

know when we have ever been within the budget guidelines, and we have done better than normal.

But the impression has been given that somehow this was an unprecedented, terrible thing and it was just Republicans and we jammed it. The unfortunate sad truth is if it was just Republicans, this bill would have failed today because we had a bunch of Republicans who did not back the Republican conference report. What we had were 58 Democrats who voted for this bill. Nearly one-third of the Democratic Party backed a bill that was just described as an awful, bipartisan, unprecedented effort, backed, by the way, by one-third of the Democrats. So I think it is really important to make sure in the RECORD that the things that the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) talked about today were, yes, very tough votes in many cases, took us a while to close the Medicare vote, but, in fact, it was an unprecedented year of accomplishment both in the Committee on Appropriations by the authorizers and in most cases, in almost every case, a bipartisan effort in spite of the fact that often the Democratic leadership pleaded with their Members not to make it bipartisan, but they saw the merits of the bill, and today 58 Democrats voted for this conference report.

I have at times been a critic of some of the drug policies of Europe, and I wanted to rise today and recognize and applaud the European Union for agreeing to toughen antidrug laws and urging actions to end drug tourism on the continent.

After more than 2 years of negotiations, EU ministers reached a landmark agreement on November 27 to toughen antidrug laws and to harmonize the continent's laws to make the bloc more efficient in the fight against illegal drugs. The laws cover all types of drug dealing, ranging from local networks to large-scale international operations.

Under the agreed rules, offering, selling, or producing drugs would be sanctioned with maximum jail terms of at least 1 to 3 years. In cases involving large-scale international drug trafficking, sanctions should be at least 5 to 10 years. Member states also agreed on a declaration stressing the importance of fighting drug tourism.

The EU's united stand against drug abuse strengthens global efforts to prevent drug abuse and to put away drug pushers and others including terrorists who financially benefit from destructive drug addiction. It is disappointing that the EU agreement will allow the so-called "coffee shops" in the Netherlands where marijuana can be legally abused to remain open. I am, however, encouraged that the Netherlands is investigating possible approaches that would end U.S. drug tourism to Amsterdam.

Dutch Justice Minister Piet Hein Donner has stated that the Netherlands Government is considering rules under

which "coffee shops" would only be allowed to sell drugs to Dutch residents as part of its obligation to dissuade tourists from going to Amsterdam for drugs. Under his proposal, only Dutch residents with identity cards would be allowed to use the cannabis cafes. This move would protect Americans visiting Amsterdam from the dangers of engaging in drug abuse. Currently, foreign tourists, including Americans, make up about 40 percent of "coffee shop" sales in Amsterdam, according to the London Times.

I also hope that this agreement will further our international efforts to control the trafficking of ecstasy and other dangerous synthetic drugs. In recent years, traffickers have set up their illegal manufacturing operations in countries, predominantly the Netherlands, and also to some degree in Belgium, in the hopes of avoiding tough penalties if they are caught. This agreement should send a clear signal to the drug cartels that Europe and the U.S. will continue to work together to break up these international drug rings.

Furthermore, I am encouraged that the Netherlands has also agreed to increase its sanctions for the possession of small quantities of marijuana to a year from 1 month. These are important steps in the Netherlands that I hope will eventually lead to stiffer penalties for all drug abuse.

It is increasingly clear that every nation must play a role in educating the public as to why drug abuse is harmful and in preventing drug addiction. As long as one country tolerates the production, sale, or distribution of any illegal drugs, other nations, communities, and families are vulnerable to the threats caused by drug abuse that is easily transported across borders. The EU's commitment to not tolerate drug abuse and drug tourism protects not only the families and communities of Europe but also the families and communities here and elsewhere in the world.

Again, I applaud this agreement and look forward to working with these and other countries to strengthen international drug laws and to protect children from the dangers of drug abuse and addiction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. HARRIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. HARRIS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Ms. WATSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CASE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. WAXMAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. HOLT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOE SKEEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit statements on my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, this is what is called special orders, and it is an opportunity for Members to come to the floor of the House and talk about a particular topic, and today it is our sad duty to honor a friend and colleague of many in this House. Congressman Joe Skeen passed away last night in Roswell, New Mexico, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease, and this is an opportunity tonight for many of his friends to come to honor him.

Mr. Speaker, Joe Skeen retired in January of this year after 22 years of service in the House, and the 2nd District of New Mexico is now represented by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE), my good friend, and I yield to the gentleman from southern New Mexico.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico for organizing this tribute.

The Nation has lost a leader, and New Mexico has lost a friend. Joseph Richard Skeen was born in Roswell, Chaves County, New Mexico, June 30, 1927. He was an Aggie. He attended Texas A&M University and graduated with a bachelor of science degree in 1950. He served the country honorably in the United States Navy from 1945 to 1946, and then I do not know what happened. I think he saw the light because

he joined the United States Air Force Reserve and served from 1949 to 1952. But the real light that he saw in his life was Mary Helen Jones, whom he married November 17, 1945. Their two children, Elisa Livingston, and her son, Ross; Mikell Lee Skeen and his wife, the former Gail Edwards, their two sons, Clint and Tyler, all deserve our thoughts and our prayers.

He began to serve immediately in positions throughout the State that reflected his agriculture desires and his agriculture background. He became a member of the New Mexico State Senate in 1960 and served until 1970. He served as chairman of the New Mexico Republican Party from 1962 to 1965. In 1980 he was just the second candidate to be elected on a write-in vote to the United States House of Representatives. He was elected to attend succeeding terms in Congress and did retire January 3, 2003, at the end of the 107th Congress.

He was the longest-serving Member from New Mexico to the House of Representatives, serving 22 years. Mr. Skeen lost two of the closest gubernatorial races that the State of New Mexico has ever seen in 1974 and again in 1978. Mr. Skeen's seniority, built up by his long tenure in the House of Representatives, accounted for his ranking by Roll Call Magazine in 2000 as one of the ten most powerful Members in the 435-Member U.S. House of Representatives.

Mr. Skeen was the first New Mexico House Member to serve on the House Committee on Appropriations and later served as chairman of two of the most powerful subcommittees that affect New Mexico, the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations and the Interior Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations. Mr. Skeen was influential in the sponsorship, support, and passage of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, one of the premier DOE facilities in the Nation located in the 2nd District of New Mexico. Mr. Skeen was the primary sponsor of many legislative projects benefitting New Mexico State University, New Mexico Tech, Holloman Air Force Base, and White Sands Missile Range. New Mexico began to recognize its favorite son even before today. New Mexico Tech named their library after Joe Skeen. New Mexico State University named their new agriculture research building after Joe and Mary Skeen. Chaves County named their new administrative building after Joe Skeen. The State of New Mexico has named Highway 70 the Joe Skeen Highway.

Mr. Skeen was a strong supporter of rural New Mexico and all its requirements: roads, schools, medical care, electricity, and water and sewage treatment plants. He was impartial when it came to serving the people of New Mexico. He served them all. His offices in New Mexico provided critical

assistance for those people who needed help with Social Security, veterans' medical care programs, immigration assistance, and a host of other government programs and services.

Joe fulfilled his ombudsman role eagerly and efficiently with the help of his capable and effective staffs in Washington, Roswell, and Las Cruces. He was tremendously respected. His friendly demeanor and quiet sense of humor seemed to disarm those folks with grudges and helped all citizens realize that by working together, we can solve the people's problems. Joe used to say, let us talk about what we can agree on and work from there.

Some of the popular quotes in New Mexico from Mr. Skeen were: "The chances of that happening are between slim and none, and slim just left town."

"Do not tell me about what you disagree with me on. Tell me where you and I agree, and let's work from there."

"Before I leave this earth, I hope the Good Lord gives me the opportunity to serve as a member of the majority party in Congress." That opportunity came to Mr. Skeen.

About his ranch he said, "We raise cattle for prestige, and we raise sheep for profit."

And, finally, "I will be forever indebted to those actions of those many citizens who stood in line until midnight to write my name in the congressional ballot. I will never forget and will work hard to make sure their views are heard in the House of Representatives."

The people of New Mexico will never forget Mr. Skeen. He is a man of the people. The people in the 2nd District have expressed their love and concern as I traveled the district this year campaigning to replace Mr. Skeen. And as I won the office, I realized that no one can replace Mr. Skeen. I can simply fill the spot that he was in.

As I took my place in this national Congress and heard from his many friends, I realized that he was just as respected nationally as he was in the State. The State has lost a friend. The Nation has lost a leader. Joe Skeen was our friend.

□ 1845

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the distinguished majority leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman coming down and holding this Special Order in memory of Joe Skeen, and I appreciate the comments of the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE). That was a very wonderfully put eulogy for an incredible man.

I met Joe Skeen for the first time when I first ran for office in 1984 in a primary. It was a big primary, a lot of Republicans running. Joe Skeen came in on my behalf and really did not know me from Adam. He had heard about me. He loved Texas A&M. I

think, with all due respect, he loved Texas as much as he loved New Mexico, because he loved coming to Texas. He came at a particularly tough time in my campaign and just wowed the folks in Houston, Texas.

He wowed them through his incredible wit. He was one of the funniest men I knew. In his wit, he always had a point he was trying to make, and somebody ought to really write a book, a compilation of Joe Skeen's speeches, because they were poignant, they were to the point, but, at the same time, they had a wonderful American flavor and an American wit that was so Joe Skeen.

From that day forward, Joe Skeen became a very dear friend of mine, as he is a friend to every Member of this House. He never met a person he did not like, and he never met a person he did not make a friend out of. The man was a stalwart in this House. Whenever you needed something, you could always go to Joe Skeen, and he would do everything in his power to see that it was accomplished.

Joe Skeen had the incredible character and integrity and moral strength that Members drew from. In his later years, when he got that dreadful Parkinson's disease, he was in here on the floor suffering from that disease and still doing his job to the very last minute. And it shows.

The man was committed to his constituency in New Mexico. He loved the people of New Mexico, and I had a great time in going out and campaigning for Joe Skeen, because you could see his real love for the land, for the ranchers and farmers, for New Mexico. He really had a strong, strong feeling for the people that he served, and he had a servant's heart.

He was a man that we will sorely miss, and we have already missed him this year. Joe Skeen is one of those very special characters that very seldom come through this House, that has enriched the House, has enriched this Nation. He is a true, true leader that will be sorely missed.

So to Mary and his family we give all our sympathy, and hope they will understand how much we miss him and the legacy that he has left by serving in this House. We greatly appreciate the service and character of the man Joe Skeen.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), a dear friend of Joe Skeen over the years, the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, who served alongside Joe as one of the other cardinals.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico, who has put together this time, and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE), Joe's colleague and friend from their own district in beautiful downtown New Mexico.

It is a sad moment for me to come and attempt in a few moments to share

with the family and friends of Joe the impact he has had on my life, the Congress of the United States, and, indeed, upon, I think, people way beyond his wonderful State.

Joe was a giant, great man who cared so much for the work of public affairs that it took every bit of his being to impact those issues that were so important to his people; a phenomenal guy who I came to know early upon his career by way of introduction from a mutual friend, Kevin Billings, who said, "Jerry, you have got to meet this guy, because he is a guy who ought to be on your Committee on Appropriations," a committee that I love. From that moment on, as Joe and I began to get to know each other, many of us worked to see that he early on took a spot on that committee.

During his service there, as has been said, both first as a member, but, beyond that, as chairman of the subcommittee that deals with agriculture, so important to his State, the Subcommittee on Interior, Joe demonstrated his unusual capability to mix the demands and needs of his own people with those requirements of members of his subcommittee, as well as the needs and priorities of the country.

He is going to be sorely missed by his wife, Mary, and his son and daughter. I want them to know that he will be missed just as much, every bit as much, by the people who work in this House.

Shortly after I met Joe, I became enamored of his sense of humor. While we all know of him as a great man, we also know of his immense capability. When you would have a tendency to take yourself perhaps a bit too seriously, by a kind of twist of a word, a sleight of hand almost, his sense of humor would bring you back to the real world, where we can find solution by way of compromise in this House, for, no doubt about it, when we finally get our best work done, it is work that is done with men and women challenging each other, measuring the pros and cons that lead to solution, and compromise is absolutely a requirement.

I remember when Joe first came to me, we were talking about a couple of his problems and discussing the fact that when he was first involved in politics, there were not too many Republicans available in his territory in New Mexico. He kind of smiled when he told me they held their meetings in a telephone booth. In the old days in San Bernardino County in California, many a person suggested to me that if I really wanted to be in politics, I had better find a party other than the Republican Party, for similarly we had a telephone booth that did not have very much room in it.

Joe demonstrated clearly that he was going to make a difference in his State and his party in his State. It has been suggested by Steve and others that he ran those very, very close races and almost became Governor of the State of New Mexico. Well, what guy is good

enough to go about getting elected to the United States Congress by way of write-in vote? To say the least, it is tough enough to get elected, but to have enough people care about you and know of your leadership skills to actually drive hard enough to get people to write your name in to be successful in races that are so intensely sought after?

Joe reminds me in many, many ways of his sense of humor by the dealings we had on another venture. We used to kid each other about Mexican food, because, you know, frankly I think those people, citizens of Mexican descent in our country, who are of the best lines come from beautiful downtown California, and he thought in turn that our food could not begin to compare in terms of Mexican food with that of New Mexico. So we challenged each other about that, first lightly, and he talked about his tamales early on and I was talking about enchiladas and tacos, et cetera. I just could not believe the tacos they produced in Washington, DC.

But in this challenge, we began to invite friends, first it was just our two staffs together, and then we would get people down the hall, and the program became a regular annual event called "Tamales on the Terrace."

The family of Joe Skeen goes beyond just the family we have mentioned here. The family also involves Selma Sierra, who was the person who was in charge of helping us put together Tamales on the Terrace. The terrace, by the way, is just outside the back door of my office, and it looks at the Capitol and a couple of other buildings.

The last time we held this gathering, we had to turn people away. There were 300 or 400 people there the last 2 or 3 years. The last event was a very, very special event indeed, because we were especially attempting to pay tribute to Joe Skeen as he was getting prepared to leave the Congress.

Suzanne Eisold, his administrative assistant, was a person who my wife, who helps me run my own office, has worked very closely with, for she helped put wheels on both of our operations. To be successful in this business you need help; and, without any doubt, he had that extra special quality of attracting the best of people around him to make sure that the best of work was done on behalf of his own people and the causes he was concerned with.

It has been said that appropriators are the people around here who must get their work done, because, without it, government cannot continue; and often times controversy stops many a bill around here.

Well, Joe was one of those workhorses who was able to get the toughest of business done in the appropriations process. His bills went to the President's desk and successfully had a huge impact upon the future of America's public lands by way of interior, and certainly had a fantastic impact

upon prioritizing the way our appropriation dollars impact farmers, not just in New Mexico, but also in the country.

There is a great building in Sacramento that reminds me of the last trip I took to New Mexico to be with Joe. This great Federal building in Sacramento has on the face of it a statement to be remembered by those who think about Joe forever. It says, "Bring me men to match my mountains." That last trip that took me to Joe's hometown was for the dedication of a Federal building there, and I would hope that the people of New Mexico, whenever they go and look at that Federal building or have business there, will remember just how great this man was.

If we, indeed, have had a Will Rogers of modern days, Joe Skeen of New Mexico is that Will Rogers; and indeed he is the mountain of a man who has come from New Mexico.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to my colleague from northern New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, both my wife, Jill, and I were saddened to learn about Joe's death. Joe Skeen served New Mexico with distinction and dedication. During the 4 years we served together in Congress, I found Joe to be a true gentleman and statesman.

One of the stories that I like to tell about Joe Skeen was how he got here. He was only the third Member of the House in the history of this House to be elected by a write-in vote.

My wife was the Deputy Attorney General, and she was assigned to represent the State of New Mexico and the Secretary of State in the legal case that determined that he had to be a write-in. There was only a Democrat on the ballot. He was beloved by New Mexicans, and my wife and I were in the court that day when there was a ruling.

Representative Skeen understood that she had a job to do. He respected that. He never held it against us. He was always a gentleman. He had a great sense of humor; and he knew, because he was so loved in the State, that whether he got on the ballot or not, he was going to get elected, which in fact he did.

One of the things I respected about him the most was his bipartisanship; and I think every Member of Congress, Democrat and Republican, every Member of this House, loved him for that. He loved this institution. He had a great sense of humor. He did not take this place where we do the serious business of the country too seriously, and he would always have a good story or a quip.

I just want to say to Mary, the children and the rest of the family that all of us in the House of Representatives that served with him loved him very much, and we send Mary and his family our heart-felt condolences.

Jill and I were saddened to learn about Joe's death. Joe Skeen served New Mexico with distinction and dedication. During the 4 years we served together in Congress, I found Joe to be a true gentleman and statesman.

It is difficult to capture with words the impact and significance that Joe has meant, not only to New Mexicans, but to the citizens of the United States and the institution of the Congress as well. During his tenure as New Mexico's longest serving U.S. House Member, he built a dedicated and talented staff on Capitol Hill. He was renowned for his tireless work on behalf of agrarian interests. Although he didn't get the credit he deserved, he also helped steer millions of Federal dollars to our State.

I was proud to work with Joe on legislation that helped return mineral rights to Acoma Pueblo. That bill, now Federal law, was easily steered through Congress by Joe's knowledge of the legislative process. While we were ultimately not as successful as we would have liked, we also fought together to change the dairy sections of the 2002 farm bill that were unfair to our State's strong milk and cheese industry. Through it all, I enjoyed working with him every step of the way.

Throughout his years of service, he was a model of integrity and truth. The way he approached his job is the way every elected official should—as a highly principled individual who stuck to his beliefs. He walked his talk. While we didn't agree on everything, he always did what he believed in his heart to be true, and he always worked in a bipartisan way to accomplish important work.

His good will and sense of humor will be missed by all who knew him. We send our sympathy to his family and friends.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from northern New Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, all of us are going to miss Joe Skeen. All of us have our Joe Skeen stories and things that make us chuckle when we are walking around this place remembering him.

Joe was a sheep rancher. He has a ranch between Ruidoso and Roswell in the Hondo River Valley, which is a long way from just about everywhere. In fact, his ranch is 17 miles from pavement in the rural part of New Mexico.

□ 1900

In a lot of ways, Joe was a man of the West, a gentleman. He loved New Mexico, loved its rural way of life, and fought in this body for those ways of life to be protected. He opposed grazing fee increases and defended property rights and water rights. And even while he served here in the Congress and got accustomed to wearing soft-soled shoes on these granite floors instead of his preferred cowboy boots, he continued to ride and work the ranch with Mary and the kids and just one hired hand.

I can remember times here when they were doing State of the Union, and Joe always sat in the same place in this House. Whenever you needed to find

Joe Skeen, you always knew where he would sit, in the back row in the far right, over in the corner. He was there, no matter what. And during the State of the Union one year, I heard a big "yippee" and a whistle from the back right corner of this room, and everyone in the whole room knew it was Joe Skeen. There is probably only one guy who can whistle and "yippee" like that, and who had the guts to do it on the floor of the House of Representatives during the State of the Union.

Joe Skeen said what he thought, and he said it in a direct way, and he stuck by his guns. He kept his word. He was a gentleman of the West.

When I was elected, I came here in a special election, and I had only 17 hours between when they counted the last votes and when I was on an airplane to fly here to Washington with my family. I did not even know where my predecessor's office was or how to get a key. There was a reception after the swearing in here on the House floor in Joe Skeen's Agriculture appropriations room. I was completely lost and somebody helped me find this reception, and my vote card was not even cool from the laminating machine when those bells went off. Not only did I not know what I was supposed to do, I had no idea where I was or where I was supposed to go or how to get there. And Joe Skeen said, "Come on, gal, you are coming with me." And for the next 5 years of my service here, so many times I was with him.

In 1960 when Joe Skeen started out in the State Senate, I was not even born, but he took responsibility for the stewardship of the next generation of young legislators from New Mexico.

Joe Skeen was a physical man. He was a rancher and a flyer and a cowboy, and that made it particularly hard for his friends and staff and family to see the ravages of Parkinson's in his later years.

There is a statue here in the House. It is in the hallway between this new modern Chamber that we use today and the old House. It is a statue of Will Rogers. Will Rogers was a man who understood the American spirit, a man who loved his country deeply, a man with a tremendous dry sense of humor that caused us to understand ourselves so much better. Joe Skeen was a lot like Will Rogers, and whenever I walk by that statue, I will always think of Joe.

Humor is a bridge between people over the things that divide us, and Joe Skeen had so much of it. I once walked up to him on the floor of this House and I said to him, my son was 5 years old at the time, and I said, Joe, my son Joshua thinks he wants to be a farmer, and Joe said, well, you send him to me, I will knock some sense into him. There is no money in it. And we had a good laugh. Everyone in this body has had a good laugh with Joe Skeen.

Our thoughts and prayers go out tonight to Mary, to his children, the many staff members who have worked

with him over the years, and to the wonderful people of New Mexico who were served so well by him.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to remember my friend and former colleague, Congressman Joe Skeen, who passed away recently in his home State of New Mexico.

Mr. Skeen was truly a giant in New Mexico politics, serving 22 years and entering the class just before mine. His is a great story of a rancher who won his first term through a write-in campaign and continued to win the next 10 terms.

I will remember Joe's work, especially on Parkinson's disease. He and I worked together as co-chairs of the Congressional Working Group on Parkinson's Disease. Although we differed on many issues, Joe and I agreed on the importance of working to eradicate this disease. We have both been personally affected by it.

I am glad that Joe was able to spend time with his family on his beloved ranch after serving a long and distinguished career. He will be missed by us on both sides of the aisle for his candor and hard work on issues of importance to New Mexicans and all Americans.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time and commemorate the life of former New Mexico Representative Joe Skeen. Joe lost his battle with Parkinson's disease on Sunday at the age of 76, and I would like to send my deepest condolences to his wife and family.

Joe was elected into the halls of Congress in 1980 as a write-in candidate. He served 11 terms which was more than any other New Mexico Member of Congress has ever served. He was chairman of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, and accomplished much during his tenure for New Mexico and our great Nation. I had the honor of working with Joe for a long time, and know of his love for the open lands of the western U.S.

As a Member of Congress, I honor Joe and mourn his passing, but also celebrate his life and his achievements.

Joe will forever be missed in the House of Representatives, in his great State of New Mexico and in this country, which he loved so much.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, it is with heavy heart I submit the following statement. Chairman Joe Skeen, our former colleague from the State of New Mexico, passed away on Sunday evening due to complications from Parkinson's disease.

Chairman Joseph "Joe" Richard Skeen was born in Roswell, Chaves County, NM, June 30, 1927, and graduated from O'Dea High School in Seattle, WA, in 1944. He went on to receive a B.S. from Texas A&M University in 1950. After fulfilling a commitment to the United States Navy and spending time in the United States Air Force Reserve, Joe turned his sights to public service and the causes of the rural residents of the State of New Mexico. Joe served his State as a member of the New Mexico State Senate, chairman of the New Mexico Republican Party, and as a delegate to both the New Mexico and National Republican conventions numerous times from 1962 to 1970. In 1980 Joe was elected to the 97th Congress as a write-in candidate, only the third in history. Chairman Skeen served longer than any other New Mexican in the House of Representatives, from 1981 to 2000. He was

also the first New Mexican to serve on the House Appropriations Committee, and served with distinction as the chairman of both the Agriculture and Interior Subcommittees.

A great family, a fine State, and a grateful Nation all lost a wonderful champion, colleague and friend on Sunday. Joe will be missed often and I hope that we who continue in his place, may carry on the tradition of caring and service, which Chairman Skeen truly exemplified.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in fond memories of our friend and colleague, Joe Skeen, easily one of the most even-handed, honest, fair legislators elected to the House of Representatives.

Joe was only a little more senior than me, but his route here was considerably more entertaining than most of ours. Joe was elected as a write-in candidate over another write-in candidate and the nephew of the sitting governor. He made history, becoming the third Member ever to win election to Congress without being on a ballot.

For the next 22 years, Joe served with us in Congress, making excellent representation for his home district in New Mexico the standard of his service. He chaired the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Rural Development. Those he represented in New Mexico could have had no better steward in Congress.

He was tireless in representing the needs of ranchers and farmers in his role as an appropriations cardinal.

Joe was my friend, and he was my neighbor on the third floor of Rayburn where we would often visit in each other's office.

He spoke Spanish, and he spoke the all-important language of bipartisanship. Joe Skeen was the best example of how a member of this House should comport themselves in any circumstance. He did more than just talk the talk, he walked the walk on bipartisanship, an art often lost in the House of Representatives today.

He was a pragmatist, and he was a guy who really enjoyed life, teasing colleagues and playing practical jokes. He was truly a gentleman, and he made our work here in the halls of Congress more pleasant when he was involved.

I join my colleagues here in the House in offering our collective and individual sympathies to Joe's wife Mary and their two children. The House has been a poorer place for Joe's absence. He was a great legislator and an exceptional man.

AMERICAN DREAM DOWNPAYMENT ACT

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 811) to support certain housing proposals in the fiscal year 2003 budget for the Federal Government, including the downpayment assistance initiative under the HOME Investment Partnership Act, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RENZI). The Chair has been informed that this request has been cleared by both leaderships under the Speaker's guidelines.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 811

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.

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TITLE I—DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "American Dream Downpayment Act".

SEC. 102. DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE INITIATIVE.

(a) DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE INITIATIVE.—Subtitle E of title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 12821) is amended to read as follows:

"Subtitle E—Other Assistance

"SEC. 271. DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE INITIATIVE.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE.—The term "downpayment assistance" means assistance to help a family acquire a principal residence.

"(2) HOME REPAIRS.—The term "home repairs" means capital improvements or repairs that—

"(A) are identified in an appraisal or home inspection completed in conjunction with a home purchase; or

"(B) are completed within 1 year of the purchase of a home, and are necessary to bring the housing into compliance with health and safety housing codes of the unit of general local government in which the housing is located, including the remediation of lead paint or other home health hazards.

"(3) PARTICIPATING JURISDICTION.—The term "participating jurisdiction" means a

State or unit of general local government designated under section 216.

"(4) STATE.—The term "State" means any State of the United States and the District of Columbia.

"(b) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may award grants to participating jurisdictions to assist low-income families to achieve homeownership, in accordance with this section.

"(c) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—

"(A) DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE.—Subject to subparagraph (B), grants awarded under this section may be used only for downpayment assistance toward the purchase of single family housing (including 1 to 4 unit family dwelling units, condominium units, cooperative units, and manufactured housing units which are located on land which is owned by the manufactured housing unit owner, owned as a cooperative, or is subject to a leasehold interest with a term equal to at least the term of the mortgage financing on the unit, and manufactured housing lots) by low-income families who are first-time home-buyers.

"(B) HOME REPAIRS.—Not more than 20 percent of the grant funds provided under subsection (d) to a participating jurisdiction may be used to provide assistance to low-income, first-time home-buyers for home repairs.

"(2) LIMITATIONS.—

"(A) AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—The amount of assistance provided to any low-income families under paragraph (1) shall not exceed the greater of—

"(i) 6 percent of the purchase price of a single family housing unit; or

"(ii) \$10,000.

"(B) PARTICIPATION.—A participating jurisdiction may not use any amount of a grant awarded under this section to provide funding to an entity or organization that provides downpayment assistance if the activities of that entity or organization are financed in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, by contributions, service fees, or other payments from the sellers of housing.

"(d) FORMULA ALLOCATION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year, the Secretary shall allocate any amounts made available for assistance under this section to each State that is a participating jurisdiction in an amount equal to a percentage of the total allocation that is equal to the percentage of the national total of low-income households residing in rental housing in the State, as determined on the basis of the most recent census data compiled by the Bureau of the Census.

"(2) PARTICIPATING JURISDICTIONS OTHER THAN STATES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), for each fiscal year, of the amount allocated to each State under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall further allocate from such amount to each participating jurisdiction located within such State an amount equal to the percentage of the allocation made to the State under paragraph (1) that is equal to the percentage of the State-wide total of low-income households residing in rental housing in such participating jurisdiction, as determined on the basis of the most recent census data compiled by the Bureau of the Census.

"(B) LIMITATION.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Direct allocations made under subparagraph (A) shall be made to a local participating jurisdiction only if—

"(1) the participating jurisdiction has a total population of 150,000 individuals or more, as determined on the basis of the most recent census data compiled by the Bureau of the Census; or