

enough money to bring his parents and four siblings to America.

Before retiring to the beach in Bayville, Rocco worked as a butcher in Elizabeth, New Jersey and raised his two children with Michelina, Vito and Maria. He is survived by his wife, two children and two grandchildren, Michelle and Julian, who I know will think back on their time with Rocco and cherish the wonderful memories they created together.

Rocco will always be remembered as a loving and caring man, whose greatest accomplishment was his family and the joys they shared together. To his immediate and extended family, especially to Michelina, Vito, Maria, Michelle and Julian, as well as Rocco's siblings Sal, Carmine, Renato, Ugo and Geraldina, I offer my sincerest condolences for your loss.

On behalf of Rocco's entire family, I am proud to share his story with my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives and to pay tribute to the life of such a great man.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOYERTOWN BOROUGH

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2016

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Boyertown, Berks County as the community commemorates the Borough's 150th Anniversary.

Incorporated in 1866, Boyertown takes its name from founding brothers Henry and Daniel Boyer—two of the many visionaries during the past century and a half who have called Boyertown their home.

The Boyer brothers were business owners and a robust spirit of ingenuity and entrepreneurship has always been part of the Borough's rich history. Whether it was mining iron ore, rolling cigars, building caskets, assembling carriages, founding a national bank or operating small shops and inns, residents always have demonstrated an incredible work ethic and exuded extraordinary pride in "building a better Boyertown."

As the community pays tribute to the defining moments and key figures of the past 150 years, the future of Boyertown is equally worth celebrating. The rebirth of the Colebrookdale Railroad, a revitalized downtown with unique boutiques and restaurants and a renewed appreciation for vibrant historical and cultural attractions, such as the Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, are all reasons to believe Boyertown's future will be bright.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the residents, business owners and community leaders as Boyertown celebrates this memorable milestone.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 4909) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Chair, this amendment includes my resolution to express appreciation of our disabled veterans and recognize October 5th as an appropriate date to honor them each year. This coincides with the anniversary of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. I thank Chairman JEFF MILLER for his support.

Thankfully, my son, a U.S. Marine, returned safely from two wars. Regrettably, there are many veterans for whom the fight doesn't end when they come home.

My constituent Jeff Colaiacovo is one of those people. A few months into his first tour in Vietnam, Jeff's tank hit a mine, exploding shards of metal into his eyes, blinding him. Miraculously, the doctors recovered his vision. Months later, a grenade hit Jeff's tank and flames engulfed his body. After spending months in burn units, he was honorably discharged. He raised a family and started a small business.

Jeff is disabled for life. He bears the scars of duty that remind us of what he and many others gave to serve us. In honor of Jeff and our four million disabled veterans, I urge adoption of this package.

OFFERING A WARM WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA, TSAI ING-WEN

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2016

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tsai Ing-wen, who will soon be sworn in as the new President of the Republic of China (ROC or sometimes Taiwan). I cannot overstate the importance of the U.S.-Taiwan strategic relationship. This relationship is not built on just mutual security and peace; it also involves extensive trade, tourism and cultural awareness.

Taiwan has undergone many changes over the decades since World War II, and its peaceful democratic transition of power is a testament to the progress and development of this hard-working country. Ms. Tsai Ing-wen will take the reins of a government that has provided peace and economic security for its people and has made Taiwan a household name throughout the world.

Arizona is blessed to have a strong connection with Taiwan, including Phoenix as a sister city with Taipei.

I extend my sincere congratulations to President Tsai Ing-wen and I am confident that she will excel and exceed the expectations of the voters that put her in office. I look forward to great things from Taiwan in the years to come.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. PATRICK MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4974) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes:

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chair, I strongly support grant funding for construction of state extended care facilities included in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, which will go towards facilities like the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Lucie County, Florida. Our veterans should be receiving extraordinary care, and these facilities will provide those who fought for our nation with the long-term care they have earned.

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs recently resubmitted its grant application to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for construction funding for the State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Lucie County. I am hopeful and urge that this bill will fully fund the new facility on Florida's Treasure Coast, including the costs to adhere to Community Living Center standards. This facility will be the first of its kind in Florida and fill an existing nursing home service gap in our state.

I have been a strong advocate for the Copas facility, which will be a huge asset to our community and our veterans. The nursing home will provide health care, follow-up assistance, and long-term care services that we can be proud of, all while providing these services closer to home for many veterans. In addition to assisting veterans residing in St. Lucie County, it will also serve those in neighboring Martin, Indian River, Okeechobee, and Highlands counties as well as portions of six other nearby counties. This facility's location gives it the ability to reach approximately over 200,000 veterans with more than half of these veterans over the age of 65.

These important grants will advance long-term veterans care on the Treasure Coast and across the country. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this critical funding.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION AND SERVICE OF DR. DAVID SPENCER UPON HIS RETIREMENT AS PASTOR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MILTON

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to rise and recognize Dr. David Spencer upon his retirement from First Baptist Church of Milton, Florida. Throughout his more than forty-five years as a pastor, including

twenty years as the Senior Pastor at the First Baptist Church of Milton. Dr. Spencer tirelessly served the Lord and communities all along the Gulf Coast, and his leadership will be deeply missed.

Dr. Spencer was born in Senatobia, Mississippi and graduated from Senatobia High School in 1965. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from William Carey University in 1969, his Master of Divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1973, and his Doctor of Ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1979. Over the last 45 years, Dr. Spencer has served throughout the Southeastern United States, including North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, with his wife of 46 years, Connie, at his side.

Dr. Spencer answered the call in 1996 for what would be his final assignment. After 16 years of service at the First Baptist Church of Long Beach, Mississippi, the First Baptist Church of Milton welcomed Dr. Spencer as pastor. In addition to being known for his love for preaching and his ability to capture his congregation through storytelling, Dr. Spencer played a major part in inspiring his congregation to give back to the local community. Under his leadership, the church grew both spiritually and physically. Countless individuals in Northwest Florida and overseas have been touched by the passion and service of First Baptist Church of Milton. The dedication of its people is evidenced by the eight churches they helped establish in Santa Rosa County, Florida, and the churches and foster homes they built and renovated as part of their mission trips.

In addition to his seminary work, Dr. Spencer has served on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, as a trustee for William Carey College, and as an adjunct professor at the William Carey campus in Gulfport, Mississippi. In 2007, Dr. Spencer was also elected to the State Board of Missions as a representative of Santa Rosa County, where he served until 2013.

While Dr. Spencer's time as pastor has officially come to a close, he understands that God's work is never done, and in addition to spending time with his family, pursuing his love of writing, music, wood-working, and golf, Dr. Spencer hopes to continue playing a role in the success of the Church.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Dr. Spencer for his dedication and service to Northwest Florida. My wife Vicki and I wish him and Connie, their two sons, and two grandchildren all the best as they embark on this next journey in their lives. May the Spirit of the Lord continue to bless the Spencer family and the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Milton.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 4974) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in reluctant opposition to H.R. 4974, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (MilCon). MilCon funds military construction projects for the Department of Defense and health care and other important services for the country's veterans at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This is a vital piece of legislation that we must get right so that our veterans get the benefits they earned and deserve and that our military has the facilities they need. Unfortunately, the bill has a major shortcoming—it cuts \$1.5 billion below the President's request for the VA, including more than \$1.2 billion from the Veterans Health Administration. The VA serves over forty-three million Americans a year and over a billion dollar in cuts will make it harder for the VA to provide for our veterans. It is for this reason I cannot support the bill.

Over the years, the VA has faced a number of challenges. The VA faced funding shortfalls and was unprepared to meet the demands of a new generation of returning veterans. Access to quality health care and veterans' benefits has been an ongoing challenge for the VA, highlighted by the claims backlog and by veterans waiting long periods for health care appointments. However, these challenges are made more difficult to overcome when Congress provides insufficient funds to the VA or shuts down the government, as it did in 2013—which led to furloughs at the VA. Many of my constituents are active duty or veterans who receive services through the VA and they deserve a fully funded VA that can quickly and accurately manage their claims.

We simply must do better. As the Ranking Member on the House Budget Committee I proposed budgets that reversed sequestration for not just defense programs, but also for nondefense programs because they include important priorities like veterans' health care. I also proposed extending advance appropriations for all of VA's discretionary programs so that veterans' programs are insulated from the possibility of future government shutdowns. I am going to continue to fight to ensure that the VA gets the resources it needs to provide for the nation's veterans and I am hopeful that more funding will be provided to the VA when this bill returns from conference.

COMMEMORATING TERENCE J. O'SULLIVAN

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2016

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember an extraordinary advocate for workers of all kinds, Mr. Terence J. O'Sullivan.

Terence dedicated his life to advocating on behalf of workers and, more important, negotiating collective bargaining agreements that helped workers earn pay to support their families, good benefits, and the opportunity for advancement and better lives. He was the Gen-

eral Secretary-Treasurer of the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA), one of the most diverse and effective unions representing public service employees.

Terence dedicated his life to fighting for workers' rights and for social and economic justice. He chose this path because of the strong working tradition that grew out of his Irish heritage and a dedication to assisting those in need, which he found as a man of deep faith. Following in his stead, his son Terry continues as the General President of LIUNA, continuing his father's strong leadership tradition and example for the American labor movement.

Terence was a positive force in the lives of thousands, if not millions, of workers across the nation through his advocacy and the positive changes he supported. Terence recently passed away in the 11th District of Virginia in what would have been his 86th year. Although he will be greatly missed, his legacy will endure through those he touched, those he helped, and the societal changes he championed.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2016

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the important work of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in its 40th anniversary year. The American Folklife Center was created by Congress in 1976 to "preserve and present American folklife" through research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibitions, publications, and training. The Center collects and preserves living traditional culture and makes its valuable resources available to researchers and the general public in a celebration of American culture.

Many of my colleagues are familiar with the work of the American Folklife Center because of the Veterans History Project, created with unanimous, bipartisan support in 2000. In this model oral history project—now the largest oral history project in America—volunteers across the country are recording interviews and collecting diaries, photographs, letters, and scrapbooks about veterans' wartime experiences, from WWI to the present day. The growing collection tells the personal stories of more than 100,000 veterans and enables current and future generations of Americans to understand their sacrifices.

A similar Congressional initiative through the American Folklife Center is the Civil Rights History Project, concluding this year. The Folklife Center partnered with the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture on a project to record the experiences and memories of heroes across the country who participated in the historic struggles to secure freedom, equality and full citizenship for African Americans.

The American Folklife Center's archive is the largest of its kind in the world, preserving the cultural practices of American families,