

in saluting this heroic man and extending our condolences and gratitude to his wife Debbie, son, Christopher, daughter, Lori, step-son, Bryan, father, Albert, his beloved dog, Cassie Earlene, and the Independence Police Department.

TRIBUTE TO ROY F. NARD

**HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2001*

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today, I am deeply saddened to share the news of the passing of Roy F. Nard.

Roy F. Nard was born on May 28, 1923 to James A. and Mary E. Parrish Nard. Besides his wife, formerly Virginia A. Smith, whom he married in 1948, he is survived by two sons, Roy F. Jr. and Kenneth Sr.; a daughter, Barbara Sepesy; and five grandchildren. Mr. Nard's two brothers, Michael and James, are deceased.

Roy worked for 35 years as a roll turner for Youngstown Sheet & Tube and LTV Steel prior to his retirement in 1979. Not only was he a contributing member of the Youngstown community, but also a loyal servant to his country. A veteran of World War II, he served in the elite Ranger Division and fought for our nation's freedom.

He had a tremendous love for America's pastime, baseball. He devoted much of his time to coaching and managing teams in the Kiwanis Little League and Youngstown Pony League. A man with vision, Roy co-founded the Youngstown Babe Ruth Baseball League. In addition to this accomplishment, he was a member of Ohio Football High School Officials Association for 22 years.

His passion for sports drove him to volunteer as an assistant baseball coach and equipment manager for the football team at Cardinal Mooney for 16 years. His remarkable contributions to the school's athletic programs were rewarded in 1996 with his induction into the Cardinal Mooney Hall of Fame.

The lives of many were enriched by Mr. Nard's life. He always took the time to make people feel extra special with a kind word or a warm smile. He was a wonderful friend and all who knew him looked up to him. Roy F. Nard will be sorely missed by the Youngstown community. I extend my deepest sympathy to his family.

HONORING KENNETH CARPENTER

**HON. PETER DEUTSCH**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2001*

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the lifetime achievements of one of Florida's most active nature enthusiasts. Kenneth Carpenter, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and businessman, died Monday, February 5, 2001 at his home in Oakland Park at the age of 88. Mr. Carpenter was a lifelong outdoorsman and devoted countless hours to developing a 65 mile section of the Florida National Scenic Trail. He will be dearly missed by his community.

Mr. Carpenter was born on September 14, 1912 in Synder, Illinois and married Thelma Danner on September 11, 1935. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1936 with a degree in education and then obtained his master's of arts degree from Ohio State University in 1937. He was a dedicated teacher whose career was interrupted twice so he could serve his country in World War II and the Korean War.

After retiring from the armed forces in 1961, Mr. Carpenter moved to Ft. Lauderdale and opened an auto supply store and later became a residential realtor. However, he gave up all of his business affairs to devote the rest of his life to canoeing and hiking the Florida and Appalachian Trails, a feat he accomplished at 78. Mr. Carpenter was a trail coordinator for the Broward County chapter of the Florida Trail Association and even during his struggle with cancer continued to make plans and attend meetings concerning the Florida Trail. Further treks have lead him to Peru, Colorado, Minnesota, Utah, and the Yukon. Mr. Speaker, Broward County will be forever grateful for the trails blazed by Mr. Carpenter, and will dearly miss his community leadership.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 1289: THE REGISTERED NURSES AND PATIENTS PROTECTION ACT

**HON. TOM LANTOS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2001*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today with my distinguished colleagues, JAMES MCGOVERN of Massachusetts and HILDA SOLIS of California, I introduced H.R. 1289—legislation that would restrict the ability of hospitals, including hospitals operated by the Veterans' Administration, to require registered nurses to work mandatory overtime hours as a normal course of business. Increasingly, hospitals and other employers in the health care field are requiring their employees to work overtime. Our legislation—the Registered Nurses and Patients Protection Act—would stop that unsafe and exploitative practice.

The Fair Labor Standards Act grants nurses the right to receive overtime compensation even though they are licensed professionals, but it does not limit the amount of overtime that nurses can work, nor does it permit them to refuse mandatory overtime. Our legislation would change that inequity. Under our bill, mandatory overtime for licensed health care employees (excluding physicians) would be prohibited. The bill amends the Fair Labor Standards Act to prohibit mandatory overtime beyond 8 hours in a single work day or 80 hours in any 14 day work period. The legislation provides an exception in cases of a natural disaster or a declaration of emergency by federal, state or local government officials. Voluntary overtime is also exempted.

Mr. Speaker, no employer should be allowed to force an employee to work overtime or face termination, unless there is a situation that requires immediate emergency action. In other cases, employees should have the right to refuse overtime. If workers are physically and psychologically able to work additional hours, that should be their choice; it should not be the decision of a supervisor or hospital administrator.

In the health care field, the issue is not just employees' rights. More importantly, it is an issue of patient safety. When nurses are forced to put in long overtime hours on a regular basis against their own better judgment, it puts patients at risk. A nurse should not be on the job after the 15th or 16th consecutive hour, especially after he or she has told a supervisor "I can't do this, I've been on the job too many hours today."

Mr. Speaker, nursing is a physically and mentally demanding occupation. By the end of a regular shift a nurse is exhausted. Health care experts and common sense tell us that long hours take a toll on mental alertness, and mandatory overtime under such conditions can result in inadvertent and unintentional medical mistakes—medication errors, transcription errors, and judgment errors. When a nurse is tired, it is much more difficult to deliver quality, professional care to patients. Increasingly, however, nurses are being forced to work 16, 18, or even 20 consecutive hours in hospitals all across our nation.

Studies have shown that when a worker (especially a health care worker) exceeds 12 hours of work, and is fatigued, the likelihood that he or she will make an error increases. A report of the Institute of Medicine on medication errors substantiates these common sense assumptions. The report states that safe staffing and limits on mandatory overtime are essential components to prevent medication errors.

An investigative report by The Chicago Tribune found that patient safety was sacrificed when reductions in hospital staff resulted in registered nurses working long hours of overtime because they were more likely to make serious medical errors. The report found that nursing services were deliberately cut in order to preserve historic profit levels.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to report that this legislation has broad support from the individuals most involved in this matter and the associations and organizations that represent them. These include the American Nurses Association (ANA), the California Nurses Association (CNA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Black Nurses Association and others. It is also supported by the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), which represents nurses and health care workers at our nation's veterans' hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, we need to give nurses more power to decide when overtime hours hurt their job performance. A nurse knows better than anyone—better than his or her supervisor and certainly better than a profit-driven hospital administrator—when he or she is so exhausted that continuing to work could jeopardize the safety of patients. You don't have to be a brain surgeon to know that forcing nurses to work 12 or 16 hours at a time is a prescription for bad health care.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to allow hospitals to force nurses to work so many hours that the health and safety of patients are put at risk. I urge my colleagues to join me as a cosponsor and support the Registered Nurses' and Patient's Protection Act.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE BRUCE F.  
VENTO

**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2001*

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I submit to the RECORD my tribute to a wonderful man; an outstanding Member of this body for 24 years; my Congressman, my teacher, my mentor, and my dear friend—the late Bruce F. Vento.

Because of his leadership the working families of Minnesota—of America—are stronger. Our land and our lakes, our rivers and our streams are cleaner; our air is better. He gave us, our children, and future generations the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and the Minnesota National Wildlife Refuge—thousands and thousands of acres of pristine environment that will fill our lives with weekends where the only sounds we hear will be “the sounds of the canoe paddle dipping, the winds wafting, and the birds singing . . .”

Bruce Vento gave a voice to those without one; a shelter for those without a home, at a time when it was not the popular thing to do so—homeless people, after all, rarely vote. But because of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, families down on their luck, are given a second chance.

Bruce welcomed and worked tenaciously to bring our newest neighbors fully into our community—the Lao-Hmong. Because he did so, St. Paul and our State is a richer, more tolerant, and more prosperous community.

Bruce Vento was the very embodiment of public service; a civics lesson personified. Each day he rose without fanfare, “to make people’s lives better, to provide opportunity—to give them hope.”

When I first met Bruce, he was my Congressman. He quickly became a friend and a mentor to a young Mom who sought to make a difference in her community. Bruce taught by example, and his example was always to do the right thing. We shared a belief that strong communities begin with our families. The essence of Bruce Vento began with his family. His parents, Frank and Anne, to this day speak to their children, grandchildren, and the great grandchildren with the boundless love, caring, and compassion—of their Minnesota family values. Values that helped them raise their eight children to work hard and care deeply.

Bruce always put our families, children, and seniors first. Those of us he represented weren’t his constituents—we were his friends and neighbors. A weekend couldn’t pass that you didn’t run into him having morning coffee at Serlin’s, or getting his hair cut at Falzone’s—or maybe join him for lunch at Yarusso’s. He always had time to listen, and—if you had the time—he would offer some friendly advice, or give some historical perspective. He was, always first, the teacher.

As our career paths crossed, Bruce continued to teach and to mentor all he came in contact with. Even as his days grew shorter, he still chose to teach. He taught all of us what it means to be a truly good and decent man. It would have been so easy, and so understandable, for Bruce to turn inward and treasure his remaining time with his family. Bruce would have none of it. Instead, he recognized his challenge was but another lesson

to be taught—this time in the lessons in living his final days with dignity and grace.

As the accolades poured in for a life committed to public service, you could see the pride his son’s, Michael, Peter, and John took in the adulation an appreciative community and country had for their father. The renaming of his boyhood Eastside school to the Bruce F. Vento Elementary School teaches our newest Eastsiders the value of public service. The Vento Trail, which meanders through the natural creekbed of a St. Paul gone by, affords all of us from the city and the suburbs a respite from our everyday lives. A scholarship fund established by Bruce, himself, will enable our young aspiring science teachers to realize their dreams—and share their knowledge with our future: our children.

Perhaps the most meaningful tribute to this “great man,” who “being a true Eastsider never told us he was,” were the phone calls to the radio call-in shows that brought wishes of good health from his former students of thirty years ago. Each began, “Mr. Vento, you may not remember me—but I was a student of yours, and I just want to tell you what a difference you made in my life . . .” Those touched his heart, and told him to teach one more time the joys, the value, the necessity of giving of one’s self—the essence of Bruce Vento, the public servant.

I am deeply honored and humbled to stand here today as Bruce’s successor. I am committed to represent as ably as this great man did the constituents of Minnesota’s Fourth Congressional District. As I cast my votes here in this august Chamber, I do so with a clear and present knowledge that I do indeed have a guardian angel always and forever guiding me with his compassion, his wisdom and his strength. Forever teaching. Thank you, Bruce.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, four items that capture the essence of Congressman Bruce F. Vento; a man who represented all of us from the Eastside of life who believe that hard work, family values, educational opportunity, and a commitment to a greater community are the keys to a happy and successful life.

[From the Saint Paul Pioneer Press, June 30, 2000]

BRUCE VENTO JUST ANOTHER GUY FROM THE EAST SIDE WHO WENT ON TO DO GREAT THINGS

(By Garrison Kellor)

There was a dinner in Washington, D.C., Tuesday night to honor a guy from St. Paul’s East Side.

The president dropped by and dozens of U.S. representatives, Republicans and Democrats. And at the end, when the guy from the East Side stood up to say his piece, he got a long, long standing ovation. You could have gone around the room and stolen everyone’s dessert, they were so busy applauding him.

U.S. Rep. Bruce Vento, a modest man and a hard worker, is stepping down after 24 years representing the 4th Congressional District, and I must admit I voted for him all these years because I’m a yellow-dog Democrat and he’s a Democrat. So now I’m a little taken aback to see what a good man he is who I unthinkingly supported all these years.

This isn’t how our civics teachers taught us to exercise the franchise, but a person doesn’t have oceans of time to study up on candidates. I sure don’t. I heard Mr. Vento speak once years ago, speak very movingly about the problem of homelessness and about

the importance of wilderness, and that was good enough for me. But if he had stood on his hind legs and barked, I still would have voted for him.

Wilderness preservation and the plight of the homeless are not issues that pay a big political bonus. You become a wilderness advocate and you’re going to be hung in effigy and yelled at by large men in plaid shirts. Homeless people tend not to turn out in numbers at the polls.

But Mr. Vento applied himself to the issues he cared about, did his homework, made the round of his colleagues, carried the water, dug the ditches, fought the good fights, made the compromises, and wrote landmark legislation that became law and that made a real difference in the world. And I’m not sure how many of us in St. Paul are aware of this.

There have been only three congressmen from St. Paul in my memory, and that covers 50 years. Gene McCarthy, Joe Karth, Bruce Vento—all DFLers, all good men and all of them got to Congress on the strength of yellow-dog Democrats like me. They got re-elected simply by doing their job, representing working people, speaking the conscience of the Democratic Party, and applying themselves to the nuts and bolts of Congress.

A political party serves a big function that TV or newspapers can’t. It pulls in idealistic young people, puts them to work in the cause, trains them, seasons them, and gives the talented and the diligent a chance to rise. If it can produce a Bruce Vento, then a party has reason to exist, and if it can’t, then it doesn’t. Simple as that. Then it fades, as the DFL has.

People say it’s inevitable for political parties to fade, part of the loss of the sense of community, blah blah blah, that people are cynical about politics and more interested in lifestyle and media and so forth, but we are poorer for the loss of parties and the devaluation of endorsement.

Bruce Vento never could’ve gotten elected in a media-driven campaign, the sort in which high-priced consultants and media buyers spend 15 million bucks to make the candidate into a beautiful illusion.

Mr. Vento is the wrong man for that kind of politics. His eyebrows are too big; he isn’t cool enough. He is a modest and principled and hard-working guy, but you couldn’t put this over in a 30-second commercial. He managed to get to Congress because there was a strong DFL Party that endorsed him, and so voters like me pulled the lever and gave Mr. Vento the wherewithal to be a great congressman. Which he, being a true East Sider, never told us he was. But which I now think he was.

Unknowingly, we did something great in sending him there. And our partisan loyalty gave him the freedom to take on thankless tasks, like protecting wilderness and dealing with the homeless.

I sat in the back at Mr. Vento’s dinner and thought what a shock it is when you realize that the country is in the hands of people your own age. You go along for years thinking it’s being run by jowly old guys in baggy suits and then you see that the jowly old guys are people you went to school with.

Mr. Vento is about my age, and I feel for him. He is fighting lung cancer and it has taken its toll on him. He looks haggard but game. His three boys were at the dinner in Washington, and their wives, and the event felt like a real valedictory. If Mr. Vento had wanted to make us all cry into our pudding, it wouldn’t have taken much.

But he was upbeat and talking about the future and about national parks and the decoding of the human genome and saying, “All we need to do is take this new knowledge and apply it to public policy,” and