

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. CLYDE
LARSON

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to note the passing of my constituent in Minnesota's Eighth Congressional District, Mr. Clyde Larson, of Hermantown. Mr. Larson was a pillar of the railroad labor community in Duluth, the Arrowhead, and throughout our state.

Across Northern Minnesota, we are all so very proud of the men and women who operate the BNSF, Canadian National, and Canadian Pacific and short-line railways. The railroad workers of America—epitomized by Clyde Larson and so many thousands of others like him—help form the foundation of our Nation's economy. Whether they are moving passengers, iron ore and steel, grain, chemicals, forest product or intermodal goods, railroad train crews work around the clock under all weather conditions. They are silent sentinels protecting the public while serving industries and operating their trains across the land.

Clyde was 62 years of age when he passed unexpectedly. Born to Dexter and Wanda Larson, master bakers and small business owners from Fridley, Minnesota, the Larson family later moved to Hermantown, where Clyde graduated from high school in 1972 and met his bride, Anne Tessier, in 1977.

After high school and vocational training, Clyde went to work for Burlington Northern Railroad (BN), and then the mighty Duluth Masabi and Iron Range Railway (DM&IR) where he worked as a conductor until being severely injured in the early 1990's. During his railroad career, Clyde was elected Local Chairman for the United Transportation Union and rose by democratic election to the position of UTU General Chairman for the DM&IR.

General Chairman Larson helped countless railroad workers and protected one of the most valuable and lucrative steel-road contracts in the United States. Brother Larson presided over the DM&IR's Carnage pension contributions to steel-road workers, in addition to ensuring each member's rights under the United States Railroad Retirement pension and disability system. Thanks to his work ethic and devotion to his UTU members, thousands of active and retired railroad workers across northern Minnesota have lived independent lives, supported our Main Street economies, and helped to make Minnesota a better place in which to live, work, and do business.

Upon the CN Railway's takeover of the DM&IR in 2009, Clyde went to work for the UTU Designated Legal Counsel firm of Hunegs, LeNeave, and Kvas, where he served and protected all railroad craft workers. Clyde worked as an expert investigator, consultant, and advocate for railroad families when they were most vulnerable. Through his work to improve safety in the railroad work place, Clyde, along with his Union Brothers and Sisters,

have made America's railroads a safer place to in which to work and prosper.

In true Minnesota tradition, Clyde honored justice, common decency, and maintained civility at all times. With a dry wit and cutting sense of humor, Clyde championed fair treatment for workers and railroad families. He was tremendously generous with his own time and resources to help all of those with less. Having known Clyde Larson as a husband, father, grandfather, brother, friend, mentor, and member of the St. Lawrence Church of Duluth, Moose Lodge, United Transportation Union, and Railroad Retiree's Association, the greater Duluth and Arrowhead community moves forward as richer Americans.

Clyde Larson is survived by his loving wife Anne, sons Scott, Eric, and Corey, with their wives Jen, Lindsey and Jean, his grandchildren Dexter and Gustafson, parents Dexter and Joanne Larson, and siblings Joel, Mikkel, Karen, and Kathy, along with their spouses and extended families.

TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT
SCOTT "SMASH" STURTZ

HON. AUSTIN SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, after more than twenty-one years of exceptional service to our Nation, Master Sergeant Scott A. Sturtz, United States Air Force, will soon retire from his position as First Sergeant of the 461st Operations Support Squadron, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

Master Sergeant Sturtz enlisted in 1997. After basic training, he learned to load weapons on F-15s and to perform maintenance on armament systems. He was initially assigned to the Chiefs of 335 Fighter Squadron and then the 4th Operations Support Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina. Career highlights during this period include being selected as a member of the premiere loading crew that performed nuclear load for evaluation by nuclear surety inspectors. Additionally, he was selected for promotion Below-the-Zone to Senior Airman. In 2002, he was transferred to the 51st Maintenance Operations Squadron in the Republic of Korea working with A-10C aircraft and he became one of the first airmen in the country certified to load the GBU-31 Joint Direct Attack Munition on the F-16. He returned to Seymour Johnson and was assigned to the 4th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, where he served in units with the Chiefs, the World Famous Rocketeers, and the Eagles. His vast duties included end of runway operations, supervising weapons load crews on twenty-two aircraft munitions, weapons load crew chief, weapons expeditor, non-commissioned officer in charge, and unit deployment manager where he was responsible for directing mobility activities for 900 personnel in support of

contingency operations across the globe. In 2015, through a rigorous process he was selected as a First Sergeant and served in the 16th Airborne Command and Control Squadron at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

Master Sergeant Sturtz has deployed around the world in his sworn duty to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. His deployments include Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, where his actions led to the delivery of 4,500 pounds of guided bombs during the Second Battle of Fallujah, and a Middle East deployment where his efforts resulted in the successful visit of President George W. Bush to the area of operation. Additionally, he has deployed for Operation ALIED FORCE, Operation NEW DAWN, and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

Currently Master Sergeant Sturtz is First Sergeant of the 461st Operation Support Squadron and is responsible for advising the group commander and two squadron commanders on health, welfare, and professional development for 249 Air Force personnel.

It is a pleasure to recognize Master Sergeant Sturtz's successful and decorated career. On behalf of a grateful nation, I commend Master Sergeant Sturtz for his service, selfless dedication, and contributions to the security of the United States of America. I also wish to recognize the sacrifices and contributions made by Master Sergeant Sturtz's son, Jackson, his wife, Gina Sclafani, and her daughter, Sofia. His parents, Mrs. Delores K. Sturtz and United States Marine Corps Vietnam Veteran, Mr. Stuart A. Sturtz have supported their son throughout his twenty years of faithful service. We are a nation indebted to veterans, service members, and military families who give so much to defend our Constitution and way of life. I extend my best wishes to Master Sergeant Sturtz and his family on the occasion of his retirement.

RECOGNIZING LEN ALBRIGHT FOR
THE 2018 MONTANA CONGRES-
SIONAL VETERAN COMMENDA-
TION

HON. GREG GIANFORTE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Len Albright of Bozeman, a recipient of the 2018 Montana Congressional Veteran Commendation for his service to his country and leadership in his community.

Mr. Albright is a four-year veteran of the United States Air Force and served his country in the 55th Recon Squadron during the Vietnam War.

Mr. Albright became heavily involved in serving the veteran community following his time in the Air Force. He is Commander of American Legion Post 14, Vice President of Veterans Alliance of Southwest Montana, a Mentor Coordinator for the Veteran Eligible

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

Treatment Services Court, and Chairman of the Memorial Day Parade committee. He is also active in Honor Guard, Color Guard, and other veteran organizations. In addition to his work with veterans' groups, he serves as a community sports advocate and official.

Mr. Albright is the son of a World War II and Korean War veteran, and he has inspired his son and grandson to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending Len Albright for his dedication and service.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
BENJAMIN C. PALACIOS

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of an outstanding Soldier and a very dear friend, retired Command Sergeant Major Benjamin C. Palacios who passed away on November 9, 2018.

Affectionately known as Ben, Command Sergeant Major Palacios was born on November 11, 1950 on the island of Saipan in the Northern Marianas. He later moved to Guam where he graduated from George Washington High School and was drafted into the United States Army in 1969.

Ben spent the next thirty-four years in exemplary service in the Army as an armor Soldier. His duties have included diverse assignments ranging from Tank Commander to Command Sergeant Major of some of the premier organizations in the United States military. He served as the Operations Sergeant in several Armor Battalions including an assignment as a Senior Enlisted Advisor for the 50th Armored Division, New Jersey Army National Guard in 1988. In 1991, Ben deployed to Saudi Arabia in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm as the 3-69 Armor Battalion Command Sergeant Major. In 1994, Ben served as the Brigade Command Sergeant Major for the 2nd Vanguard Brigade in the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and in 1996 he was selected to be the 24th Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major. Following this assignment Ben served as the Command Sergeant Major for the Third Mobile Armored Corps at Fort Hood in Texas and was subsequently selected to serve as the United States Army Forces Command's Command Sergeant Major in July 1998. Ben's illustrious Army career culminated in one of the most prestigious assignments as the command sergeant major of the United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, United States Forces Korea and 8th United States Army in the Republic of South Korea.

On his retirement in 2003, the Republic of South Korea awarded Command Sergeant Major Palacios the Order of National Security Merit Gwanbok Medal on behalf of the President of South Korea. Ben was the first enlisted soldier to receive this prestigious medal since the end of the Korean War.

Ben's most prestigious awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Republic of Korea Order of National Security (Gwangbok) Medal, Bronze Star Medal, and

Meritorious Service Medal. Some of these he was awarded more than once.

Since 2003 Ben has remained engaged in Guam and the Pacific region working for companies associated with improving the United States security posture and contributing to the local community. One of his most devoted efforts was as a member of my Veterans Advisory Council which I founded to assist my advocacy on behalf of veterans residing in Guam. His dedication and personal efforts at improving services, support, and benefits for the U.S. military veterans living on Guam was greatly appreciated and a welcome improvement to the quality of life of all veterans.

I appreciated his warm, welcoming and inclusive approach to serving our veterans and everyone he engages.

I will miss Ben and his ever-optimistic attitude. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife of 45 years Estella Kosaka Palacios, and his sons; Benjamin, Bryan, Bradley, Brent, and their families.

Rest in peace my friend.

TRIBUTE TO BENNETT "BEN"
DRAKE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Riverside County farming and water leader Bennett "Ben" Drake, who passed away on Wednesday, November 7, 2018. Ben served the people of Riverside County in many ways throughout his life and he will be deeply missed.

Ben was born in Riverside, California on July 8, 1949, to Richard and Martha Drake. Ben was a graduate of Fresno State University and also a member of Class XII of the California Agricultural Leadership Program. Ben was a fifth generation farmer in Riverside County and a resident of Temecula since 1973. Ben founded Drake Enterprises, Inc., a farm management company 40 years ago. They manage 750 acres of avocados and 450 acres of winegrapes in the Temecula Valley. Ben served as past President of the Temecula Valley Winegrape Growers Association and past Chairman of the California Association of Winegrape Growers.

As a prominent farmer and water advocate, Ben played a significant role in the successful growth of the Temecula Valley Wine Country. In the 1990's, an outbreak of Pierce's Disease threatened to wipe out grape vineyards throughout the region and state. As I witnessed first-hand, Ben's leadership during the crisis made a tremendous impact and resulted in a coordinated response from local, state and federal agencies that ultimately saved the region from devastation. Ben was elected to serve on the Rancho California Water District's Board of Directors in September, 2001, and faithfully served on the Board for 17 years. For all of his many accomplishments Ben was named California Association of Winegrape Growers Leader of the Year 2013; Boy Scouts Distinguished Citizen of the Year 2014; Riverside County 4H All Star; and received the Robert M. Howie Award for Outstanding Service to Riverside Agriculture 2010.

Ben is survived by his wife of 43 years, Sharon (Clark) Drake and his children Katie (Drake) and JD Harkey, Chase Drake, Kourtney Drake, Kara (Drake) and MacLain Atkinson. I want to extend my heartfelt condolences to the entire Drake family, his friends, and everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him. Although Ben may be gone, the many contributions he made in Riverside County will have a lasting impact.

CONGRATULATING JOHN
NICHOLAS "NICKY" SMITH

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate John Nicholas "Nicky" Smith, Mayor of Albany in the 1st District of Kentucky, on his retirement from public office and offer my best wishes as he focuses on doing what he enjoys most—spending time with his loved ones.

As a staunch advocate for the citizens of Albany throughout his tenure, Mayor Smith secured over \$27 million in grants and loans to improve the livelihood of each of his neighbors through improvements to downtown infrastructure and the expansion of vital community services. His leadership on Area Development District Boards of Directors and his chairmanship and involvement with multiple community boards and committees during his career are a testament to his fervent spirit and lifelong commitment to bettering those around him.

I join with his family and friends as well as all those who have benefited from his efforts to wish him the best in this new chapter of his life. I am grateful for his steadfast leadership and profound influence on countless residents of the 1st District of Kentucky.

HONORING JERRY WHITE

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a former longtime member of my staff, Jerry White, for his work in my office and his service to our state.

Jerry started on our team during my first term in Congress, serving as my Deputy Chief of Staff in Washington, D.C. and later as the Staff Director of the Republican Policy Committee. During his time in our office, he advised me on a variety of policy issues, developed and wrote numerous bills, and managed the Republican Policy Committee. Since leaving our office, Jerry has gone on to serve as the Legislative Director for Rep. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and now works as the Policy Director for the House Republican Conference.

On a personal note, Jerry and I share a love of the life lessons of sports and a commitment to putting family first in our life. Jerry has been my advisor, but more importantly, I consider Jerry my friend.

I wish Jerry continued success in all that God has planned for him and his family. I