

happy to offer my support for the First Annual America's Family Day.

HONORING STATE  
REPRESENTATIVE PAUL ROAN

**HON. DAN BOREN**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 20, 2012*

Mr. BOREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man of determination, service, and integrity—State Representative Paul Roan of Tishomingo, Oklahoma.

Roan, a member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, has served his district and state with distinction during the years of 2000 to 2012.

Paul's legislative work has been devoted to helping Oklahoma's brave veterans and emergency responders, protecting the state's natural resources and improving education for young people.

His personal career has been built on a foundation of public service. Roan proudly served our country as a member of the United States Air Force, he then spent time as an educator, a police officer and was elected Deputy Sheriff of Pontotoc County, followed by over 20 years of service as an Oklahoma Highway Patrol State Trooper.

Representative Roan has been a civic leader in the Oklahoma community for several years, serving as 1st Vice-President of the Oklahoma State Troopers Association, President of Tishomingo Lions Club, Master of Tishomingo Masonic Lodge #91, and a member of Johnston County Chamber of Commerce and American Legion Post 164.

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to acknowledge not only his successes in the Oklahoma legislature, but also as a devoted father and family man.

Paul Roan is the husband of Betty Roan and father of Chris, Brad, and Angela Roan. The 20th House District of Oklahoma is a better place because of the service of Paul Roan.

IN HONOR OF SEA OTTER  
AWARENESS WEEK

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 20, 2012*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the 10th Annual Sea Otter Awareness Week, September 23–29, 2012 sponsored by Friends of the Sea Otter located in my congressional district. This week-long event highlights one of the most iconic species in California and the integral role they play in the near-shore marine ecosystem and draws public attention to sea otters and the conservation issues they face.

We all know that sea otter recovery has been met with challenges and sea otter populations remain threatened. Each day, research is uncovering additional causes of sea otter population declines. As a keystone species, sea otters hold the entire kelp forest ecosystem together, and as a bellwether species, they are an important indicator of the health of the marine environment. The decline of south-

ern sea otters off of the California coast not only impacts the species itself, but also affects other marine populations and the surrounding ecosystems. The demise of sea otters allows their prey, sea urchins, to proliferate unchecked—leading to the alarming overgrazing of kelp beds, which function as critical nursery grounds for many marine animals, and also help to sequester CO<sub>2</sub>. Recent research has shown that spreading kelp can absorb as much as 12 times the CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere than would an urchin dominated system.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be commended for their efforts in the recovery of the southern sea otter. Termination of the translocation program, allowing sea otters expansion into southern Californian waters, is a critical step along that path to recovery. I am concerned that language in the House version of the FY13 NDAA contains language that would impede the termination of this failed program and those flawed sections of the bill must be removed.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the many accomplishments of Friends of the Sea Otter and other non-profit environmental organizations that work on southern sea otter recovery in the Monterey Bay region. The Monterey Bay Aquarium, researchers, fishermen, state and federal agencies, schools, and many other institutions and individuals devote tremendous time and resources to protect and recover the southern California sea otter. Sea Otter Awareness Week is just one of their many activities geared towards honoring and saving this species, and I am proud to be associated with this vital work.

IN RECOGNITION OF TAIWAN'S  
NATIONAL DAY

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 20, 2012*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the people of the Republic of China (Taiwan) on its upcoming National Day.

During the last four and a half years, the Republic of China's President Ma has further strengthened the ties between Taiwan and the United States. One way Taiwan has accomplished this has been by reducing its trade surplus with the U.S. year after year. Additionally, Taiwan recently lifted its ban on U.S. beef imports. Taiwan's lifting will help our beef industry economically and Taiwan's example will encourage other countries to lift their bans against U.S. beef and beef products.

Taiwan is also known for being a champion of peace. In addition to reducing tensions across the Taiwan Strait, Taiwan has continued to assert itself as a proponent of peaceful solutions. For instance, in the most recent dispute over the Diaoyutai/Senkaku islands, Taiwan has urged all parties to exercise patience and to put aside their differences, instead of resorting to military threats.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Taiwan on its 101st National Day. I am confident that the friendship and close relationship that has been cultivated by the United States and Taiwan will continue for many years to come.

HONORING SENIOR MASTER  
SERGEANT EMILIO HERNANDEZ

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 20, 2012*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to honor Senior Master Sergeant Emilio Hernandez, an exceptional individual who has most recently been awarded the 2012 Outstanding Airman of the Year award by the United States Air Force. This prestigious award is given to only 12 members of the Air Force each year for their superior leadership, job performance, community involvement, and personal achievements.

SMSGt Hernandez was born in Havana, Cuba but grew up in Miami, FL. He graduated from Hialeah High School in 1990 and began his military career in 1992, serving at both Sheppard AFB in Texas and K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in Michigan. He was deployed to Incirlik Air Base in Turkey later that year in support of Operation PROVIDE COMFORT where he garnered two achievement medals, and was selected as a holiday phone call recipient from then President Bill Clinton. His decorated service history includes deployments to Kuwait in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, and Baghdad in support of both Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

In 2008, SMSGt Hernandez was assigned to his current position in the 100th Civil Engineer Squadron as Superintendent Operations Flight at RAF Mildenhall in the United Kingdom. In 2009 he deployed to Ali Base Iraq, where he served as Electrical Superintendent of the 407th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron and received the Meritorious Service Medal. Later, he was selected as the 100th Civil Engineer Squadron's 2009 Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the year. In 2011 SMSGt Hernandez was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his service at Kandahar Airfield as the Operations Flight Chief of the 777th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadron.

In his current position, SMSGt Hernandez has led 52 people in 53 civil engineering projects at 163 forward operating bases in support of 85,000 warfighters. He orchestrated \$80,000 in repairs to nine Marine Corps aircraft hangers to safeguard \$300 million in assets in support of a vital ISR platform. He oversaw a project to upgrade an electrical grid on a dam which preserved water and power flow to 450,000 Afghans, and managed the construction of two tactical operations centers worth \$500,000, securing Afghanistan's key district of Panjwai.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Senior Master Sergeant Emilio Hernandez for his continued service to our nation, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

RECOGNITION OF TAIWAN'S  
NATIONAL DAY

**HON. TIM RYAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 20, 2012*

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, in celebration of Taiwan's National Day on October