

President Obama nominated Ms. Harden for the position of Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. Her nomination was unanimously approved by the Senate. Ms. Harden's steadfast leadership led to what Secretary Vilsack has called the "best-implemented Farm Bill in history," referencing the 2014 Farm Bill in which Ms. Harden led the USDA's efforts to work with Congress to see the bill through to completion and implementation.

Ms. Harden has been praised by many for her bipartisan and commonsense approach to policies and programs that expand opportunities for rural communities. Krysta Harden, a "Georgia farm girl" herself, has dedicated her career to serving our nation's farmers and promoting a thriving bio-based economy.

As a friend of long standing and someone that I have had the honor to work with closely in developing legislative frameworks for farmer settlements, I can say with a full heart that I will miss working with Krysta in Washington. She has served admirably as Deputy Secretary of the USDA and has shown herself to represent the highest standards of public service. Ms. Harden has established a legacy of providing support for underrepresented groups—particularly women, young people, immigrants, disadvantaged producers, and veterans. I am very grateful for her tireless advocacy to diversify the nation's agriculture sector and her steadfast support for rural America. A woman of great integrity, her efforts, her dedication, and her expertise in her field are unparalleled and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Ms. Krysta Harden upon the occasion of her departure from an outstanding career at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on February 23, 2016, on Roll Call No. 83 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4408, to require the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel, and for other purposes, as amended, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on this bill to require the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, within 180 days of enactment, to transmit a national strategy to Congress to combat terrorist travel.

On February 23, 2016, on Roll Call No. 84 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4402, Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016, as amended, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on this bill to require the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, within 120 days of enactment, to provide a report to Congress on instances or attempted instances since 2011 of foreign fighter travel from the United States to Iraq or Syria.

PEARLAND CHEERLEADERS PLACE
AT STATE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pearland High School cheerleading team for placing third overall in the University Interscholastic League (UIL) State Competition.

Spirit, the UIL State Cheerleading Competition, is an extension of the typical high school cheerleading role, enhancing school spirit. This highly competitive UIL competition consists of three different categories: fight song, time out band dance, and time out cheer. Pearland High School competed in the UIL State Competition in the Class 6A division where the Pearland Oilers placed third overall, how impressive. We are so proud of our Pearland Cheerleaders and we can't wait to see what the future competitions bring.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Pearland High School Cheerleaders for placing third in the UIL State Competition. Keep up the hard work.

THE RETIREMENT OF RICHARD "RICK" HEALY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my profound thanks for the service and best wishes on the retirement of Rick Healy. Rick has worked in the House of Representatives for over 35 years, which is multiple lifetimes here on the Hill.

Rick's career in the House encompassed more than three decades of dedicated service to the people of Minnesota's 4th Congressional District, to the House Natural Resources Committee, and to the Appropriations Committee.

I was fortunate enough to have Rick work with me as the Democratic Clerk for the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee during his last year, before departing this month to work with our former Chairman Jim Moran in the private sector.

Rick is a proud son of St. Paul. He graduated from St. Thomas, and his wife, Cecilia, is a St. Kate's grad. The first Congressional experience Rick gained was as an intern with his Member of Congress, Representative Bruce Vento. He then joined the Congressman's staff in DC working on environmental issues in 1980. When Bruce became the Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, Rick left his personal office and joined the Subcommittee staff.

Congressman Vento is remembered both in Minnesota and nationally for his tremendous dedication and passion for the conservation of America's wilderness and natural treasures. Rick Healy played a pivotal role in advancing those efforts. He supported Chairman Vento and his successors in crafting much of the major public lands legislation passed through

the Resources Committee over the next 25 years.

Rick's knowledge and experience was instrumental in issues of importance to Minnesota, like the management of the St. Croix National Scenic River and the establishment of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

Rick was a tremendous help to me when I was first elected after Congressman Vento passed away in 2000, and provided valuable council on environmental issues as I followed in our friend and mentor Bruce's legacy by serving on the Resources Committee.

As a staffer who has been here longer than almost all of the Members serving in this body, Rick Healy assisted his Chairs and Ranking Members through the ups and downs of Majority and Minority.

And, five years ago, when he joined the Appropriations Committee, he brought that institutional knowledge to the work of funding and improving our nation's public lands, our environmental stewardship, our trust and treaty responsibilities with tribal nations, and our investment in the arts and humanities. Rick has been an invaluable resource on the Appropriations Committee.

I, along with many other Members and staff, will miss his depth of knowledge, his expertise and insight, his hard work, and his sense of humor.

Rick, we wish you the best of luck.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 151

HON. JERRY MCNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 151 in Antioch, California. Formed in 1916, it is one of the oldest troops in California.

Since 1910, the Boy Scouts of America have helped mold future leaders of our country by teaching lifelong values and skills through educational activities. The Boy Scouts believe that helping the youth of America today sets us on a path to become a more responsible, respectful and productive society tomorrow. From its inception, Troop 151 has built a program consisting of traditional outdoor scouting activities that include camping, backpacking, and hiking to promote physical fitness and good character.

Community involvement continues to be a guiding principle for the Boy Scouts of America. Troop 151 was instrumental in the resurrection of the Antioch's Veterans Day celebration and they annually provide traditional flag services to the Veterans' Day celebration among other important community events. The boys of Troop 151 are proof that scouting can help build a greater sense of personal responsibility and high self-esteem. As a result, scouts are better prepared to make good decisions and give back to our community.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Boy Scouts of Troop 151 for one hundred years of service to the City of Antioch and its residents.

A JOINT RESOLUTION DIS-
APPROVING THE SALE OF WEAP-
ON SYSTEMS TO PAKISTAN

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, today I submit to the House of Representatives a Joint Resolution disapproving the sale of weapon systems to Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has been using weapons from the United States to repress its own citizens and especially the people of Baluchistan. The deciding factor of whether to support this Joint Resolution is, for me, the arrogant and hostile actions taken by the Government of Pakistan against the man who helped bring Osama Bin Laden to justice.

Osama Bin Laden was a mass murderer of 3,000 Americans on September 11, 2001. Anyone who helped bring him to justice is an American hero. The Government of Pakistan arrested Dr. Shakil Afridi and continues to hold him in a cage. That arrest was a declaration of hostility toward the United States. Our government should not provide military equipment to Pakistan, let alone F-16s, as long as they are holding Dr. Afridi. His continued incarceration is an action which underscores that the Government of Pakistan considers itself our enemy, not our friend.

HONORING SANDY BEST

HON. JOHN KLINE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a historic promotion in the Minnesota National Guard. Today, the Minnesota Guard will conduct a promotion ceremony for Colonel Sandy Best, who will become the first female general in Minnesota National Guard history when she is promoted to Brigadier General.

General Best will be the Air Chief of Staff responsible for command supervision, oversight, and leadership of the 133rd Airlift Wing at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Joint Air Reserve Station, and the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth.

Mr. Speaker, General Best began her career more than 30 years ago when she, a Minneapolis Edison High School graduate, enlisted in the Minnesota Air National Guard in 1984 as a Personnel Specialist. In 1991, she was commissioned through the Academy of Military Science at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Tennessee, contributing to the Minnesota Guard in a variety of positions ever since.

General Best's passion for our soldiers, their families, and our country as well as her advocacy for the National Guard has been exceptional. I have always appreciated our meetings in Minnesota and in Washington and I look forward to working with the new Brigadier General.

Mr. Speaker, this promotion is well deserved and I wish General Best my best, and congratulate her and the Minnesota National Guard on this historic achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE 24TH ANNIVER-
SARY OF THE KHOJALY MAS-
SACRE

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 24th anniversary of the massacre of hundreds of people in the town of Khojaly in what was the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians in the course of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Khojaly, which is located in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, was once home to 7,000 people. However, on February 26, 1992, Armenian armed forces descended on the town in a final attempt to take over the city. In doing so, they massacred over 600 unarmed people—including 106 women and 83 children—and left less than 2,000 survivors. Hundreds more became disabled due to their horrific injuries. More than one hundred children lost a parent and 25 children lost both parents. At least 8 families were completely obliterated.

Even though a ceasefire went into effect over two decades ago, more than 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts, remain occupied and more than 1 million Azerbaijanis remain refugees unable to return to their home villages. Ongoing violence along the line of contact surrounding occupied Azerbaijani territory reinforces the urgency of robust American participation in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Minsk Group as it works toward a peaceful resolution of the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict.

Azerbaijan is the only country that borders both Russia and Iran, and yet Azerbaijan has been a strong partner of the United States and its allies in security and energy matters. This cooperation has included: enforcing sanctions against Iran; providing troops to serve shoulder-to-shoulder with U.S. forces in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan; allowing transit for 40 percent of all non-lethal equipment used by NATO forces through Azerbaijan to Afghanistan; construction of the Southern Gas Corridor from the Caspian Sea to Italy, thereby providing Europe with an alternative to Russian energy sources; and supplying 40 percent of Israel's oil.

I invite my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in recognizing and remembering the horrible events that occurred during the Khojaly Massacre twenty-four years ago. As Azerbaijanis in all parts of the world continue to grieve the loss of loved ones, let us commemorate their losses with support of non-violent efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and of reforms that promote peace and stability throughout the Southern Caucasus region.

IN HONOR OF THE UNI-CAPITOL
WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP PRO-
GRAM

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, for the past 17 years, the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship

Program (UCWIP) has granted the opportunity for a select group of Australian students from ten partner universities the opportunity to intern in a Congressional office from January to March each year. Since 1999, over 180 Australian students have had the benefit of partaking in these internships, and credit is due to Eric Federer, a former senior Senate and House Congressional staffer who founded and continues to coordinate the program. The students must undertake a rigorous application process to be successful and come from a range of backgrounds. The program is a mutual exchange—the students use their time in Washington, D.C. to develop their knowledge of American politics and have the opportunity to work on a range of issues that are of personal interest, while simultaneously sharing experiences from their home country with their office.

This year, our office is lucky to be hosting Emily Denbigh from the University of Adelaide. Emily is currently in her 4th year of a Bachelor's degree in Law and Arts, pursuing a major in Development Studies and a minor in French. She is passionate about social justice issues, and has previously undertaken an internship in Tanzania with a women's legal rights organization. She is interested in pursuing a career in international human rights law or environmental law. During her time in Washington, D.C., Emily has enjoyed learning about the dynamic American political system and California's beautiful 20th district. She has developed her knowledge of legal environmental issues, including what the American judicial system and legislators can do to combat climate change and promote conservation. She has also enjoyed talking to our constituents, who take a particular interest in her accent.

We have enjoyed hearing her accent and all of her wonderful ideas. Emily is a hardworking and highly intelligent woman. She is a strong writer and researcher and her passion for the environment and social justice shows in all the conversations I have had with her and through her writing. She has been a great asset to our team and we will be sorry to see her leave.

My staff and I have greatly enjoyed participating in the UCWIP program since its inception. I thank Mr. Federer for his hard work and dedication in bringing these Australian students to our nation's capital and for sending us Emily this session.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes on February 9, 2016 through February 12, 2016, February 23, 2016, and February 24, 2016 due to the death of my father.

Had I been present for roll call vote number 64, passage of H.R. 3036—The National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 65, ordering the previous question for H. Res. 609, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for roll call vote number 66, H. Res. 609, the combined rule providing