

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF FINLAND'S  
CENTENNIAL

**HON. SEAN P. DUFFY**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise on behalf of the Congressional Friends of Finland Caucus in recognition of Finland's Centennial. For a generation of Finns, this is the most significant commemorative year in their lifetime.

The significance of the anniversary comes with good reason. A century ago, on December 6, 1917, Finland declared itself an independent republic and rejected its status as an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia. As is often the case, independence is not easily won. Soon after breaking away from Tsarist Russia, the country descended into civil war with neighbor pitted against neighbor. However, from the struggle of war, something incredible happened: the Finnish people emerged with renewed purpose and a new national identity.

After 100 years of democracy, Finland has become a shining example to the world of what monumental achievements can be made in a short time. Today, Finland is the pinnacle of Nordic values and culture, a proud member state of the European Union, and a key political and economic partner of the United States. The deep relationships between the United States and Finland cannot be overstated. The United States is the third largest trading partner of Finland and in addition, around 250 Finnish-owned companies, which directly employ about 34,000 people, are based in the United States. Truly, US-Finland relations have never been stronger.

And just a few short months ago, President Trump hosted President Niinistö at the White House. There the Presidents discussed Finland's leadership of the Arctic Council, the coalition to defeat ISIS, and cybersecurity. Furthermore, President Trump pledged an additional half-million dollars to the Fulbright Finland Foundation so that the United States could send more of our brightest students to study and form lasting relationships in Finland.

Our peoples share many common values and interests that make Finns and Americans readily identify with one another. Hard work and the drive to succeed have benefitted both our peoples and embody some of our most deeply-held virtues.

In light of these shared interests and the strong relationship between our peoples, I congratulate all Finns on 100 years of independence. Continued cooperation between our nations will make Finland's second century as robust and vibrant as the first and my colleagues in the House and I look forward to closely working with our Finnish counterparts towards that end. Thank you, Finland, for being a valued friend to the United States and happy centennial.

HONORING THE MINNESOTA CHAPTER OF THE COUNCIL ON AMERICAN ISLAMIC RELATIONS

**HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today in recognition of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Council on American-Islamic Relations—Minnesota Chapter (CAIR-MN). CAIR-MN works, as part of a nationwide network of chapters, to diligently protect and enhance some of the fundamental principles that have shaped America since its inception. They fight to defend the constitutional right to religious freedom. They promote community engagement, inspire civic activism, and defend civil liberties. CAIR-MN's work with Muslims in America has expanded the notions of social justice in our communities and supported the active participation of all our nations' citizens and residents.

Today, too many Americans have a distorted, inaccurate, or unclear understanding of Muslims, who they are, and what they believe. Fortunately, for ten years now, CAIR-MN has taken on the truly difficult, necessary, and rewarding task of dispelling misinformation, enhancing our society's understanding of Muslims and Islam, and combatting bigotry and intolerance. It is my hope that CAIR-MN will continue its remarkable contribution to our society for many more decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing CAIR-MN for the ten years of invaluable service they have provided to the State of Minnesota and the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE MULTIFAITH ALLIANCE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES AND AFYA FOUNDATION

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an important event in my district-sponsored by the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees and the Afya Foundation. Last week, these two organizations collected much-needed supplies to benefit those who have suffered from the Syrian civil war.

The Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees has a powerful story to tell. A coalition of over 90 organizations, it has facilitated a partnership between Israeli and Syrian organizations to help deliver critical humanitarian assistance, including food and medicine, to people inside Syria. Containers of donated assistance arrive at Israeli ports, where the Israeli Defense Forces transport the supplies to the Syrian border for distribution by Syrian organizations inside Syria.

Joining the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees is the Afya Foundation, which has a

record of collecting supplies for humanitarian crises all over the world.

The event in Yonkers, New York will build upon similar events and campaigns which have raised over \$66 million of life-saving assistance.

I applaud the participants in Yonkers, the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees, the Afya Foundation and all those Americans who have made an effort to help those in desperate need in Syria. I recognize that the Syrian crisis will not be resolved by sending humanitarian assistance. For that, we will need a political solution. However, if we can help a family access food and medicine, help them realize that America has not forgotten them, then we can offer them hope for an end to the violence and war.

HONORING CARTER GILMORE

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and service of a pillar of the Oakland community, the Honorable Carter Gilmore. Although Mr. Gilmore passed away in 2006, the Oakland African American Museum and Library will be unveiling an exhibit focused on his life and career on December 9th, 2017.

Carter Gilmore was born on May 30th, 1926 in Grapeland, Texas, and served in the US Navy during World War II. In 1947 he married Liz Hampton, and the couple soon moved to Oakland, where Mr. Gilmore worked as a plant manager for Granny Goose Foods.

In 1977, Mr. Gilmore made history when he became the first African American elected to the Oakland City Council. During his tenure, which lasted until 1990, Mr. Gilmore made important contributions to the City of Oakland through his role in the creation of the citizen's police review board, and the city's anti-blight ordinance, among many other initiatives and accomplishments.

In addition to his work on the City Council, Mr. Gilmore was also an active member of his church, Bethel Missionary Baptist, starting when he first moved to Oakland in the 1950's.

Mr. Gilmore's life was guided by a belief that we should all work to improve our communities, and the lives of our neighbors. He was also staunchly committed to civil rights.

That belief in social justice led him to join the Alameda branch of the NAACP, and he later served as the chapter president. He also served as president of the NAACP's Northern California division. In 1990, he helped lead the investigation into racial discrimination against African American employees at UPS, resulting in the largest settlement in the NAACP's history to that point.

On a personal note, Carter was one of the first people to act as a mentor and advisor to me as I began my career working for Congressman Dellums. He always took time to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

help clarify issues for me, and he was a true trailblazer who educated our community about the importance of black political power. I will always remember his wise counsel and his friendship.

Though Carter Gilmore died in 2006, his trailblazing legacy as the City of Oakland's first African American elected to the City Council continues to inspire younger generations to aspire for heights that they may not have ever considered without his example.

Today, the Oakland African American Museum and Library is unveiling an exhibit dedicated to Carter Gilmore's life and legacy. Therefore, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I join the family and friends of Carter Gilmore in celebrating his life of public service. I offer my sincerest gratitude to him for all that he did to pave the way for future generations of community-oriented leaders.

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HONORING MELODY  
WATTENBARGER

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**HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Melody Wattenbarger, the CEO and President of Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico. Ms. Wattenbarger has worked tirelessly to fight hunger for over 30 years.

As CEO and President of Roadrunner Food Bank, Melody created innovative approaches to aid families facing hunger across New Mexico. Her leadership enabled the food bank to assist 70,000 people each week. She created and strengthened key partnerships across communities, including partnerships with schools, doctors, private industry leaders, senior centers, and food pantries. Melody was the founding President of the board for the New Mexico Association of Food Banks from 1999 to 2004 and continues to hold a seat on the board

Melody Wattenbarger's leadership in hunger relief has not only helped New Mexicans; she was the founding executive director of the High Plains Food Bank in Amarillo, Texas, she worked for the National Food Bank Network (Feeding America), and she regularly served on a variety of Feeding America committees. Melody was named the 2017 John van Hengel Fellow by Feeding America. The award "recognizes the recipient for their leadership, local impact, national influence, commitment, and entrepreneurial spirit in the area of hunger relief."

I am proud to honor Ms. Melody Wattenbarger for her leadership in the fight against hunger. Her efforts are inspirational to the entire community in New Mexico. I am confident that even in retirement she will remain an advocate for families experiencing hunger and her community will be better for her involvement.

CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING  
OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR  
AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN  
IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF  
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO  
RAKHINE, BURMA

SPEECH OF

**HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 5, 2017*

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 90, which condemns ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calls for an end to the attacks, and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma.

Many consider the Rohingya one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

The stories that have come out in recent weeks and days are devastating and horrific.

The waves of brutally violent campaigns against the civilians—marked by mass killings, sexual violence, and forced displacement—have resulted in one of the fastest-growing refugee crises of our time.

Women, who account for the majority of those inside the refugee camps, face widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence, and some are even being sold as sex slaves.

Just like our zero-tolerance policy towards persecution within our borders, we must be crystal clear that the United States will not tolerate the persecution of innocent men, women, and children around the world.

I strongly believe that, with the help of the international community, we will find a peaceful solution to this crisis, despite various obstacles in our way.

This resolution is one step forward in that direction.

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HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR  
ROBERT HAWKINS

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**HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sergeant Major Robert Hawkins of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our Nation. Sergeant Major Hawkins will soon transition from his current assignment as an Army Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the House of Representatives to serve in The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology.

A native of Alexandria, Virginia, Sergeant Major Hawkins began his military career as an Airborne Infantryman in 1990. He subsequently served in assignments to Fort Kobbe, Republic of Panama; Fort Myers, Florida; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Fort Polk, Louisiana; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and thrice at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Sergeant Major Hawkins has served in multiple leadership and staff positions throughout his career. His combat deployments include one tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and three tours in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2014, Sergeant Major Hawkins was selected as a Fellow in the Army Congressional Fellowship Program. He subsequently served twelve months as a Defense Legislative Fellow in my office, representing the First Congressional District of Minnesota. While working on my team, I came to know Sergeant Major Hawkins as a shining example of the Army Values set forth in the Noncommissioned Officer Creed. Competence is indeed Sergeant Major Hawkins' watchword, and his commitment to doing what good NCOs do, accomplishing the mission taking care of his teammates, was second to none.

For next two years, Sergeant Major Hawkins served as a Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the United States Army House Liaison Division. As the primary liaison between Members of the House of Representatives, their Staffs, Committees, and the Army, he has provided insight and understanding of Army policies, actions, operations, and requirements. His first-hand knowledge of the military, its culture, and traditions has been of tremendous value to Congressional offices. Sergeant Major Hawkins was especially effective in his service to Members and staff as he escorted them on fact-finding and oversight delegations within and outside the United States. Members and staff found him to be a thoughtful, intelligent, and dedicated Soldier in the best traditions of America's Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure to know and serve with Sergeant Major Hawkins during his time as an Army Congressional Fellow and Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the House of Representatives. On behalf of a grateful Nation, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service and sacrifice of Sergeant Major Robert Hawkins and his family. I wish Sergeant Major Hawkins the very best as he begins a new chapter of dedicated service to our nation in the United States Army.

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NORTHWEST INDIANA ISLAMIC  
CENTER 25TH ANNIVERSARY

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**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I congratulate the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center, as its members and leaders join together to celebrate the center's 25th anniversary. In honor of this special occasion, the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center will be hosting an anniversary dinner on December 10, 2017, at the Avalon Manor in Merrillville, Indiana.

In the early 1990's, a small group of the Muslim population in Northwest Indiana decided to purchase property in the area with a vision to provide a spiritual home for its members, offering religious education and a place for prayer, worship, and community services. The original structure, completed in 1992, was quickly outgrown as the membership grew. In 1999, a new prayer hall and community center were completed. Today, the center is home to over one hundred families, and Friday prayer services are attended by more than three hundred individuals. The Northwest Indiana Islamic Center provides numerous activities and services, accommodating Muslim and non-Muslim individuals and families throughout

Northwest Indiana. These include consultation services, Qur'an reading and memorization services, ceremonial and religious services, interfaith dialogues, humanitarian relief services, and numerous youth programs, to name a few. In addition, there are two Islamic weekend schools and two Islamic full-time schools on its premises.

Northwest Indiana is not only grateful, but proud to have the support of the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center for the past twenty-five years. I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to recognize the exceptional leadership of this noteworthy organization. The Board of Trustees includes Arshad Malak, Hakam Safadi, Hytham Rifai, Nabil Shabeeb, and Wahbi Adad. The Board of Directors is comprised of President Abdul Fatah Adisa, Vice President Omar Estwani, Treasurer Isam Abdo, and Secretary Ferrass Safadi, as well as former Presidents Fadel Shaaban and Shahabul Arfeen, and Osama Salameh, Ashraf Tebry, and Rami Musleh. For their significant contributions to their community, the members and leaders of the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center are worthy of the highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center on its 25th anniversary. For their remarkable dedication to service and for touching the lives of countless individuals, the organization's leaders and members are worthy of the blessings that have been bestowed upon them.

#### HONORING HARRY O. BLACKWELL

### HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Trenton's beloved Harry O. Blackwell, affectionately known as "Chubby."

I was saddened to hear of his untimely passing; he was a tireless advocate for youth programming for decades in our capital city.

When we examine the life and passion of Chubby Blackwell, his compassion for the youth cannot be ignored. He dedicated his life to mentoring and teaching young people skills that could transform their future. Countless Trenton youth have memories of participating in sports leagues, golf lessons, and summer camps because of Chubby Blackwell.

Chubby's advocacy for children was effective because he made it his business to know the whole family. For many, Chubby Blackwell was that consistent and strong life force that kept them on the straight and narrow. Chubby had a zero tolerance for foolishness; his love was not always friendly—sometimes tough—but always consistent.

Today as we celebrate Chubby we celebrate a life of service to others whose impact will be felt for generations because his commitment was purposeful and motivated by love.

God Bless Chubby Blackwell and thank you to his beautiful family for having shared him with countless young people and indeed this entire community.

I urge my colleagues to join me in remembering the life of Chubby Blackwell and send-

ing our sincere condolences to his friends, family, and to the families he has helped over the years. May Chubby be blessed and rest in peace.

#### RECOGNIZING MAYOR PRO-TEM YVONNE JOHNSON

### HON. MARK WALKER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson, from Guilford County. I am honored to acknowledge Mrs. Johnson as she receives The Order of the Long Leaf Pine. Awarded for exemplary service to the community and the State of North Carolina that is considered above and beyond the call of duty, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine is among the most prestigious awards conferred by the Governor. Mrs. Johnson has continually worked to make a positive impact in North Carolina. The citizens of Greensboro, Guilford County, and the entire state of North Carolina are truly fortunate to have Mrs. Johnson, an outstanding representative of our community and country. I join with her family, friends, and the Sixth District in thanking Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson for her dedicated service to the city of Greensboro and the United States of America.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for the votes on the Motion to Go To Conference on H.R. 1 (Roll Call No. 653) and the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 1 (Roll Call No. 654). Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 653 and I would have voted yea on Roll Call No. 654.

#### REMEMBERING NEIL ETSON

### HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to remember Neil Etson of Olney, Illinois, who passed away on December 2, 2017, at the age of 93 surrounded by his family at the homestead he built fifty years ago.

Neil dedicated his life to service to others, serving his country, his church, and his community.

In May the Rotary Club of Richland County presented Neil with the Quilt of Valor for his service during World War II, where he served honorably as a Staff Sergeant with the 766th Military Police Battalion.

However, anyone who met him knows that Neil's first and foremost priority was his family, especially Frances, his wife of 66 years, their three children, ten grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

The Olney community has lost a dedicated entrepreneur and community leader. Yet while we mourn his loss, we should remember that Neil Etson's legacy lives on in his family and in the three children's books that he authored based on a lifetime of stories shared with his family.

#### CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO RAKHINE, BURMA

SPEECH OF

### HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 5, 2017*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support of House Concurrent Resolution 90 which condemns the attacks against civilians by Burma's (also known as Myanmar) security services and calls on Burma's Commander-in-Chief, Min Aung Hlaing, to end such attacks in the state of Rakhine.

I share the sentiments of this Resolution that expresses appreciation for the government of Bangladesh for providing refuge to those fleeing violence.

As the Resolution does, I, too, condemn the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army attacks, but also warn that these attacks do not justify the response that has resulted in severe human rights violations and atrocities against civilians.

Rightfully so, the Resolution calls on Burma's government and military and security forces to: (1) implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, and (2) allow humanitarian access to refugees and internally displaced persons.

Further, the bill urges support and access for the United Nations Fact Finding Mission to Burma, and I strongly support that effort.

The Resolution calls on Burma's military and government to allow refugees to return to Burma and to change laws and policies that have contributed to insecurity in the state of Rakhine.

And last but not least, the Resolution calls on the President to impose sanctions on those responsible for human rights abuses, including members of Burma's military and security services.

Over the past month, 436 thousand Rohingya have fled from their homes in Myanmar's western Rakhine State to neighboring Bangladesh.

This is the second exodus of Rohingya, members of a Muslim ethnic minority, in the past year.

The current exodus, like the previous one in October 2016 that led 87 thousand to flee, is being driven by a brutal government crackdown following attacks by armed Rohingya.

Despite calls from international rights groups for stronger action to stop the violence, there appears to be little appetite within the wider international community for more robust intervention.

Permitting the current crisis to unfold, however, eats away at its credibility and threatens peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

On August 25, militants attacked 30 police posts and an army base in northern Rakhine

State, killing ten police officers, a soldier, and an immigration official.

Following this attack, the government designated the organization responsible, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), also known as Harakah al-Yaqin, a terrorist group.

Security forces have responded with indiscriminate force against the Rohingya community.

Shamefully, security forces have razed entire villages to the ground and have killed, tortured, and raped civilians.

The United Nations has previously described the October 2016 violence against the Rohingya as “crimes against humanity,” and on September 11 the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad al-Hussein, referred to the current situation as “a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.”

The government of Myanmar (also known as Burma) has denied these accusations.

Instead, Myint Swe—a former chief of military intelligence—said that “people from abroad have fabricated news claiming genocide.”

I am all too familiar with the instance of a head of government denying his own shameful actions by blaming an imaginary fake news source.

The Myanmar government insists it is only targeting “terrorists.”

With hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fleeing, many of whom are women and children, the government’s claim rings false.

The UN estimates that children make up about 60 percent of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Although Myanmar has refused to allow international fact-finding missions into the country, groups including the UN, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International, which interviewed Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, have documented atrocities committed by security forces.

I am proud to be on the right side of history today, standing here in Congress, to speak out on my support for these human rights organizations that fight against anti-democratic governments that would go as far as backing genocide.

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HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF MRS. ANNIE JACKSON

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Annie Jackson of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who passed away at the age of 99 on October 27, 2017. Mrs. Jackson was born in Waynesboro, Georgia and received her education in the Georgia State School system. She held a variety of jobs in her lifetime and retired from the Broward County School System, where she worked for over 29 years.

At the age of fourteen, Mrs. Jackson’s spiritual life began at the Third Chapel Church in Midville, Georgia. She later joined and continued to serve at New Hope Baptist Church, until her health began to fail. Married to the late Mr. Jackson, Mrs. Jackson spent her time ministering to the needs of her church, family, and community.

Mrs. Jackson led her family by example as a strong Christian loving mother, and endless server of her community. Fond memories of her will forever remain with her son Rayford Smith; her sisters Florence Smith and Mae Julian Smith; four grand-children; three great grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren; a great-great grandniece; her caretaker and host of other relatives and friends.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Annie Jackson will be remembered by the many people she touched in her 99 years of life. She was truly a shining star of the Fort Lauderdale community. I am so grateful to honor her life and legacy. She will be missed tremendously.

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IN RECOGNITION OF MR. LARRY  
SPIKES

**HON. DAVID G. VALADAO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Mr. Larry Spikes for thirty five years of dedicated service to the constituents of Kings County.

A Central Valley native, Larry Spikes attended California State University, Fresno, where he received his Bachelor’s of Science degree in Accounting in 1981 and later received his Master’s degree in Public Administration in 1992. He and his wife, Kristine, have been married for thirty five years and have three children, their son, Austin and twin daughters, Madison and Taylor.

In 1981, Larry began his career at the County of Kings as an Accountant before transferring to the Administrative Office as Deputy County Administrative Officer (CAO) in 1986. He served in that capacity until November 1993, when he was named County Administrative Officer.

In 1996, Mr. Spikes served on California Governor Peter Wilson’s Trial Court Funding Task Force on Court Employees and from 1997 to 2016, he served as the Representative for the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) on the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

Additionally, Larry served as the President of the County Administrative Officer’s Association of California from October 2002 to October 2003. In 2008, he was appointed as a board member for the California State Association of Counties Finance Corporation where he served until 2015. He was elected to a CAO’s position on the County Medical Services Program Governing Board in 2012. Today, Mr. Spikes is currently serving on the Court Facilities Advisory Committee for California Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani Cantil Sakauye.

Outside of work, Mr. Spikes is a long-time member of the Rotary Club of Hanford and serves on the board of the Disabled American Veteran’s Charities of Central California.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Mr. Larry Spikes on his retirement, for his service to the people of Kings County and wishing him well as he embarks on the next chapter of his life.

HONORING DAVID WEINSOFF

**HON. JARED HUFFMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of David Weinsoff for his 12 years of dedicated service as a member and Mayor of the Fairfax Town Council.

After graduating from University of New York at Binghamton with a bachelor’s degree in History, Mr. Weinsoff pursued a Juris Doctor at the University of Bridgeport School of Law (now Quinnipiac College School of Law). Mr. Weinsoff has since built a distinguished legal career prosecuting citizen suits under the federal Clean Water Act, the California Coastal Act, and local government laws representing the government and nonprofit agencies.

In the mid-nineties Mr. Weinsoff relocated from San Francisco to Fairfax, California, with his wife and young child. In addition to building his private practice, Mr. Weinsoff deepened his commitment to public service and the environment through volunteer roles on the Town of Fairfax Planning Commission, Marin Municipal Water District’s Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee, and as a founding member of the Fairfax Open Space Committee, among others. And, after retiring from seven years on the Marin Conversation League Board, he continued to support the organization as its legal counsel.

Mr. Weinsoff was elected to Fairfax Town Council in 2005. Over the course of his 12-year tenure, he would serve two terms as mayor and vice mayor, as well as on a wide array of community boards and organizations, including the Marin County Flood Zone 9 Advisory Board, the Ross Valley Fire Department Board, and the Measure “A” Committee. Known for his active leadership, the strength of his convictions and his commitment to public service, David’s enduring contributions to Fairfax and to Marin County will be felt for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, David Weinsoff’s service has left many lasting and positive impacts on his community, and I am certain he will continue his public service in a variety of ways in the days ahead. It is therefore fitting and appropriate that we honor him on the occasion of his final town council meeting, and extend to him our appreciation for his past—and future—civic engagement.

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VILLAGE OF MAMARONECK  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2017*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, We are fortunate in New York’s 16th Congressional District to have some of the finest first-responders anywhere in the country. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the Village of Mamaroneck, where the Village Volunteer Fire Department has provided its citizens with courageous fire protection for 129 years.

The Village of Mamaroneck Volunteer Fire department is comprised of a highly skilled

dedicated team committed to providing the highest level of safety, protection of life, property and the environment to those who live, work or play in our community. The five fire companies that comprise the department: Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, Mamaro Engine & Hose Co. No. 1, Columbia Engine & Hose Co. No. 2, Volunteers Engine & Hose Co. No. 3, and Halstead Manor Engine & Hose Co. No. 4 operate out of four fire stations with over 200 volunteers. The Mamaroneck Fire Department operates with five Engines, two Aerial Trucks, two Utility Trucks, three Chiefs Vehicles, and one Fire Boat and responds to approximately 800 fire emergencies a year.

The Mamaroneck Fire Department has always done an outstanding job keeping its citizens safe, and as a result The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman is honoring the department at their 25th Anniversary celebration. They have chosen to acknowledge an incredible partner in the community. I too would like to congratulate the Village of Mamaroneck Fire Department Day in recognition of the significant impact they have made and continue to make in the community, and as a partner with The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman in serving the elders of our community.

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHT TO  
COMBAT EXTREMISM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I held a hearing on advancing human rights to counter extremism. Today's hearing explored ways to combat violent extremism by advancing fundamental human rights—in particular, freedom of religion.

Advancing freedom of religion, both as an end in of itself and as means to achieve peace, stability and human flourishing, should be a core objective of U.S. foreign policy.

Religious liberty is opposed, however, by extremists who seek to impose their vision of an ideal society upon all. Oftentimes, the "choice" they give to those who seek to adhere to the beliefs they were raised in boils down to convert or die.

This clash manifests itself in numerous parts of the world, in varying degrees of intensity, but is particularly acute in certain Muslim-dominated regions, where groups such as ISIS, al-Nusra, Boko Haram and al-Shabaab seek to bring all under their sway.

To personalize this, let me tell you about a victim of Boko Haram that I have gotten to know.

On a trip to Nigeria, at an IDP camp in Jos, I met Habila Adamu.

Dragged from his home by Boko Haram terrorists, he was ordered to renounce his faith.

With an AK-47 pressed to his face, he was asked "are you ready to die as a Christian." With amazing courage Habila answered, "yes, I am ready to die as a Christian."

He was asked a second time and he repeated his answer—"yes I am ready to die as a Christian."

This time, the terrorist pulled the trigger. A bullet ripped through Habila's face. He crumpled to the ground, left for dead.

By some miracle, he survived.

I asked Habila to come to Washington, D.C. to tell his story. At a Congressional hearing I chaired, Habila told my committee—"I am alive because God wants you to have this message—knowing Christ" is so much "deeper" than merely knowing Boko Haram's story of hate and intolerance.

He closed his testimony with this—"do everything you can to end this ruthless religious persecution. . . but know Christ first"

It should be stressed that extremist groups such as Boko Haram coerce and oppress not only members of other faiths, but also and in particular members of the Muslim faith whose interpretation of Islam differs from that of the extremists. They also target converts, whose consciences lead them to choose a different path.

To combat these extremists, the ideological battlefield is just as important as the territorial one. By emphasizing human rights principles, we counter extremist messaging, support moderate voices and promote the popular aspirations of people around the world who simply want to live in peace and freedom.

Last year, an important weapon in the fight against extremism was passed by Congress and signed into law: The Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. This law provides tools and resources to our State Department to integrate religious freedom into our diplomacy the world over in order to counter violent extremism abroad.

In building upon the landmark International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, this law addresses the changed circumstances in the world since 1998 by designating non-state extremist groups such as Boko Haram and ISIS as "violent non-state actors," making it easier to ostracize and apply financial sanctions against their members, thereby helping starve extremists of resources.

The law strengthens the ability to investigate and monitor religious persecution, creating a "Designated Persons List" of violators while also setting up a database of those detained, imprisoned and tortured for their faith, so that the victims are not forgotten, but rather can be more readily advocated for. Indeed, the Frank Wolf Act elevates the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, thereby enhancing the ability to advocate on behalf of victims of religious persecution.

Finally, the Act requires that our Foreign Service Officers undergo training in religious liberty, so that they are able to integrate this important tool into their daily work.

Before we move on to my colleagues' remarks, I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman FRANCIS ROONEY, the former United States ambassador to the Holy See, for his interest in this subject Today's hearing was brought about in large part due to his persistent interest in these themes, and I want to thank him for joining our subcommittee for this hearing today.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF MRS. NEZZIE MARION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy Mrs. Nezzie O. Mar-

ion of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who passed away at the age of 102 on October 14, 2017. Born on May 15, 1915 to Mr. & Mrs. Allanza and Katie Oglesby, Mrs. Marion was Georgia-born and raised.

Married to the late Mr. Willie Preston Marion in 1937, the young couple moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1940. Mrs. Marion's spiritual life began at a young age. She was a faithful member of the New Mount Olive Baptist Church for 77 years, where she served on the Usher Board and the Pulpit Aide Ministry.

Mrs. Marion led her family by example as a strong Christian loving mother, embodying what it means to be a true servant to her community. Fond memories of her will forever remain with her four children: Willie Marion, Polly Harden, Lonzie Marion, and Beverly Hardemon; two sisters: Mary Caldwell and Annie Wallace; eleven grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren, and eight great-great grandchildren, along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and other loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Nezzie O. Marion will be remembered by the many people she touched in her 102 years of life. She was truly a blessing to the Fort Lauderdale community. I am so pleased to honor her life and legacy. She will be dearly missed.

ENHANCING VETERAN CARE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 1266, the Enhancing Veteran Care Act.

I support this legislation because it would establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the capacity to conduct independent analysis of the healthcare services provided by the VA to our nation's veterans.

The Enhancing Veteran Care Act would authorize the Secretary to contract with nonprofit private healthcare auditors and investigators to investigate a VA Medical Center and to then, assess and report deficiencies found at the medical center.

This bill will not vacate the authority of the Inspector General or the Government Accountability Office from conducting investigations of VA medical facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this important legislation is needed is illustrated by the tragic and heart breaking cases of thousands of veterans who were left waiting for care for serious medical conditions.

The debt that we owe to our nation's veterans is immeasurable. Their sacrifices, and those of their families, are freedom's foundation.

Without the brave efforts of all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast Guardsmen and women and their families, our country would not live so freely.

In the State of Texas we have 1,099,141 Veterans under the age of 65 and 590,618 who are over the age of 65. There are over 1,689,759 veterans living in our state.

The 18th Congressional District has 20,607 under age 65 and 9,844 Veterans over the age of 65.

Nationwide more than 9 million veterans and their families enrolled in the VA health care system in 2014,

In the city of Houston, the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Hospital Center, serves the health care needs of thousands of veterans and their families.

The DeBakey Veterans Hospital Center provides support to veterans and their families who are amputees, cancer, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injury, and have visual impairments.

The Medical center provides family support services through its Fisher House that provides living suites at no cost to family members of hospitalized Veterans and military members.

The devotion and dedication of family members who provide care to our nation's wounded warriors should not be forgotten.

Last month was National Caregivers Month to show our caregivers how grateful we are for them.

Today, 5.5 million spouses, parents, children, and other loved ones care for our wounded warriors and 15 percent of caregivers spend 40+ hours a week providing care for our military families.

The wounds of war and the recovery process may be long in healing, which is why it is important that as members of Congress we provide them with the best healthcare treatment possible.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass S. 1266.

#### SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the *Extensions of Remarks* section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, December 7, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

#### MEETINGS SCHEDULED

##### DECEMBER 12

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet  
To hold hearings to examine digital decision-making, focusing on the building

blocks of machine learning and artificial intelligence.

SR-253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the permitting processes at the Department of the Interior and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for energy and resource infrastructure projects and opportunities to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of federal decisions for such projects.

SD-366

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the cost of prescription drugs, focusing on an examination of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report "Making Medicines Affordable: A National Imperative".

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act.

SD-226

2 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy

To hold hearings to examine the future of Zimbabwe.

SD-419

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard

To hold hearings to examine national ocean policy, focusing on stakeholder perspectives.

SR-253

#### DECEMBER 13

Time to be announced

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Kenneth L. Marcus, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, and Johnny Collett, of Kentucky, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, both of the Department of Education, Scott A. Mugno, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary, and William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, both of the Department of Labor, and other pending nominations.

TBA

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine safeguarding American agriculture in a globalized world.

SR-328A

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine using force, focusing on strategic, political, and legal considerations.

SD-419

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To receive a closed briefing on Department of Defense global counterterrorism operations.

SVC-217

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Personnel

To hold hearings to examine an update on research, diagnosis, and treatment for traumatic brain injury/concussion in servicemembers.

SR-222

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SH-216

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

SD-406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act, focusing on responding to mental health needs.

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Elizabeth L. Branch, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, R. Stan Baker, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Georgia, Charles Barnes Goodwin, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, Matthew J. Kacsmayk, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Matthew Spencer Petersen, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, and Eli Jeremy Richardson, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold hearings to examine the consumer welfare standard in antitrust.

SD-226

#### DECEMBER 14

10 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Margaret Weichert, of Georgia, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget, and John Edward Dupuy, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Office of Personnel Management.

SD-342