Katie also served her community as Chairwoman of the Orlando Utilities Commission and in her capacity on other community boards, such as the City of Orlando’s Nominating Board, the Orange County Membership Advisory Board, and the Heart of Florida United Way. Katie’s love for her community is reflected in her two children, Michael and Stephanie. Stephanie is a community organizer in Central Florida and demonstrates the same commitment to equality and justice that her mother has shown.

Katie’s work has earned her recognition in Central Florida. In 1996, she was presented with the Distinguished Leadership Award by the National Association of Community Leadership. In 2000, she was recognized as one of the “Top 10 Central Florida Women Who Mean Business.” In 2003, our local public radio station, WMFE, called her the “Can-Do Woman of the Year.” Last month, our local newspaper named Katie the “Central Floridian of the Year” for her lifetime commitment to serving our community.

I want to recognize Katie for creating a legacy of care and compassion for the voiceless—and as an inspiration to those of us who dream of serving our community.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I enter these remarks into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of history for my friend, and Central Florida’s hero, Katie Porta.

HONORING KIDS ALIVE

HON. LUKE MESSER
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kids Alive, an organization that is working around the world to improve the lives of children.

America is the most generous nation in human history. When tragedy strikes and innocent people are suffering, Americans respond. Kids Alive is an organization that exemplifies that great American tradition by supporting girls and boys who are orphaned or struggling to survive extreme poverty. For nearly 100 years, Kids Alive has helped thousands of children with their housing and medical needs, along with providing food, clothing and education assistance. Children from all over the world have seen their lives improve thanks to this faith-based organization.

I am proud that this organization, based in Indiana, has received so much support from the 6th Congressional District. Churches and individuals from across the district have stepped up to help children in the most desperate situations. By donating their time and resources, these Hoosiers have helped give Indiana, as a state, a place of honor in the global community of caring.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional district to join me in recognizing the important work of Kids Alive and all those who contributed to their success.

HONORING ZACHARIAH FRANKLYNN PIXLER

HON. SAM GRAVES
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachariah Franklyn Pixler. Zachariah is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active role in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachariah has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Zachariah has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zachariah has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zachariah Pixler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING AMBASSADOR VICTOR ASHE

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.
OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Victor Ashe retired in 2009 as the longest-serving U.S. Ambassador to Poland.

Prior to his distinguished service abroad, Ambassador Ashe served 16 years as Knoxville’s longest-serving Mayor. Ambassador Ashe has held many other positions in service to Tennessee and our Nation, and he has had one of the most distinguished careers of any State Senator.

Even following his retirement, Ambassador Ashe is being cited for his expertise and continued devotion to our Nation. I call the following article from the website BBG Watch, in which Ambassador Ashe is quoted many times and is reprinted in part below, to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD. I am glad to see my good friend is still working to protect the tax payers of our Nation:

BBG Watch has learned that officials of the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) at a federal agency, Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), are alleged to have violated IRS tax rules by employing thousands of private contractors as full-time, long-term employees who are on contract as opposed to term employees but failing to withhold taxes from their salaries as they were required to do, according to IRS and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

BBG Watch has also learned of allegations that some IBB officials suspected of these irregularities may be trying to cover up their alleged violations by refusing or delaying release of information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests from private individuals, including news reports.

Allegations have been made that some of IBB officials responsible for employing thou-
away with this violation of federal practices and law. Now this seems to be an end.'"

"Now the BBG board should review the Radio and TV Marti lawsuit by Cuban Americans over 4 years ago, take appropriate action to settle it. Otherwise, BBG may face $5 million in legal expenses," Ashe added.

"I commend Jeff Shell, the new chair, for his efforts to correct the problems he inherited," Victor Ashe stated.

Jeff Shell. The revamped BBG board have already announced several key personnel and management changes at the IBB and further management reforms are expected. Former IBB chairman Shell announced his resignation at the end of November 2013. But some remaining IBB officials are alleged to be engaged in an attempt to cover up their previous mistakes by unnecessarily prolonging the FOIA process, sources told BBG Watch.

Ashe and some of his colleagues on the BBG board have been vindicated in a number of cases where their initial concerns were first strongly resisted by agency officials and later turned out to be correct and their proposed solutions embraced by other BBG members.

Among three BBG members who seem to have most annoyed IBB senior staff with demands for accountability, Ashe is widely admired by rank and file agency employees and contractors, as are Governors McCue and Meehan with saving Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFERL) from a major management and journalistic crisis last year. Ashe received the Glassnitz Award for those efforts from a Russian human rights organization. He is also believed to have helped new RFERL CEO Kevin Klose rehire Radio Liberty journalists who had been fired by the previous management—another incident which produced a major public relations and public diplomacy crisis for the United States in Russia.

In a phone conversation about his previous difficult dealings with IBB officials, Ashe recalled discovering that flu shots were being denied to contract employees at the agency because of their status. IBB officials declined to correct the problem until he went public with the issue and shamed them into recognizing it was a health risk for the entire workforce, since contract employees and federal employees work daily side by side. "Today I am glad to say all can receive flu shots," Ashe was quoted as saying.

Alleged attempts to silence inconvenient BBG members and alleged attempts by IBB officials to remove Ashe from his position as a Republican Governor of the revamped BBG board with unfounded accusations to the OIG were described in recent editorials published by the American Federation of Government Employees. AFGE Local 1812, a union representing BBG's federal workforce.

One OIG team sided with IBB officials against Ashe and incredibly accused him of being too aggressive in pursuing his oversight responsibilities, although it did not mention him by name. That particular OIG team reported repeatedly to Congress, to correct alleged mistakes? Can we ask: who's in charge of this Agency? It's not the first time, and not the last, that we ask: who's in charge of this Agency? As the new Broadcasting Board of Governors members get down to business, we recognize their role in being in charge of ensuring that the broadcasting arm of the United States government carries out its mission for the 21st century. However, we get the feeling that some in top and middle management take the position that the bureaucracy is still in charge, will remain in charge, and the Agency would not stand perfect attendance record at all meetings.

Why should there be any concern? Flash back to the arrival at the Agency several years ago of a former BBG Governor, the Honorable U.S. Ambassador Vicente T. "Ben" Blaz, who passed away on January 8, 2014 in Fairfax, Virginia at the age of 85.

The honor and the dignity of the office. He was born on February 14, 1928, in Hagatna, the capital of Guam. At 13, he was forced into a Japanese detention camp following the Japanese seizure of the island immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. While a detainee, Gen. Blaz witnessed the torture and murder of his fellow Chamarro—natives of Guam—until American Marines liberated the island in 1944.

Following the war, Blaz learned English and received a scholarship to study at the University of Notre Dame. Soon after graduation, he joined the Marine Corps, where he served in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, earning the Bronze Star. He then served in the Joint Staff for a number of years, including under General Lemeul Shephard, who liberated his home from the Japanese many years earlier.

Blaz was promoted to Brigadier General in 1977. He was the first non-white soldier to attain this rank within the Marine Corps.

Gen. Blaz served three more years before returning to the military academy, where he graduated in 1982. For eight years, he served as Guam's non-voting representative in the House, and held committee assignments on the Foreign Affairs and Armed Services Committees. During his time in Congress, he focused on veterans' education issues, as well as the reorganization of Guam's judicial system. Other blockades were erected by the resident bureaucracy to thwart any attempts by Governor Ashe to find out what was going on in the Agency including a scandalous and conflict of interest involving former OIG; its report in January 2013 report, characterized Governor Ashe's actions as somewhat of a transgression when it wrote: "We visit widely and meet the agency--offering to bypass IBB management to assure Board attention to employee concerns."" As an independent Governor, Asse did not budge. He continued his fight. So, he was disposed of thanks to a blustering and factually-challenged OIG report that the Union described, and still today, could have stayed in his position as a Republican Governor on the BBG. There was no need to push out the only BBG member who had a perfect attendance record at all meetings and seemed to genuinely care, and was competent as well. The Agency would not stand for that and the White House somehow found time to name someone to replace him.

AFGE Local 1812 will always be grateful to former Governor Ashe for his intrepid efforts to try to find out what was wrong in the Agency and to fix it. We are also grateful that he did not look at the Union as a pariah. For its part, the Union has arranged with the Knoxville, TN, city administration to have a tree planted in one of its parks in honor of Governor Ashe where he served five terms as mayor. We are considering another project in his honor as well.

REMEMBERING GENERAL BLAZ

HON. FRANK R. WOLF
OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember former U.S. Representative and Brigadier General Vicente T. "Ben" Blaz, who passed away on January 8, 2014 in Fairfax, Virginia at the age of 85.

General Blaz was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in 1977. He was the first non-white soldier to attain this rank within the Marine Corps.

Gen. Blaz served three more years before returning to the military academy, where he graduated in 1982. For eight years, he served as Guam's non-voting representative in the House, and held committee assignments on the Foreign Affairs and Armed Services Committees. During his time in Congress, he focused on veterans' education issues, as well as the reorganization of Guam's judicial system.