

Committee. He also served on the Board of Governors of The Wings Club. After earning a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Kansas, he completed a master's degree in manpower management from the same university.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join Mr. Flynn's colleagues, family and friends in celebrating his many years of hard work and dedication to the aerospace industry and the community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 11, 2015

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed roll call votes 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329. If present, I would have voted "no" on roll call 319, "no" on roll call 320, "no" on roll call 321, "no" on roll call 322, "no" on roll call 323, "yea" on roll call 324, "no" on roll call 325, "yea" on roll call 326, "no" on roll call 327, "yea" on roll call 328, and "no" on roll call 329.

CELEBRATING D.C. FLAG DAY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 11, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating D.C. Flag Day, Sunday, June 14, 2015, which will be celebrated beginning this Saturday. All are invited to the fourth annual D.C. Flag Day Festival in Dupont Circle, celebrating the determination of the people of the District of Columbia to continue to fight for equal rights and statehood under the American flag. D.C. residents have struggled for equal rights since the city became the nation's capital in 1801. Although the city did not achieve home rule until 1973, D.C. finally got its own flag in 1938, when Congress commissioned a competition, and native Washingtonian Charles Dunn designed the current flag from the coat of arms of George Washington.

Thanks to the D.C. Flag Festival organizers, the event showcases everything that makes D.C. unique—our diverse communities, music, arts, food, and our D.C. flag—all of which will be on display for enjoyment and entertainment. However, on D.C. Flag Day, residents will rally not only for the American flag but also their flag, to show pride in their city and demand statehood. Residents began to celebrate D.C. Flag Day in 2011, and June 14 continues to serve as an important day to mark the quest for freedom and equal rights for the citizens of hometown Washington, D.C. D.C. Flag Day coincides with national Flag Day, which has been a national holiday since 1886, and inspired the organizers of D.C. Flag Day to celebrate the event locally in the District of Columbia.

At this weekend's D.C. Flag Day, we celebrate the District's own flag as well as the American flag. As residents show pride for our country and their hometown, they also con-

tinue to fight for the equal treatment the flag symbolizes. The American flag, our national symbol of patriotism and love of country, emboldens our continuous battle for self-government, voting rights, and statehood for the more than 650,000 taxpaying American citizens who live here.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing D.C. Flag Day, its two-day celebration on June 13 and 14, and the organizers of the D.C. Flag Day celebration for their exemplary efforts to ensure equal rights for the citizens of the District of Columbia by creating pride in the city and promoting the city's rich cultural heritage.

COMMEMORATING THE 71ST ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY AND REMEMBERING THE MEMBERS OF THE GREATEST GENERATION WHO SAVED FREEDOM IN THE WORLD

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 11, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in humble gratitude to commemorate the 71st anniversary of D-Day, the Allied Forces' audacious amphibious landing at Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944.

"Operation Overlord," as D-Day was formally known, was the largest single amphibious assault in the history of warfare.

The success of D-Day, which was far from certain at the outset, led to the liberation of Western Europe, signaled the death knell of the German Wehrmacht, and paved the way to unconditional victory by the Allied Forces over the evils of Nazism, fascism, and Japanese imperialism.

It is no exaggeration to say that D-Day changed the course of human history.

The aim of the meticulously planned D-Day operation was to open a second front in the European war theater from which the Allied Forces could attack the German army and push east to capture Berlin.

With the Russian Army advancing from the east, coupled with the southern front opened by the Allied invasion of Italy from North Africa in 1942, the opening of a western front would set in motion the pincer movement that would catch the German Army in a trap from which there would be no escape.

The formidable German Army expected that the Allied Forces would try to launch an invasion from the western beaches of France, they just did not know when or where.

So in anticipation of an Allied invasion, the Nazis constructed the infamous Atlantic Wall, an extensive system of coastal fortifications built along the western coast of Europe and Scandinavia.

Under the direction of Field Marshal Rommel, the Atlantic Wall was reinforced by the addition of concrete pillboxes built along the beaches to house machine guns, antitank guns and light artillery.

Mines and antitank obstacles were planted on the beaches themselves and underwater obstacles and mines were placed in waters just off shore.

By the time of the D-Day landing, the Nazis had laid almost six million mines in northern France.

And awaiting Allied soldiers who made their way onto and away from the beaches were gun emplacements and minefields extended inland.

"War is hell," said General William Tecumseh Sherman during the Civil War.

And that is an apt description of what awaited the brave Allied warriors who set sail from England to the beaches of Normandy in the early morning of June 6, 1944, at the beginning of what has rightly been called "The Longest Day."

But they were buoyed in their resolve by the millions of prayers from Americans and others back home, of all races, religions, and creeds, invoking the Lord's blessing, mercy, and grace.

With the outcome in doubt, President Franklin Roosevelt asked the nation to join him in this solemn prayer:

Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity.

Lead them straight and true; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith.

They will need Thy blessings.

For these men are lately drawn from the ways of peace.

They fight not for the lust of conquest.

They fight to end conquest.

They fight to liberate.

They fight to let justice arise, and tolerance and goodwill among all Thy people.

They yearn but for the end of battle, for their return to the haven of home.

The prayers were needed because the cost of D-Day was high; U.S. casualties on D-Day totaled more than 2,499 dead, 3,184 wounded, 1,928 missing, and 26 captured.

Our British and Canadian allies suffered terrible losses on D-Day as well: approximately 2,700 for the British and 946 for the Canadians. German casualties are estimated at 4,000 to 9,000.

In total, the number of combatants killed, wounded or missing in the Battle of Normandy for both sides exceeded 425,000, not including the estimated 15,000 to 20,000 French civilians killed.

But the operation was a success.

More than 156,000 troops or paratroopers came ashore on D-Day, 73,000 from the U.S., 83,000 from Great Britain and Canada.

By the end of June 11, D-Day+5, 326,547 troops, 54,186 vehicles and 104,428 tons of supplies had come ashore.

And with them the seeds for the victory in Europe that would come less than a year later, on May 8, 1945, with the fall of Berlin and the unconditional surrender of the Nazis.

On the eve of the Normandy invasion, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, addressed the soldiers, sailors, and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Forces and said to them that they were about to embark upon a "Great Crusade," and that the "eyes of the world" were upon you.

He told them that their task would not be easy because the "enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely."

But, General Eisenhower said, "this is the year 1944. The tide has turned. The free men of the world are marching together to victory."

And march to victory they did, fully justifying General Eisenhower's "confidence in their courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle."