

TODAY'S CHALLENGE: EDUCATION
IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, the challenge confronting us today is education. Before us is the future of education. We as a Nation must place education as the number one priority if we are to meet the challenges and needs of the 21st century; if we are to look where our children are going to be and if they are well prepared to meet those challenges.

We need to invest in education. We need to come together in a bipartisan effort and support H.R. 4094; 228 Members are cosponsors. This is not a partisan issue. This is a bipartisan issue. This is about education and putting a high priority and investing in the future of America.

We need to make sure that class size reduction for our children is there. We have got to make sure that our children have the same opportunity that many other individuals have where they have small classes, but it can only happen through modernization and class size reduction.

We need to fund education at the highest level. When a child comes into school, they must feel comfortable to know that the ratio is 25 to one, student to teacher. If the atmosphere is good, the students feel good, the teachers feel good. They are in an atmosphere that they can learn. That is positive for a lot of our students. The individual attention is important to a student, because a student has to develop self-esteem, self-confidence in themselves. If he or she has confidence in himself and they know that the teacher is working in areas that they need, then we can have the accountability to make sure that our students are progressing and learning in our public institutions. It can only happen if we reduce the class sizes.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we need teacher training; and, yes, we do need accountability. That is very important for us as well. But we must invest in education; we must allow that to happen. We must provide the tools and the instruments to make sure that our teachers have the resources and the funding. I know that it is very difficult in today's society. When we look at California alone, that has over 6 million students in our K through 12. More and more students are coming in, and yet we have a ratio of 45 to one in many of our schools. We need to make sure that we look across the Nation and we provide the funding.

My son, Joseph Baca, Jr., is a teacher in junior high, and he is going out and buying supplies. This should not happen to him and many other teachers because we are not providing the funds that are very much needed in our classrooms. We need to make sure that we provide not only the funding to make sure that teachers have the equipment,

have the supplies, and create the atmosphere; we want to make sure that when children go into our schools, that they know very well that they are coming into a school that they do not have to worry about leaking roofs. They do not have to worry about not having any faucets that are fixed, and they do not have to worry about looking at windows that are broken. They do not have to look at walls that have graffiti. We want to create an atmosphere that is good for them.

If an atmosphere is good for them, then they will begin to learn. And if it is good for them, then teachers feel good about being energized in teaching.

At the same time, we have to make sure that we look at not only modernization, but the digital divide, to look at technology to make sure that we fund every one of our schools so that our children are well prepared to meet the 21st century and well prepared and well trained. If they are not, what is going to happen to our Nation? What is going to happen to our Nation? It is our responsibility that we provide the funding at a higher level. We have got to invest more. We are not investing enough in education.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the answer and the beginning and the right steps are in H.R. 4094. That is a step in the right direction. When an individual receives the funding, then that means we have the accountability. At the same time, when we look at where are our students, we must prepare them to meet the 21st century so they are ready to go to a community college and State college and our universities.

Are community colleges ready for them? We have to make sure that we provide tax incentives and tax rates and tuition that is available for our students to go on to our community colleges. More and more students are going to our community colleges right now, and we have to make sure that we provide the funding there. And as we look at those students who are transferring on to 4-year institutions, to make sure that they can get into a State college or university.

Mr. Speaker, I know that we have honors programs and other programs, but it becomes difficult when we do not have the funding and we do not have the financing that are available for a lot of our students. The tax incentives and tax breaks are there. Mr. Speaker, we need to invest more in education. We can take the right steps. The steps are ahead of us, but we have to come together in a bipartisan effort.

TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN RON PACKARD UPON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, the leader of our California delegation, the

gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), has given me the honor of putting together a night to honor the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD), one of our colleagues who is leaving the House, retiring at the end of this session.

We wanted to take a little time to talk a little bit of his accomplishments while here in the Congress. First of all, we will hear from our leader, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS). I yield to him such time as he desires.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate my colleague yielding. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleagues this evening in paying tribute to our friend from the Committee on Appropriations, RON PACKARD. RON is retiring from the House after 18 years of service to his constituents. He has had the privilege of representing one of the most beautiful parts of our State in south Orange County and north San Diego County, a small piece of Riverside County as well, as he would remind us.

It is understandable why RON would want to spend more time at home. He has just completed the building of a new home with his wife, Jean, seven children and too many grandchildren to count. He has got plenty to look forward to as he goes back home to his district.

RON came to the Congress after serving in the U.S. Navy and later as a member of the school board, active in the chamber of commerce. He served on the city council and was mayor of Carlsbad. RON was elected to Congress as a result of his success as a write-in candidate in 1982, one of the very few occasions in which a write-in candidate has been successful.

I have worked most closely with RON in the appropriations process where over the years he has been the chairman of the Subcommittee on Legislative Appropriations, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Construction Appropriations, and is just completing a tour representing our State very well on the subcommittee that deals with energy and water appropriations, a most important appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to miss RON greatly as a member of our committee. He has been of great service to Southern California.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Long Beach, California (Mr. HORN).

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, RON PACKARD is truly a man of the House of Representatives. He is a gentleman. He is civility. He is a good listener, and he has got a ready smile. He won friends all over this Chamber on both sides of the aisle; and, of course, that is what effective legislators do.

Of course, when we all learned that he had a total of 44 children and grandchildren, 7 children, 34 grandchildren, and three great grandchildren, we were envious. And I always wondered how he

remembered their names. I suspect Jean, his charming wife, maybe put a sort of easel up and when they were coming, said here are the names.

RON, in whatever he did as a legislator here, first on public works, now known as the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, but now on the Committee on Appropriations, he was very fair when he listened to all of us, Democrats, Republicans, Easterners, Westerners, Northerners, Southerners. On appropriations, he brought basic common sense to the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, one of the most difficult committees in this Chamber, because it involves floods, it involves ecology, it involves environment. RON could deal with all of those pressures.

He cared about our troops abroad, in particular. In the period when he was chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, our troops abroad in Korea were in Second World War barracks going to pieces, and RON knew that should not be. If we have families, as we do now in all the services, we need good facilities and we need a place where they can call home when it is abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank RON for all he has done in this Chamber, and all he will do when he goes back to, as the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) said, that beautiful part of the California coast.

So, Jean and RON, you are a great couple to have as a mentor and have as a model, and we thank you for what you have done in your 2 decades here, and we wish you well in the years ahead.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), a colleague of RON PACKARD's on the Committee on Appropriations.

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Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to wish our colleague RON PACKARD well in his retirement from the House of Representatives at the end of this 106th Congress.

Tonight a number of us have gathered in this Chamber during this special time to pay tribute to our colleague and our friend who has served with distinction in this people's House for 18 years. All of us know this very good-natured gentleman from California is one of only four Members of Congress to have ever won their first election to the Congress as a write-in candidate, a tremendous feat in and of itself. Little did we know that RON would go from that point in 1982 to become chairman of three very important House appropriations subcommittees.

As other Members have mentioned, many of us here tonight know RON for his years of service on the House Committee on Appropriations. I myself have had the honor of serving with him on that committee, and most recently

I have had the pleasure of serving under his chairmanship on the appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water.

For the past 2 years, RON has been steadfast in reversing the President's decision to underfund our Nation's infrastructure needs. Due to his leadership, the Congress has maintained a strong commitment to partnerships with our local communities and States by providing these needed funds for flood control, shore protection and dredging our harbors and the like.

As a former businessman, school board member, city councilman, and mayor, RON has always believed that the Federal Government should provide a helpful hand but the true power and decisions should be returned to State and local government officials who know the best needs of their constituents.

On a personal note, in July of 1999, I traveled with RON and his wife, Jean, and other Members to Russia as part of our committee assignment on Energy and Water. RON and our colleagues toured the Russian "closed cities" or the former nuclear sites and met with numerous Russian officials. It was a trip to remember, in large part due to RON's leadership, his insistence that we see where U.S. dollars were being spent to dispose of or contain nuclear waste.

Throughout our trip within Russia, RON showed his dedication to our purpose for being there and to the American people by insisting on receiving a complete understanding of the current status of all of these nuclear sites. Additionally during this trip, I had the opportunity to get to know RON and Jean; and I can tell you, judging from our discussions about our families, that RON and Jean will definitely continue to be busy grandparents, taking a very active role in all of their 34 grandchildren's lives. The Congress' loss will be his family's gain.

I wish you well in retirement, RON. You have set a high standard for all of us to follow that remain. We will miss you. Good luck and Godspeed.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Riverside, California (Mr. CALVERT), another of RON's good friends and neighbors.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Valencia, California, for putting together this special order for our good friend, RON PACKARD; and I say that very sincerely.

I do not know if the gentleman remembers, but in 1982 we both ran for Congress in Republican primaries, and, something we have in common, we both lost. I lost my Republican primary, but RON went on to win a very substantial victory in a write-in campaign.

That has only happened four times in the history of the United States House of Representatives, which shows how popular and well loved he is in his district. I know that for a fact, because our districts adjoin each other in the Temecula-Marrietta areas of our dis-

trict. And every year we would get together for the last 8 years I have been in the House, and we would meet and have what they call the RON and KEN show up there. And we would talk about issues that affect the Temecula-Marrietta Valley. I will miss that very much; and you need to come out, RON, to celebrate those times.

On issues out in those areas, Pierce's Disease, which is devastating the vintners out there in that area, and avocados, that we just successfully concluded here shortly, those I am sure are issues you are very proud of in the local sense. But, obviously, on a national sense, the service that you have done for the Committee on Appropriations in all the various subcommittees, legislative branch, certainly military construction, where you have helped a lot of young families get better housing and a better place to live, to help retention in our military forces, something I am sure you are very proud of. And certainly the energy and water account in which you have done many things throughout the country, and happily in our own area, the Temecula-Marrietta area that has devastating floods, that we can finally move toward flood protection for the many people that live in that area and the property we would like to protect.

So RON, it has been a privilege serving with you. I know that another thing that I do not know if a lot of people know, he is probably the finest golfer in the House. No doubt about it. He will be giving me at least a stroke a hole from now on. I really appreciate that.

I thank the gentleman for his service and look forward to many years to come of friendship.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA), another golfer, a Member from the other side of the aisle, and also a neighbor and friend of RON's.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to be up here to say a few words about an individual. I am the new kid on the block. I just got elected not too long ago. I said, who is RON PACKARD? But, you know what, since I have gotten to know RON PACKARD, basically he reached out and touched the lives of many of us.

You may think the type of relationship he built here on a bipartisan is very important. I know we are going to miss you. I know I am going to miss you, since I am relatively new here. I know, not only because you are on the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Subcommittee on Energy and Water, but what you have done throughout the area is you really have left a legacy for many other individuals in the community, because truly your legislation and your policies have been bipartisan, in the interests of California, in the interests of the Nation.

That is important for people to remember when they look at a legislator

that is serving us. That is why not only is he well liked and loved in his district, but throughout the Nation and by many of us. You truly are a leader, a visionary, an individual who cares about not only our communities as a whole, and in your district, but you are an individual that is willing to listen on a bipartisan basis and say what is important for our Nation, what is important for California, and take action, which is very important on a bipartisan basis.

As the new kid on the block, I find that very energizing, I find that very enthusiastic, and I find that very motivating, because it is important to get motivated. Everybody told me, when you come up here, JOE, it is going to be so partisan. I found out that not everything is so partisan. Sometimes, yes, but there are individuals that are not, and you truly have developed a kind of friendship and you have opened the doors to many individuals to say what is it that you have to say that is good for California, what is it that is good for all of us. If it is good, I am willing to listen. That kind of relationship and kind of friendship, there is no dollar value that you can put on it.

It truly has been an honor to be your friend and know you this short period of time. I wish you were here longer. But I know that you left a legacy, not only the legacy in policy, but the legacy in golf. You truly are one individual that has been an outstanding golfer. A lot of us are going to try to follow in the same footsteps, and hopefully we can. Thank you very much for serving the State of California and our Nation.

Mr. MCKEON. I yield to the gentleman from San Diego, California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank JOE BACA, a Member from the other side of the aisle, for giving tribute to someone that we cherish very, very much.

You know, RON PACKARD was a write-in, and what a rich legacy he gave the constituents of North County. Much of the district I now represent was RON's former district, and his legacy was hard to keep up with. As a matter of fact, when I go up there, they used to tell me, well, "RON didn't do it that way, DUKE." But RON gave me a lot of guidance.

RON PACKARD, DUNCAN HUNTER, myself and BRIAN BILBRAY represent North County, San Diego and San Diego City, both on authorization and appropriations, and I want to thank you for your leadership and what you were able to help us with. Not only from the appropriations, but RON also knows how to breach partisanship and work with Members on the other side, as you just witnessed with JOE BACA.

But he is no nonsense, and his style is that of a grandfather to a child. If you were bad on this House floor, or very partisan, RON, through his leadership, was not above going after somebody that was partisan. He was also

not afraid to call for removal of the President or a cabinet member when he thought it was within his value system, and he had the strength of a leader to carry that through.

RON loved public service. He loved his wife, Jean, and his family, but his family might be described as a covey, a herd, a flock, or just maybe a large group. RON has seven children, 34 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, the last we heard; and I am sure that that number is going to go up.

But I think it also shows the competitiveness of RON PACKARD. I would like to give a story off the Hill. RON does love golf, with a passion, and if he loses a dime, I mean, he frets for a week if he loses a dime. He is a fierce competitor. As a matter of fact, right there where he is sitting at this moment he was sitting with DUNCAN HUNTER one night.

Now, RON is a very good golfer, in the 70s or 90s. DUNCAN HUNTER is of equal caliber, in the 70s or 80s. I am lucky to break 100, so I am always asking for strokes on the golf course on the weekends from these two rascals, but they will not give it. Sometimes they cave in.

They were discussing something, and I was sitting behind them waiting for them to finish. Come to find out, they were plotting on Saturday when we went to the Old Soldiers Home golf course, both of them were going to show up with their arms in slings so they would not have to give me a stroke a hole that game.

Well, they did not see me slip out behind, they did not know the stealthiness of one Member; and, when we showed up, I had my arms in two slings, so they had to give me a stroke a hole.

But I thought I would share this letter. I thought enough of this, I got this just a couple of years ago from RON, to show you what a competitor he is. I would like to read it. He says, "Dear DUKE, you can have my wife, you can have my children, my grandchildren, my house, my car, my good name, but never, never, never, ever a stroke a hole. Signed, RON PACKARD."

God bless you, RON. We love you.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to be here tonight to honor RON PACKARD. It is not a happy occasion, however. It is not happy, and it does not make me happy and does not make us happy that we will not have RON PACKARD with us to help us and to guide us and direct us and to cheer us in the years ahead in this body.

We will remain friends, we will remain people who respect RON PACKARD forever, but we will sorely miss you. This is something that I say from the heart.

RON has been a father figure, especially for those of us in the Republican Party and the Republican delegation

from Orange County. He has been truly a father figure, a kind father. He has been a hard-working father, he has been a caring father, and he has been a wise father, and all of the things you think of when you think about a good man and a person of integrity, of strength, that is what you think of, that is what we think of, the people who have worked with him so many years and relied upon his strength of character and his cheerfulness, that is what we think of when we think of RON PACKARD.

RON started his career as a dentist. I always find it is fascinating to talk to people, as I have spoken to RON for many hours, about what they did in the previous career before actually coming here to Washington, D.C. Actually I know it is hard to say you were thrilled to hear stories of his dentistry, but it made him a real human being to me, and realizing you could actually go into a dentist's office and have RON PACKARD there, you know, him leaning over you and saying this is going to hurt me as much as it is you, and you realize that is really true; that RON is such a sympathetic person and empathetic with people, that he was as a dentist and a human being was very successful outside of the political arena.

Also we know that RON PACKARD served in the Armed Forces. I know he has several stories which he will not tell in public about the Armed Forces. He served his country and he had a good time doing it, but he also was very dedicated to his country. RON is the true image of a Patriot, of an American Patriot. American patriots, some of us in the conservative movement think patriots are the solemn guys and just repeating slogans about the country. RON is an honest, honest patriotic person. He is an American, a true American, and you can sense that in his heart.

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How one can tell that this is so evident, not only to us, but to his constituents, as has been mentioned here several times, RON did not win his first race right off the bat. RON won a write-in race. Now, with a name like ROHRABACHER, I can tell my colleagues that that would have been absolutely impossible, but even with a name like PACKARD, which anybody can spell, it has only happened 4 times in the entire history of the United States Congress.

Why did this happen? What was the issue which made people in his district take the time to fill out that name? What was it that motivated them? What was the crying need that said, we need RON PACKARD in that first election? It was one word, and the word is integrity. The people in his district knew that they needed integrity and they called out for it and they knew that RON PACKARD was the candidate, even though they had to go out of the way and do more work to get him in by writing his name in, to get him in this

position. Of course, since then he has been winning every election by huge majorities.

As a Member of Congress and the dean of the Orange County delegation, he has given all of us direction. We have looked at his hard work, we have looked at his fairness and his willingness always to lend a helping hand to others on both sides of the aisle, and yes, to give advice. We look at those things as a role model for the rest of us. I came in in 1988 and RON was already a veteran. I will have to say that what he has offered us and offered me personally has been very, very advantageous. He has given me a lot of professional guidance on how I should be operating here as a Member of Congress, but he has also served as a role model and given professional advice, or I should say personal advice.

RON is a model for us, both professionally and personally. RON, I might add, in the last election showed his values and showed how important values are to him by taking a lead in California in trying to pass the Save the Family or Protect the Family Act, which is basically designed to protect the institution of the family in California. Also, the efforts he has made to make sure that the Boy Scouts are not forced into lowering their moral standards or giving up the word "God" in their scout oath.

Mr. Speaker, I was just married 3 years ago, and I will close with this. I hope that I have as much happiness in my life and that it shows on my face and in my life as much as RON's family life and the happiness and joy that he has had has had on his life, because he has been a shining example to all of us of what marriage and what love between people is all about. We will miss you, RON. Your presence will not be forgotten; it will shine on as long as the rest of us are here. Thank you very much for all you have done for us and for what you have done for the United States of America.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I feel compelled to be very kind to RON, because as I have been listening to some of my other colleagues who are going to follow me, I think that this will end up as something other than a love fest. I have just heard a story that has not been shared with me that in fact our colleagues will get to hear from my dear friend and classmate, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) in a few minutes about RON's earlier life.

So let me take a couple of minutes and be very kind. I know that many people focus on the divisiveness that exists here in the Congress and the partisan antipathy that regularly goes on, but there is, in fact, a camaraderie. Then, when we look at the California congressional delegation, the California delegation is known for being

extraordinarily divisive: Californians all hate each other; the Democrats and Republicans do not get along; the Republicans are all divided; the Democrats are all divided. If the truth were to be known, we rally, and RON PACKARD was key to putting together the kind of solidarity which we frankly do enjoy today.

I will always remember many late-night meetings which members of the California congressional delegation held, and RON PACKARD was always there. He had as a top priority bringing our delegation together, and he was key to that effort.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard about his wife, Jean, and this huge family, and he is the only guy I know who will actually look you in the eye and say that he does not know the names of some of his relatives. Somebody talked about the fact that he has a number of grandchildren and 7 children, and that when they have family reunions, the Packards have hundreds, I think it may be even thousands, who gather together for family reunions. It is a very, very impressive family that he has. I hope one day he gets to meet all of them.

I will say that when we look at the work that he has done on the Subcommittee on Energy and Water, most recently, I have to say that this very soft-spoken dentist, the former mayor of Carlsbad, has stood up in meetings, and now that he is getting ready to leave, I think I can share this, that he has made it very clear that if Members of Congress have been fortunate enough to have their issues that are priorities for them included in legislation, they had better vote for the legislation. RON very calmly, very firmly makes that statement, and he does it with a kind of confidence that only a powerful cardinal can exercise around here.

So we are going to miss RON. The gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and I were just talking about the fact that RON is our junior colleague. We had the privilege of coming here with Ronald Reagan back in 1980 and then, as many have said, RON shocked the world of being the person, I guess the fourth, to win that famous write-in election, and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) has all kinds of stories about that write-in election that he will probably share with us.

So let me just say to RON and Jean, his wonderful wife who has stood by him, and I have had the privilege of traveling with them and spending time with other members of their family, they will be sorely missed. The California delegation has come together in large part due to the commitment that RON PACKARD made to that goal, and I shall always be grateful to him for that.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to another strong member of our delegation, the gentleman from California (Mr. OSE).

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my thanks also to Mr. PACKARD

who has done so much during his 18 years here in this body for the State of California and everybody not only who lives in his district, but in mine and in Mr. MCKEON's, Mr. HUNTER's, Mr. DREIER's, and others. I know the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) has some great stories that are coming. We have heard them in our luncheons and been regaled with them. They are good. I hope that they are presented and taken in the spirit of camaraderie that we have.

RON has a quiet leadership style that, as the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) said, members of both sides of the aisle appreciate and, frankly, rally around. He has been very fair to all members, regardless of party affiliation. Frankly, I have only been here for just about 2 years now, but in my short time, I have tried to emulate his qualities: humility, fairness, honesty, accountability, and, frankly, the integrity that just comes. If one gets the chance to work with RON, it just comes out. It is just so clear. His qualities have won him many friends and admirers here in Washington and in California, as we can see from him being returned 8 times from his initial election.

Mr. Speaker, on the Subcommittee on Energy and Water, Mr. PACKARD has provided critical assistance for the safety of Americans across the Nation and particularly for Californians and specifically for people who live in the Sacramento area. He understands our challenges along the Sacramento River and the American River, and his work has led to a significant increase in the level of flood protection for the people that live in my area, and for this I am grateful. It makes a difference.

Mr. Speaker, RON PACKARD, as others have said, is very devoted to his family, which is and always has been his most important priority in life. As he takes his bride, Jean, and returns to California and leaves this august body, I know that he will enjoy spending time again with them in the manner in which perhaps every one of us should, and devoting more time to those that he loves as family members. I say to the gentleman, I appreciate your leadership and guidance, and you will be missed. Godspeed.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), a colleague of Mr. PACKARD's on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I too rise this evening to pay tribute to RON PACKARD, who I consider to be a distinguished statesman from the State of California, and on this occasion of his retirement at the end of the 106th Congress, I wish him well.

I have known RON and I have known his wife, Jean. I have not known the 7 children and, I believe, 34 grandchildren and the great grandchildren, but that will come. I have had the

pleasure to travel with he and Jean on some CODELS, I would not say around the world, but certainly to various parts of the world, and we have had I think some very interesting experiences on those trips and I have gotten to know he and Jean. We find that his dedication to his family and to his church is very, very strong. It is unwavering. The fact that he is a dentist and that he moved from being a dentist into Congress is a little bit of a change, I guess, but others do the same from the field of medicine, so that is not so unusual. But he has made the change and he has done it, as somebody has already said, several members have mentioned the fact that he was only the fourth member, only the fourth in history to actually come to the House via the write-in process. I never believed anybody could get here by the write-in process, but RON did. The residents of his district in southern California have seen fit to send him back to Washington, and by overwhelming majorities, every election since, back to 1982. I think well they should, because RON PACKARD has been a respected and dedicated member of this House ever since.

He has served his California constituents well. Not only that, he has served the Nation well, and that includes his service in the Navy and his time as the mayor of Carlsbad, California and, of course, the 18 years here in the House.

As we know, RON PACKARD is the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Energy and Water, and it has been my privilege to serve with him on that committee as well as on the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations for the past few years. He has also served, as we know, on the Subcommittee on Military Construction and the Subcommittee on Legislative Appropriations, as well as his efforts on the Subcommittee on Transportation.

I can assure my colleagues that the Energy and Water bill is no easy task, and let me say a little bit about why. It was only through RON's tireless dedication and self sacrifice that made difficult matters appear mundane. Energy and Water runs the gamut of issues, hitting upon matters of national and energy security. That bill provides vital important funding for such items as the Nation's stockpile stewardship, Cold War weapons plant cleanup and energy supply, only to name a few. But here is the part that gets tough. It not only funds hundreds, even thousands, of local water priorities performed by the Corps of Engineers and conducted in just about every Member's district, and the member from California has brought balance, he has brought common sense in approaching the Energy and Water bill discussions during his tenure. In fact, this year, RON PACKARD had to deal with some 3,000 requests. Now, those were not all Member requests, but a good many were and the rest came from a variety of sources. All of these have to come before the committee, all have to be dealt with. His hard work and dedication resulted in a

timely and reasonable piece of legislation that covered all of those bases, and it took patience and it took thoughtfulness and it took courtesy, and he had all of those qualities to meet and deal with people and with their requests.

RON PACKARD's retirement will leave a set of shoes that will be difficult, if not impossible, to fill. Mr. Speaker, I think I echo the sentiments of all of the Members who have spoken here this evening in saying that this gentleman will certainly be missed.

I am certain that RON will make good use of his time in the coming months. I can only guess that golf courses around the country will be richer, will be the richer for it. RON, congratulations to you and to Jean. Enjoy your retirement, and thank you very much.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to another good friend of RON's and a member of the California delegation (Mr. DOOLITTLE).

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Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) for organizing this special order.

RON is obviously someone who is looked upon very favorably here in the House and who is a friend to all. And in the frenetic pace that we have, we do not take time to stop and pause upon the contributions of any given individual until the time of his or her retirement.

It is unfortunate that it is that way, but at least we do have this occasion to pause for that moment, and many things have been said. RON has a very interesting life and a number of significant accomplishments.

I just want to provide just two or three brief snapshots of my encounters with RON. When I was a brand-new Member here, 10 years ago, I would take the Metro in; and so if we stayed late at night, although I could have taken the Metro back out, RON lived out near us, and he was kind enough to give me a ride.

So he introduced me to an interesting way of getting home. But the best way, and I always take it whenever I am driving, and that is you go down 395 South. You get off at Maine Avenue. You go past the Jefferson and Vietnam Veterans and Lincoln Memorials right along the Potomac River.

There are quite a few little turns you have to know how to make, but you end up going up over the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge looking past the Kennedy Center, and you are on 66 West. And, RON, every time I go that way I have you to thank for that. I think of you. I think of you every single time. I do think of you teaching me how to get home that way.

We have another thing that is somewhat unusual. When we were not back in our districts and happened to be here for the weekend, RON and I were members of the same congregation, the Oakton Ward of The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter Day Saints. And RON served for many days for the instructor of priesthood group.

I might add ORRIN and Elaine HATCH are members of that ward. And Jean, of course. RON and Jean's daughter Lisa. We miss them, I must say, as they have been wrapping up their affairs and making the transition completely back to California.

They have moved back with their family, and we do not see RON so much in that capacity, but we did see him there this last Sunday.

Anyway, I treasure those memories.

Lastly, but not least and most directly related to our legislative life, I had the privilege of working with RON on a very important issue to California, the subject of water and specifically, the subject of cow fed. RON is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and as we all know, there is an appropriations subcommittee that handles the money to be spent for each of the different policy committees.

The policy subcommittee that I chair is the Subcommittee on Water and Power. And so we worked rather closely together on this very contentious issue of water, and that is really not resolved as of this moment and will be taken up in the next Congress.

But I do want to say this, rather than simply doing whatever he liked as the appropriations chairman, because frankly, if that power is used in that fashion, legislating on appropriations bills can occur and can occur contrary to whatever the policy committee would like to have happen. I do not think that that is appropriate, but it occasionally happens around here.

It did not happen with RON and his subcommittee, and I really value, RON, how closely you worked with us and the authorizers to try to reach an accommodation on that. You and I and our committees were together, but not all the parties in this process were, and so it has not worked out yet; but you certainly gave it the maximum effort. I am convinced the foundation that we laid will eventually be built upon to resolve this problem.

Lastly, the last personal snapshot, as you heard what a great golfer RON is, and I think he is one of the best in the House. But he and his wife also love games, board games, and we had a couple of delightful evenings over the years enjoying those experiences together as couples.

So I want to say thank you. We will miss you, and Godspeed in your new endeavors.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from San Diego, California (Mr. HUNTER), another good friend.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) for putting this special order together, and we talked about the serious side of RON I think a little too much tonight. I need to tell you a couple of stories about this guy.

The first story is, a number of people have talked about his patriotic service to the Nation as a Naval officer, indeed, a dentist; and there is one story that is floating around Southern California about a certain dentist who was seeing a large number of recruits. They were running them through pretty rapidly, filling teeth, pulling a few here and there and getting them in shape to go overseas.

RON and his cohort there, the other dentist who worked in the office, decided they would have a little fun. It involved a new technique, the technique of utilizing dynamite to remove bad teeth. So they had a rather large, naive young man who was in the chair, a little bit apprehensive about this dental work that was to begin.

RON very ceremoniously opened up a large volume, a big book; and he said we are going to try the new blasting technique on your teeth. I hope you like it. It is experimental, and RON proceeded to take a piece, a little roll of gauze that he dipped in iodine that looked like a miniature dynamite stick.

And as this horrified recruit, who had been promised good dental care in the U.S. Navy, lay back in that chair with just a look of horror on his face, RON inserted this small stick of dynamite under one of the molars or on top of one of his molars, he looked back at the book and he said it now says we have to attach the fuse, and he pulled out a piece of dental floss, which if you light it will in fact fizzle and sputter and acted something like a fuse, then he plugged the fuse into the small stick of dynamite that was laying on top of a now horrified recruit's back molar.

RON then, a very, very solemn man. We all know RON can be a solemn person. When RON is solemn we all get solemn, and he very solemnly skipped a few lines in the book, and he says to his friend, his fellow dentist, that we have to take cover. So they led the fuse over behind the desk and got down behind the desk; and RON then lit the fuse, and as this fuse sputtered and fizzled and the flame, the spark got closer and closer to this young recruit, the recruit got more and more agitated, as you may imagine, and finally leaped up with a squeak and raced out of the office.

RON was required shortly thereafter to visit the commanding officer. And this is pure RON PACKARD. He has gotten away with stuff all of his life. He very solemnly went in and began to explain what had happened very truthfully, and his commanding officer wanted to be very severe, but after RON had gone about halfway through the story, his commanding officer could not help himself, and he burst out laughing.

He finally just admonished RON and his colleague to get out of there, so they left. They promised not to harass any more recruits, and that is one of my favorite Navy stories.

But that epitomizes the sense of humor that RON has and RON has car-

ried that sense of humor over to today. In fact, he has a great sense of humor. He actually told the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) and I we had good golf swings before he proceeded to take us for a small wager, of course not illegal; but we have had a lot of fun out there playing golf.

RON is a fairly tight-fisted guy. I had an opportunity to actually make a hole-in-one in a golf tournament that my colleagues played in, and I thought I would get a car. But I was informed that since RON was running the tournament, I would not get any car. And I think I got just a couple of dollars for making this fabulous hole-in-one, even though another member of the conference then got a very nice car after he made a hole-in-one a couple of tournaments later.

RON wanted to present me with my car this year, which I understand was a small model about 5 inches long; so, RON, I want to get that as soon as possible.

My other favorite story about RON PACKARD involves his family, and it involves where he comes from in that great area of the Snake River Plains in Idaho, where people work from dawn to dark and have a tremendous work ethic and where everybody looks the other guy right straight in the eye and where literally a big piece of American wilderness was carved into a very productive land, and that is where RON and his 16 brothers and sisters, 14 boys and 3 girls, grew up near Meridian, Idaho, and the Snake River Plains there.

His father was working for Morrison, Knudson just prior to the Japanese bombing in Pearl Harbor in World War II, and he was on Wake Island. He was working as a civilian worker. When Wake Island was taken shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor he was captured by the Japanese. His father became a POW.

I think what his father did in that POW camp represents the character that RON took on, and that has followed him all of his life, and that is that RON's dad who became a POW was taken on one of the so-called hell ships to Japan and treated very brutally, helped to take care of the other POWs.

He became the historian of the POW camp, and he wrote down the history of all of the members of that POW camp, and he kept a log on what happened to them. As you know, 30 percent of our POWs were killed in World War II that were incarcerated in Japan.

He hid that little history, as I recall, in a piece of bamboo. And when he came back to the States, he made sure that he contacted every family that had a loved one in that POW camp and gave them the history of their loved one, who in most cases did not make it back or in many cases did not make it back before he went back to his own family, and then like RON PACKARD, he told them, all the kids, what had happened, and then he talked very little about it. And that is RON.

He is the kind of guy who has got great character, a great caring and

does not dwell on himself a lot. We have had little cabals, as the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) said in the California delegation. I like a good cabal myself, and a good secret meeting; RON PACKARD is a guy that likes to bring people together and likes to put oil in the water and bring out the best in everyone.

He really epitomizes what is best about this Congress. He has got a good heart. He looks you in the eye. He helps you whenever he can, and he is a great citizen. And I cannot help but think that it was that upbringing that the 17 boys and girls, 14 boys and 3 girls, on the Snake River Plains of Idaho and all that hard work that they had to endure and keeping that family going without a father that made RON PACKARD what he is.

We have been better for his presence. God bless you, RON.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to another good friend of Mr. PACKARD's, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), who served with him on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I sat in my office listening to speeches being made, and I thought to myself how many times I had shared in private conversations with so many people both in this Congress and outside, how much admiration and respect I had for RON PACKARD. I thought to myself, maybe this is a good time to share with the world at large exactly what some of my feelings are for him.

Mr. Speaker, I met RON first when I showed up to play in one of his golf tournaments, and I think when he saw me, he thought maybe I had strayed on to the wrong golf course. But we struck up a relationship on that day; and some time after that, I was elected by my party to serve on the Committee on Appropriations and of course I sought a seat on the Committee on Energy and Water Development, and much to my pleasant surprise, I found out that RON PACKARD was the Chair of that subcommittee.

I cannot think of anybody with whom I have worked since being in this body that I felt more fairly treated than the time I spent on that subcommittee. And of course, I took leave from the committee and am still on leave from that committee and his subcommittee. We still find time to interact with each other.

Quite frankly, I am not too sure he didn't treat me more fairly in my absence than he would have if I had been there to argue my case in person. But this past Members golf tournament I had the opportunity to play in a foursome with RON PACKARD, and I always thought of how much I admired and respected him, until that day when he politely taught me just how much better a golfer he is than I am, but he did it in such a way that I really enjoyed that thumping you gave me on that day.

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But all of that aside, as I said earlier, in this body, I think, as some things

get contentious, we often plead our partisan cases in such a way that even we are often not proud of how we have done it. But I have never seen an instance when my interaction with RON PACKARD was not of the highest regards for each other.

I wanted to come to the floor tonight and say how much I appreciate serving with him, how much I appreciate my friendship with him, and to wish him Godspeed in all that is before him in life and let him know that, if ever he comes to South Carolina, I want to repay that thumping on the golf course that he gave me not too long ago. I thank him and Godspeed.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Orange County, California (Mr. COX), one of the leaders of our California delegation.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California very much for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I want to join with this distinguished group of Members on both sides of the aisle in paying tribute to my friend and our colleague, this great national leader from Southern California, RON PACKARD.

I, too, have enjoyed listening to the stories tonight on the floor, and I hope the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) has, too. There are many to tell about a man whose time here in Congress has done so much to improve our national life and to improve this institution.

RON and Jean and their seven children and their 34 grandchildren are a family that the Packards have made us all feel a part of. I have met some, but not all of the Packard family. Perhaps someday I will be able to do that. But the family members that I have been introduced to and I have met are fine men and women that say a lot about RON and Jean.

I have my own much younger family. It seems to me, given the natural limits to mortal life, I can never catch up. But I know from the task of being a father what a measure of our own worth that is. That is one and only one, a big one, area of RON's life in which he has set an example for the rest of us.

When I first came to Congress, I had the opportunity to serve on the Public Works and Transportation Committee with my neighbor in Orange County to the south, RON PACKARD. RON was and is an expert in aviation, served on that as well as other subcommittees in the Congress, and continued to have even greater influence in that area on the Committee on Appropriations where, as has been remarked upon several times tonight, he is a cardinal, a term of reverence, well deserved in his case for someone who wields extraordinary power of the purse in our constitutional system.

I have had the opportunity even to have some vacation dinners with RON and Jean. Rebecca and I have shared a nice meal at some romantic spots in Hawaii together and gotten to know

RON in that way personally, and it has been a lot of fun. I hope we have the opportunity to continue to do that even after he retires, because we are Southern California neighbors.

It has been mentioned because it is such an extraordinary fact of RON's career here how he got here in the first place, one of only four Americans in our national history to come to this people's House as a write-in candidate.

It is extraordinary in a time in election season right now when we are all talking about campaign finance reform and the nefarious influence of special interests to think about what this means in RON's case. RON got here in exactly the opposite way, not because of special interests, not because he was even the nominee of a major party. He was not. He had to run against the Democratic nominee, run against the Republican nominee as an individual. He was RON PACKARD first and became the party's standard bearer thereafter because the people wrote him in.

RON PACKARD and I share another distinction that I am very proud of. Possibly this means more to a Republican than a Democrat. But RON and I are the only Members to have our legislation become law, notwithstanding the veto of President Clinton, in two full terms of the Clinton administration: in my case, the Securities Litigation Reform Act; in his case something even more important, I have to say, and that is rebuilding our Nation's military.

Because as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Construction of our Committee on Appropriations, he put before this House what was necessary to rebuild our military, to provide the resources that armed services needed. He convinced our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. They voted to support his legislation. The same was true down the corridor in the other body, the United States Senate.

We sent that legislation to the President. When the President made the rare decision to cast a veto that he should not have, the Congress reacted quickly and supported RON PACKARD, even against the wishes of the President of the United States, because they knew he was supporting the United States military and that he was right.

Now, it should be said about a Republican who serves on the Committee on Appropriations that there are temptations. The whole term limits movement has a reason in America because of those temptations, because people who serve too long in Washington find it too easy to spend other people's money on pork barrel projects, on wasteful Washington ways. Sometimes they forget about the people back home. It is sad to say that temptation is strongest when one is closest to the money on the committee charged with spending it, the Committee on Appropriations in the House and in the Senate.

So how honored have we been as American citizens to be served by a

chairman on the Committee on Appropriations who took his trust so seriously that, in discharging it, he actually reduced spending.

When RON PACKARD first became a chairman on the Committee on Appropriations in 1995, he quickly sent a bill to the floor of the House of Representatives that did not just cut spending for the benefit of taxpayers, it cut spending at home where, presumably, it would hurt Members of Congress themselves most, in our own legislative budget. He cut spending by Congress on itself by fully one-third, an extraordinary achievement when we had a new majority, a new Congress, under the leadership of RON PACKARD.

In fact, throughout his career in the majority as a cardinal, as a chairman on the Committee on Appropriations, RON PACKARD has been garnering awards, not for bringing home the bacon, but from such groups as Americans for Tax Reform, which rated him a taxpayer's hero, and the National Taxpayers Union, which rated RON PACKARD an appropriator and a chairman and a cardinal in the top 5 percent of people in this entire Congress interested in cutting spending.

This is an extraordinary accomplishment and something, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) can not only be proud of, but that all of his colleagues here are proud of. He has made us all proud. Everything that he has done in his career, even before he came to Congress, as a local leader, as a mayor, as a member of the city council, as a dentist with his own practice has distinguished him.

But in this Congress for 18 years, everyone on both sides of the aisle, as the gentleman is hearing tonight from his friends, has found him to be scrupulously honest in his dealings, to be always fair, and, just as importantly, to be hard working and is represented by the fact that he got here as a write-in candidate, a citizen legislator. The gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) is, in short, everything that a Member of Congress should be, everything a national leader should be.

It is well said that ours is a government of, by and for the people. The for and by parts are very important. But remember that it is also a government of the people, and that this Congress, which manufacturers nothing, is simply the sum of the people who populate it, the people who were chosen by the voters to come back here.

Therefore, by being who he has been, the fine gentleman that he has been and is, the leader that he has been, the exemplar that he has been for all of us, he have improved this institution, the people's House. The Congress of the United States and thus our country is the better for it.

It has been a privilege to know the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) and to work with him, and I look forward to continuing our friendship in the years ahead.