

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING DAVID VAN DYKE
FOR OUTSTANDING VOL-
UNTEERISM

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 3, 2013

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding community leader in West Michigan, and a personal friend.

David Van Dyke, a dairy farmer from Coopersville, Michigan, was recently recognized as the Michigan Farm Bureau's 2012 Volunteer of the Year.

David became involved in a local township issue when he saw a fellow farmer put at risk by a planned recreational trail that would have cut through the middle of his family farm. The trail would have bisected a beef feedlot, threatening the existence of the family business. The back half of the property could only be accessed from a point on the proposed trail.

David served as an intermediary between township and county officials, Farm Bureau, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and various elected officials. He helped engage the farming community and concerned neighbors in support of the local farmer and helped coordinate the appeal to the county for action.

The efforts were fruitful. The county ultimately purchased and swapped land in the community to entice the MDNR to re-route the trail around the family farm.

Echoing the words of Dave's friend and neighbor, who first nominated Van Dyke for Volunteer of the Month, "Dave is a tireless proponent of agriculture and the local farming community. His ability to communicate and bring together people with opposing viewpoints has made him an excellent leader and liaison for the local agricultural community."

"Dave is someone who can be counted on to go the extra mile by donating his time and services for important agricultural and community causes."

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring David Van Dyke for his service to his community and for serving as a model volunteer for others across Michigan.

THANKING COLLEAGUES AND CON-
STITUENTS AND STAFF FOR
PRIVILEGE OF SERVING

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 3, 2013

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House for the last time during the 112th Congress.

I will be very brief. It has been an honor to serve as a member of this body, and the

southern California congressional delegation—the largest Democratic delegation in history—that is, at least until the 113th Congress convenes.

But the greatest honor is serving the wonderful people of the 37th Congressional District of California, which includes Long Beach, Compton, Carson, and Signal Hill. Since September 2007, I have had the great privilege and high honor of representing the best congressional district in the world's greatest legislative body, the U.S. House of Representatives, aided by a terrific cadre of talented, hard-working, and dedicated staff members, both here in Washington and back in my district offices.

Together, my staff and I have, worked very hard to advocate for, and advance the interests of my district. One of my proudest achievements has been to continue the tradition begun by my predecessor, the late, great Congresswoman Juanita Millender McDonald, of hosting an Annual Senior Briefing at the Juanita Millender McDonald Community Center in Carson, California. This event is attended by more than 1,000 seniors in my district and was a valuable opportunity for me to discuss with them, one-on-one, what their concerns were and where I could help them the most.

In the last five years, my office has assisted more than 1,000 constituents in resolving casework ranging from Social Security claims to disputes with the IRS to help with immigration and housing issues.

From my seat on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, I have worked with colleagues in the delegation and across the aisle pass legislation and secure funding to strengthen and protect the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles and to develop a national freight transportation policy for the 21st century.

I will always be grateful to have been selected by my colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee to serve as Chair and then Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response, which enabled me to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that our first responders have the resources needed to secure the homeland and to provide comfort and deliver relief supplies to the people of America Samoa when the island was struck by a tsunami in October 2009.

Like all of you, I believe in bipartisanship because you have to work together to get things done. As President Clinton reminded us this past summer, "what works in the real world is cooperation."

I came to Congress on a pledge to work to end the war in Iraq and refocus our national security efforts on Afghanistan so we could achieve our goals there and bring our troops home. That is why I was so pleased to lead a Codel to Afghanistan consisting of me and 4 Republican House colleagues and to be appointed by Speaker PELOSI to serve as a conferee to the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act Conference Committee, which in-

cluded a provision of mine to strengthen and support the nation's strategic ports, including the Port of Long Beach in my district.

Another great example of bipartisanship is the way the women members of the House, supported by our male colleagues, banded together to form the Congressional Softball Team to battle the Capitol Hill press corps to raise funds for, and awareness of, breast cancer research. I will always be proud to have been the first baseman and cleanup hitter for those great teams.

Not only is the California congressional delegation the largest, it has been one of the most productive and consequential. During my tenure in Congress, colleagues in our delegation chaired the powerful Energy and Commerce Committee (HENRY WAXMAN); Education and Labor (GEORGE MILLER), Foreign Affairs (BERMAN); and the Veterans Affairs (Bob Filner).

And it is to this delegation that the House looked when it made history by electing the first woman to be Speaker of the People's House (NANCY PELOSI).

This delegation is the most racially diverse and gender balanced in history. It is in fact a mirror of our nation: a delegation of men and women, black and white and Hispanic and Asian Pacific, young and young at heart, from all backgrounds and different experiences, committed to working together in common cause to advance the interests of our constituents, our state, and our nation.

And working together, we made a positive difference. We can look back with pride on the remarkable and landmark achievements of the Congress, especially the 111th Congress which was led so brilliantly by Speaker PELOSI, working so closely with President Barack Obama to pass the:

1. Affordable Care Act, ensuring that the wealthiest country in the world gives all of its citizens an opportunity to receive decent care and ending the worst insurance industry abuses.

2. Dodd-Frank Act, which protects the middle class and prevents Wall Street executives from ever again jeopardizing the savings, retirement, or livelihood of middle class families.

3. The Recovery Act, which provided the investments necessary for the American economy to create new jobs while saving existing ones, and to spur economic activity and laying the groundwork for long-term growth.

We can also look back with pride on the passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act; Credit CARD Act; Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act; American Clean Energy and Security Act; Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act; Hire Act; Cash for Clunkers; Small Business Jobs and Credit Act; Disclose Act; and Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act.

And we helped to end the war and bring our troops home from Iraq and ended "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

These policies, supported and led by members of this delegation, serve the best interests of the country and will continue to shape our future for generations to come.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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