

The United States and Taiwan have always had a strong relationship, even in the absence of formal diplomatic ties. This relationship has led to cooperation in many areas such as matters of international security, trade and investment, cultural exchange and education, etc. Taiwan is also a great friend in times of need. When Hurricane Harvey recently wrought destruction and wreaked havoc in areas of Texas, Louisiana, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Taiwan made a generous contribution of \$800,000 to help the hurricane's victims. Taiwan's President, Tsai Ing-wen, repeatedly expressed concern for our country's hurricane victims, and the people of Taiwan have, once again, demonstrated their friendship with the United States.

We need to continue to give Taiwan all the support it needs. Taiwan is a democracy and deserves our friendship and best wishes.

It is my privilege today to rise to congratulate Taiwan as it celebrates its 106th National Day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, due to a personal conflict, I was unable to make votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 530, and YEA on Roll Call No. 531.

RECOGNIZING AIR EVAC LIFETEAM

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, more than 46 million Americans and tens of thousands of Tennesseans live over an hour away from Level 1 or 2 trauma centers, making them twice as likely to die from an accident or medical condition. Rapid, sophisticated, air transportation is their only option for complex, time-dependent care.

That is why today we recognize Air Evac Lifeteam for its critical service to rural, medically-underserved communities. Five bases in Lawrenceburg, Parsons, Savannah, Waverly, and Waynesboro, Tennessee, serve all 19 contiguous counties in the 7th Congressional District through advanced helicopter ambulances and personnel.

Their crews of 65 pilots, nurses, paramedics, and mechanics maintain a patient-first focus on high-tech, fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. Many pilots, having served in Iraq and Afghanistan on military air assaults and medivac missions, use those same skills to save thousands of lives every year in Tennessee. Many crews are regularly deployed for disaster relief nationwide. Their service is invaluable.

Air medical transportation will ensure access to emergency health care for the people who need it most, and Air Evac Lifeteam puts the journey in experienced, cutting-edged, compassionate hands

HONORING THE TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT FOR THEIR ROLE IN HURRICANE HARVEY RELIEF EFFORTS

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Texas Military Department for their outstanding response and service to the state in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.

The Texas Military Department is a unique force comprised of the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard, the Texas State Guard and the Domestic Operations Task Force. With little notice, Texas National and State Guard forces mobilized to participate in search and rescue missions, provide vital first aid, and assist in transportation and distribution support to the storm-ravaged areas of the Lone Star State. The 12,000 soldiers of the Texas National Guard are fully mobilized and completely engaged in operations serving Texans in need.

Since Hurricane Harvey made landfall, the Texas National Guard has performed more than 16,000 rescues and evacuated more than 7,400 people and 1,000 animals. They also ensured that the immediate needs of Texas residents were met by setting up over 30 points of distribution for food, water, and other vital commodities between Beaumont and Corpus Christi. There are 35 active Texas State Guard Shelter teams sheltering more than 8,000 evacuees at 13 shelters across the state and the Texas National Guard assisted in setting up three evacuation hubs. Rescue efforts have involved over 400 vehicles ranging from Humvees and troop transport vehicles to re-fuelers and wreckers. The Texas National Guard also deployed its 16 aircraft fleet to support rescue operations all along the coast, including numerous Blackhawk, Lakota, and Chinook helicopters.

Not only have Texas' military forces proved crucial during the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth located in my district continues to play a critical role in the relief effort. The base housed a massive influx of aircraft that was evacuated ahead of the storm in order to avoid damage to critical military weaponry. It also became a rallying point for military and other first responders from all over the country to organize recovery efforts. I cannot stress enough the importance of this strategic base and its role in providing a swift response during the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

The Texas Military Department's dedication to working around the clock in incredibly challenging conditions and its demonstrated ability to integrate seamlessly with active duty military troops, first responders, and the myriad of volunteers in the midst of one of the worst natural disasters to affect Texas is truly an embodiment of their motto of "Texans Serving Texas."

The Texas Military Department's response to Hurricane Harvey complimented federal efforts and the countless Texans who rose to the challenge of helping their fellow Texans during their time of need. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee and a native Texan, I could not be more proud of my state's response during one of the worst natural disasters to ever affect Texas.

I honor the Texas Military Department and the countless first responders who answered the call for help from their fellow Texans.

HONORING ST. MICHAEL PARISH ON THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor all of the parishioners and clergy—past and present—of St. Michael Parish in Orland Park, Illinois, as they celebrate the 150th anniversary of their parish.

Established shortly after the end of the Civil War, St. Michael Parish began with a simple wooden church, twenty feet long and thirty feet wide. The first Mass was held on the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel on September 29, 1867. After World War II, the parish began construction of a grade school which opened in September, 1949, to better serve the growing parish. As growth continued a new church needed to be built and was dedicated in 1969, followed by a Parish Activities Center in 1981.

What has remained constant through all of the changes is the commitment of St. Michael's parishioners to be a gathering of Catholic people believing in God's love, manifested by His Son Jesus, and working to fulfill His mission on earth. I have experienced the daily manifestation of this commitment during my visits to St. Michael Parish, whether for worship or to visit the school. St. Michael School is an exemplary Catholic elementary school that has won a National Blue Ribbon Award and emphasizes academics, moral values, and discipline. The spirit of the school really shined through during my visit for Catholic Schools Week.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to recognize Father Paul Burak and all the parishioners of St. Michael, and congratulate them on the 150th anniversary of their parish. May their community continue to thrive and grow in God's love.

WORLD CONTRACEPTION DAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is World Contraception Day, which provides us an opportunity to talk about the importance of access to contraceptives.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called contraception one of the greatest public health interventions of the 20th Century.

They improve overall health and well-being, reduce maternal mortality, and allow women to have greater control over their bodies and their lives.

The Affordable Care Act mandated contraception coverage with no co-pays, and the evidence of the value of this protection is clear.

We should build on this success and ensure all women—both here at home and across the globe—have access to affordable, live-changing contraception.