Project Selection Committee, and she is currently the Southeast Regional Director of the Community Transportation Association of America.

Ms. August has garnered media acclaim during this distinguished career. In 2007, SWRTA was featured in Mass Transit Magazine, and in 2008, Ms. August contributed to the magazine's ''Manager's Forum'' on the topic ''How a Board Can Help Directors Manage Systems.''

An asset to the community in numerous capacities outside of transportation, Ms. August previously served as Vice President of the YWCA of the Upper Lowlands Membership Committee and is the immediate past Chair of the United Way of Sumter. She served 30 years in the Army Reserves, retiring in 2004. Ann is married to Henry August Jr., a transportation professional who retired from SEPTA after serving 35 years in the industry; they have two adult children and five grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. August will be missed in South Carolina, but I have no doubt that our loss will be Alabama's gain. I ask that you and my colleagues join me in wishing Ms. Ann Dawson August all the best and Godspeed in her future endeavors.

## HONORING OFFICER THOMAS DECKER UPON HIS DEATH

### HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 4, 2012*

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Thomas Decker of the Cold Springs Police Department. On November 29, Officer Decker was killed in the line of duty while trying to help a man believed to be suicidal.

Officer Decker was a Minnesota boy through and through, growing up on a dairy farm near Cold Spring. After attending Rocori High School, he went on to serve as a police officer for 10 years, serving in the communities of Isle, Watkins, Kimball, and the Cold spring/Richmond Police Department. He bravely served the citizens of central Minnesota and those who knew him called him a hero who loved his family. He leaves behind a wife, four young children, parents, siblings and a community who loved him.

Officer Decker's death tears at the heartstrings of a small town who knows all too well the sting of heartbreaking tragedy. This community lost another son to senseless bloodshed. It is hard to grasp why such violence occurs, but it is important that friends and neighbors stick together in these trying times. My thoughts and prayers are with the Decker family as they deal with this painful loss, especially five-year-old Devon, six-year-old Justin, seven-year-old Jade and eight-year-old Kelly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body join with me in mourning the loss of this brave and noble police officer who represented not only Minnesota, but a force which protects citizens across this great country.

## IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF DR. PHILLIP HAMMONDS

### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 4, 2012*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleagues Congressman SPENCER BACHUS and Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL in asking for the House's attention today to recognize Dr. Phillip Hammonds who is retiring as the Superintendent of Jefferson County Schools after nearly 40 years of service to Alabama's school systems.

Dr. Phillip Hammonds received his Bachelor degree in English Education from Evangel College in Springfield, Missouri. Soon after, he received his Master's degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He went on to earn Doctoral degrees from both the University of Montevallo and the University of Alabama.

While earning his numerous degrees, Dr. Hammonds also served Alabama schools in various capacities. From 1973–1983 he work for Sylacauga High School. In 1983, he began working for the Sylacauga City School System, where he stayed until 1996. He also served as the Superintendent of Sylacauga City Schools from 2001–2003. From 1996–1997, Dr. Hammonds was the Superintendent of Education for Pell City Schools. In 1997, he began his work for the Jefferson County School System, and in 2004 he was appointed Superintendent.

Because of his faithful service to Alabama's school systems, Dr. Hammonds has been the recipient of numerous awards. In 1989, he was honored as the Outstanding Graduate Student in School Administration at the University of Montevallo. In 1991, he received a Faculty Recognition Award from the University of Alabama. He was also named the Outstanding Alumnus in School Administration by the University of Montevallo in 1996. In 2007, he was recognized as the Outstanding Superintendent of the Year by the Alabama Congress of Parents and Teachers. Finally, in 2010, he was appointed to the Board of Directors for the The Capstone at the University of Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, we join his family, friends and the state of Alabama in this celebration in his honor. We will miss Dr. Hammonds' leadership in Alabama, and wish him the very best.

## HONORING UNITED STATES NAVY VETERANS

### HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 4, 2012*

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor our veterans.

There are no words that can express the gratitude that the American people owe all of the men and women who choose to serve the United States of America in the armed services. We are all humbled by the sacrifice they make—knowingly putting themselves in harm's way while also leaving loved ones behind. This commitment is the mark of America's finest citizens and those who answer to a higher calling. I would like to honor, from the Navy:

Michelle Luz Trinidad, Stephanie Tillman, Andrew Kissoon, Gary Austin, Emmanuel Hernandez, Carlo D. Casanova, Kristie Hamm, Relles Campos, Raymond Farmer, Peter Calhoun, Ruben Gallardo, Percy Fernando Monroe, Jeffrey W. Butler, Jr., Marquais Rashann Bellamy, Marcus M. White, John C. Carter, Jr., Michael C. Thompson, Frederick Alan Edwards, Kenyatta Bennett, Jamie Shire, Cameron Zbikowski, Sam Owens, Neville Bain, Alvine Burke, Freddie Berrios, Janette Ramos Chandler, Rafael Trinchet, Henry Elam, Willie B. Taylor, Mae Christian, Randolph Mobley, John M. Locklier, Charles W. Wright, Brian F. Kipp, David Nunez, Ben Rape, Stephanie Tillman, James F. Wilson Jr., Jackie Bernard Singleton, Richard Victor Powell, Mary Lesic, Angus Laney, Rock Daze, Franklin Johnson;

Finally, it is not our tanks, weapons or machinery that make the United States Armed Forces the best military in the world. It is our young men and women who serve professionally with honor and distinction. If not for these exemplary citizens, freedom and the American way of life would not be safe and secure. For these sacrifices, we respect and should commend their service everyday of the year. Congress has designated, November 11th 2012 as the official day showing our gratitude.

Please join me in honoring these American heroes for their bravery and sacrifice in defense of this great nation.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 4, 2012*

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I was out of town due to a family medical situation and was not present for the rollcall vote numbered 611 on Thursday, November 29, 2012. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Rollcall Vote No. 611—Resolution providing for consideration of H.R. 6429, the STEM Jobs Act: ''no.''

## LT ENVIRONMENTAL, INC. (LTE)

### HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 4, 2012*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud LT Environmental, Inc. for providing decades of expertise through innovative technologies in helping our citizens identify and eliminate environmental liabilities.

Since 1992, LT Environmental or LTE, has performed environmental consulting services for a diverse range of industries including oil and gas, transportation, manufacturing, real estate, government, and public and private property owners. The high level of devotion LTE has shown to our communities serves as a prime example of their quality service.

LTE's primary goal of rapid site closure allows for businesses, many of whom would