

RECOGNIZING LAVERA ETHRIDGE-WILLIAMS IN CELEBRATION OF HER 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Mrs. LaVera Ethridge-Williams' 90th birthday. Ms. Ethridge Williams is a celebrated entrepreneur and community advocate, who has been a staple in the West Fresno community for more than fifty years.

LaVera Ethridge-Williams was born in Boley, Oklahoma to John and Alberta Ethridge. She was raised in Wewoke, Oklahoma where she received her early education. In 1945, Mrs. Ethridge-Williams moved to Fresno and continued her education at Fresno City College and California State University, Fresno.

Mrs. Ethridge-Williams married Lonzell Williams and together they were parents to three children. They've also been blessed with five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Ethridge-Williams made child care her life's passion and lifelong career. She often cared for her younger siblings growing up and cared for her own children, in addition to those of family members and friends. In 1968, she attempted to open her first child care center in Fresno. Although the banks turned her loan requests down numerous times, she continued her persistence. Eventually through private funding, Mrs. Ethridge-Williams secured funding to open her first infant child care center. After four years of working with the California State Department of Social Welfare and Department of Health and Welfare, Mrs. LaVera Ethridge-Williams' dream became a reality, with the opening of her first childcare center in West Fresno. Not stopping there, Mrs. La Vera Ethridge-Williams opened a chain of daycare centers for infants and young children in Fresno. LaVera's Infant Nursery and LaVera's Educational Center provided desperately needed childcare for working parents in the area.

Mrs. Ethridge-Williams has been rightfully honored by numerous local officials and organizations throughout her career. These include, the city of Fresno, Fresno Unified School District and the Phi Lambda Society.

Outside of her work, Mrs. Ethridge-Williams enjoys spending time with her family and several hobbies. These include traveling, fishing and attending church, where she is an active member.

She has always believed that personal success comes with a responsibility to touch the lives of others through good deeds. Today, she works to provide shelter for the homeless.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. LaVera Ethridge-Williams as she celebrates her 90th birthday. She is an inspiration for us all, having lived her life to serve others. I ask that you join me in wishing her and her family continued happiness.

SUGAR LAND REALTOR NAMED PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE WOMEN'S COUNCIL OF REALTORS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jo Ann Stevens of Sugar Land, TX, for being named the 2017 President-elect of the Women's Council of Realtors, an affiliate of the National Association of Realtors.

The Women's Council is a network of realtors working to advance women as professionals and leaders in their businesses, industries and communities. Jo Ann has been a licensed realtor for over 30 years and joined the Women's Council in 1986. She's held several leadership roles in the Women's Council, such as: Local Network President, District Vice President, Governor, President of the Texas Network, and Regional Vice President for Region 9. Jo Ann has been named "Member of the Year" twice for Texas and will be sworn in as president on November 4, 2017. She's currently working for the Lane Real Estate Team.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Jo Ann for being named President-elect of the Women's Council of Realtors. This is an amazing accomplishment and we know she will be a great leader.

WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a globally-engaged and welcoming United States. Historically, hosting international students and scholars at our colleges and universities has been one of the most important ways America reinforces those values. I urge my colleagues and the administration to recognize the vital contribution international students, scholars, and their families make to the United States.

The cross-cultural partnerships formed through international education and exchanges offer widespread benefits for the United States. Students and their families supported 400,000 jobs in the 2015–2016 year, contributing nearly \$33 billion to our national economy. Their financial and academic contributions allow universities to offer more advanced courses—often in STEM subjects—to American students. These students, the vast majority of whom do not study abroad, gain invaluable knowledge towards succeeding as global citizens through cooperation and interaction with their international peers.

As co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on International Exchange and Study and as a student who studied abroad, I recognize the enormous benefits offered by a cross-cultural education. May is a critical month on the college calendar, a time when college seniors graduate and enter the global world while high school seniors finalize their choice on where to study in the fall. The new administration's immigration policies, specifically the Travel Ban Executive Order, harvest uncertainty for students making these decisions.

Our nation's security must remain our top priority, but we must balance that with the need to remain open, welcoming and committed to driving future economic growth and opportunity. We must reassure international scholars who may be unsure about coming that their contributions are valued and that they are welcome here.

HONORING SPECIAL AGENT BILL BATES

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Special Agent William Bates of the U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Inspector General, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, after 32 years of dedicated government service.

Special Agent Bates' grew up in Buffalo, New York, and attended the SUNY Fredonia. Upon graduating, he served in the U.S. Army as a Veterinary Food Inspector and then worked as a Treasury Agent for the Internal Revenue Service.

In 1989, Mr. Bates joined the Defense Criminal Investigative Service where he has served as a Control Tactics Instructor and Health and Wellness Coordinator for the Syracuse, Buffalo, and Pittsburgh offices.

Throughout his esteemed career, Special Agent Bates' work includes assistance in the recovery efforts in New York City immediately following the terrorist attacks on our country on September 11, 2001 as well as the investigation of Lynx Machine Total Corporation which brought to light false testing certifications on U.S. military products. He has received several commendations during his esteemed career, and is a member of the DCIS's prestigious Million Dollar Club.

It is my honor to recognize Special Agent Bates and to congratulate him on his retirement after 32 years of devoted service to keeping our great nation safe. I wish him the very best in his retirement.