

as many troops as possible by providing the U.S. Army with a quantitative analysis of JBLM's vital role to the region and to U.S. national security. His diligence and successful coalition-building helped to minimize the negative impacts that a reduction in military personnel would have entailed, including a projected \$1 billion loss in economic activity in the region that could have resulted.

Throughout his career at the Chamber, Gary made it a priority to not only interact with local and state leaders, but to have a presence in Washington, D.C. as well. He was instrumental in helping to secure federal funding for the construction of much-needed elementary schools at JBLM, local water and sewage projects, and other transportation infrastructure improvements on base. In recognition of his leadership, Gary was asked by Governor Inslee to serve on the Washington Military Alliance (WMA) where he worked to ensure the continued liveliness of Washington's military and defense sector community.

Gary's success at building coalitions includes his significant role in the development of an ongoing positive relationship between JBLM and its surrounding communities. Through his work to create the Chamber's Military Affairs Forum, base commanders and personnel have the opportunity to interact with local business and political leaders on a monthly basis. The Forum has served as an open platform to discuss controversial issues including joint land use and clear zone funding. Due to its success over the years, the Military Affairs Forum has served as a model for similar military communities across the country.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Gary Brackett on his retirement and accomplishments. His leadership has been critical to fostering a thriving economy and maintaining the quality of life of Pierce County businesses and military personnel and their families in Washington State.

CONGRATULATING RON HAYNES  
ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE  
CITY OF HURST, TEXAS

**HON. KENNY MARCHANT**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 18, 2015*

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ron Haynes on his well-earned retirement from the City of Hurst, Texas.

Ron Haynes is a hardworking, respected employee of Hurst, and has been since he began in March of 1985. He has displayed strong leadership and instilled positive change throughout his tenure. His quick ascension demonstrates his dedication, efficiency, and success as a worker for the people of Hurst. Ron began as an engineer in 1985, became Director of Public Works just two years later, and has held that post since.

Born a Texan, Ron graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1970 and married his wife, Dixie, in 1971. He then attended North Texas State University where he would graduate with a Master in Public Administration in 1982 while working for Dallas Water Utilities. They went on to have three beautiful children, Brian, Keri and Amy.

Outside of work, Ron is very active in the community. He has been involved in several organizations and groups over the years. Ron was a member of Rotary in the Mid-Cities for nearly a decade, as well as the City of Fort Worth's Wholesale Water and Wastewater Customers' Committee for 28 years. Other organizations he participated in over the years include the American Water Works Association, American Society of Civil Engineers, and the American Public Works Association. He also received a Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Municipal Utilities Association in 2009.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the exhaustive efforts Ron has contributed to the City of Hurst. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing Ron Haynes and his many years of service.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND  
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RE-  
LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIA-  
TIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 17, 2015*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Omnibus Appropriations bill. While this is far from a perfect bill, I believe it represents the best way forward to keep the government open and advance many important priorities that help Maryland get ahead. I thank Ranking Members MIKULSKI and LOWEY and the Democratic negotiators for their work to protect critical priorities.

I was pleased to help lead efforts to lift sequester caps, which has allowed us to make needed investment to support jobs and the economy. The Purple Line, WMATA, and efforts to ensure a clean Chesapeake Bay are all supported. The National Institutes of Health will see its most significant funding boost in many years. Education programs like Head Start, Title I, and special education get added resources, and the maximum Pell grant will be increased. And I am pleased that funding for full consolidation of the FBI headquarters was included in the bill—Team Maryland will keep fighting for it to be relocated to Prince George's County.

Important tax provisions were included in the Omnibus. I strongly support extension of the renewable energy tax incentives that will create jobs and aid our transition to a clean energy economy. I am also pleased with the delay in the so-called Cadillac tax, which would otherwise erode health benefits for workers. The Omnibus also reauthorizes the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, finally fulfilling our promise to first responders.

Democrats were also able to reject countless corrosive policy riders, including those that would defund Planned Parenthood, block refugees from Syria, pollute our air and water, and erode worker protections.

However, some damaging riders remain. I strongly oppose lifting the oil export ban, a Christmas gift to Big Oil. If we are to reduce global carbon emissions, as world leaders pledged to do just last weekend, we must reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and keep

more of them in the ground. Lifting the export ban would do the opposite. Moreover, there is no evidence that American consumers would see any benefit from this policy.

The Omnibus also contains a rider to delay action at the IRS to clarify rules surrounding political activities by nonprofits. It delays efforts at the SEC to require corporate disclosure of political spending, a critical step to address the dark money that is influencing our elections.

The bill continues the prohibition on gun violence research—known as the Dickey Amendment—that our nation's public health experts strongly oppose. We should be acting with urgency to confront this plague of violence in our nation, and that includes research into preventing injuries and death. Even former Congressman Jay Dickey, who authored the amendment, now opposes it, writing in the Washington Post that "The same evidence-based approach that is saving millions of lives from motor-vehicle crashes, as well as from smoking, cancer and HIV/AIDS, can help reduce the toll of deaths and injuries from gun violence."

I am troubled by provisions of a cybersecurity authorization that were packaged into this bill and believe they deserve a fuller hearing than the few days we have had to review this measure. While cyber attacks are a clear threat that must be confronted, we must be vigilant to ensure the protection of civil liberties.

While I support the short-term extension of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, I am disappointed that a permanent extension was blocked. LWCF funds are a critical tool for local conservation and the program should not be allowed to lapse, as it did in October for the first time in 51 years.

I remain concerned that we are underfunding important investments in the middle class and those working to join the middle class, particularly in light of the enormous, unpaid-for tax package that was just passed by this House. If we can afford tax giveaways to special interests, we can afford a stronger investment in middle class families and those seeking to join the middle class. More must be done to bring families out of poverty, rebuild our infrastructure, and provide opportunity to all.

Ultimately, no bill of this size is perfect, and all sides have made concessions to move our country forward. I will continue to fight for the investments we need to make our nation safer, stronger, and more prosperous for all.

RECOGNIZING DEAN WILLIAM  
REEDER OF GEORGE MASON UNI-  
VERSITY FOR HIS COMMITMENT  
TO THE ARTS AND EDUCATION

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 18, 2015*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dean William (Bill) Reeder of George Mason University on his career in education, management, philanthropic administration, and most notably, the arts.

Over the span of his 40-year career, Dean Reeder has raised over \$250 million in private funds for the arts and education. Reeder is the