

forever cherish his friendship; and, I join my colleagues in extending the Honorable SAM GIBBONS my very best wishes for the future. God bless you, SAM.

#### SAM GIBBONS: TRULY AN AMERICAN HERO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in honoring the gentleman from Florida, my dear friend, SAM GIBBONS. I would like to say thank you to the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN] for organizing this tribute to a man who has served his country with distinction for over half a century.

SAM GIBBONS is truly an American hero. Most people know SAM for his work here in the House in steadfast defense of Medicare for our Nation's seniors. He understands what Medicare has meant in the lives of seniors. He understands what health insurance has meant to the seniors of this Nation. He has been inspiring in leading the charge in that important fight and I am proud to have served with SAM GIBBONS.

Yet, outstanding service to our Nation is nothing new to SAM. Mr. Speaker, 52 years ago this June SAM GIBBONS led the charge as American and Allied troops stormed the beaches in Normandy in Operation Overlord, the invasion that liberated Nazi-occupied France and marked the beginning of the end of World War II.

SAM won the Bronze Star for parachuting into France the night before the invasion. As President Clinton remarked during the 50th anniversary ceremony commemorating brave men like SAM, and I quote, "What we must remember is that when they were young, these men saved the world."

Throughout his 34 years of service to the American people in this House, SAM GIBBONS has worked long and hard to provide opportunity and progress for the American people. SAM was instrumental in the enactment of President Lyndon Johnson's Job Corps, Head Start, and other antipoverty initiatives.

As the former chairman and current ranking Democrat of the Committee on Ways and Means, SAM has long been a leader on pension reform, international trade, health care, welfare, and tax policies.

Again, to the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN], I thank you for allowing me to participate in this tribute to this true American hero. The people's House, which is what this body is, will not be the same without SAM GIBBONS. We will miss his intelligence, his dignity, his indomitable will, his commitment to the people of this country, his love for a good fight, and his desire to make this place a better

world, a better country for American men and women.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the gentleman from Florida the best fortune in his future endeavors.

#### A TRIBUTE TO SAM GIBBONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I also want to participate in this commemoration to our good colleague, SAM GIBBONS, and I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. BROWN, my colleague, for setting aside this time to do this.

Mr. Speaker, it came as a surprise when SAM GIBBONS announced his plans to retire from Congress at the end of this year. SAM GIBBONS' name has become synonymous with Florida politics. He has represented the Tampa area for the past 44 years, first venturing into politics as a State representative and then the State senate. He was sworn into Congress during the Kennedy administration and for the past 34 years has represented Tampa in the House of Representatives.

When I first heard about SAM's plans to retire, I couldn't help but recall the 50th anniversary D-day invasion ceremonies that I had the privilege of attending and to which SAM GIBBONS was appointed as a special representative, by President Clinton.

It was indeed fitting that Mr. GIBBONS was specially designated as the President's representative. SAM has a long and distinguished career in service to his country. A decorated World War II veteran, he showed extreme bravery by parachuting into Normandy the night before D-day and then made his way behind enemy lines during the Normandy invasion.

After the war he returned to Florida and commenced his law practice. He then began a political career that spanned several decades.

Although we have not always agreed politically, I believe SAM has served his constituents well and has worked tirelessly as a champion on their behalf. SAM has long been considered a leader and supporter of free trade which he attributes to his experience during the war. SAM has often been heard to say: "I believe fundamentally, people who trade together and work together do not fight."

As a fellow Floridian, I can assure you, SAM, that you will be missed. Your spirit and energetic nature have set you apart and truly demonstrate your commitment and willingness to fight for your convictions.

Leaving can sometimes be difficult, but you leave knowing that you gave it all you've got and then some. Perhaps, now you will be able to find time for another great passion in life—arranging a tee time will now be a little easier. I wish you well in the future and I

venture to say that whatever you do you will do with great passion and gusto.

#### SAM GIBBONS WROTE THE RULES FOR THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from California [Mr. STARK] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, it is a joy to get a chance to speak to SAM when he has to sit and listen to us.

Mr. Speaker, I have worked with SAM my entire 22 years on the Committee on Ways and Means. It is interesting. SAM opposed expanding the Committee on Ways and Means when all of us new youngsters came on the committee. They had a nice little club and they really did not want to add to it.

But once the caucus worked its will and the Committee on Ways and Means learned about democracy and expanded its membership, SAM turned out to be the fairest of the titans on that committee for opening up and sharing the responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, he wrote the rules for that committee which stand today I think as a mark for other committees in its fairness and its openness. And many of us who worked with SAM for so long remember that. He could oppose you and he is not shy and he is willing to speak out. And unlike some of us, he does not need to learn more diplomacy and reticence because he has Martha, and Martha has been able to keep SAM mellow and happy when he has been fighting like hell for something that he believes in.

Mr. Speaker, SAM wrote the rules for the Committee on Ways and Means. He is an expert on trade. Then in the last Congress when we were attempting to pass welfare reform, SAM sat through every markup with our subcommittee, even though he was not on that committee, and when the bill came to full committee it was the expertise not only from his experience as he had been with Medicare from the time he voted for it as an original bill but from all the service on the Committee on Ways and Means he was able to help us pull together that coalition that was able to present to the American public a health care bill that was fair, did not increase the deficit, and opened up health coverage to every American.

I hope, SAM that he can provide that for you in your retirement and you can come back and share with us when under the leadership that you set, and the goal you set for us with the President, we will accomplish that.

God bless you, SAM. We will miss you.

#### SAM GIBBONS: AN IDEAL CITIZEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Texas [Mr.

GONZALEZ] is recognized during morning businesses for 2 minutes.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendously mixed emotional feeling for me.

SAM GIBBONS is an ideal American: He is absolutely honest; he is courageous in every sense of the word; he cares about his fellow human beings; and he is a public servant of the highest integrity, the deepest commitment, and the most dogged determination. SAM GIBBONS is everything that anyone could ever hope to see in a friend, a neighbor, a soldier and an elected representative. SAM is the kind of man you are grateful to know and happy to serve with. If you had the ability to pick and choose who you would have for a friend and colleague. SAM would always be first on the list.

Others have or will speak about SAM's history as a D-day paratrooper, and of the details of his long and distinguished career. But I want simply to say that SAM is a decent man, the kind we all look up to, and the kind we always wish we could be.

One thing about SAM GIBBONS: He fights for what he believes in and for what he knows is right. He is not afraid to challenge the kind of arbitrary and frankly brutal behavior of the current majority in this House; nor does he shade the truth when it comes to the tough issues we face. He's old-fashioned in that regard: A gentleman whenever he can be, and a fighter if he has to be.

SAM is one we can always count on to be fair, and to be square with us. His word is never open to question: When he makes a commitment, he means it and he stays with it.

I've not always agreed with the actions of the Committee on Ways and Means—who does? But one thing I have always known is that if SAM says that a bill or a provision is good, you can trust his judgment. And if SAM says that he can't help you or can't agree with you, he'll give you a reason that you can both understand and respect. That's the kind of friend and colleague this House depends on. And that's the kind of person every American should want to represent them in the House.

Not many people have had a life as filled with adventure and challenge as SAM has. And very few who have had such distinguished lives and careers are as modest and self-effacing as SAM is. It's a measure of his greatness, that he maintains—and always has maintained—a sense of balance and proportion. SAM knows what really counts, and he doesn't forget it.

The House of Representatives has been enriched and enlivened by SAM GIBBONS. He has brought us life and light. He's been a friend to many, many people, and a model for all of us. I've known thousands of Members in my career here, and none has been more respected than SAM GIBBONS. He is a great representative for his district and for the whole country. When he leaves, the House will be diminished. I'm glad to have known him, privileged

to have served with him, and happy to join in this well-deserved tribute. Thank you, SAM, for being an ideal American, a great friend, and an outstanding colleague.

#### SAM GIBBONS WILL BE MISSED DEEPLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I first came really to know SAM GIBBONS and his wife, Martha, on what is now a rather famous bus trip to Eastern Europe. I think I was just a freshman then; not on the Committee on Ways and Means. SAM was good enough to invite me.

No junket was that. We worked 12 hours, sometimes 14 hours a day. We went to Czechoslovakia, to Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and we went to most of those places by bus. Mr. Speaker, I saw firsthand what SAM GIBBONS was really like. Hard working, down to earth, good natured, generous. He made sure that each of us had a crack at introducing the delegation to the distinguished, and not so distinguished in some cases, leaders of those countries.

Then, Mr. Speaker, I joined the Committee on Ways and Means and since then I have had a chance to work firsthand with SAM GIBBONS, to work on trade. He and I have not always agreed, but one thing all of us agree on and that is the caliber of leadership and commitment of SAM GIBBONS.

He has been compared to some other famous people. Claude Pepper, for example, another favorite son of Florida. But I do not think you can compare SAM with anyone. He is very much his own person. He is very much a real article.

SAM, you care so much, you have such a sense of commitment. So, I am not sure why you are leaving. I think maybe it is because his main passion is not for power; it is for public service. I think there is some hint that SAM is going to remain very much a public figure.

I close with this, SAM. I think with your streak of modesty you do not really know how much you are going to be missed. The answer is, very deeply.

#### SAM GIBBONS: A LIFE OF EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PAYNE] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI].

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PAYNE] for yielding, and since he only has 2 minutes I will not take much of this time except to join my colleagues in commending SAM GIBBONS, a great

leader in the Congress of the United States; a leader on the issues; and, a gentleman at all times.

Mr. PAYNE of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Florida, Ms. BROWN, for requesting this special order to honor our good friend and colleague, Chairman SAM GIBBONS.

Many years ago, Teddy Roosevelt compared success in life to success in football. The key to success in both, he said, is to hit the line hard day after day.

Those of us who have served with SAM GIBBONS know that by this or any other measure, he has been an extraordinary success.

For his entire adult life, SAM GIBBONS has served this nation with courage and tenacity. From the day more than a half-century ago when he took part in the D-day invasion, to his passionate defense in this Congress of the millions of Americans who depend on Medicare, SAM GIBBONS has always put his Nation first.

I first came to know SAM well through my service on the House Ways and Means Committee. I remember the very difficult circumstances under which he assumed the chair. SAM took over the committee without a hitch. His approach was inclusive and thoughtful and was marked by a great sense of bipartisanship.

Chairman GIBBONS will always be remembered for his passionate defense of the nation's senior citizens and poor, for his tireless work on behalf of free and open trade, and for his advocacy of a fair, and equitable, and economically efficient Tax Code.

SAM GIBBONS is the consummate southern gentleman, and I am proud to call him my friend.

Mr. Speaker, as SAM and Martha enter this new phase of their lives, I know the whole House of Representatives joins me in wishing him well.

#### A TRIBUTE TO SAM GIBBONS, A FRIEND OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from the Virgin Islands [Mr. FRAZER] is recognized during morning business for 1 minute.

Mr. FRAZER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my voice to my colleagues who have recognized, as many of us feel, the untimely departure of Mr. GIBBONS, but I am sure he is moving on to bigger and better things.

As a representative of the Virgin Islands, where we have no vote in this body, I would like to recognize the assistance that Mr. GIBBONS has given the Virgin Islands. As those issues that affect the Virgin Islands have come before his committee, I have always been able to go to him and ask him to make sure that he looks out for American citizens who happen to reside in the Virgin Islands, but in fact have no real voice in this institution.

So, Mr. GIBBONS, I thank you for the assistance that you have offered the