

around the country. The goal of the foundation is to establish at least one Gold Star family memorial monument in every State over the next 5 years to honor families who have sacrificed a loved one in service of their country.

Woody spends his time traveling the country supporting the military families and reminding all of us that freedom has not been and is not free.

Upcoming memorial dedications are in Fort Knox, Kentucky, on September 23; Fall River, Massachusetts, and Port St. Lucie, Florida, on September 25; Palmetto Bay, Florida, on October 15; Barboursville, West Virginia, on October 30; Annapolis, Maryland, on November 11; and Medina, Ohio, on November 12.

Woody's passion and love of his country and fellow man has never ceased. We can all learn how to be better Americans from Woody, and I wish him a happy upcoming 93rd birthday.

DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE ADVOCACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, the Standing Rock Sioux and all tribes have the right to self-determination and a say in decisions that impact their health, land, and cultural preservation. It is not just a matter of justice, it is the law. Don't we all, as Americans, have that right? Isn't that the whole premise of our democracy?

Being able to have a voice in decisions that affect our lives is the cornerstone of our American democracy. It thrives when we stand up, speak up, and voice our concerns on matters vital to our existence as humans, like our health, clean drinking water, and cultural survival.

That is why I stand with the Standing Rock Sioux and hundreds of tribes throughout our Nation to demand that the Army Corps of Engineers comply with their legal trust responsibilities to protect tribal lands, cancel the Dakota Access Pipeline permit, conduct meaningful consultation with the tribes, and do a complete environmental impact statement.

The Standing Rock Sioux and neighboring tribes are rightfully concerned that the pipeline will destroy sacred sites and that an oil spill would cause devastating and irreversible harm to their land, health, and drinking water. The proposed pipeline is over 1,000 miles long, transporting up to 16,000 gallons of crude oil a minute, upstream from the tribes' water source, near the reservation, and on tribal land. A leak would be devastating. It was already determined to be too risky to construct near the city of Bismarck's water sources.

The Army Corps has granted construction permits, despite legal and

noncompliance warnings by other Federal agencies. That is why, on September 8, I called for a systemwide GAO investigative report on Federal agencies' compliance with meaningful tribal consultation policies. On September 9, the Departments of the Interior, Justice, and the Army announced a pause in construction to review their compliance with Federal policies. I welcome this review.

Tribes have rights under law. The Federal Government has a moral and legally enforceable obligation to protect tribal treaties, land, and resources under the Federal trust responsibility. Tribes have the right to regular and meaningful consultation under executive order 13175. Under the Historic Preservation Act, Federal agencies are required to be responsible stewards of our Nation's historic resources and consult with Indian tribes when their actions may impact sacred sites.

Furthermore, the Army Corps, under the Clean Water Act, must protect our Nation's waters from contamination by conducting accurate environmental assessments to determine if construction permits should be granted. Unfortunately, the Army Corps granted a permit based on flawed assessments, incomplete information, and a willful disregard for the serious concerns raised by the tribe and other Federal agencies.

Chairman David Achambault from the Standing Rock Sioux reported that they were not meaningfully consulted and didn't even know about the Corps' assessment until it was made public. He has serious concerns about the pipeline's harm to the tribe's health, water source, and sacred sites.

Letters from the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to the Army Corps list their serious concerns. They mention the potential of a devastating oil spill, lack of emergency response plans, desecration of sacred sites, noncompliance with Federal policies and laws, and even disagreed with the Corps' environmental assessment.

They recommended a full environmental impact study, an expanded environmental justice analysis, consideration of all sacred sites along the path of the pipeline, and meaningful tribal consultation prior to any decisions.

Moving forward, all Federal agencies must conduct meaningful tribal consultation and address concerns regarding risks to drinking water and desecration of sacred sites. The Corps must cancel their faulty permit near tribal land and complete a full environmental impact statement. Only then can the President make an informed decision to permanently stop construction of the pipeline on Federal property near tribal land. You have the authority and moral imperative to do what is right.

Time after time, tribes have seen their treaties broken, their lands

taken, and sacred sites desecrated. I visited with the Standing Rock Sioux and witnessed Native Americans from hundreds of other tribes standing together in peace and prayer to protect their water and ancestral sacred sites. I have witnessed their dignity and their resolve. They stand in solidarity for their full rights under Federal law and for their voices to be heard. They stand in unity, and I stand with them.

WISHING HERSEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS A HAPPY 93RD BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as the Congressman representing West Virginia's Third Congressional District, I am proud to call Hershel "Woody" Williams a constituent.

I first met Woody more than 18 years ago when I was first elected to the State legislature, and he has been a constituent of mine for the past two decades. But I am just as proud to call Woody my friend.

Over the years, at countless legislative committee hearings, veterans' recognition and appreciation events, Veterans Day, and Memorial Day commemorations, Woody has been there fighting for our veterans. Woody always has a kind word, a friendly smile, and an optimistic outlook.

I have two sons that became Eagle Scouts. Very often our local Scout council gets the newly awarded Eagles all together, and Woody is invited to come in and spend a little time with the boys and share a few thoughts. I can't tell you the power of the impact it had on my boys when Woody shook their hand, looked them in the eye, and challenged them to conduct their life according to the Scout oath and motto—to do their duty to God and country.

Woody truly embodies that motto. Throughout West Virginia and the Nation, Woody is best known for his brave efforts in the Pacific theater during World War II. At a critical point in the Battle of Iwo Jima, and with minimal backup, Corporal Williams heard the call and acted. He disregarded his personal safety. He thought not of the seemingly monumental task in front of him. He did not stop to calculate the odds of success—or the odds of failure.

He acted. He picked up his flamethrower, and he ran towards those trying to take him out; and he did it again and again and again. He did so because he believed in something greater than himself, because his country asked him, and he answered. He was there in that place and at that time when his country—our country—needed him the most.

Woody is the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo