

the First Circuit in Boston, Massachusetts. From 1991 to 1992, he was the Chief of Staff for the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, Jaime Fuster, in Washington, D.C. Bhatia is also the former Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration in Washington D.C. As the Executive Director, he officially represented the Governor of Puerto Rico on important issues affecting the Commonwealth.

Bhatia was elected as an official Senate candidate in the Popular Democratic Party (Partido Popular Democrático or PPD) primary on March 9, 2008. At the 2008 general elections, Bhatia won one of only five Senate seats obtained by his party.

At the 2012 primaries, Bhatia won the most votes, securing his spot for the general elections. He then won the most votes of all the PPD candidates to the Senate. After the win, Bhatia was elected by his colleagues as the fifteenth President of the Senate of Puerto Rico.

In 2013, Bhatia served as Co-Chair of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments (CSG-ERC). Later that year, he was elected as President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL), becoming the first Senate President to hold the title. Bhatia is also a board member of several organizations, including the Council of State Governments (CSG) and the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO).

I am honored to recognize Senator Eduardo Bhatia, during Hispanic Heritage Month, for his leadership and commitment to serving the Puerto Rican and Hispanic-American communities.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District. Since 1964, the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District has actively developed and implemented specialized projects and educational programs to improve, protect, and preserve Suffolk County's most treasured natural resources.

Suffolk County's thriving agriculture has been assisted by the conservation efforts of the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District in partnership with the local communities and landowners, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Long Island Farm Bureau, the Cornell Cooperative Extension and Research Lab, the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the New York Association of Conservation Districts.

As a result of this collaboration, Suffolk County leads the rest of our great state in market value of crop production, including sod, grapes, nursery stock, aquaculture, and specialty crops. The County can also be proud of flourishing agricultural tourism, known for at-

tracting thousands of visitors to wineries, greenhouses, and seasonal pumpkin picking.

Consisting of over 600 farms spanning 35,000 acres, Suffolk County farms form the pillar of the East End economy and contribute millions of dollars to the Long Island and New York state economies, supporting local jobs and igniting economic growth across the region. This success is sustainable with the help of the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District and can help further propel Long Island's continuing economic recovery.

Mr. Speaker, helping local farmers secure federal aid and educating them about building green infrastructure are just some of the many critically important functions of the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District, which remains dedicated to the success of Long Island farmers and small businesses, and why it is an honor to offer my congratulations on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 2258, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2014.

Mr. Speaker, it is an undeniable truth that our military veterans deserve our deepest gratitude for the courage and valor they demonstrated while defending the United States of America.

One way the nation can express its deepest appreciation for our service men and women is by assisting disabled veterans with compensation and financial support.

The VA estimated that it will provide compensation to over 4 million beneficiaries in FY 2014.

Among the veterans estimated to receive such compensation are:

136,897 World War II veterans
140,169 Korean War veterans
1,327,348 Vietnam-era veterans
1,546,030 Gulf War-era veterans
695,574 veterans who served during peacetime

Close to half of the nearly 2 million veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have or will seek compensation for service-related injuries, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

We must be certain that disability compensation provides adequate assistance to veterans, and this bill does so by increasing the amounts paid by the same cost-of-living adjustment that will be payable to Social Security recipients.

Mr. Speaker, not only does S. 2258 benefit our injured veterans, it also helps the families of these injured service members by providing increased compensation for dependents and surviving spouses.

By passing S. 2258, countless veterans and their families would have financial stress alleviated thanks to increased rates of veterans' disability compensation.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge all members to support the passage of S. 2258 to ensure that

all of our courageous veterans receive adequate disability compensation.

TRIBUTE TO MR. BRENDAN
BERNARD FRANCIS MCKAY

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, it is with a very heavy heart that I share this obituary of an outstanding young American, Mr. Brendan Bernard Francis McKay.

Brendan, 30, passed away Monday, September 8, 2014, in Rome, Italy, following a tragic accident.

An AmeriCorps volunteer, artist, multi-instrumentalist, snowboarder, world traveler, counselor, historian, Ph.D. candidate, and Seanchai in the Irish storytelling tradition, Brendan was born June 30, 1984 in Summit, New Jersey, the second of Bernard and Mazy McKay's four children. He grew up in Alexandria and McLean, Virginia, where he graduated from McLean High School in 2002.

Brendan began undergraduate studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, later attended Western Connecticut State University and John Cabot University in Rome, and in 2012 graduated magna cum laude from Rhode Island College with a Bachelor's in History. Most recently, Brendan completed his Master's degree in International Relations at St. John's University in Rome, Italy in June 2014.

Throughout his teens and early twenties, Brendan struggled with addiction issues. With the support of loved ones, he participated in therapeutic and rehabilitation programs in Utah, New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Kansas. In 2008, Brendan emerged from this period secure in his recovery, and with a renewed passion for education, adventure, and experience which would come to define the rest of his life.

From 2008–2010, Brendan served with AmeriCorps as a volunteer with Big Brothers, Big Sisters in Worland, Wyoming. Within a matter of months he was promoted to Vice President of Development, going on to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars on behalf of at-risk youth, before leaving to accept a position as an AmeriCorps Program Manager in Rhode Island. Before leaving Wyoming he was urged by locals in Worland to stay and run for mayor. He was flattered and seriously considered it.

Brendan is remembered fondly by his loved ones in the U.S. and around the world for his legendary sense of humor, a classic Irish storyteller vividly sharing his many adventures. He ran with the bulls in Pamplona, Spain. He rode a hot air balloon through the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. He skied across the Swiss-French border in the Alps, not entirely on purpose. Completing an Asian journey that included Malaysia, Cambodia and Nepal, he returned to Rome over the Himalayas and Mt. Everest. He crisscrossed the United States by car, camped in the badlands of North Dakota, and lived on a mountain in Southern California. During academic travel to North Korea he became one of only a small number of Americans to have seen the demilitarized zone from the north side.