

school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Rahul Nagvekar attends Dulles High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: majority rule.

Majority rule is an important principle in any democracy, but it is always crucial to preserve the rights of and consider ideas from minority factions. To improve our system of majority rule, I would seek to introduce legislation permitting binding nationwide referenda, consequently allowing proposals supported by an absolute majority of voters to be enacted independently of our party system.

Our current system of majority rule allows political factions to claim majority status even without the support of a numerical majority of voting-eligible Americans. In the last ten years, voter turnout has never exceeded 65% in a nationwide election. Even a party that wins 55% of the vote in an election with 65% turnout—almost always sufficient for a majority in a legislature or Electoral College—has been endorsed by just over 35% of eligible voters. Clearly, this does not indicate majority support for the winning party's policies and positions.

As an alternative, I believe America needs a nationwide petition-and-referendum system, some variant of which is already used in most states to consult voters about significant changes to legislation. Here is a basic framework for a nationwide referendum system, which can, if used correctly, bypass the party system and promote true majority rule:

1. Any voting-eligible American citizen can introduce a petition calling for a referendum, either to introduce a new law or to repeal an existing law. The petitioner should include the text of his or her proposed referendum question.

2. Once the petition is signed by 20% of all voting-eligible Americans, the proposal will be submitted to a Referendum Committee consisting of five constitutional law experts, all appointed by the Supreme Court. (The very high signature threshold should ensure that referenda are only used to resolve questions of genuine national importance.)

3. If the Referendum Committee unanimously concludes that the passage of the referendum will not violate the Constitution, the referendum question will appear on the ballot at the next available opportunity. Nationwide referenda will coincide with elections to the House of Representatives, but no more than three referendum questions will appear simultaneously on any national ballot.

4. If an absolute majority of voting-eligible Americans vote for the referendum proposal, the referendum will be binding and the proposal will be passed into law with a vote of Congress and the signature of the president.

This petition-and-referendum system enhance our current system of majority rule, first and foremost by allowing a proposal genuinely supported by a majority of voting-eligible Americans to be enacted into law even if it is not supported by the governing party. Additionally, by giving citizens a say in important national matters, a referendum system is likely to encourage increased turnout in future elections. I sincerely believe that this increased political participation

will lead to more vigorous debate, encouraging winning parties to consider ideas from their defeated opponents—making our majority rule system more functional and democratic.

RECOGNIZING THE OXNARD COLLEGE MEN'S SOCCER TEAM AS THE 2015 CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION STATE SOCCER CHAMPIONS

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the Oxnard College Men's Soccer Team for winning the 2015 California Community College Athletic Association State Soccer Championship. I commend the entire Oxnard College community on this monumental achievement and victory.

It is important to recognize that the journey for the Oxnard College Men's Soccer Team began far before they stepped on the field to practice. For the majority of these young men, their soccer careers began as young children playing in youth sports for fun. It was only a mere dream that one day these men would grow up to play for their college team and win the state title. Under the outstanding leadership of Coach Ross Greaney, a former Oxnard College player himself, the team was led to victory through hard work and dedication throughout the season.

Beginning with their initial home game, the Oxnard Condors worked diligently throughout their season up until the championship game on December 6, 2015. The Condors ended their season with 19 wins, 4 losses, and 3 ties. Facing Evergreen Valley College at De Anza College in Cupertino, California for the State Championship may have felt like a dream at one point, but their successful season had prepared the Condors well for this challenge.

From over 300 miles away, the Oxnard College community cheered and vigilantly watched as Cristian Guzman scored the winning goal for the Condors in overtime with the final score of 2–1. Through their perseverance and teamwork, the Condors returned home as state champions.

Through their sportsmanship and commitment, the Oxnard Condors brought home Oxnard College's first state title in almost forty years. With a leadership team of Head Coach Ross Greaney, Assistant Coach Bryan Hill, Team Manager Marc Pinlac, and Student Manager Oscar Martinez, the Condors had a strong support system to become champions. I would like to recognize the 19 players who deserve recognition for their victory including Eduardo Garcia, Saul Higuera, Daniel Aguilar, Mario Sermeno, Ricky Arroyo, Jorge Jimenez, Edwin Elizarraraz, Gustavo Navarro, Fernando Hernandez Puga, Christian Guzman, Jerry Orozco, Raul Gonzalez, Luis Cabrera, Andres Herrera, Damian Lopez, Matias Lopez, Keifer Cooksey, Joseph Hernandez, and Sergio Equivel.

I am confident this hallmark achievement is only the beginning of many more to come for this team. For these reasons, I am pleased to express my sincere congratulations to the

Oxnard College Men's Soccer Team for this great victory.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on April 12, 2016 I was absent for recorded vote Number 139 and Number 140.

I would like to reflect how I would have voted if I were here:

On Roll Call Number 139 I would have voted yes.

On Roll Call Number 140 I would have voted yes.

RECOGNIZING THE 2016 TYSONS REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce and to congratulate the incoming 2016 board members.

Tysons has drastically transformed during the past 50 years. This change began when the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved plans for the Tysons Corner Shopping Center in 1962. When the mall opened in 1968, it was hailed as the largest enclosed mall in the world.

Since then, there has been a dramatic influx of technology companies, government contracting firms, and other corporations. Tysons has become the premier business district of the Washington Metropolitan Area and is the 12th largest employment center in the United States. With the recent opening of Metro's Silver Line and ongoing redevelopment, the region is expected to continue adding not only businesses but also high-density residential housing.

The mission of the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce is to be the unified voice of the business community in the area while ensuring that its ties and commitment to the community are strengthened. The Chamber actively promotes local non-profits and community organizations, as well as youth educational programs, and it sponsors multiple events each year in support of these activities. The growth of the Chamber has been the result of the diversity of its members and the leadership of its Board. I am pleased to submit the following names of the incoming 2016 board members:

2016 Chairman of the Board: Lori Lopez
2017 Incoming Chairman of the Board: Jeff DiMeglio

Incoming Board Members: William P. Daly, Jr., David MacGillivray, Peg McDermott, Stacy Bradford, Scott Finberg, Angela Inzerillo, Kathy Jensen, Kevin McCoy, Scott M. Ward, James Y. Boland, Carla Doyle, Matt Edgar, Maureen Loftus, Matt Evans, Jerry Ferguson, Shania Kapoor, Sopa Keo, Jeffrey B. Krashin, Shirley Luu, Cory Scott, Michele Weatherly, Peter Wynne, and Dean Xenos.

I also commend Mark Rogoff who served as Chairman for 2014–2015 for his leadership during this time of significant expansion. During his tenure, membership of the Chamber increased by 15 percent, professional programs offered to members were expanded and improved, and community involvement was increased.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce for its commitment to promoting the business community while encouraging social responsibility and in congratulating the incoming board members. I wish the Chamber continued success.

ESSAY BY REBECA CHACKO

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Rebeca Chacko attends Manvel High School in Manvel, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

In the 1960's the movement for marriage equality gained notable attention. This attempt gained traction because of the growing number of people who identified as homosexual. Since then, there has and continues to be conflict facing the definition of marriage. This issue unraveled the larger issue of government power. What can the government dictate, and what is overstepping the line? Even though the United States was built on Christian ideals, the government cannot cater to a specific group of people and neglect the rest. The Supreme Court legalizing same sex marriage evoked discussion and reevaluation of our country's beliefs.

Our government has the responsibility of maintaining order and protecting the rights of the people. As the people evolve, the government must evolve accordingly. With this Supreme Court ruling, some individuals felt as if this was an attack on their personal beliefs. Certain groups of people felt that they were going against their religious views by accepting this ruling. However, the ruling made it clear to individuals with those beliefs that it is not a matter of right or wrong in their standards, but a matter of equality that is extended to all individuals. Religious rights should not be encroached on, but individual rights must be preserved as well. The country learned to be more open and accepting of an array of views. Our constitution was created to ensure the protection of the minority, so no one group has to feel inferior to the rest.

The nation realized that everyone's views are not homogenous. With the legalization of

same sex marriage, our nation has become more progressive. Though the entire country might not be on the same page, they are on the path to acceptance. Nothing happens overnight, and no one should expect it to. Moreover, people cannot be complacent; they have to continually fight for the minority. Now, our country is more open to change and reform. This ruling helped us to become a better nation that includes all groups. Democracy cannot function without the illumination of the people's voice provoking change. That is exactly what has happened with this ruling.

RECOGNIZING CAPTAIN JESSICA
GRACE KINGSLEY

HON. JOSEPH J. HECK

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Captain Jessica Kingsley for her past year of exemplary service as an Army Congressional Liaison for the Chief, Army Reserve. During that short time, Jessica made a lasting and positive impact on the Army Reserve through her efforts to foster and maintain relationships with Congressional members and staff. As the legislative liaison for personnel and medical portfolios, she ensured that Army Reserve Soldiers' interests were clearly communicated to Members of Congress and their staffs as they contemplated the impacts of pending legislation. Additionally, Jessica led efforts to draft, refine, and promote legislative proposals designed to ensure the well-being of Army Reserve Soldiers and to maintain the superior quality force the Nation expects from its Army Reserve.

I am grateful that she will continue to serve the Army and Congress in her new assignment to the House Liaison Division, Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison, at the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. We wish her well in her new position and look forward to our continued relationship.

A native of New York, Captain Kingsley enlisted in the Army Reserve as a Private. She served ten years as an Intelligence Analyst. During that time, Jessica deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina in support of NATO's first peacekeeping operation and the NATO led Stabilization Force, deterring war and maintaining security to support civil reconstruction efforts. In 2001, she mobilized for 30 months at U.S. Army Forces Command in support of the Global War on Terrorism. In 2002, she graduated from the University of Georgia with three Bachelor Degrees in Criminal Justice, Sociology and Psychology.

Captain Kingsley was appointed via direct commission into the military intelligence branch in 2005. As an Officer in the United States Army Reserve, Captain Kingsley served at various levels. In 2005, she mobilized in support of humanitarian efforts on behalf of the people of Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas as part of Joint Task Forces Katrina and Rita. In 2006, Captain Kingsley deployed to Iraq as the Senior Intelligence Officer for the Engineer Task Force serving Multi-National Force-West and conducting all bridging, construction and route clearance operations in western Iraq. In 2008, she was selected to serve as the Aide-de-Camp for the Commanding General of the Military Intel-

ligence Readiness Command at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. In 2011, she was selected as the Company Commander for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 377th Military Intelligence Battalion in Orlando, Florida. In 2012, Captain Kingsley was recognized with the General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award.

Her service in the Army Reserve is highlighted by her 2013 selection as an Army Congressional Fellow. Captain Kingsley graduated with a Master's Degree in Legislative Affairs from The George Washington University and served as a Congressional Fellow for Senator ROBERT CASEY JR. of Pennsylvania. In Senator CASEY's office, she worked legislative and constituent issues in National Defense, Foreign Affairs, Veterans Affairs, and various labor and union related areas. Following her fellowship, Captain Kingsley served as a Legislative Liaison assigned to the Office, Chief Army Reserve.

As with all our Citizen Soldiers, it is important that we acknowledge her civilian employer's sacrifice and community's service. It is because of their cooperation and understanding during her many tours on Active Duty that she is able to make such a positive impact on the Army Reserve.

Jessica is accustomed to working long hours in all of her positions in the Army and civilian sector. So, it is only fair and proper to acknowledge the tireless support of her spouse, Annah. I thank her for her sacrifices and wish her all the best for continued success in the future.

Throughout her twenty year career, Captain Jessica Kingsley has made positive impacts on the careers and lives of her Soldiers, peers, and superiors, and I am grateful that she has chosen to serve as an Army leader. I join my colleagues today in honoring her dedication to our Nation and invaluable service to the United States Congress as an Army congressional liaison.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE RICHARDS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mike Richards for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As a senior shareholder and attorney at the Davis Brown Law Firm, Mike works tirelessly to provide his customers with sound, reasonable legal advice and top notch customer service. Mike's dedication to his community goes hand in hand with his hard work in his