

a scholarly and popular leader; he is the foremost expert on the health of Lake Erie and our Great Lakes endowment.

Dr. Reutter has tackled many issues facing Lake Erie during a distinguished career where he has witnessed the first Earth Day, the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, the return of nesting eagles to Lake Erie following a ban on DDT, and many other changes in our Great Lakes system.

More recently, since the mid 1990s, Dr. Reutter has concentrated his efforts on finding solutions for Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB), caused by high nutrient run-off in the Western Lake Erie Basin, the largest watershed in the Great Lakes. Dr. Reutter's commitment and service to the people of Ohio and our Great Lakes will be celebrated for years to come. His talents will continue to be applied to those endeavors to which he has dedicated his life.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation for his years of service and his unparalleled dedication to a healthy Lake Erie, a restored Great Lakes ecosystem and clean water for those who count on this amazing freshwater abundance—collectively, the most important freshwater body on the face of the earth.

HONORING ROBBIE WILKIE

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Robbie Wilkie for his work as the Caldwell County Emergency Services Director and congratulate him on his retirement.

Mr. Wilkie began his career in 1983 as a volunteer firefighter with the North Catawba Fire Department, where he continued serving through 2004. During that time, he also served as a firefighter for the Lenoir Fire Department from 1988 through 2004, where he worked his way through the ranks to eventually become Fire Captain. After working as a Fire Marshal from 2004 to 2010, Mr. Wilkie was eventually promoted to the Emergency Services Director position in 2013. While serving in this role, his duties included handling all budgetary, administrative, and policy decisions for Caldwell County Emergency Services, while coordinating all fire rescue efforts for Caldwell County. Due to his faithful service, Mr. Wilkie has received multiple awards throughout his career, including Firefighter of the Year from both the North Catawba Fire Department in 1985 and the Lenoir Fire Department in 1998, and the Author H. "Ott" Dellinger Leadership Award in July 2006.

Mr. Wilkie has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to serving the people of Caldwell County in emergency management. As such, I am proud to honor Mr. Robbie Wilkie for his faithful service to the people of Caldwell County and I wish him the best on his retirement.

GOLD STAR MOTHER'S DAY

HON. TOM RICE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of our Gold Star Mothers.

As we honor the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation, we pay tribute to their families, who have made tremendous sacrifice for the sake of our country. On this day, we give due honor to those mothers whose sons or daughters have given their lives while defending our nation.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 115 of June 23, 1936 designated the last Sunday in September as "Gold Star Mother's Day."

Now, therefore, I, TOM RICE by virtue of the authority vested in me as representative of the Seventh District of the state of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim September 27, 2015 to be Gold Star Mother's Day. I encourage the American people to display the flag and hold appropriate ceremonies as an expression of our nation's sympathy and respect for our Gold Star Mothers.

IN RECOGNITION OF BISHOP
PRESTON W. WILLIAMS II

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding Man of God who has provided sage counsel, wisdom, and guidance throughout Georgia, the United States of America, and the world, Bishop Preston W. Williams II. Bishop Williams is the Presiding Prelate of the Sixth Episcopal District, which spans the state of Georgia. After his term concludes in 2016, Bishop Williams will be retiring. A celebration will be held in his honor on Saturday, September 19, 2015 at Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church in Byron, Georgia.

Bishop Preston W. Williams II was born in Willacochee, Georgia and has worked tirelessly to spread the Word of God in the state throughout his life. He pastored several A.M.E. churches in Georgia, leaving a lasting mark on each through increased membership, improved worship facilities, and impactful community outreach. He also served as the Treasurer of the Sixth Episcopal District and Director of Communication in radio and television for the A.M.E. Church, where he was responsible for coordinating media outreach to more than 100,000 Georgians. He served as a member of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches and was selected as the State of Georgia Distinguished Churchman.

From 2000 to 2004, Bishop Williams served as the Presiding Prelate of the Seventeenth Episcopal District, located in Central Africa. Under his leadership, the membership of the Seventeenth District expanded exponentially, necessitating that the district be split into two separate parts and leading to the formation of a new Twentieth Episcopal District. In fact, this trend of increasing membership would con-

tinue throughout the Bishop's distinguished career, with thousands of people inspired to give their lives to Christ by this charismatic leader's everlasting love and enthusiasm for God.

From 2004 to 2012, Bishop Williams served the Seventh Episcopal District, which consists of the state of South Carolina. There, Bishop Williams advocated for the implementation of Christian education by founding Youth Adult ministries, expanding the curriculum at Allen University, establishing scholarship funds for clergy members to pursue their Master of Divinity degrees, and increasing opportunities for seminary-level training. Moreover, Bishop Williams served the community at large by creating after-school programs dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk teens, among many other worthy contributions. Known to many, respected by all, he left an indelible mark on the Seventh Episcopal District.

In 2012, Georgia rejoiced at the return of Bishop Williams when he was appointed to lead the Sixth Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Church. From 2012 to 2016, Bishop Williams will continue to govern the 543 A.M.E. churches in the state of Georgia. He will also serve as Chairman on the Board of Turner Theological Seminary and Morris Brown College, both located in Atlanta, Georgia.

Bishop Williams has accomplished much for the Kingdom of Christ throughout his life, but none of this would be possible without the grace of God and the love and support of his wife, Wilma, and his children, Arnold Andre, Wilma Priscilla, Stella Jacinta, and Prestina Delores.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Bishop Preston W. Williams II for his numerous invaluable contributions to Georgia, the United States of America, and the world. Bishop Williams has made a tremendous impact on communities across the globe. Even in his forthcoming retirement, I am confident that Bishop Williams will remain an esteemed and active member of the community, as his limitless enthusiasm and diligent work ethic knows no bounds.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL
COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the National Collegiate Honors Council and highlight its work to bettering the education of over 325,000 students in more than 800 member colleges and universities around the country.

I want to specifically commend my alma mater, the University of North Georgia, for its prestigious honors program. I am proud to say that this university—which I believe to be one of the finest institutions of higher learning in the state of Georgia—is located in the beautiful town of Dahlonega in the Ninth District.

I attended the school when it was still known as North Georgia College, but I am glad to say that the school continues to grow. In 2013, North Georgia College and State University was consolidated with Gainesville State University and became the well-known institution we are honoring today—the University of North Georgia.

The University of North Georgia seeks to improve the quality of life for residents of the North Georgia region. They do this through excellence in academic performance, student research, student leadership, service learning, and study abroad programs. Additionally, the University of North Georgia is a premier senior military college and one of only six federally designated senior military colleges in the nation.

The Honors Program at UNG cultivates a community of engaged and academically motivated students who uphold the values of service and integrity, demonstrate global awareness, and exhibit strong leadership skills. Evidence of the program's success is exhibited by some of their outstanding alumni. One example among many is Sara Brubaker, class of 2010. Sara completed her Doctorate of Physical Therapy in 2013 and was one of just twelve physical therapists chosen for employment by the U.S. Navy. She now serves at the rank of Lieutenant as the Rehabilitation Department Head at the Naval Hospital in Beaufort, SC.

I am proud to recognize the accomplishments of Sara and other accomplished students and alumni of the University of North Georgia and to commend the University's successful honors program.

HONORING PRINCIPAL CHIEF
MICHELL HICKS

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Principal Chief Michell Hicks of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, who is retiring on September 26, 2015. I am proud to call Chief Hicks a good friend and thank him for his dedicated service as Principal Chief.

After graduating from Western Carolina University, Chief Hicks served for twelve years as the Principal Chief for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and prior to that served eight years as the Chief Finance Officer for the Eastern Band. During his tenure as Principal Chief, Chief Hicks was instrumental in the completion of several vital service facilities, such as the Shawn Blanton Emergency Operations Center, the Snowbird Youth Center, the new Justice Center and Jail, and a new Cherokee Hospital, scheduled to open in October of this year.

Additionally, Chief Hicks spearheaded many educational efforts in the region. He developed and implemented a reading program for kindergarten children in the region, he oversaw the development of a financial literacy program for Cherokee youth, and he helped rekindle an interest in the Cherokee language by including it as required curriculum at Cherokee schools.

Chief Hicks is known by his friends as a kind, compassionate man who, while cherishing the old Cherokee traditions, is a visionary for a better future for his people. His tremendous passion and vision earned him the Tribal Leader of the Year Award from the Native American Finance Officers Association.

The exemplary leadership and vision of Chief Hicks is something that all of us can admire and respect. As such, I am proud to

honor Principal Chief Michell Hicks on his faithful service to the people of Cherokee and congratulate him on his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and not present for Roll Call vote number 495. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Amendments Act.

CELEBRATING THE HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE LATINO COMMUNITY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, since 1968, America celebrates the National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15th to October 15th, 2015, to recognize the legacy of those whose ancestors came from Latin America and Spain. The beginning of the National Hispanic Heritage Month is very important because it is also the anniversary of independence for some Central American countries such as: Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Also, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16th and September 18th respectively.

We are fortunate to have in our district so many dedicated community leaders and organizations, such as CUNY Dominican Studies Institute, Dominican American National Roundtable, Hispanic Federation, Dominican Women Development Center, Mirabal Sisters Cultural and Community Center, Dominican Medical Association DMA, National Dominican Women Caucus, Dominican Bar Association, Latino Leadership Institute, East Harlem Preservation, Inc., Falu Foundation, El Museo del Barrio, Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service, East Harlem Council for Community Improvement, Inc., Friendly Hands Ministry, VIDA Family Services, Inc., N.E.R.V.E., Inc., Teatro Moderno Puertorriqueno, Inc., Casabe Houses Development Fund, Company, Inc., Julia de Burgos Cultural Center, Latino Justice PRLDEF, Hispanic Federation, La Casa de la Herencia Cultural Puertorriquena, Borikén Health Center, Nuevo Caribe Democratic Club of El Barrio and Cataño Gardens and the Association of Progressive Dominicans, working tirelessly to improve the lives of people living in East Harlem, Inwood, Washington Heights and the Bronx. Pioneers such as Secretary Thomas Pérez, America's first Cabinet Secretary of Dominican descent and Justice Sonia Sotomayor who is of Puerto Rican descent and is the country's first Hispanic to be appointed to the Supreme Court, are not only role models for youths in our congressional district, but also symbols of the American Dream. They remind us that willingness to strive can help us to achieve great success, not only for ourselves but for America as a country.

Like all Americans, Latino families aspire to own a home, save for their children's higher education, and put aside enough money for a secure retirement. We need comprehensive immigration reform that will fix our broken system and allow millions of aspiring Americans to come out of the shadows. Every day we delay the issue of immigration reform is another day that our economy, our businesses, and our families lose out. I will continue to fight for comprehensive immigration reform and for the policies that will strengthen the Latino community and expand their opportunities to achieve the American Dream.

The United States of America is greater, thanks to the contributions of the Latino community, which is 55.4 million strong, and continues to grow and make a great impact throughout our country. Happy Hispanic Heritage Month.

IN HONOR OF BETTY HARDY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, residents in Montgomery County are blessed to have non-profit organizations that provide a true safety net for struggling families and individuals.

One of those organizations is the Montgomery County Food Bank which has been helping families since 1985.

This food bank is an integral part of our community today because a group of individuals led by Betty Hardy saw a need and found a way to fill that need by partnering with other agencies.

Betty Hardy has put others first as long as any of us have known her. She is a blessing to our community. She went from helping people on the crisis hotline to ensuring families in need had a meal on the table.

Betty's passion to put others first is what led her to bring together several like-minded friends each week to organize and create food pantries, food drives and deliveries.

Out of her commitment—and her garage, trunk and backseat—grew the program we know as the Montgomery County Food Bank.

From the food bank's initial one-room office space this program has grown to service countless families.

The Food Bank went from serving nearly 18,000 meals in the first year to 400,000 annual meals just a short decade later.

In 2007, the food bank opened its first official warehouse with the help of a community development grant. Today, the food bank operates out of a 60,000 square foot facility that distributes several million pounds of food every year. They coordinate with a network of approximately 50 food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers and other agencies to provide fresh produce, meat and non-perishables to more than 32,000 people each month.

Betty's dream of helping Montgomery County residents weather a crisis has evolved into the sixth largest food bank in Texas.

Betty Hardy is proof that one person's determination, dedication and willingness to roll up her sleeves can have a far reaching impact on individuals and families who need to know there is hope and support in their community.