

Statement on Representative John D. Dingell, Jr.'s Decision Not To Seek Reelection

February 24, 2014

Serving nearly six decades in the House of Representatives, John Dingell has earned the distinction of being both the longest serving Member of Congress in U.S. history and one of the most influential legislators of all time. After serving his country in the Army during World War II, John was first elected to Congress in 1955, representing the people of southeastern Michigan in a seat previously held by his father. In Washington, John risked his seat to support the Civil Rights Act of 1964, fought to pass Medicare in 1965, and penned legislation like the Clean Air Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act that have kept millions of Americans healthy and preserved our natural beauty for future generations.

But of all John's accomplishments, perhaps the most remarkable has been his tireless fight to guarantee quality, affordable health care for every American. Decades after his father first introduced a bill for comprehensive health reform, John continued to introduce health care legislation at the beginning of every session. And as an original author of the Affordable Care Act, he helped give millions of families the peace of mind of knowing they won't lose everything if they get sick. Today, the people of Michigan—and the American people—are better off because of John Dingell's service to this country, and Michelle and I wish him, his wife Debbie, and their family the very best.

Remarks Announcing New Manufacturing Innovation Institutes

February 25, 2014

Hello, everybody! Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you. Thank you very much. Hey! Thank you.

Well, welcome to the White House, everybody. We've got some pretty cool stuff up here, and we also have people here who can explain what it all is. But thank you so much for being here. We've got, first and foremost, some people who I'm proud to call friends and have been fighting on behalf of American workers every single day.

We've got the Governor of the great State of Illinois; Pat Quinn is here in the house. We've got somebody who is responsible for trimming my trees and potholes in front of my house—[laughter]—and shoveling snow. And I haven't been back for a while; I don't know how it's going, but I'm assuming he's handling his business. The mayor of the great city of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel is here. We've got Phil LaJoy, who's the supervisor of Canton Township, Michigan, who is here. There he is. Good job, Phil.

And we've got some outstanding Members of Congress who are here, especially someone who just announced that this would be his last term in Congress, but is somebody who so many of us have learned from, have admired. He is a man who has, every single day of his life in office, made sure that he was fighting on behalf of people who really needed help. And he is going to be very missed. John, you are not just the longest serving Member of Congress in American history, you're also one of the very best. Michigan's own John Dingell is here. So—[applause]. And we are better off because of John's service, and we're going to miss you.

Now, today I am joined by researchers who invent some of the most advanced metals on the planet, designers who are modeling prototypes in the digital cloud, folks from the Pentagon who help to support their work. Basically, I'm here to announce that we're building Iron Man. [Laughter] I'm going to blast off in a second. [Laughter] We've been—this has been a secret project we've been working on for a long