorary 4-H member and a supporter of the Iowa 4-H Foundation 400 Club.

4-H has been a long tradition in the McCoy family. Mr. McCoy's passion for 4-H is derived from his grandfather Ralph and his father Malcolm who played major roles in his devotion to 4-H. Mr. McCoy has enjoyed the many pleasures of helping his children Jeromy, Katina, and Dustin participate in 4-H activities. He says his success in 4-H comes from the support he has had from his wife, Becky, and attributes his accomplishments to her unwavering support. Their family has shared many special memories through their years of involvement in 4-H.

Mr. McCoy is an Iowan who has made a difference and makes our state proud. He has dedicated his life to helping young people in 4-H and serving his community. It is with great honor that I recognize and congratulate him today. I know my colleagues in the House join me in honoring his accomplishments. I thank him for his service and wish him and his family all the best moving forward.

LAQUITTA DEMERCHANT
COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Laquitta DeMerchant for receiving one of the World Youth Foundation's 2015 Community Impact Award thanks to her work as CEO of Fuzion Apps and dedication to her community.

Ms. DeMerchant has numerous accomplishments and shows tremendous enthusiasm for her community. She won the Women Innovation Mobile Award and the grand prize in the Department of Labor's Equal Pay App Challenge. Laquitta speaks at universities and high schools around the Houston area to increase awareness of wage gap issues and supports initiatives for working families. Laquitta also mentors young programmers and software developers in competitions throughout the nation. A member of her team at the Essence Festival YESWECODE hackathon went on to win the biggest international impact award for devel-

oping an anti-human trafficking app. We are proud of her accomplishments on behalf of our community.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Laquitta DeMerchant for receiving the Community Impact Award. We appreciate your dedication to strengthening our community.

ALLIANCE WORLD CHAMPS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Clear Creek Independent School District's (CCISD) robotics team and their robot, Empire, for being named Alliance World Champs at the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Competition Championship.

The Robonauts is made up of students of all ages from around CCISD. Together these students worked hand in hand with mentors from NASA's Johnson Space Center to build their robot, Empire. The team travelled to St. Louis where they competed against 600 other engineering teams from around the globe. The Robonauts really had to put their engineering skills to the test. In St. Louis, Empire succeeded in each competition, allowing the Robonauts to take home first place. Congratulations to all of Robonauts' team members and mentors for their victory. We are excited to see all that you accomplish in the future.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the CCISD Robonauts for being crowned the Alliance World Champs.

COMMEMORATING THE 95TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE JONES ACT**HON. DEREK KILMER**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important milestone in maritime history.

On June 5, 1920, the landmark Merchant Marine Act became law, establishing the importance of maintaining a strong domestic maritime fleet.

That law, known as the Jones Act, was the anchor that allowed the United States to launch a highly trained and skilled group of mariners who can serve to protect our nation in times of national emergency. It supports our shipyard industrial base and preserves our capacity to defend our homeland, patrol the seas, and promote American jobs.

Ninety-five years later, it's clear that the Jones Act has stood the test of time.

General Paul J. Selva, the Commander of U.S. Transportation Command, recently said, "I can stand before any group as a military leader and say without the contribution that the Jones Act brings to the support of our industry there is a direct threat to national defense, and I will not be bashful about saying it and I will not be silent."

I couldn't agree more.

General Selva doesn't stand alone in defending the Jones Act from its critics.

In fact, Congress passed one of the strongest statements of support for the Jones Act last year as part of the National Defense Authorization Act, recognizing that it promotes "a strong domestic trade maritime industry, which supports the national security and economic vitality of the United States and the efficient operation of the United States transportation system."

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to maintain the Jones Act for a new century, fight for our domestic maritime industry, and make sure that high quality, American-made vessels are being piloted by American mariners.

KATY HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL
STATE CHAMPIONS**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Katy High School Lady Tiger softball team for winning the Texas 6A State Championship. This incredible team is now the best in Texas!

With a young team, the Lady Tigers had a lot to prove. The team reached the second round of the playoffs last season and was determined to perform better this season. This resilient team certainly rose to the challenge this season. In the state tournament, the Lady Tigers ousted the powerhouses of Alvin, Brazoswood, and The Woodlands before defeating Lewisville in the championship game. We are proud of the entire team and coaching staff for their immense dedication to each other and to the sport.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Head Coach Kalum Haack and the Katy High School Lady Tigers softball team on their State Championship. Thank you for bringing the gold back home to Katy.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RE-
LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2577) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chair, I rise today to express my strong opposition to H.R. 2577, the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act.

This legislation is severely underfunded. Considering declining Federal Housing Administration receipts and increased Section 8 renewal costs, this year's THUD bill is funded at