

New England Concrete Masonry Association, the Worcester Better Business Bureau and the Bay Path Education Foundation.

Henry has also served in a variety of other roles to support our local businesses through organizations like the Worcester County Homebuilders Association, the National Concrete Masonry Association, Skills-USA.

As an active member of the Worcester community, Henry has also contributed through his work with the Charlton Little League and the Boy Scouts Pack 338. Henry's support for great programs like these that give Worcester families and their kids a chance to build friendships and strengthen our community are another example of the great impact he has had.

I want to thank Henry and his family for all that they have done and continue to do to support our local economy and keep Worcester strong.

TEXANS FINDING CURES

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate James Allison, Ph.D for receiving the Lasker-Debakey Clinical Medical Research Award.

Dr. Allison pioneered research on a new class of cancer treatment that allows for a patient's immune system to continuously attack cancerous tumors itself. The research expands the ability to provide patients with less invasive treatments to fight all different types of cancer. Dr. Allison's discovery is a massive breakthrough for cancer research and outstanding news for those who are unfortunately diagnosed with the disease.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to James Allison, Ph.D for receiving the prestigious Lasker-Debakey Clinical Medical Research Award. Thank you for your work to find a cure.

IN SUPPORT OF GROWTH AWARENESS WEEK

HON. DENNY HECK

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Growth Awareness Week.

How much a child grows is a major sign of his or her overall health. If a child is failing to grow, it could mean that they are developing serious medical problems. A child's height (either too much or too little for their age) is one of nature's early warning signs—a visual alarm for parents and physicians. According to the Pictures of Standard Syndromes and Undiagnosed Malformations (POSSUM) database, more than 600 serious diseases and health conditions cause growth failure.

Many conditions which interfere with children's growth are treatable, but according to the MAGIC Foundation for children's growth, unfortunately 48% of children in the U.S. who were evaluated with the two most common causes of growth failure went undiagnosed.

The longer a child with growth failure goes undiagnosed, the greater the potential for damage and higher costs of care. Early detection and diagnosis are crucial in ensuring a healthy future for a child with growth failure.

Last year I was pleased that Congress recognized "Growth Awareness Week" as the third week in September 2014. So today I ask my colleagues to join me in permanently recognizing the third week in September as "Growth Awareness Week" and to continue to raise public awareness of growth failure to improve the lives and health of children.

COMMEMORATING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of Okaloosa County, Florida, located in Florida's First Congressional District.

Okaloosa County is situated along Florida's Gulf Coast and was established in 1915 through legislation sponsored by then-Florida State Representative William Mapoles from Laurel Hill. It is the 52nd county in Florida, flanked by Santa Rosa and Walton counties, and was carved out of portions of both counties. Sharing the namesake of a steamboat, "The Okaloosa," meaning "Black Water" in Choctaw, Okaloosa County once consisted of small outposts and pioneers in Florida's wilderness, and its main economic drivers at the time of its founding were lumber, turpentine, and fishing.

Over the course of the last 100 years, Okaloosa County, while still true to its agricultural roots, has transformed from a sparsely populated, simple, and rural pioneer county into a top tourist destination, with white pristine beaches and world-class fishing, and an essential area of support for our Nation's defense, which is due in large part to a local businessman and airplane enthusiast, James E. Plew. Plew's vision for the area at the height of the depression was one of opportunity and one that saw the advantages of attracting the military to the county.

Plew proposed to donate 1,460 acres to the U.S. government for a bombing and gunnery range, which was accepted in 1937. A few short months later, the U.S. Army Air Corps mandated that the Valparaiso Bombing and Gunnery Base be renamed "Eglin Field" after Lt. Col. Frederick Irving Eglin. Upon establishment of the U.S. Air Force, Eglin Field would then bare the name of its present day, Eglin Air Force Base. Eglin Air Force Base, which extends across three counties is one of the world's largest Air Force bases and home today to several military major commands, including the 7th Special Forces Group, the Air Armament Center, the Air Force Special Operations Command, and the 33rd Fighter Wing.

The residents of Okaloosa County, including the thousands of military servicemembers and veterans who call it home, are a resilient people, and even through the most challenging of times, they have united as a community to develop and maintain its place as a key area for business and tourism in the State of Florida and throughout the entire Gulf Coast region.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pleasure to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of Okaloosa County, Florida. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating all of those who are fortunate to call Okaloosa County home on its 100-year history and its proud achievements and continued success.

CREATING LEADERS AND EARNING GOLD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Allison Carpenter for receiving the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest honor in Girl Scouting. The Girl Scout Gold Award symbolizes outstanding accomplishments in the areas of leadership, community service, career planning, and personal development.

Allison, a junior at Katy High School, has continually showed her commitment to changing society and helping her community. She was awarded the Gold Award after partnering with the You Can Academy to serve academically at-risk children who attend a local elementary school. She created and led curriculum workshops to teach students how to respect others, follow the rules, and stay on task. We are proud of Allison's commitment to education and look forward to seeing her future accomplishments.

I am proud to represent such an impressive young Girl Scout who possesses a strong commitment to service. On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Allison for earning this distinguished award.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE IN VIETNAM

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Vietnam's religious persecution of its citizens is nothing new. I have spoken before about prisoners of conscience held in Vietnam; in fact just this time last year, I spoke on the release of Pastor Duong Kim Khai.

Unfortunately, Vietnam is still carrying on with this egregious practice. I have been made aware of yet another example of human rights violations by a country the State Department has perpetually refused to include as a Country of Particular Concern for religious freedom.

On February 11, 2014, Mr. Nguyen Van Minh and approximately 20 other religious freedom activists were arrested by police officers in the Dong Thap province. Mr. Minh and the others were viciously beaten and had their personal belongings confiscated.

The activists were detained nearly 40 hours before some of the group was released. Mr. Minh and two other activists continued to remain detained and were not charged until approximately a week later on February 20th.

Mr. Minh was charged with "disturbing public peace" and while awaiting trial he was tortured and isolated from his family and lawyers.

Mr. Minh withstood the brutal tactics and refused to sign any report against him.

His trial was "open to the public," which in Vietnam means closed to the approximately 100 people who showed up to support him and the 15 of the 18 witnesses called by his defense.

Then on August 26, 2014, Mr. Minh was sentenced to serve 2.5 years in prison.

A few months later, the Supreme People's Court of Vietnam upheld the ruling from the preliminary trial, finding him and the other two activists, guilty of disturbing the public peace. This form of government sponsored religious persecution has no place in any nation.

In the Bill of Rights, freedom of religion is listed first because it is the most important. This was no mistake by our Founding Fathers.

Freedom of worship is a basic human right, and one that all countries should recognize.

I urge the State Department to do its job and recognize Vietnam as a Country of Particular Concern.

And that's just the way it is.

POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE
AWARENESS DAY

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, September 3, was PKD Awareness Day. Throughout the country, ordinary citizens took the time to make their neighbors aware of a little-known disease affecting thousands of people in the United States.

Polycystic Kidney Disease or PKD is a genetic disease that eventually leads to kidney failure. Parents have a 50 percent chance of passing the disease to each of their children. However, 10 percent of the people diagnosed with PKD have no family history of the disease. More alarming, PKD is the fourth leading cause of kidney failure, and more than 50 percent of people with PKD will develop kidney failure by age 50.

Unfortunately, there is no treatment to stop or slow the growth of the cysts that develop and enlarge in both kidneys. The only remedy at this time for kidney failure or end stage renal disease (ESRD) is dialysis or a kidney transplant. While ESRD patients are less than one percent of the Medicare population, they account for nearly seven percent of the Medicare budget—totaling nearly \$35 billion annually.

PKD Awareness Day helps to bring attention to this debilitating disease and the constant challenges people impacted by PKD face. Advocates joined together across the country this year to highlight the need for research and innovation that could help PKD patients and their families.

I stand in support of these tireless advocates to help find better treatments, but more importantly, a cure for PKD. It is essential to raise awareness about PKD in the hopes of bringing relief to the more than 20 million Americans with kidney disease.

NURSING EXCELLENCE IN TX--22

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital's nursing staff for earning the Pathway to Excellence designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

The American Nurses Credentialing Center awards hospitals that create flourishing work environments for their nurses. These nurses are committed to providing Katy residents with high-quality and safe patient care. The nurses' efforts to create a positive work environment makes this hospital one of the best places for nurses to work. This award recognizes what a strong and dedicated staff the nurses are at Memorial Hermann Katy. We are lucky to have such an incredible team of nurses so close to home.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital's nursing staff for earning the Pathway to Excellence designation.

HONORING THE DEDICATED SERVICE AND SELFLESS SACRIFICE OF STAFF SERGEANT FORREST B. SIBLEY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with both profound sadness and deep gratitude that I rise to pay tribute to a fallen decorated American hero. On August 27, 2015, Staff Sergeant Forrest B. Sibley, who was assigned to the 21st Special Tactics Squadron, 720th Special Tactics Group, 24th Special Operations Wing, Pope Army Airfield, North Carolina, tragically succumbed to wounds received during an attack the day prior while conducting operations in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel near Camp Antonik, Afghanistan. SSgt Sibley was 31 years old, but lived a lifetime marked by and full of service.

Although a Louisiana native, born in Shreveport in 1983, Pensacola, Florida, would become home to Forrest. By all accounts of his loved ones, he lived his life to the fullest and always savored spending time with friends and family along the beautiful coastline of Pensacola Beach. After Hurricane Ivan struck Northwest Florida in 2004, Forrest and his friends worked to clean up the destruction in its devastating aftermath, helping neighbors rebuild and recover, with his jovial nature intact.

Answering the call of duty, Forrest entered into the United States Air Force and upon completion of basic training in 2008 became an Air Force Combat Controller, serving alongside some of our Nation's most elite. Among his qualifications, SSgt Sibley was a military static line jumper, free fall jumper, an Air Force combat scuba diver, and a joint terminal attack controller. SSgt Sibley's military career would include four deployments to some of the most critical and sensitive areas of operation. His awards include four Bronze Stars, one

with Valor Device, the Purple Heart, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Air Force Combat Action Medal.

As exemplified by his extraordinary heroism, SSgt Sibley's life stands as a testament that freedom is not free, and his legacy will echo in time as an example of the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom. My wife, Vicki, joins me in praying that God is with Forrest's parents, Brent and Susan, and all of the beloved family and friends he held so dear, and we ask that God continue to bless them and the United States of America.

KENTUCKY STATE TROOPER
JOSEPH PONDER

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, another peace officer has been targeted and killed.

Late Sunday night, Kentucky State Trooper Joseph Cameron Ponder made a routine traffic stop. He pulled over the suspect who as it turns out was driving with a suspended license. The trooper was going to arrange for an overnight stay for the man and his fellow passengers, which included two children, but this plan never came to fruition.

This stop would prove fatal. Suddenly, the driver sped away and the chase began.

For nine miles, Trooper Ponder pursued the criminal. Then, the criminal's car made a hasty and abrupt stop. The trooper's vehicle smashed into the back of the criminal's getaway car.

The criminal emerged from the vehicle and fired intently at the officer. Bullets scattered around the hood and windshield and hit the officer.

Ponder was struck multiple times.

The armed criminal fled, this time on foot.

And a manhunt was underway for the killer. Helicopters manned the sky as officers and canines manned the ground and wooded areas.

The criminal was spotted. He refused to drop his weapon and instead hatefully pointed it straight at police. The criminal was taken down.

The trooper passed away at the hospital later that night.

This story is becoming all too common. Officers are being targeted just because of the car they drive and the uniform they wear. This war on police must stop.

Trooper Ponder graduated from the police academy in January and was working in Trigg County.

He was a Navy veteran and just 31 years old.

On the Kentucky State Police Facebook page, tributes fill the comment section.

One stands out, from Ponder's sister.

It reads:

"Thank you for all the kind words. My brother was the best man in the world and did not deserve what happened to him. Please pray for us, this was an enormous loss."

A loss that is felt around the country, as our nation continues to mourn fallen peace officers.

Kentucky State Trooper Joseph Ponder will not be forgotten.