Johnson recalled trudging through the jungle before being surrounded by North Vietnamese soldiers who took him to the infamous Hoa Lo Prison, better known as the ''Hanoi Hilton.'' He endured what he would later describe as 3-foot by 8-foot, rat-infested ''dark and filthy cell.

''Forty-two of those months were spent in solitary confinement with 10 other fine American patriots because the Vietcong labeled us 'die hard' resistors,'' Johnson wrote in 2015.

He recalled tapping code on the wall to communicate with other Americans being held, and that ''our captors would blare nasty recordings over the loud speaker of Americans protesting back home.''

While speaking on the House floor in 2003, Johnson said his faith only got stronger through captivity. He recalled how one day his captors put him against a wall and promised to execute him with machine guns.

''I started praying harder than I have ever prayed in my life. In a few seconds, the guns went click, click, click, click, click,'' Johnson told the chamber. ''It is only because of the grace of God I survived.''

He was released and flew out of Hanoi on Feb. 12, 1973. He earned a master's degree at George Washington University in Washington in 1976. He retired from the Air Force three years later and began a home-building business. He was elected to the Texas Legislature in 1984 and went to Congress following a special election in 1991, after Rep. Steve Bartlett resigned to become Dallas mayor.

Representing Plano and other conservative northern suburbs of Dallas, Johnson was known for his work on veterans' affairs and for his efforts to bolster the financial standing of the Social Security program. He took office backing term limits, yet he stayed in Congress more than double his promised maximum of 12 years.

When Bill Clinton ran for president in 1992, Johnson and other Republican military veterans in Congress alleged that Russian intelligence lured Clinton to Moscow during the Vietnam war when ''I was sitting in a POW camp in Vietnam eating fish eyes and pig fat.'' Questions about Clinton's patriotism dogged him during his first campaign, but the allegations made by Johnson and the others were largely soon forgotten.

As a prisoner of war, Johnson shared a cell with McCain, who would later become a U.S. senator from Arizona. But the pair later clashed on political issues—including McCain's efforts to eventually help normalize U.S. relations with Vietnam. Still, Johnson criticized Trump for suggesting McCain was no hero.

''Comments like those of Donald Trump, or any other American, suggesting that veterans like Senator John McCain or any other of America's honorable POWs are less brave for having been captured are not only misguided, they are ungrateful and naïve,'' Johnson wrote in 2015.

In February 2018—marking the 45th anniversary of the operation that led to his release—Johnson donated a chipped green tin cup issued by his captors and tube of toothpaste he smuggled out of North Vietnam to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Johnson recalled then how he and other prisoners would communicate by tapping on the walls and how he'd hold his cup against them to amplify sounds and better hear their messages.

In his autobiography, ''Captive Warriors: A Vietnam POW's Story,'' Johnson wrote of the cup: ''For me, it symbolized our war of resistance for seven long years. It had been a means of communication and, as such, a means of survival.''

Johnson's wife died on Dec. 3, 2015 at their home in Plano at age 85. He is survived by his adult daughters, Gini Johnson Mulligan and Beverly Johnson Briney, and 10 grandchildren. His son, James Robert ''Bob'' Johnson, died in 2013 at age 61.

COMMEMORATING THE 102ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE AZERBAIJAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

HON. KEVIN HERN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Mr. KEVIN HERN of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 102nd anniversary of Republic Day in Azerbaijan, which recognizes the establishment of the first independent, secular democracy in the Middle East in 1918.

While they spent much of the 20th century under Soviet control, their undying faith in democracy was rewarded in 1991 when the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic reclaimed its independence after the collapse of the USSR. The United States swiftly established diplomatic relations in 1992.

A reliable American ally, Azerbaijani troops have fought side-by-side with Americans against international terrorism in Afghanistan, Balkans, and Iraq. They help secure international energy security of our allies through their support of Southern Gas Corridor and the diversification of energy routes. A friend of Israel, they provide 40 percent of Israel's oil consumption. Azerbaijan is a secular Muslim-majority country dedicated to religious pluralism and home to thriving Christian and Jewish communities.

As an Oklahoman and member of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, I am proud that Azerbaijan's friendship with the United States is celebrated in my home state through the Oklahoma-Azerbaijan National Guard Partnership.

I once again wish to extend my sincere congratulations to our partners in Azerbaijan on this worthy day.

ADVOCATING FOR CRITICAL FUNDING FOR TRIBAL NATIONS IN THE HEROES ACT

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Heroes Act and to address the critical need for emergency funding for tribal nations.

Native Americans have been hit disproportionately hard by the COVID–19 pandemic. The Navajo Nation has experienced nearly 5,000 positive cases and the loss of more than 100 lives. In addition, the Colorado River Indians Tribes on the border of my district and Arizona have seen a sudden rise in cases over the past weeks.

Native Americans remain at particular risk because they face greater health disparities and have higher rates of underlying health conditions than the general population. In addition, those living on rural reservations have reduced access to health services and preventative care.

The toll on tribal nations isn't just affecting those who are sick. Many Native Americans work in service jobs that have disproportionately been lost, and many tribal governments rely on income from business enterprises that have closed their doors to comply with stay-at-home orders.

The Heroes Act was written with these communities in mind.

This bill represents the House of Representatives' commitment to fulfilling the trust and treaty responsibility of the United States government to tribal nations across the United States.

The Heroes Act provides an additional $20 billion to tribal governments in the form of grants to help address the catastrophic impact of this virus and the economic toll it has taken on Indian Country and their surrounding communities.

The Heroes Act expands the use of the funds provided by the CARES Act to account for lost revenue, which is critical to providing effective relief for tribal governments.

It is important to note that unlike the portion of the Coronavirus Relief Fund provided to states and local governments, the fund for tribal governments explicitly does not prescribe a population-based formula for distribution to tribes. Such a formula would be inappropriate given that population is not a proper measure of economic impact that a tribal government and tribally-run businesses have experienced.

This bill also does not codify the current Indian Housing Block Grant formula that the Department of Treasury is using, because such a formula is not representative of the intent of the program.

It is the intent of Congress that the Department of Treasury works with the Department of Interior and tribal governments to develop a new formula that accounts for the tribes' aggregate expenditures and the total economic hit they have taken as a result of this pandemic.

This is an issue that is critical for Indian Country. I am proud to have voted for the Heroes Act and look forward to seeing the program implemented as Congress intended to support tribal governments.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING JONATHAN CORONADO, KATHERINE PARDY, AND AINSLEY POWERS

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Jonathan Coronado from Stevens Senior High School, Katherine Pardy from O'Gorman High School, and Ainsley Powers from Brookings High School for their recognition as 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars.

Jonathan, Katherine, and Ainsley have been recognized for their impressive scholastic achievements, leadership skills, and service to their communities. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program honors our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors, and I am proud of each of these students for bringing this high honor to the State of South Dakota. They have graduated in an unprecedented time and I'm sure they will each find