

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the National Adoption Day celebration that is taking place today in Odessa. Throughout the day, local courts in Ector County will open their doors and finalize the adoption process for families in the community.

It is fitting that National Adoption Awareness Month occurs in the month of November, a time of family and Thanksgiving. During this time of the year, we reflect on what we are most thankful for in our lives, such as our families. Each of our families provide us with unconditional love, help shape our character, provide a lifetime of precious memories and motivate us through challenging times.

Unfortunately, not everyone is afforded this opportunity in life. Thankfully, God has blessed our world with selfless individuals who open their hearts and homes to these children. Many of these children have various medical, developmental, and emotional needs that requires special nurturing from devoted parents and families. These special individuals who elect to take on full responsibility for their care, upbringing, and overall well-being provide an important service not only to these children, but also to our communities and country.

I am particularly gratified to recognize these new families because I am adopted myself. My father adopted my little brother, sister, and me, so seeing other children who have the benefit of a loving family warms my heart.

I want to thank CASA of the Permian Basin and the other organizations across the nation who help make National Adoption Day possible. I also want to thank the dedicated individuals who make a powerful difference in the lives of children through adoption.

LEGISLATION TO COMPEL THE RELEASE OF ALL JFK ASSASSINATION DOCUMENTS

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the legislation I introduced today that would require President Trump to immediately meet his obligation to release all documents that can and should be released pertaining to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Despite the 1992 passage of a Congressionally-mandated October 26, 2017 deadline requiring the President of the United States make a determination about what documents can and should be released to the public regarding President John F. Kennedy's assassina-

tion, the current President failed to comply.

The President's failure to execute this requirement before the established deadline raises long-held concerns that the U.S. government continues to withhold critical information about the former President's assassination.

As a result, it is now up to Congress to enforce this deadline and deliver to the American public the certainty it deserves.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to exert the authority of this body's intent when it passed the 1992 President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act and enact this important measure to enforce the required release of all appropriate documents concerning the assassination of the late, and Honorable, President John F. Kennedy.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF CAROL JACKMAN

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Carol Jackman, who turns 80 years young on December 4th.

Carol's dedication to our veterans stretches back to her childhood. Growing up on army bases, she developed a keen awareness of the important work our servicemembers do every single day. Not only is she the daughter of a U.S. veteran, but she is the sister, wife, mother, grandmother, sister-in-law, and aunt of U.S. veterans.

Volunteerism has been an important theme in Carol's life. For over 50 years, Carol has been a proud member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She has served as unit president, district director, state president, and the chair of many different programs. During the 1970s Carol worked to ensure no veteran was forgotten. She created and delivered homemade Easter baskets for sick and homebound veterans. Carol has also spent decades volunteering at the West Roxbury and Brockton VA hospitals.

Honoring veterans is her passion. To this day she plants flowers in the Highland Cemetery, a tradition she has kept up longer than she can remember. She also serves on the Memorial Day committee in Dover, working to ensure each year's celebration properly honors our servicemembers.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Carol Jackman on this joyous occasion of her 80th birthday. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing her many more years of health and happiness.

COMMEMORATING THE HONORABLE LYNN C. WOOLSEY ON HER 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate former United States Representative Lynn C. Woolsey on her 80th Birthday. She represented California's 6th congressional district, including Marin County and most of Sonoma County from 1993 to 2013.

Lynn was born in Seattle, Washington on November 3, 1937. A graduate of Lincoln High School, she attended the University of Washington from 1955 to 1957. Lynn received her Bachelor of Science degree in 1980.

As a working single mother in Northern California, Lynn spent several years receiving public assistance to help make ends meet. During her 20-year career in the House of Representatives, she focused on issues facing children and families. She describes herself as the "first former welfare mom to serve in Congress." Prior to entering public service, Lynn opened her own human resources consulting and employment agency, Woolsey Personnel Service, and taught at the College of Marin and the Dominican University of California.

Lynn won her first election in 1984, when she ran for a city council seat in Petaluma. She served on the Petaluma City Council until 1992, her last year as Vice Mayor. The people of Sonoma and Marin Counties elected Lynn to Congress in 1992 and continued to elect her to eight more terms.

In Congress, Lynn served as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Chair of the Committee on Education and Labor's Workforce Protections Subcommittee and as a senior member of the House Committee on Science and Technology. Lynn had many proud moments in federal public service. She secured federal funds for her district for a variety of projects, including funds for the Petaluma River flood control project and for the seismic retrofit of the Golden Gate Bridge. She voted against authorizing the invasion of Iraq and consistently voted to suspend funding for the wars. She was one of Congress' foremost advocates on education issues, offering legislation to expand school breakfast programs, expand childcare programs and encourage young girls to study science and math. Her measure to provide job-protected leave for family members of injured soldiers was incorporated into the FY 2008 defense authorization bill. Lynn's former colleagues, staff and constituents admire her immeasurably and continue to benefit from her dedicated years of service.

Mr. Speaker, former United States Representative Lynn C. Woolsey served her constituents diligently for ten consecutive terms. Her career is an excellent model of principled and dedicated leadership for members of this

• 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.

body. It is therefore fitting and proper that we commemorate her on her 80th birthday and send her our best wishes here today.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE REV. DR.
THOMAS L. WALKER

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to congratulate my constituent and friend, Rev. Dr. Thomas L. Walker, for 50 faithful years in ministry, and 47 years as pastor of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church.

Dr. Walker, a native of Edgecombe County, North Carolina, was called to the ministry in 1970. At the age of 22, he and his wife Joyce, and their two children, Timothy and Teresa, began a ministry that would inspire and uplift the faithful for decades. Today, under his leadership, the church's community outreach includes TV and radio ministries, a daycare center, a tutorial program, and ministerial trainings.

The church also has a non-profit corporation called the EBC "ATOM" Project, Inc., whose objective is to improve the quality of life for low and middle-income citizens. Dr. Walker has committed his life to serving both his community and fellow man. One of Pastor Walker's many talents is his success as a gospel recording artist. Through song, his messages and voice have uplifted and inspired countless individuals. His signature, "One Day at a Time," continues to inspire hearts across the nation.

In 1996, Dr. Walker received troubling news when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Yet, he would not sit idly by or be sidelined. His perseverance led him to write, "Brother to Brother—You Don't Have to Die of Prostate Cancer." A thoughtful and informative book, Dr. Walker presents an honest account of his challenges and frustrations, with the goal of empowering men and their families. In April of 2014, First Lady Joyce Walker, having battled sickness for many years, was called home to be with the Lord. Dr. Walker remained steadfast and continues to stand as a pillar of strength, persistence, and a living testament of the Gospel.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate this great North Carolinian and ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in expressing sincere appreciation for Dr. Walker's fortitude, faithfulness, and servant leadership on this historic milestone.

RECOGNIZING BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM
"ROBBIE" ROBERTSON ON HIS
PROMOTION IN THE ILLINOIS
AIR NATIONAL GUARD

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize Brig. Gen. William "Robbie"

Robertson on his promotion in rank and to Chief of Staff of the Illinois Air National Guard.

In 1983, Brig. Gen. Robertson became an officer in the 182nd Airlift Wing of the Illinois Air National Guard. Over his years of service, Brig. Gen. Robertson defended our nation in Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Joint Forge, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. As a command pilot, he has flown over 4,800 hours in various aircraft. Brig. Gen. Robertson's leadership was critical to the conversion of the unit from the OA-37 Dragonfly to F-16 Fighting Falcon and to the C-130 Hercules, which equipped our Armed forces with tools they need to combat our nation's enemies.

In 2004, Brig. Gen. Robertson took over command of the 182nd Airlift Wing. Under his command, the 182nd Airlift Wing maintained the highest mission capability rates for ten of the past eleven years for all C-130 units. As commander, he is responsible for maintaining the combat readiness of eight C-130 aircraft and over 1,200 Illinois Air National Guardsmen. The 182nd Airlift Wing received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award five times during his tenure.

Brig. Gen. Robertson has committed his life to serving our nation. I am grateful for his leadership and sacrifice in the Illinois Air National Guard. This country is blessed to have servicemen like William Robertson and I extend my sincere congratulations to him on his promotion to Brigadier General.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LOUIS
PAPIA

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Louis Papia, 92, of Agoura Hills, California, a constituent of mine who was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on Monday, October 30, 2017. Mr. Papia was a decorated World War II veteran who fought in the D-Day invasion with the 1st Battalion, 314th Regiment, 79th Infantry Division. He was a recipient of the Bronze Star and eight other citations, including the Good Conduct Medal, the Presidential Unit Emblem, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal with German Clasp, the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Honorable Service Lapel Button for WWII. Mr. Papia was also a recipient of the French Jubilee Medal, for his service at Utah Beach during the Invasion. Mr. Papia received his Bronze Star when helping an Army medic save the life of a fellow soldier while under heavy fire.

Mr. Papia landed at Utah Beach with the 79th, and took part in the Battle of Cherbourg. His initial mission was to battle his way southwest, across the Cherbourg Peninsula. One of the critical missions was to capture the port city so the Army Corp of Engineers could quickly erect a working port big enough to accommodate large U.S. supply ships. The 79th fought in Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and in Central Europe,

including Germany. Mr. Papia was under the command of Colonel Olin E. Teague, who later became the 16-term Congressman from Texas's 6th Congressional District. After serving his country abroad in Germany, and as the war in Europe was drawing to a close, Mr. Papia was shipped back to the U.S. where he began to prepare to do his part in Operation Downfall, the planned U.S. invasion of Japan.

Louis Papia is survived by his wife of 65 years, Kay Papia, of Agoura Hills, California, and four sons: Louie, Russell, Mark, and Todd. Mark and Melissa Papia reside in Calabasas, California, with two of Papia's five grandchildren.

Mr. Papia will be remembered for his selfless service to our country, and we are forever grateful to him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 604 I was absent on account of personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted aye.

HONORING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE CLAVERACK REFORMED
DUTCH CHURCH

HON. JOHN J. FASO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize the 250th anniversary of the Reformed Dutch Church in Claverack. Reverend John Gabriel Gebhard dedicated this historic sanctuary on November 8, 1767, adorning the church with the text, "Stand in the gate of the Lord's House, and proclaim there His Word . . . enter in at these gates to worship the Lord." Reverend Gebhard headed the church for the next fifty years until his death, laying the foundation for what would be two more centuries of continued worship and community in central Columbia County.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Claverack's Reformed Dutch Church is a historic treasure. During the Revolutionary War, this building served as a refuge for soldiers and officers. Surrounding the church is the Claverack Cemetery, where Claverack residents connect to the community's earliest members.

The church continues to serve as a center for religious, educational, and community activities. On November 5, 2017, Claverack will come together to celebrate this incredible milestone. I thank Pastor Linda Miles, Vice President and Senior Elder Louise Bliss, Senior Deacon Donna Lynk Campion, and all members of the local Reformed Dutch Church for their contributions to this special community. I am proud to honor the Reformed Dutch Church in Claverack for fostering 250 years of prayer and kinship.

COMMEMORATING LISA STONE
FOR RECEIVING THE 2017 STATE
JOURNAL REGISTER FIRST CIT-
IZEN AWARD

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor Lisa Stone of Springfield, Illinois for receiving the 2017 State Journal Register First Citizen Award.

Since 1963, the State Journal Register has been awarding the First Citizen award to a resident who goes above and beyond their commitment to making Springfield a better place. For over four decades, Lisa has volunteered countless hours and raised money for numerous organization in the Springfield community. Lisa's many contributions to the community include: fundraising for the Sojourn House, a domestic violence shelter; fund-raising for the Jewish Federation; and helping Russian refugees resettle in America. Additionally, Lisa served as an original board member of Habitat for Humanity of Sangamon County.

Lisa's commitment to the Springfield community is unmatched. Her years of volunteering and fundraising have made a true difference in Springfield. I applaud her for her efforts to make our community a better place.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Lisa Stone on receiving the State Journal Register First Citizen award, and I wish her much success as she continues to lead a life of service to the community.

DELAY MEDICAID DSH CUTS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge Congress to delay the cuts to Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments that went into effect on October 1, and to protect our nation's safety net hospitals from financial ruin.

Medicaid DSH hospitals serve a high proportion of Medicaid recipients as well as underinsured or completely uninsured Americans. These hospitals bear the risk of caring for the most vulnerable members of our districts because they recognize the inextricable value of healthy communities: when we are healthy together, we thrive together. It is our duty to return the favor to the hospitals that ensure our communities have a secure health care safety net.

If Congress does not act soon to delay Medicaid DSH cuts, safety net hospitals across the country will face a twenty percent cut in federal funding. In my home district in Queens and the Bronx, Medicaid DSH hospitals stand to lose over \$409 million over the next ten years. I cannot stand by as Congress throws our safety net hospitals into an economic upheaval.

However, I also cannot stand by as Congress brings forth a proposal—the CHAMPIONING HEALTHY KIDS Act (H.R. 3922)—to pay for a delay of Medicaid DSH cuts for two

years by imposing steeper cuts on those same hospitals in future years, among other flaws.

This legislation is an example of how this Republican-led Congress has championed partisan gridlock that threatens the vitality of our safety net hospitals. Within a package to delay Medicaid DSH cuts and extend federal funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and community health centers, Republicans proposed several problematic offsets that would ultimately set our health care system back. For example, certain changes to Medicaid would inhibit access to pediatric providers, and cuts to the ACA's Prevention and Public Health Fund would undermine the value of preventive services delivered at community health centers. Furthermore, the package would lead to higher premiums for certain seniors receiving Medicare benefits and shorter grace periods for individuals who receive their health coverage through the individual market. In other words, this package would slash benefits and protections for one group of beneficiaries to extend services for another. Democrats will not stand for any packages that would rob Peter to pay Paul.

I cannot in good conscience vote for a package that starts a food fight amongst different groups of beneficiaries. And I cannot in good conscience vote for a bill that would be so irresponsible to the long-term financial viability of the hospitals that are a flagship for the most vulnerable constituents in my district.

I urge my Republican colleagues to drop this partisan exercise and work with us on a compromise to extend these long-standing, successful, bipartisan federal health programs. The job of our nation's safety net hospitals is much too important to bear the brunt of needless political games.

HONORING NORTHEAST GEORGIA
EFFORTS TO END DOMESTIC VIO-
LENCE

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my northeast Georgia neighbors for their efforts in raising awareness surrounding domestic violence.

Nearly 25 million Americans have been victims of domestic violence at some point in their lives, and more than 65,000 Georgians have reported experiencing domestic violence.

Recently, the community of Clarkesville held a vigil to remember local victims of domestic abuse. By rallying around each other, they demonstrated their commitment to helping neighbors who may be suffering in silence.

Tricia Hise is one Clarkesville neighbor whose dedication to addressing this scourge head-on stands out. Hise, a local attorney, has invested countless hours in pro-bono litigation to amplify the voices of domestic abuse victims. Through her work, Hise has inspired victims to take a stand on behalf of themselves and their loved ones.

My neighbors in Clarkesville serve as an encouragement to us all. As we continue to oppose and address domestic abuse, I encourage everyone here today to find opportunities to work for the well-being of Americans who are impacted by domestic abuse.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF REX
E. GOLDEN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Rex Earl Golden, age 95 of Machesney Park, Illinois who passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Tuesday, October 31, 2017.

Rex was born on September 3, 1922 in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas to Luther M. & Mettie Golden (Hislip). A Veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps, he served his country with distinction in Europe during World War II on D-Day. He was a proud 50-year member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 364, and a former member of the Ancient Free & Accepted Masons, Rockford Lodge No. 102.

Rex was a beloved father, grandfather, and brother who will be dearly missed by his friends and family. He is survived by his sons, Darrin (Tracy) Golden and Alan (Nikki) Golden; grandchildren, Kiley, Brayden, Brant, Cassidy, and Jack; brother, James "Bud" Golden; sister, Jeanette (Bob) Pace and Pat (Frank) Todd; and brother-in-law, Thomas Neton Sr. He is predeceased by his wife, Jean C. Golden (Edwards); siblings, Edward (Edna) Golden, Georgia Gatewood and Ruby Neton.

His son Darrin and I are good friends, and it is with deep respect that I extend my most sincere and heartfelt condolences to all the family and friends of Rex Golden.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUBEN GALLEGO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I cast a vote in error. On the Roll Call Vote No. 598, I had intended to vote in the following manner: Roll Call Vote No. 598—Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017—No.

HONORING THE MILITARY
SERVICE OF LEONARD SWARTZ

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember WWII veteran, Leonard "Lenny" Swartz of Beaumont, TX who died peacefully in his own bed on October 30, 2017.

Lenny was born on April 17, 1919 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1930, the Great Depression forced the Swartz family to move to Atlantic City in hopes of a better living. After High School, Mr. Swartz moved back to Philadelphia until December of 1941. When WWII began for the United States, Lenny felt the call to serve his country and immediately enlisted in the United States Army. After graduating Officer's Candidate School in Ft. Jackson, South Carolina Lenny was next stationed at Camp Polk, in Deridder, Louisiana. While he

was stationed at Camp Polk, Lenny took a trip to Beaumont, TX on leave and met a woman named Marie "Mongie" Eisen. In March of 1943, the two entered into a marriage that would last over 74 years. Mongie died just ten weeks ago in August. The couple lived in Deridder until Lenny was sent to Ft. Ord California for training before he boarded a ship headed to fight in the Pacific.

Lenny was a captain in the 536th Amphibious Tank Battalion that played an important role in the Battle of Leyte Gulf that began the invasion of the Philippine Islands. It was while fighting during the invasion of Okinawa that Lenny was wounded badly and received his battlefield recognition. When the war ended, Lenny left the military as a Major and returned with Mongie to Beaumont. After working for his father-in-law in the produce business, Lenny opened his own produce business.

Lenny was very active in the American Legion, Jewish War Veterans and the Masons. He always set an example for his sons and community by working hard every day and being active at his synagogue. After retiring, Lenny worked in his flower gardens around his home and watched his favorite football team, the Dallas Cowboys. Mr. Swartz loved his family dearly and truly lived a life worth living.

It is always an honor for me to recognize those American heroes who sacrificed so much defending and preserving our freedom in World War II. This truly was the greatest generation. We thank Mr. Swartz—as well as his entire family—for their bravery and sacrifice to our great nation.

CONGRATULATING HESLER
CARDENAS

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hesler Cardenas, a visually impaired senior at Gainesville High School who recently placed second in a nationwide art competition.

Hesler submitted a painting titled "Blossom Petal" to the 2017 American Printing House for Blind Insights Art Competition. Out of nearly 400 entries, Hesler's painting surpassed all but one and earned a spot on the walls of the American Printing House in Kentucky.

Hesler stands out among his peers by pursuing his goals despite his visual limitations.

Mr. Speaker, Hesler's success reminds us that with tenacity, hard work and determination often take us closer to our dreams than we could imagine.

As Hesler continues to inspire his fellow northeast Georgians, I look forward to seeing where his talent will take him next.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE STATE OF IDAHO WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE IDAHO STEP CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH AND WELLNESS BY MEASURING THEIR DAILY STEP COUNT

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of several constituents in my district who have taken it upon themselves to improve their health and wellness by incorporating exercise and a balanced diet into their daily routine.

Last year, my staff and I created the Idaho STEP Challenge. The goal of the challenge was to encourage residents from across the state of Idaho to get fit and healthy by walking virtually across the United States, while collecting data on a wearable activity tracker and pedometer. Beginning on June 1, 2016, a group of more than 300 residents and several workplace teams set out on the virtual walk across the United States starting at the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington D.C. and arriving at the Idaho Statehouse in Boise, Idaho more than a year later.

The nearly 3,000 mile route took participants through 18 iconic American cities, national parks, and spacious heartlands. The event was documented on social media under the #hikewithMike hashtag, and through regular email newsletters sent to participants. Residents also shared their encouraging weight loss and fitness stories online, and uploaded their mileage counts to a special section of my website. The event was devised to be a non-partisan, non-political interactive event open to all Idaho residents.

The Idaho STEP Challenge officially concluded on October 23, 2017. Those who participated demonstrated their commitment to healthy living and a spirited stand for fitness within our state. I would like to acknowledge the following participants for joining me on the virtual road to Boise and I thank them for promoting healthy lifestyles in our community.

Nick Abshire, Jeff Daniels, Kathy Parks, Lisa Lane, Susan Littlefield, Miranda Collins, Jeannette Barnes, Jessica Padour, Suelynn Williams, Pat Mills, Kellie Gough, Carolyn Simpson, Maryl Fisher, Penny Handley, Fred Hughes, Carolee McKenzie, Patrick Kole, Dana Flatter, Miranda Smith Collins, Bart & Julie Harwood, Gerald Simpson, Wendy Jaquet, Celia R. Gould, Sheila Woods, Gina Martin, Ray Simpson, Jan Simpson Rhoades, Dennis & Sheila Conley, Toni Orth, Ron Fisher, Connie Pond, Angela Degni, Sheila Ames, Elizabeth Criner, Elaine M. & James Long, Glen Tait, Cheryl Hardy, Shelby C. Sommer, Judy Slayton.

Once again, thanks to all the participants in the Idaho STEP Challenge and I congratulate them on their commitment to a better Idaho.

ETHIOPIA RESOLUTION

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 3, 2017

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the Government of Ethiopia's continued pattern of repression and violence against its own people, and I urge the House of Representatives to vote on House Resolution 128, the "Supporting Respect for Human Rights and Encouraging Inclusive Governance in Ethiopia Resolution." This resolution calls on the Government of Ethiopia to take clear, decisive, steps toward becoming more inclusive, more democratic, and more respectful of the basic human rights of its own people.

This resolution has overwhelming bipartisan support with more than 70 cosponsors, and it passed out of the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously on July 27.

The ongoing human rights crisis in Ethiopia is extremely troubling to me, to the resolution's other co-sponsors, the many Americans of Ethiopian heritage, and to numerous human rights groups. I firmly believe that the passage of this resolution will encourage the Ethiopian government to end its practice of violence and repression and provide a strong basis of an inclusive government.

Specifically, this resolution condemns: the excessive use of force by Ethiopian security forces; the killing of peaceful protestors; the arrest and detention of journalists, students, activists, and political leaders, and; the Ethiopian government's abuse of the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation to stifle political and civil dissent.

The resolution does not simply highlight the Ethiopian government's increasingly authoritarian acts, but it also encourages the United States to support efforts to improve democracy and governance in Ethiopia. I believe that the United States can take actions that will positively influence the Ethiopian government and use our existing institutions to further democracy and effective governance in Ethiopia. Critically, the resolution calls on the Ethiopian government to admit UN human rights observers so they can conduct an independent and thorough examination of the current state of human rights in Ethiopia.

On March 9 of this year, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, held a hearing to discuss specific steps the United States can take to bring about positive changes for the Ethiopian government and their people. Among those who testified was Deacon Yoseph Tafari, of the St. Mary's Ethiopian Orthodox Church located in Aurora, Colorado. Deacon Yoseph was raised in Ethiopia and has experienced the daily struggles too many Ethiopians have faced living in abject poverty under an oppressive government.

Deacon Yoseph fled from Ethiopia in 1976, and came to the United States as a refugee. He and many of the members of the Ethiopian community in my Congressional district in Colorado—including the Oromo and Amharas—have worked diligently to organize and assist those still suffering from repression in their home country.

Oromo Community President of Colorado, Jamal Said, has also shared his concerns with me, and both of these gentlemen have no motives other than a concern about the safety

and state of democracy in Ethiopia. I appreciate their leadership in the community as they continue to fight for democracy in their homeland.

Unfortunately, stories like this are not uncommon in my district and I am disappointed that the House has not yet scheduled a floor vote on House Resolution 128. I note that on two prior occasions a vote was tentatively scheduled. In both of these instances it is my understanding that the vote was postponed due to pressure from the Ethiopian government who continues to make promises to curb human rights abuses against their own people but fail to deliver. Additionally, it has been brought to my attention that the Ethiopian Government has threatened to cut off security

cooperation with the United States should we proceed with House Resolution 128.

I am particularly dismayed that rather than solving their problems and moving towards becoming a more democratic country, the Ethiopian government has chosen instead to hire a D.C. lobbying firm, at a cost of \$150,000 a month, to “work with the [Ethiopian Government] to develop and execute a public affairs plan to enhance the dialogue and relationships with policymakers, media, opinion leaders and business leaders . . .” in addition to “meetings with members of Congress, their staffs, and executive branch officials.”

The issue the Ethiopian government needs to address is the repression of democracy and its citizens in Ethiopia. The solution to what-

ever negative perception it has in the halls of the U.S. Congress is not a public affairs one, but rather what concrete steps are being taken against democracy in Ethiopia. That is why I remain committed to working with House leadership to have a vote scheduled on House Resolution 128.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage leadership to schedule a vote and I call on my colleagues to vote in favor and pass House Resolution 128. I will continue working with local Ethiopian community leaders in Colorado and across the country to raise awareness of the human rights abuses occurring in Ethiopia and to bring relief from oppression to the Ethiopian people.