

exhibit, Mrs. O'Neill said, "life with Tom was a wonderful experience, and I am proud to have shared those 50 years and see parts of it displayed at this library."

Tip O'Neill died in 1994, ending a storied life as one of the country's premier politicians. He retired from the House in 1986 after 50 years in politics. His wife was a constant presence in his social and political circles.

In his autobiography, O'Neill wrote that when he became speaker and Millie learned that other wives never knew when their husbands were coming home at night, she told him, "I don't want you keeping them in the House until 8 or 9 at night. And that, more or less, marked the end of evening sessions in the House."

Mrs. O'Neill was chair or a member of the boards of the March of Dimes, the Congressional Wives Club, and the International Club. As chairwoman of the historic Ford's Theatre in Washington, she was one of the first to receive the Lincoln Award, in recognition in 1984 for spearheading a \$4 million fund-raising drive.

"Now, Mildred, you may have suspected now and then that from time to time your husband and I find something about which we disagree," President Ronald Reagan quipped at the awards ceremony. "But there is one thing that we sure agree on—he's lucky, mighty lucky, to be the man in your life. On behalf of everybody with whom you work, your work for this grand, old theater has meant so much, Millie, that we all thank you from the bottom of our hearts."

The O'Neills lived in Cambridge until 1976, when Tip was named speaker and the family moved to Washington. The city of Cambridge dedicated the north branch of its library as the Mildred A. O'Neill Library in 1995.

Raymond L. Flynn, former mayor of Boston, said, "She was a great friend. She was just a remarkable mother and led a wonderful life and was a great representative for America."

In addition to her son, Mrs. O'Neill leaves two daughters, Rosemary of Washington and Susan of Bethesda; a son, Christopher, also of Bethesda; a sister, Dorothy Ryan, of Marston Mills; and eight grandchildren. A son, Michael, died in 1997. A funeral Mass will be said Friday at 10 a.m. in St. John the Evangelist Church in Cambridge. Burial will be at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in Harwichport, where Mrs. O'Neill had long summered.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life of a wonderful woman—Mildred "Millie" O'Neill. After a long and illustrious life, she passed away in her sleep last night after 89 years.

Like so many congressional spouses, Millie committed her life to public service alongside her loving husband, Tip. While her husband was the Speaker of the House, she worked to advance a number of important causes and took leadership roles in major philanthropic groups. Her favorite charities and projects included the March of Dimes, the Congressional Wives Club, and the effort to restore historic Ford's Theater.

She will be missed by everyone who knew her.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mildred O'Neill, wife of the late House Speaker Thomas P "Tip" O'Neill, who passed away yesterday.

Mrs. O'Neill was a great political partner for her husband throughout his career. She was Tip's sounding board and confidant. As Tip wrote in *All Politics Is Local*, "Every election day as Millie and I left for the polls, I'd say, 'Honey, I'd like to ask for your vote.' 'Tom,' she'd reply, 'I'll give you every consideration.'"

The constituents of Massachusetts' 8th district who were represented by Tip O'Neill benefited greatly from her dedication. As the current representative from the 8th, I regularly encounter people with a story to tell about Mrs. O'Neill's legendary commitment to her community and numerous worthwhile causes.

Mrs. O'Neill was also a devoted mother, raising five children and instilling in them an appreciation for public service. She was involved with a number of organizations, including the March of Dimes, the Congressional Wives Club and the International Club. She also served as Chairwoman of Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC, receiving the Lincoln Award in 1984 for her fundraising efforts. She was also very active in the St. John's Church Rebuilding Fund and served as President of the parish Guild of St. John's Church—maintaining strong ties to her community.

As Tip wrote in a chapter entitled *Never Forget Your Spouse*, "My Millie certainly did it for me. When I was off to Washington helping run the country, she was back home running the family. When I was at my low point in politics, she was giving me a hug and telling me to go out and do my job. When I was in the spotlight taking the applause, she was in the background cheering me on. I love her for it."

All of us from Massachusetts, but especially those from the 8th District, will miss Mrs. O'Neill greatly. Our thoughts are with her family during this difficult time.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleagues from Massachusetts this evening to remember Millie O'Neill, a great woman from our home State and the wife of the late Tip O'Neill, who passed away yesterday at her home.

Millie O'Neill was a wonderful woman; a wife, a mother and an activist involved in many social organizations and causes. For the vast majority of her 89 years, she stood by Tip's side and was certainly his chief advisor on "domestic" matters. The two were married for 52 years, and during that time the navigated the political tides of Massachusetts and the Capitol. They were certainly a dynamic duo.

Tip referred to Millie as "The Speaker of My House. A loving wife, mother and my partner through so many triumphs and trials." She was a mentor, a leader and a friend, and she will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, much is going to be said this evening in honor of Millie O'Neill. She is deserving of all of it and more. But perhaps the best testament to the quality of her life—to her legacy—is the quality of the lives she left behind. I'd like to extend my sympathies to Millie's daughters, Rosemary and Susan, and her sons, Tom and Kip, and to her eight grandchildren, who to Millie's credit, have undoubtedly been instilled with an indelible respect for family and a desire to improve the greater public good.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great woman and a great American, Mrs. Mildred ("Millie") O'Neill, who passed away yesterday.

Millie was the wife of our beloved House Speaker, Tip O'Neill. On the dedication page of his autobiography, "Man of the House," Tip described her as "The Speaker of My House. A loving wife, mother and my partner through so many triumphs and trials." They enjoyed 52 years of marriage together, and they had five children.

But Millie was more than merely the wife of a well-known politician. In addition to her dedication to her children and her husband, she very ably served many worthwhile causes. Mrs. O'Neill was chair or a member of the boards of the March of Dimes, the Congressional Wives Club, the International Club, and So Others Might Eat. She led a \$4 million fundraising effort as chairwoman of the historic Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC, which earned her a prestigious Lincoln Award in 1984.

In addition, she was active in many causes back in Massachusetts, including the St. John's Church Rebuilding Fund, and the St. Coletta's School for Exceptional Children.

Mr. Speaker, Millie was a lovely, charming woman who will be missed. Her warmth and her sense of humor were radiant. Story has it that Tip, always mindful of the rule that all politics is local, would make a point of asking her personally for her vote every election day as they left for the polls. Fitting her good nature, her typical response was to acknowledge the request by replying only, "Tom, I'll give it every consideration."

During the awards ceremony at which she was presented with the Lincoln Award, another well-known American, President Ronald Reagan, noted her marriage to Tip, by remarking "he's lucky, mighty lucky, to be the man in your life."

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#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to refresh and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of this special order on Mildred O'Neill.

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

There was no objection.

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#### HOUSTON'S RAIL PROJECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wish to join my colleagues in offering my sympathy to the O'Neill family for their loss.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share some thoughts about what I believe the role of this House, and certainly the role of those who are part of the people's House, who represent the millions of Americans across the Nation, and how their roles should be one of advocacy, assistance and empowerment.

Sometimes one might be a little less than enthusiastic and certainly concerned to bring a local matter to the floor of this body, because we are here to work on behalf of all of the American people. But as I looked at this issue that has been plaguing Houston for almost 25 years, I believe that the precedent being set here is one where I need to warn my colleagues and make them well aware of how sometimes the works of Members can be used to undermine the efforts of local communities.

In Houston, Texas, since 1978, we have had a large, fair and moderate majority who have wanted to see rail implemented in our community. During the course of that time, we have had a number of elections, perhaps thousands of community hearings and meetings, and many times came nearly to the brink of success in seeing rail voted in in Houston. But each time there was something to thwart its way: Politics, differences of opinions, or mayoral races. But never did that reflect the total voice of the people. Special interests have been involved and engaged, and they have used elected officials in any way that they can.

As we move toward FY 2004, I am very proud to say that the Houston Metro has done something that probably no other agency advocating rail or light rail or commuter rail in Houston has done. They have put forward plans that have had any number of extensive hearings in our community. They have worked with small cities, they have worked with surrounding counties, and they have come up with a regional mobility plan. They worked with elected officials, county officials, county commissioners, the mayor's office, the small, local, city mayoral offices, various Members of Congress, and United States Senators. All of them have been engaged in this much-needed effort in Houston, a city that is a friendly city, full of wonderful neighborhoods, the fourth largest city in the Nation, but number seven on the vulnerability list for terrorist acts, and a city that has been grappling with environmental concerns as it relates to clean air.

So we have reached the point of consensus of a 72-mile project, 39 miles, and just as we are about to get the unanimous vote of our board, or close to unanimous vote, the intervention of special interests drew the attention of the mayor to the point of compromise, so that we have moved on a 22-mile project and not a 39-mile project. When we moved forward, we were told that we would be able to go to the voters now with a unified voice; that even those who were against it would be joining us.

Lo and behold, we have come to find out that there are Members of this body who are willing yet to undermine local constituencies. They are using agencies like the Department of Transportation and the FTA to thwart the efforts and desires of thousands, maybe millions, of Houstonians and those in Harris County. We now find that the Department of Transportation was used to issue opinions that are half-baked and without total facts. Those opinions have been issued without getting the complete facts from the actual agency, without calling the actual agency, and misrepresenting the agency's position. And then Members of this body have utilized that agency to represent that they would go to the United States Attorney under the Department of Justice in order to attack or challenge or accuse these Metro

board members of having committed criminal offenses.

Mr. Speaker this is an abomination. This is a precedent not worth setting. This is a horrific act that can be bad news, if you will, for the rest of our colleagues. We realize that this body has oversight responsibilities. We realize, in fact, that we, as Members of Congress, have oversight responsibilities. But, Mr. Speaker, we should not abuse the power that is given to us. It is an outrage that agencies would be used to thwart the desires and the commitment and work of our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, I close by simply saying I will stand with thousands in Houston and Harris County. We will have regional mobility, we will have light rail, and I look forward to putting forward a motion to instruct, so we can stop this bad precedent occurring in this House.

#### IRAQ

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 165 years ago, conservatives in this House of Representatives passed a rule banning the discussion and debate of slavery in the United States House of Representatives. In those days, former President, then Congressman, John Quincy Adams, trooped to the House floor night after night, week after week, protesting that the issues of slavery were not being debated, and he then shared letters from his constituents, many of them women who could not vote, so that Members of Congress and the American people would learn more about why he believed slavery should be abolished.

In like manner today, Mr. Speaker, conservative leadership in this House of Representatives has not really allowed full debate on whether or not the Bush administration told us the truth on his reasons for taking us into Iraq; whether leaders in the Bush administration, all the way up and down, were actually leveling with the American people; whether and how the \$87 billion the President has asked for should be spent, whether we should spend it. Questions and concerns about that \$87 billion that the American people have raised are not being debated, and especially the concern that my constituents are expressing about the safety of our troops.

And so similar to John Quincy Adams, Mr. Speaker, I have brought letters tonight from my constituents, as I have night after night since July, expressing the concerns of people in my district about whether or not the Bush administration told the truth, about the Halliburton connections with Vice President CHENEY, the company that is getting literally hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts, even though Vice President CHENEY is receiving from that company still, sitting this

close to the oval office, \$13,000 a month from Halliburton, and just concerns that people in my district have about all of this.

Melissa, from Akron, writes: "We truly need to change our course of action in Iraq. Mr. Rumsfeld's arrogant, bombastic, my-way-or-the-highway way of thinking, speaking, and acting have put this country and our soldiers, especially our soldiers, in a precarious position, some ways worse than Vietnam. Our own country is falling apart: The energy grid, highway infrastructure, schools, health care, child care, industry, personal freedom, the environment, as well as employment. The money wasted on this fool's errand could have been used to rebuild this country, to find Osama bin Laden, to really deal with terrorism, not by providing Halliburton," the Vice President's company, that as I said is paying him \$13,000 a month still, "not by providing Halliburton with a steady income."

Jessica of Akron Ohio writes: "The \$87 billion President Bush has asked for could be spent in so many other ways that would benefit Americans directly. Manufacturing, education, and health care are just a few areas that have been put on the back burner since the administration has taken office."

What Jessica is referring to, surely, is the fact we have lost 3½ million jobs since President Bush took office, 2½ million manufacturing jobs. In Ohio, literally one out of every seven manufacturing jobs has vanished without any real response from the President.

Howard from Akron writes: "The Bush administration bungling in Iraq must be challenged. Before any more money is approved for this misadventure, Congress must insist on seeing a comprehensive plan, with time lines for restoring basic services, establishing home rule, and removing U.S. troops."

Howard's letter suggests what so many of these letters do; that people are concerned about the safety of the troops first, they want answers about where the \$87 billion is going, how much of it is going to private contractors, like Halliburton and other unbid contracts, that happen to be to people who happen to be very good friends and often contributors of the President, and just when there is going to be a timetable to wrap this up in Iraq.

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Liane and George from Avon write, "Please don't give the President the added funds he requested. We need a guarantee that our troops are coming home and all rebuilding responsibility is transferred to the United Nations."

Evelyn of Akron writes, "Please vote against giving the President \$87 billion without his relinquishing part of the power to the U.N. and any countries that are willing to send troops and money to Iraq."

We have already spent \$69 billion in Iraq, more than a billion dollars a