

achievement and honor six researchers from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) who were part of one of the most significant scientific discoveries in a century.

While hundreds of scientists worked together to make this discovery, I am especially proud of the researchers from RIT—James Healy, Jacob Lang, Carlos Lousto, Richard O'Shaughnessy, John Whelan, and Zhang Yuanhao. All of these researchers are members of RIT's Center for Computational Relativity and Gravitation, which is led by Manuela Campanelli. Her team was one of the first groups to initially solve Albert Einstein's strong field equations describing black hole mergers. Because of this legacy, it is fitting that the recent discovery helps further confirm Einstein's general theory of relativity.

As the only microbiologist in Congress, I know that every scientist hopes to have their predictions verified by direct observation. I also know that this is relatively rare, so I stand in awe of this RIT team that accurately modeled the merger of two black holes and predicted the gravitational waves that were detected. This monumental achievement marks yet another chapter in Rochester's rich history as a center of scientific innovation and discovery.

Rochester has helped pioneer important research and develop innovative products such as the Kodak Brownie camera, the Norden bombsight, and myriad high-powered lasers. Established in 1829, RIT has not only played a critical role in Rochester's past, it continues to ensure that Rochester remains a global center of excellence. RIT makes invaluable scientific contributions to the research community, but it is also a cornerstone of the Rochester community and helps provide local businesses with the talent they need to flourish.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of this discovery is that it allows us to pose new questions and push the bounds of our collective knowledge. There's no doubt in my mind that RIT will play an essential role in these forthcoming discoveries, and I am proud that millions of people will continue learning about the world around us thanks to the contributions of researchers like Dr. Campanelli and the other members of her team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding all of the individuals who helped contribute to this monumental discovery and especially the six researchers from RIT. These Rochesterians have helped fundamentally change our understanding of the world, and I am proud to support their work in Congress.

RECOGNIZING THE 70TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF VFW POST 5277

**HON. DANIEL WEBSTER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 25, 2016*

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5277, William Alfred Suggs Memorial Post in Clermont, Florida, celebrates 70 years of service to veterans and their families.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is a strong advocate for veterans ensuring they receive their earned entitlements and the care they deserve. The history of the VFW dates back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-

American War and the Philippine Insurrection founded organizations to assist wounded and sick veterans with securing benefits as there was no medical care or veterans' pension. Some of these veterans collaborated and started organizations which would be known as the VFW. The first chapters, founded in Ohio, Colorado, and Pennsylvania, quickly expanded reaching over 5,000 members by 1915; by 1936, membership had grown to nearly 200,000.

The VFW was an instrumental voice in the establishment of the Department of Veterans Affairs, GI Bill for the 20th century, national cemetery system, and compensation for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange and veterans diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome. The VFW championed the 21st century GI Bill, passed in 2008, providing educational benefits to active-duty service members, and members of the Guard and Reserves.

It is my distinct pleasure to commend the VFW Post 5277 on their 70th anniversary, and I join the VFW in expressing appreciation for our veterans and those currently serving in the United States military.

COL. WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS  
LETTER

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 25, 2016*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following letter:

COL. WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS LETTER  
FEBRUARY 24, 1836

There are those in history that paid for our freedoms with their lives. In 1836 Texas was fighting for its independence from the dictator of Mexico, Santa Anna. A small band of 180 patriots from numerous nations and states, of several races, stood defiant at the Alamo (in now San Antonio,) from Santa Anna's enormous invading army. The leader of the Texian patriots was a 27 year old lawyer from South Carolina by the name of William Barrett Travis. Surrounded by the enemy, Travis penned his famous letter seeking aid for the defense of liberty. It was 180 years ago:

BEJAR, FEBY. 24TH. 1836

COMMANDANCY OF THE ALAMO,

TO THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS & ALL AMERICANS IN THE WORLD—FELLOW CITIZENS & COMPATRIOTS—I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna—I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man—The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken—I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls—I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country—Victory or Death.

WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS,

*Lt. Col. Comdt, The Alamo.*

Mr. Speaker, Col. Travis and his Texians all died defending our freedom at the Alamo.

Sixty days later General Sam Houston and his Texians defeated Santa Anna in the marshy plains of San Jacinto, winning independence from Mexico, once and for all. Travis's letter is a remarkable and inspirational statement for freedom and the spirit of liberty. Col. Travis is one reason my oldest grandson is named "Barrett Houston."

And that is just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVID  
BIEGLER

**HON. PETE SESSIONS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 25, 2016*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of an outstanding Texan, David Biegler, as he completes his distinguished work as the long-term Chairman of the Board for Children's Health System of Texas (CHST). While serving as Chairman for Children's Health System of Texas, Mr. Biegler served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Southcross Energy since 2011 and has more than 47 years of experience within the energy industry.

Children's Health Systems of Texas' original location is in Dallas and has now grown to include the more than 30 other specialty and pediatric care centers located throughout North Texas. Children's Health Systems of Texas remains the seventh largest pediatric health care provider in the country—with more than 850,000 patient encounters annually and performing more than 28,600 surgeries at its two full-service campuses in Dallas and Plano. Children's Health is the only academic healthcare system in the Dallas-Fort Worth area dedicated solely to the comprehensive care of children from birth to age 18. Children's Health has also been recognized as (1) one of the most connected hospitals in the nation for its excellence in patient safety, patient engagement and clinical connectedness; (2) one of only six STS three-star designations for congenital heart surgery; (3) a Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit—the highest qualification for such programs; and (4) a Level 1 Trauma Center for pediatric care.

I have seen the power of Children's Health System of Texas as both a Member of Congress and as the father of a patient. Our region is blessed to have the resources and expertise of CHST medical professionals and staff available to meet the needs of our children. So much of the CHST success story is due to the involved engagement of civil leaders like David Biegler. Together, those leaders have ensured the children of our region would never have to leave home to have the best possible medical care.

I have personally had the opportunity to work with Mr. Biegler over the years in Dallas on a number of issues important to our community, region and state. Besides serving as the Chairman of the Board at CHST, David has served as a director of Southwest Airlines Co. and Trinity Industries, Inc. David has also been recognized as an outstanding board member of CHST time and time again. In 2015 alone, he was recognized by the Texas Healthcare Trustees as an outstanding board member and by the Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council with the Kerney Laday, Sr. Trustee of