

I extend my deepest congratulations to Oribi Manufacturing for this well-deserved recognition from Commerce City.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR TRANS-ATLANTIC ENGAGEMENT (LITE) ACT

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2020*

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Leadership Institute for Transatlantic Engagement (LITE) Act—a bill that will create an institute to assist in strengthening ties with our allies, protect democratic institutions, and support visionary leadership on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the 116th Congress, under my leadership as chair, the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the U.S. Helsinki Commission, has held events on the importance of international election observation, good governance, and focused on democratic backsliding in particular countries as part of our continued commitment to the underlying principles of the Helsinki Final Act adopted by the 57 North American, European, and Eurasian countries that make up the region of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

We identified numerous challenges in western leadership that are putting our democracies and the transatlantic partnership at risk, including as continuing disparities in wealth, health, employment, education, justice, and other sectors that lead citizens to question whether democracy can deliver. Common to among these issues is the role leaders can play in ensuring laws are equitable, transparent, and enforced; elections are free and fair; and laying the groundwork to ensure the same protections, rights, and laws, are extended to all in their constituencies.

The LITE Act will establish an institute to assist western democracies in living up to these ideals and restoring faith in democracy, by equipping transatlantic policymakers with legislative, communications, conflict resolution and other leadership tools to strengthen democratic institutions in their societies and the transatlantic relationship. Given demographic change on both sides of the Atlantic, the activities of LITE, as established by this legislation, will also include a focus on inclusive and intergenerational solutions to current challenges with the goal of empowering individuals across generations and from diverse backgrounds with the knowledge, tools, opportunity, and access to fully participate in their democracies. In addition, LITE will seek to reunify communities by assisting leaders with strategies that build resilience against the exploitation of community grievances that can lead to dangerous divisions in our societies.

In February, we hosted young parliamentarians from the OSCE region here in the U.S. Congress to discuss how we can strengthen their political inclusion to advance peace and security efforts. Last year, we held hearings featuring European lawmakers, and on global leadership, democracy and public diplomacy. These hearings were the capstone in a decade of events that began in 2009 whereby the

Commission has convened U.S. and European policymakers under the banner of the Transatlantic Minority Political Leadership Conference and Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network to support increased political representation in western democracies. As we celebrate the tenth anniversary of these efforts that have been pivotal in strengthening international relations over the past decade, I hope you will join me in supporting LITE to further codify leadership exchanges and knowledge building between diverse and young transatlantic policy makers as a means to sustain our democratic futures.

HONORING MICHAEL PAUL STEPHENSON, JR.

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2020*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Michael Paul Stephenson, Jr. Michael is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1028, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Michael has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Michael has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Michael has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Michael has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Michael constructed two garden boxes for the early childhood education programs at the Platte County Community Center in Platte City, Missouri.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Michael Paul Stephenson, Jr. for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO ALEXIS SANCHEZ—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2020*

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Alexis Sanchez of the Los Feliz neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

As a native Angeleno, Alexis Sanchez is a transgender woman and a fearless supporter of transgender rights in her community and across the country. Ms. Sanchez displays powerful personal initiative and leadership as an advocate for transgender rights empow-

ering those who may not realize they have a voice. Dedicated to public service, she devotes her time to community organizing, media advocacy, and volunteering to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Alexis serves on the board of directors of Still Bisexual, a non-profit that seeks to raise bi+ visibility and advocate for mental health resources for bi+ individuals. Ms. Sanchez is involved in planning the City of West Hollywood's Transgender Day of Remembrance and advocating for the creation of the first Transgender Day of Visibility in Los Angeles.

Ms. Sanchez is also a member of the City of West Hollywood Transgender Advisory Board, which is responsible for addressing issues concerning transgender rights, as well as making recommendations regarding the adoption of policies that would benefit the community. She has led the City of West Hollywood Transgender Advisory Board delegation that travels to Washington, D.C. to meet with Members of Congress and the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus to discuss the importance of the transgender rights movement in federal policy.

Alexis works within the field of public policy to implement change that benefits her community. She is an Assistant Program Manager at the Institute for Public Strategies, where she oversees a program centered on substance use disorders within the LGBTQ+ community. Alexis is currently collaborating with a coalition of state representatives to create a tool for law enforcement, researchers, community groups, and local municipalities to track methamphetamine data and research in the LGBTQ+ community.

Ms. Sanchez spends her free time as a volunteer and mentor with Brave Trails, a leadership camp for LGBTQ+ teenagers and is an enthusiastic hiker and mountaineer.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Alexis Sanchez.

HENDRIX JETT RODRIQUEZ

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2020*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Hendrix Jett Rodriguez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Hendrix Jett Rodriguez is a student at Everitt Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Hendrix Jett Rodriguez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Hendrix Jett Rodriguez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassador for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.