

with an innovative course of instruction on the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy.

The We the People program's culminating activity is a simulated Congressional hearing in which students evaluate and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. These young constitutional experts from West Valley High School won the state competition in Alaska on December 2, 2015 and qualified for the We the People national finals competition held in Washington, D.C.

The students from West Valley High School who qualified to compete at the national competition are:

Alicia Alabran, Dylan Brabham, Jennifer Campbell, Mitch Wilson, Robin O'Donoghue, Ileana Casiano, Skylar Watt, Emma Wiegand, Samuel Hiltenbrand, Daniel Hornbuckle, Teddy Edquid, Colton Scribner, Teresa Wrobel, Jacqueline Lundberg, Natilly Hovda, Carl Birchard, Caleb Moretz, Jonathan Gates, Jewel Hediger, Siani Post, Amber Szmyd, Jenna Zusi-Cobb, Nicholas Kowalski, Tara Vaughn, Brinley Jarvis, Hunter Meltvedt, and Celia Richards.

I would like to recognize their teacher Amy Galloway for her dedication and contributions as one of the top civics teachers in the country. I would also like to recognize Alaska's We the People state coordinator, Maida Buckley, who has done such an outstanding job throughout the years organizing and directing the program for our state.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ARTHUR
OBERMAYER

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of a dear friend and mentor who passed away recently.

Dr. Arthur Obermayer was a talented entrepreneur, generous philanthropist, and a passionate advocate. He committed his life to making his community, our country and the world a better place.

Throughout his life, he showed how words like justice and opportunity were not just words, but principles to be pursued and, if necessary, fought for.

He was a man of many accomplishments, among them, advocating for federal investment in small businesses and focusing on and fostering research and development. In 1982, due in large part to the efforts of Dr. Obermayer the US Small Business Innovation Research grant was created with the support of my late uncle, Senator Ted Kennedy.

In a true testament to this remarkable accomplishment, the Obermayer family was inducted into the Small Business Innovation Research Hall of Fame for their pioneering efforts in a White House ceremony last June.

Dr. Obermayer inspired many, and though our country has lost a champion his values and vision live on through all those he touched.

My thoughts and prayers are with the Obermayer Family during this difficult time.

May his memory be a blessing for us all.

HONORING BILL BARNETT FOR HIS
SERVICE AS CHRISTIAN COUNTY
COMMISSIONER

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Barnett, for his service as County Commissioner to Christian County for more than twenty years.

After two decades, Bill has now decided to retire from this long held position. Bill began a career of outstanding service in 1994, and is now one of less than a handful of county employees who has more than twenty years of experience. His passion for his work stemmed from his passion for helping fellow residents.

During his time serving as Commissioner, Bill has contributed to his community in many ways and accomplished much, but none he is more proud of than the barn that was built for the county's road crews, finally providing them with a central location to better serve the community. Over the years he handled adversity with disdain and dignity, balancing the community's need for services and the community's desire to maintain a low cost of living. Bill saw taxes as a last resort, traditionally setting the property tax of his district at zero.

Mr. Speaker, Bill Barnett's work as County Commissioner has set a great example of exceptional public service for the people of Christian County. I am proud to represent citizens like him and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on his well-deserved retirement from service.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,975,719,827,131.21. We've added \$9,349,942,778,218.13.11 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes on Tuesday, February 2, 2016. Had I been present for roll call vote number 50, the Palazzo Amendment to H.R. 3700, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 51, the Green Amendment to H.R. 3700, I would have voted "nay."

RUSSIAN INCURSION OF TURKISH
AIRSPACE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call our attention to Russia's unprovoked aggression against a friend and NATO ally of the United States.

As you may know, in recent months, the Republic of Turkey has reported several incidents of Russian incursion of Turkish airspace. As my colleagues will remember, in November 2015, the Turkish military was forced to shoot down a Russian warplane that entered its airspace. That action was condemned by the Russian Federation, but Turkish officials have repeatedly disclosed that they provided significant warnings to those pilots, as well as allowed ample time for the plane to correct its course. This shows the Russian incursion into Turkish airspace was no incursion.

This weekend, the Pentagon confirmed another such incident of a Russian fighter jet entering Turkish airspace without authorization. While this incident did not result in any violence or loss of life, it is disappointing to see continued disrespect from Russia towards the Turkish boundary. The Department of Defense released a statement calling on the Russians "to respect Turkish airspace and cease activities that risk further heightening instability in the region."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Pentagon and the Obama Administration for standing with Turkey and the rest of our NATO allies in condemning Russia's unprovoked aggression. The world is most stable when the United States acts in conjunction with its partners around the world in standing up to those who would do them harm. I urge the Administration to continue to stand strong with our friends in Turkey as well as with our NATO allies around the world in condemning this unprovoked encroachment and protecting allies' borders.

CONGRATULATING MELANIE MORGAN ON RECEIVING THE CITIZEN SCHOLAR AWARD FROM MISSOURI

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Melanie Morgan, an outstanding student at Missouri State University, on her selection to receive the Citizen Scholar Award.

Each year, this prestigious award is given by Missouri State University's Board of Governors to students who have contributed to the university, furthered the university's public affairs mission, and have been significantly engaged in extra-curricular accomplishments and/or in important service activities in the community. Since the award was created in 2007, only forty-seven students have been recognized for their stellar achievements.

Melanie, from Springfield, Missouri, was one of a handful of exceptional students to receive