

Northern Marianas. Soudelor rendered hundreds of families homeless overnight. It also decimated infrastructure—knocking out power and water systems, shutting down the ports, ravaging the college, schools and other public buildings.

Survival is a way of life in our islands. We are accustomed to bracing ourselves through tropical storms and picking ourselves up when skies clear. But the sheer ferocity of Typhoon Soudelor caught us all off-guard. Even the National Weather Service failed to foresee the force of this storm.

That there was no loss of life is testament to the resilience and resourcefulness of our people. And we are grateful to Providence for sparing us.

As long as we live, those of us who experienced Soudelor will not forget the wreckage we saw the morning after. Nor will we forget the hardship that followed, the long hours in line for food and fuel and other necessities, the days of physical suffering and distress, the weeks without power and running water.

Soudelor tested our infrastructure, our government, and our capacity as a community to deal with disaster.

Now, however, four months after the storm, I can report that conditions are greatly improved, since that long and terrifying night in August.

Electricity is restored, and residents have daily water service. Streets have been cleaned in our villages and commercial districts. Students are in school. Businesses have reopened. Workers are employed again. Families are putting their lives back together.

Though there is still much to reconstruct and strengthen to be better prepared and more resilient than before, it is remarkable how far we have come on the road to recovery.

So, today, I want to thank all those who contributed to this successful response to adversity. There are so many individuals and organizations. It is not possible for me to know and name each and every one. Their collective efforts prove how much can be done, when people work together towards a common goal.

First we thank the American people, who gave without hesitation to fellow citizens in need. When all is said and done, American taxpayers will have contributed an estimated 100 million dollars in federal disaster aid to feed those who had no food, shelter those who lost their homes, repair residences and replace lost property, reopen shops and return the economy to life, revive the power and water systems. In doing all this, they gave us the hope that we needed to work our way to recovery.

We thank President Barack Obama and Governor Eloy Inos for their leadership in ensuring the prompt availability of resources to address the state of disaster in the Northern Marianas.

We thank the Federal Emergency Management Agency team, led by Federal Coordinating Officer Stephen De Blasio. FEMA's collaborative spirit set the tone for the response, working with other federal agencies and responders to aid the thousands of typhoon survivors.

We thank our U.S. service members, who mobilized quickly to produce and distribute drinking water, clear debris, clean up fuel spills, and transport critical supplies and equipment.

We thank our Commonwealth emergency management crews, utility workers, police officers and firefighters, healthcare professionals, educators, and other local government employees, who answered the call to serve even as their own families were picking up the pieces of their shattered homes and lives.

We thank our local businesses, shuttered by the storm, who nevertheless rallied together to raise funds for the recovery effort.

We thank the legions of volunteers—of all ages, all religions and races, many survivors themselves—who came forward to share food, water, clothing, shelter, and comfort with their fellow human beings.

And we thank our friends from throughout the Pacific region, and indeed throughout the world, for sending supplies, expertise, and equipment by air and by sea to help us back on our feet.

Today, the marks of Typhoon Soudelor are still to be seen in homes and businesses yet to be repaired, debris yet to be removed. But beneath these physical scars, a new strength is arising.

A new community-based working group known as CARE—the Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts—has emerged. The people in CARE—from all walks of life, private and public sector, formal and informal organizations—are committed to rebuilding our island home so that it is stronger and better than before.

With this newborn spirit of hope, cooperation and interdependence I am confident that we will succeed.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH YEAR OF
DESEGREGATION OF THE CITY
OF MEMPHIS FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th year of desegregation of the City of Memphis Fire Department. On July 11, 1955, twelve African American men were recruited to join the Memphis Fire Department and were assigned to Fire Station No. 8 located at E.H. Crump and Mississippi Boulevards. They were: Robert Crawford; Carl Stotts; Floyd Newsum; Norvell Wallace; George Dumas; John Copper; William Carter; Leon Parsons; Richard Burns; Lawrence Yates; Leroy Johnson; and Murray Pugues. Like many African Americans who worked to break the barriers erected by Jim Crow era laws, there were many challenges to being the first to integrate the fire department, but their love for the city of Memphis and desire to keep citizens safe from harm helped them to overcome the challenges with the highest levels of determination and professionalism.

For many years following integration, racial differences dictated how African American firefighters responded to fires. In his book "Black Fire: Portrait of a Black Memphis Firefighter," Robert Crawford recalled how the twelve men were required to wait outside homes belonging to white residents until after the Captain inspected the home to ensure any woman present was appropriately dressed. When responding to fires at residences belonging to African Americans, the twelve were allowed to

enter and investigate alongside their white colleagues. Crawford also recounted the challenges he and others faced when working with firefighters from other firehouses around the city, obtaining information on fighting fires and in being considered for promotions.

Fire Station No. 8 became well-known for its crews' perseverance, work ethic and bravery in the line of duty. Over time, other fire companies became open to working with the men, which led to the full integration of the Memphis Fire Department. This was, however, not without resistance from some within the department who were opposed to such change, even into the 1980s when some of the twelve men had been promoted to high ranks. By the time of their retirements, they had achieved the ranks of: Robert Crawford—Deputy Director of the Memphis Fire Department; Carl Stotts—Deputy Chief; Floyd Newsum—Division Chief; Norvell Wallace—Assistant Fire Marshal; George Dumas—Battalion Commander; John Copper—Captain; William Carter—Fire Inspector; Leon Parsons—Lieutenant; Richard Burns—Private; and Lawrence Yates—Private. Sixty years later, the Memphis Fire Department remains integrated and three African Americans have held the highest position of Director, including Alvin Benson who now serves as the Chief of the Shelby County Fire Department.

Mr. Speaker, these twelve men are a part of Memphis history. They are honored with an exhibit at the Fire Museum of Memphis and they have a place in the hearts of the citizens of Memphis. Now, they will be honored and remembered in the United States CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 60th year of desegregation of the Memphis Fire Department.

HONORING THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE DEATH OF U.S.
BORDER PATROL AGENT BRIAN
TERRY

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brian Terry and his service to this great country as a U.S. Border Patrol agent.

In 2009, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives began a program known as "Operation Fast and Furious." The program was a maligned attempt to track 2,000 weapons destined for drug cartels.

Five years ago, Border Patrol agents were assaulted by a band of robbers 17 miles inside the U.S. border in Arizona, resulting in the death of Brian Terry on December 15, 2010. Two of the guns found at the scene were linked to Operation Fast and Furious. Together with Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY and the Senate Judiciary Committee, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform attempted to get answers for the Terry family, but this effort has been stonewalled and obstructed by those responsible for the ill-conceived Operation.

Before serving three and a half years with the U.S. Border Patrol, Agent Terry served in the United States Marine Corps and worked as a police officer in Ecorse and Lincoln Park, Michigan, not far from his hometown of Flat