EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN CLINE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 13, 2022

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 4; YEA on Roll Call No. 5; NAY on Roll Call No. 6; Nay on Roll Call No. 7; and NAY on Roll Call No. 8.

RECOGNIZING MELISSA CONNOLLY AND HER SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 13, 2022

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank Melissa Connolly for over eight years of service to the constituents of New York's 10th Congressional District.

Melissa's career in the House began in 2009 as a Legislative Assistant to former Representative Jerry Costello following her graduation from Duke University's School of Public Policy and the University of Pennsylvania. After working with former Representative Shelley Berkley, Melissa joined my office in 2013, rising from Legislative Assistant to become my Legislative Director.

As Legislative Director, Melissa has been a trusted and valued advisor who helped set and manage my policy agenda. She also played a significant leadership role in my Washington DC office, serving as a mentor and a resource for junior staff, and I appreciate and have relied on her skill and experience in managing our team. Melissa also helped staff me in my role as Dean of the New York Delegation, which included coordinating meetings with the New York Delegation and other elected officials from the City and State.

Throughout her tenure in my office, Melissa established herself as an expert on issues relating to women and families and as a critical resource for other staff on Capitol Hill working on those issues. She worked tirelessly with the Education and Labor Committee, women's and labor rights organizations, and businesses to help pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act on the House floor with a strong bipartisan vote. Her countless hours of work building support for this legislation should pave the way for it to become law soon and to improve the lives of millions of Americans.

Melissa also worked closely with my Judiciary Committee staff on several important initiatives, including legislation extending the deadline to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, which passed the House twice. She also helped lead the Judiciary Committee's work to protect women's fundamental right to abortion, springing into action after Texas enacted its abortion ban to help plan a hearing to spotlight the devastating impact of the law. She approaches the topic of reproductive freedom and health with the knowledge, passion, and energy that makes her an extremely effective policymaker.

In addition to these issues, Melissa has managed a broad portfolio over the course of her 13 years on the Hill. She worked to help pass and ensure effective implementation of the Affordable Care Act and helped fend off numerous Republican attacks designed to repeal it. She has worked diligently with stakeholders to build support for the Living Donor Protection Act, which would protect living organ donors from high insurance premiums and remove barriers to organ donation. She has also long led my office's effort to increase funding for both Section 8 housing and Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS in the annual appropriations bills. Her efforts to build support for these programs has translated into millions of dollars of additional funding for people in dire need of support. They may never know her name, but she has, nevertheless, improved countless lives through her efforts.

Twenty years later, my office continues to work on issues stemming from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Melissa was essential to our efforts to extend and expand the 9/11 health and victim compensation programs that have distributed more than $9 billion to the families of first responders and survivors of these attacks. The health care program has helped care for tens of thousands of Americans with 9/11 related health conditions and Melissa helped organize the most recent Judiciary Committee hearings on the programs that led to their long-term extension.

In response to the COVID–19 outbreak, Melissa not only smoothly managed her legislative team's transition to a remote work environment, but she also worked tirelessly to advocate for the needs of New Yorkers and keep my constituents informed of our efforts. She effectively advocated for specific legislative provisions to assist New York's hospitals, mass transit, small businesses, arts institutions and museums, and tenants, and she worked doggedly to see that these provisions were included in the comprehensive bills that were passed to address the pandemic and economic collapse that followed. She also planned and implemented our COVID–19 communication strategy with our communications and community liaison staff, including drafting issue-specific, weekly e-newsletters, setting up web pages explaining the CARES Act and Heroes Act benefits, and creating toolkits for constituents seeking assistance.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Melissa's husband, Mike Connolly, and her children, Maisie and Robert. Both of her children were born during her tenure in the office, and for me and the rest of our team it has been a pleasure watching them grow up, hearing their stories, and occasionally receiving their artwork, many of which are displayed throughout the D.C. office.

Finally, Melissa has a great attitude, a good sense of humor, and is a joy to work with. She has sound judgment, excellent people skills, and a deep understanding of how Congress works. My staff and I are lucky to have worked with her for all these years, and we will surely miss her as she moves on to new endeavors in the private sector.

HONORING CABARRUS COUNTY LIBERTY BELL AWARD RECIPIENT TOM GRADY

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 13, 2022

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Tom Grady on receiving the Cabarrus County Bar Association Liberty Bell Award.

A native of Cabarrus County, Mr. Grady graduated from Wake Forest University School of Law before returning home to begin practicing law with Williams, Willeford, and Boger in 1966. He continued work for this firm and its successors for fifty-five years before retiring in 2020.

Mr. Grady quickly became well-known for his skill and success as a motorsports attorney. He provided exceptional legal services to many associated with NASCAR, and his leadership proved paramount in the 1990s and early 2000s when the motorsports industry underwent a significant period of advancement and growth. On account of his excellence as a legal professional and mentor, Mr. Grady had the honor of serving as the President of the Cabarrus County Bar Association and was inducted into the North Carolina Bar Association Hall of Fame.

The Liberty Bell Award is presented by the local bar to an individual who exhibits exemplary or distinguished accomplishments and contributions to the legal profession. Over the course of his career and service to Cabarrus County, Mr. Grady provided a strong and consistent source of legal knowledge to support and assist his clients and community. I know I speak for our entire community in wishing him and his family continued success and happiness going forward.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Mr. Tom Grady as the Cabarrus County Bar Association Liberty Bell Award recipient and wish him well as he continues to enjoy retirement.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR JIM ARDIS

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 13, 2022

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Jim Ardis for his leadership and

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.