

is 1998, 1998, President Clinton saying, "threatened by the looming fiscal crisis in Social Security." Clearly, President Clinton understood the issue at that time.

Here is a quote from the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan in March of 1998, talking about the issue of Social Security and investment, these personal retirement accounts, voluntary personal retirement accounts. "Young people, especially, have lost faith." He is talking about the Social Security system. "They wonder why they cannot take care of their own retirements with stock and bond investments, rather than trusting a system that either is headed for bankruptcy or will provide paltry or negative returns on their contributions." Another august individual from the other side of the aisle who certainly appreciated the problem.

And then Senator HARRY REID. He is now the Minority Leader in the United States Senate. In February of 1999, he said, "Most of us have no problem with taking a small amount of the Social Security proceeds and putting it into the private sector," these voluntary personal retirement accounts that we have been talking about.

They recognized the issue. If they recognized the issue in 1997 and 1998 and 1999, what is the solution? What is the solution that they have put on the table? What are they offering to this remarkable challenge that we have as a Nation?

Well, a little earlier I talked about the initial impressions that I have had in my freshman term here in Congress, and one of the things that may not surprise anyone is the remarkable level of partisanship. Remember I talked about the need for this to be a nonpartisan issue, but the incredible level of partisanship and nowhere is it more clear than on the issue of Social Security. The Social Security problem is clearly defined, and there is a clear recognition by both Democrats and Republicans as demonstrated here that we need to fix the system. Yet where is the plan from the other side of the aisle? What is the plan that they have on the table?

Well, we searched and we searched and we searched and we searched. And this is the plan that we have come up with. This is the plan that the other side of the aisle in this incredibly important issue, in an issue that will impact every single American, this is the plan that they have on the table.

Just say no. Just criticize. It is politics as usual. It does such a huge disservice to us as a Nation and to every one of their citizens. So we should act now. There is no doubt about it. We should act now.

The Social Security trustees, the Comptroller General of the United States, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board all agree that the sooner we address the problem, the smaller and less abrupt the changes will be for individuals and their families.

One of the individuals who works in my office just this past week got her

Social Security statement, her Social Security statement that each of us get each year, and I was reading through the text of what everybody receives from the Social Security administration about their Social Security. And it clearly says and I urge every American to read the fine print when this comes to your home. It says from the Social Security Administration, "Unless action is taken soon to strengthen Social Security, in just 14 years we will begin paying more in benefits than we collect in taxes. Without changes, by 2042 the Social Security trust fund will be exhausted. By then the number of Americans 65 or older is expected to have doubled. There will not be enough younger people working to pay all of the benefits owed to those who are retiring."

This is not an opinion by anybody on my side of the aisle or the other side of the aisle. This is the Social Security administration who is looking at the numbers, seeing what kind of revenue is coming in and what is going to happen and warning each and every one of us, further, that there will be enough money to pay only about 73 cents for each dollar of scheduled benefits.

So I had the plan from the other side of the aisle. This is their plan. If you wanted to put a face on it, if you wanted to draw it on a graph, that plan is this graph. What this says is that we go along and go along and go along just as we are doing now until we get to that date, 2041, when the bottom falls out of the system and individuals are only able to receive 73 or 74 percent, which is a 26 or 27 percent cut in benefits.

I promise you that that is not acceptable. It certainly is not acceptable to me. It is not acceptable to our side of the aisle, and I do not believe it is acceptable to the American people. So it is a promise. This issue ought to be nonpartisan. We ought to get together, and I urge my colleagues to do so. There needs to be generational fairness so that younger individuals have faith that some of the money certainly that they have put into the system will be able to grow and be able to provide for their nest egg.

Finally, it is your money. It is Americans' money. It is not the government's money. It is your money. These ought to be our principles, and we should focus on the facts, study the issue and alternatives that are available to us, vigorously debate, both sides of the aisle vigorously debate and then act. It is imperative that we move forward with this because, as we have heard, every year we delay costs this Nation, costs the American public, costs you \$600 billion.

Social Security is a system that has worked for decades and for generations, but the current system is outdated and does not meet the needs of the American people. It is not secure.

We have a wonderful opportunity right now. Right now, imagine the peace of mind that you would have knowing that the contributions that

you make each month into Social Security will result in a nest egg for your retirement that you own and that no one can take away. That is my vision and that is my dream and I hope that you share that.

□ 2200

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and I ask my colleagues to take the time now, take this time now and let us get to work. We all look forward to the discussion that is coming about on this issue, but I am hopeful that we will remember those principles, that it is a promise and ought not to be partisan and to keep in mind every single generation and be fair to them. Remember that nest egg that must be maintained for security and that it is American's money, it is not the government's money. If we do not act now, that would be the height of irresponsibility, as with saying that there is no problem or that little needs to be done.

So I urge this House, I urge the Senate and I urge the President to work together and I congratulate the President for bringing this issue forward to find a responsible and a secure solution.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM LEHMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Members of the House and also the Democratic leader for allowing me to have this time tonight.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the life of Congressman Bill Lehman, the subject of my Special Order this evening.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, a great man who served in this House for 20 years went on to glory. On March 16, 2005, former U.S. Congressman Bill Lehman passed away peacefully in the presence of his family and a few close friends in Miami, Florida. He was ninety-one years old, and for 20 of those years he served in this great institution, the U.S. House of Representatives.

We are here this evening to pay tribute to Congressman Bill Lehman who served with great dignity and integrity, who the Miami Herald described as a "legendary figure in south Florida politics considered a visionary on racial issues and public transit."

Only three people have ever served in the 17th Congressional District of Florida, former Congressman Bill Lehman,

former Congresswoman Carrie Meek and myself, Mr. Speaker. For this reason, it is a great honor for me to honor him today.

By any measure, Mr. Lehman was an extraordinary man. He was a successful businessman who went back to college, got his teaching degree and taught in the Miami Dade County schools. He also was a school board member and a chairman of the school board, and he led his school system through a very difficult time, the end of segregation in schools.

Congressman Lehman was a Member of Congress universally known for fairness, kindness and compassion. He had strong relationships on both sides of the aisle and guided national transportation policy through the 1980's.

Congressman Lehman started out as a used car dealer in Miami, and his nickname was "Alabama Bill" because Congressman Lehman was born in Selma, Alabama, and I think that it was very appropriate at that time for him to be in leadership, but he was a special kind of businessman even then. He developed a reputation as a used car dealer that you could trust, and that is something that is very uncommon these days, Mr. Speaker.

My constituents still tell stories about "Alabama Bill." One person said that he bought a car from Mr. Lehman but the battery died a few days later after he drove it home, and for Mr. Lehman, the solution was very easy, give him a new battery, something very common.

Another person told the story of how she wanted to go to the prom with her boyfriend, but because they did not have a car, Mr. Lehman thought that it was fit for him to lend them a car for the evening. This was a very common man, but a man who walked softly and was a giant in this Nation.

Mr. Lehman's customers were loyal and he never forgot them. Once at a town hall meeting as a Congressman, a constituent showed up and said that he bought a car from Mr. Lehman 35 years ago. He asked Mr. Lehman, "Do you remember me?" Silence fell over the crowd as the two men looked at each other, and Mr. Lehman said, "Your name is Willie," and the man said, "No, that was my brother." Mr. Lehman remembered them both, and he had a great memory and that is something we do not see common in public service.

Mr. Lehman had a restless mind and could not be confined to business. His IQ was high enough to qualify him for membership in Mensa, a society formed in 1946 to promote intelligent exchange between very bright people. Mr. Lehman said later that he went to a few meetings of Mensa but soon stopped because he found the people there very boring.

So, after he got his business started, he went back to college and earned his teaching certificate and became an English literature teacher in the Miami Dade public schools. He would

often quote Shakespeare and other English writers in his talks.

His foray into education led him into an interest in school politics. He ran for the school board and won, the first of an unbroken string of electoral victories at all levels of government.

Later, he would become the school board chairman, just as the Federal courts ordered busing to end racial segregation in the Miami Dade County schools.

Mr. Lehman described attending meetings of parents so angry that he had to have police guards escort him in and out, but his personal courage and his uncanny skill at easing tensions helped him win the day and the schools were integrated.

In 1972, the rapid growth in south Florida led to a new congressional district which was Congressional District 17. Mr. Lehman ran for it. Seven Democrats ran for that seat, and nobody ever gave Mr. Lehman much of a chance because he insisted on supporting busing to end racial discrimination in schools. But he came in a surprising second in that election against a well-known front runner and came in a surprising first in the run-off election that followed.

Bill Lehman started out as a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, but his work in Congress is most closely associated with his service on the House Appropriations Committee, his chairmanship of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee and his membership on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee.

As a member of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Committee, Mr. Lehman used his position to help improve the lives and relieve human suffering throughout the world.

An example is his work in 1980, when the flood of hundreds of thousands of Cuban refugees, known as the Mariel Boat Lift threatened to overwhelm all of south Florida. Financially, Mr. Lehman managed to get \$100 million in Cuban refugee resettlement aid included in a foreign aid bill, only to see it later stripped from the legislation. Mr. Lehman did not give up then. He tried for the refugee money again and again until finally it got included in another bill.

Today, a whole generation of Cuban Americans who came to seek freedom in this country owe Bill Lehman for looking out for their needs when they first arrived in this country.

In 1988, Mr. Lehman used his congressional contacts to work with the Castro regime in Cuba to obtain the release of three Cuban political prisoners who had spent more than 20 years in jail for opposing the Cuban government. Lehman bargained behind the scenes through informal diplomatic back channels. He eventually traveled to Cuba and met secretly with Castro himself to win their freedom. It was a victory that only a person like Bill Lehman could achieve.

Bill Lehman only tried to use the power of government to help people who had no other recourse and often no hope. Just a few examples, Mr. Speaker: In 1991, Lehman engineered the release of a 16-year-old girl who was arrested and imprisoned by the repressive government of Argentina at the time. Lehman's personal diplomacy, along with a promise to the Argentine government that he would not publicize the case in a way that would embarrass the regime, led to her release which she is grateful for today and attended his funeral.

When a constituent who was a single woman wanted to adopt a foreign-born baby but found that the Federal Government prohibited her from doing so, Mr. Lehman introduced legislation to change it. The legislation became law, and now such adoptions are common.

On a visit to a Federal agency in 1986, Mr. Lehman was told about two employees, a husband and a wife, who both worked in the same agency. The wife had inoperable cancer and a few months to live. They had young children, and she had only a couple of months to live. They had used all of their sick and vacation time on the treatments and care. Their fellow employees wanted to donate their unused time to the couple but found that the Federal law prohibited that from happening. Mr. Lehman introduced legislation to make it legal and started what is known as leave sharing, which is today an established Federal policy.

When he learned in 1987 that the Communist government in East Germany would not allow Jews in East Berlin to have a permanent rabbi, Mr. Lehman made contacts with the U.S. ambassador to East Germany and the East German government and won approval for the first resident rabbi since World War II.

Congressman Lehman learned through hearings about "golden Hour" for accident victims. If an injured person gets proper care within an hour of an accident, he has a much better chance of living or of recovery. That is called trauma care. Mr. Lehman was one of the major champions here in this institution for that and could be given credit for trauma care throughout the Nation and definitely in south Florida.

He enlisted the help of then-Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole, now Senator DOLE, and pushed through the establishment of the Miami Dade trauma center, which is known as the Ryder Center that is working today. The Bill Lehman Trauma Research Center in Miami is a testimonial to his work.

These are just a few stories of the kind of man that Bill Lehman was and how he tried to use the power of government not for personal or political advantage but to help the lives of others. Perhaps one of the reasons Congressman Lehman was so effective is that he knew what others were going through through his own tragedy and trials in his own life.

His beloved daughter Kathy died of a brain tumor. He was diagnosed with cancer and underwent surgery and rehabilitation therapy. Because of the surgery that cut some of the nerves that can allow him to speak, he had to take speech lessons to learn how to talk again. He used to joke he was the only politician that could only talk out of one side of his mouth.

He also suffered a stroke that effectively ended his active lifestyle, which included tennis and various other activities that he maintained well into his seventies.

Yet through it all, he was an example of grace, endurance and perseverance. His mind remained as sharp and as quick as ever, and he always had a sense of humor.

The many lives that Congressman Lehman touched, he touched deeply.

Our hearts go out to his wife of 66 years, Joan Lehman; his sons, Bill Lehman, Junior, and Tom; and their families and grandchildren and his grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I just would like to say that Congressman Lehman, they only walk this way once or twice in our lifetime, someone that was willing to lead at the appropriate time in the history of this country and definitely within the 17th District of Florida.

□ 2215

Mr. Speaker, the entire Florida delegation sends their heartfelt thoughts not only to the family but also to his friends who had a great appreciation for his existence. We are forever grateful as a humble country of having his family share his life with us.

I personally feel the key to public service is helping those who cannot help themselves, and Mr. Lehman was an example of that.

Mr. Speaker, there are many Members of the Florida delegation and Members of this Congress that will be adding their comments and memories.

Finally, I want to end this Special Order with this quote from a book of poetry that Congressman Lehman wrote in his spare time. He was a well-read, well-written man. This book of poetry was called "Hear Today," and the poem is called "Recognition."

"We all have our problems,
But my acquiring wealth
Was not the cure.
Though I knew, sure as hell,
I didn't want to be poor.
Recognition was the thing
I knew I needed,
And before it's all over,
I may have succeeded."

Mr. Speaker, I speak for my colleagues in the House of Representatives and for the people of South Florida and around the world whose lives were touched in recognizing Congressman Lehman this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the following articles for the RECORD at this time:

[From the Miami Herald, Mar. 17, 2005]

WILLIAM LEHMAN, 1913-2005

(By Amy Driscoll)

Former U.S. Rep. William Lehman, a legendary figure of South Florida politics con-

sidered a visionary on racial issues and public transit, died Wednesday at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach.

He was 91. He died of heart failure, his family said.

A used-car salesman, teacher, school board chairman and powerful congressman who exercised broad authority over transportation spending in the United States, Lehman was remembered by friends and former staffers as a compassionate soul and a progressive voice who helped shape South Florida.

He was an Alabama-born Jew who opened a business in a black neighborhood in Miami and once traveled to Cuba to rescue political prisoners. Known at home as the father of the Metrorail and Metromover systems, he was part of a renowned generation of Democratic politicians, including U.S. Reps. Dante Fascell and Claude Pepper, who delivered uncommon clout to Florida.

"A person like this can only come along in a community once in a century, twice in a century if you're lucky," said John Schelble, once Lehman's press spokesman and now chief of staff to Miami Democratic U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek. "He was truly colorblind."

At the news of his passing, condolences poured forth, from Miami to Washington.

A REAL 'FOLK HERO'

Former U.S. Rep. Carrie Meek called him a "real humanitarian and folk hero" in Miami's poor communities. She recalled his car dealership, set in the heart of black Miami, and his fight as a school board member in support of mandatory busing to integrate schools.

"He felt very strongly about the people in the black community, and that wasn't just pious platitudes. He showed it in all the things he did. He showed it when he built his dealership. He showed it when he was on the school board," she said.

Mike Abrams, lobbyist and former state representative who had known Lehman since the 1970s, said the former congressman was guided by an unshakable sense of right and wrong.

"He was the most moral man I ever knew in politics—and I've known a lot of men in politics. He was clearly guided by his personal principles," Abrams said. "But that didn't mean he didn't know how to use his knuckles in the process. If he didn't think you had character, forget it. He was a character man all the way."

Lehman's ability to reach people wasn't ruled by politics. U.S. Reps. Clay Shaw and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, both Republicans, counted Lehman as a friend.

"He was a Democrat through and through, and I'm a Republican, but that never interfered with our friendship," Shaw said.

Ros-Lehtinen characterized him as "a gentleman to his last breath."

Lehman was born Oct. 5, 1913, in Selma, Ala., the son of candy factory owners. He graduated from the University of Alabama, and married the former Joan Feibelman in 1939. They became the parents of three children—two sons and a daughter, Kathryn, who died of a brain tumor in 1979. She had been a high school English teacher like her father.

'ALABAMA BILL'

He spent 30 years as a used car dealer, calling himself "Alabama Bill" in advertisements, before he got into politics. Lehman was elected to the Dade County School Board in 1966 and became chairman in 1971. His first election to Congress to represent a Northeast Dade district came in 1972.

The Biscayne Park Democrat was known for his low-key manner, for the Southern drawl he never lost—and for his political power.

"The fact that he was so demonstrably Southern probably gave him an ability to

play a conciliatory and constructive role in some of Florida's toughest times," said former U.S. Sen. Bob Graham.

In the years when the Democrats held sway in Congress, he rose to a position of great influence, a member of the so-called "college of cardinals" in the House. With an unpolished speaking style and quiet strength, he controlled billions of dollars for transportation as chairman for 10 years of the House Appropriations Committee's subcommittee overseeing highways, seaports and mass-transit systems.

MILLIONS FOR TRANSIT

He brought a significant portion of that money home to South Florida, with some \$800 million going to the construction of the Metrorail transit system. Millions secured by Lehman also went to build bridges and improve the region's seaports and airports.

"Anyone who rides a bus or takes a train in this area, they owe it to Mr. Lehman," Carrie Meek said. "That's the way poor people get around and he chose to make that his priority."

Other favorite causes included support for Israel and the resettlement of Soviet Jews.

Sergio Bendixen, a Miami-based pollster who worked in Lehman's Washington office as press secretary and executive assistant from 1979 to 1982, said the congressman didn't need the trappings of success to boost his ego.

SMALL OFFICE

"He chose the smallest office—a cubbyhole, really," Bendixen recalled. "He was a congressman. He knew he was powerful. He didn't need all the plaques on the wall and the symbols that seemed to make other members of Congress happy. He was secure."

Lehman was an unabashed liberal who voted against a constitutional amendment banning flag-burning, against military aid to the rebels fighting to topple Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government and against sending troops to the Persian Gulf during the first Gulf War.

PRISONER RELEASE

But he won respect among conservative Cuban exiles in 1988 when he went to Cuba and negotiated the release of three political prisoners.

It wasn't his first effort for victims of political repression: In 1981, he won release of a political prisoner in Argentina, and in 1984, he smuggled a synthetic heart valve to a young patient in a hospital in the Soviet Union. He was also a strong advocate for Haitian refugees.

"I'm a congressman," he told an aide inquiring about the danger of venturing into the Soviet Union. "If they catch me, what are they going to do?"

DOWN-TO-EARTH

Despite his power, Lehman retained his down-to-earth sensibilities. He was a breakfast regular for years at Jimmy's restaurant on Northeast 125th Street in North Miami.

His two sons remembered him Wednesday as someone who never raised his voice but taught them the value of working for others.

"He'd get involved in things and he wouldn't skim the surface—he'd get down to the very bottom," said Bill Lehman Jr.

"He just took great pleasure in being a friend to anyone."

Their father always listened to his internal compass, financing cars for black customers in the '40s and '50s, when few other white car dealers would, they said.

"He would look at a man's arms and if they had salt on them, from sweating, he would know that was a working man," said Thomas Lehman. "That was his credit check."

Surgery for jaw cancer in 1983 left Lehman's speech slurred. But he stayed in Congress for another decade, until his surprise

decision in 1992 not to seek reelection when his influence was at its height.

Friends say that even as he struggled with his speech and other health problems, Lehman maintained a sense of humor.

"I'm the only politician who can only speak out of one side of his mouth," he once joked, referring to treatment that left part of his mouth paralyzed.

But Lehman said he made up his mind to retire in 1992 for health reasons: He said he had "a sudden realization" that a 1991 stroke had made him a less effective legislator.

END OF ERA

His passing marks the end of a political era, said lobbyist Ron Book.

"They don't make 'em like that anymore—him, Claude Pepper and Dante Fascell—they're all gone now."

Lehman is survived by his wife of 66 years, Joan; sons Bill Jr. and Thomas, and six grandchildren.

The funeral will be at Temple Israel at 1 p.m. Sunday. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the William Lehman Injury Research Center, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, P.O. Box 016960 (D-55), Miami, FL 33101.

A MAN OF THE PEOPLE

It is customary to bestow praise on the newly departed, some of it well deserved, but in the case of former U.S. Rep. Bill Lehman there is no need to depart from the unembellished truth. He was a man of the people, and he had a gift for politics. To those who knew him well and, indeed, to anyone who encountered him even briefly, Mr. Lehman's humanity and decency radiated like sunshine.

This wonderful man who did so much for the people of South Florida died Wednesday at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach. He was 91.

Mr. Lehman will be remembered for the power he wielded as a congressman. He was chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee that oversaw spending for mass transit, highways and seaports. He developed an expertise on transportation issues that few could rival, and he used his legislative clout to bring transportation dollars to the state, especially to South Florida.

Mr. Lehman often used his power to help ordinary people. He negotiated the release of a political prisoner in Argentina in 1981 and did the same thing for three political refugees in Cuba in 1988. And once, he brazenly smuggled a synthetic heart valve to a patient in the Soviet Union.

For all his political achievements—and they were legendary—Mr. Lehman will be remembered best for his genuine warmth and generous spirit. Born in Selma, Ala., Mr. Lehman embraced liberal values. He voted against a proposed constitutional amendment to ban flag-burning; he opposed sending military aid to the contras in Nicaragua; and he did not favor sending troops to the Persian Gulf in the first Gulf War.

Mr. Lehman used his power to build community and promote fellowship. Our community is richer for having had him among us.

A LIFETIME OF SERVICE

Highlights of William Lehman's life in politics:

1966: Elected to the Dade County School Board, where he helped desegregate public schools in the late 1960s and early '70s.

1971: Elected chairman of the School Board.

1972: Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he later became chairman of the transportation subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee.

1980s: Won about \$800 million for construction of the Metrorail system.

1981: Negotiated the release of a political prisoner in Argentina.

1984: Smuggled into the Soviet Union a life-saving heart valve for a teenager.

1986: Despite opposition of the Department of Transportation, won full funding for two extensions to the downtown Miami Metromover system.

1987: Thanks to Lehman's work, a rabbi was able to celebrate Passover in what was then communist East Germany.

1988: Flew to Cuba and picked up three Cuban political prisoners whose freedom he had secured from Fidel Castro.

1992: Retired from Congress.

[From the Sun Sentinel, Mar. 17, 2005]

WILLIAM LEHMAN, DEAD AT 91, LEAVES LEGACY IN S. FLORIDA

(By Buddy Nevins)

South Floridians can see former U.S. Rep. William Lehman's legacy through their car windshields or out the windows of their trains: Tri-Rail, Metrorail, the downtown Miami Metromover, Interstate 595 and I-95 and dozens of other bridges and roads.

Rep. Lehman, once one of the most powerful congressmen to hold a firm grip on the nation's transportation spending, died Wednesday at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach. He was 91.

Although the hospital did not announce the cause of death, Rep. Lehman had suffered from a number of illnesses including cancer and a disabling stroke in his senior years, according to his family.

During his 20 years representing north and central Miami-Dade County, Rep. Lehman's passion was moving people, whether he was selling them cars from one of his auto dealerships, or building them a modern road and transit system.

Rep. Lehman was the last living member of the trio of liberal Democrats who wielded enormous clout in Washington and brought attention and billions of dollars in federal aid to South Florida. In the 1970s and 1980s Rep. Lehman, along with U.S. Reps. Dante Fascell and Claude Pepper of Miami, made the Florida delegation one of the most influential in the House.

"Public transit was always important to Bill Lehman, as he knew it was a lifeline to employment, grocery shopping, doctor visits and other necessary services for poor and working-class citizens," said U.S. Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Miramar. "Bill Lehman was known as an 'unbending liberal.' This is one of many characteristics that endeared him to me."

As Florida Speaker of the House in the late 1980s, Tom Gustafson worked with the congressman to kick-start I-595 and the Tri-Rail transit system, which carries passengers from Miami to West Palm Beach.

"He was the go-to guy for any money for transportation. If you needed federal money, you went to Bill Lehman," Gustafson recalled.

From his perch as chairman of the subcommittee on transportation appropriations, Rep. Lehman threw money at South Florida projects.

"I-595 was Bill Lehman. The Clay Shaw Bridge [on the 17th Street Causeway in Fort Lauderdale] was Bill Lehman. Tri-Rail was Bill Lehman. This is a guy who has more monuments to him than anyone I know," said U.S. Rep. Clay Shaw, R-Fort Lauderdale.

Some of the facilities in Miami-Dade named for Rep. Lehman illustrate the breadth of his impact: an elementary school, a causeway, a transit maintenance building, a research center at the Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital.

As news of his death reached the community, tributes poured in.

"He didn't just make government work, he brought people together," said U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek, the Miami Democrat who occupies Rep. Lehman's seat.

"Mr. Lehman clearly left his mark on the South Florida community," said Mayor Carlos Alvarez of Miami-Dade. "His pioneering works will be a fixture in Miami-Dade County for many years to come. My thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time."

Rep. Lehman's liberal voting record included opposing a constitutional amendment banning flag-burning, voting against military aid to Nicaragua's contra rebels, and voting against sending troops to the Persian Gulf in the first Iraq war. He went to Cuba in 1988 to negotiate the release of three political prisoners and was an advocate for Haitian refugees.

Born on Oct. 5, 1913 in Selma, Ala., Rep. Lehman's roots were far from the underprivileged he would champion in Congress.

His father was a wealthy candy manufacturer. His mother was a housewife and the young Bill Lehman would ride in the family's chauffeur-driven Cadillac, family members said Wednesday.

Rep. Lehman's liberal philosophy sprang from the realization early in life that his small Southern town was filled with the less fortunate who could make it in life only with the help of the government, said Tom Lehman, his son and a Miami-Dade lawyer.

"He saw that, especially during the Depression, all that the federal government could do," Tom Lehman said. "He was a big believer in the role of government in peoples' lives."

Moving to Miami in the 1930s, Rep. Lehman sold used cars, billing himself as "Alabama Bill." He developed the unusual reputation for a car dealer as a gentleman who respected his customers and he carried that into politics.

"He was admired, respected and loved, and you can't say that about a lot of members of Congress," said U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Miami.

Bill Lehman Jr. recalled that his father never lost the common touch.

"He was as comfortable talking to Ted Kennedy as he was talking to a car porter at the dealership."

After a stint as a public school teacher, Rep. Lehman entered politics in 1966, winning a seat on the Dade County School Board. Six years later he went to Congress. Rep. Lehman left Washington in 1992 after suffering a stroke, but also as he faced the possibility of being thrown into the same congressional district as Fascell when boundaries were redrawn.

Services for Rep. Lehman are at 1 p.m. Sunday at Temple Israel of Greater Miami. He is survived by Joan, his wife of 66 years, two sons and six grandchildren.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 17, 2005]

WILLIAM LEHMAN, FLA. CONGRESSMAN AND CAR DEALER, 91

(By Adam Bernstein)

William Lehman, 91, a used-car dealer who later served 20 years in the U.S. House of Representatives and became a force on transportation legislation, died March 16 at a hospital in Miami Beach. His heart was weakened from a recent bout with pneumonia.

Mr. Lehman, known as "Alabama Bill" when he was in business, owed his nickname to his birthplace. But he spent most of his car-sales career in Miami, a district he served as a Democrat in the House from 1973 to 1993.

He was a member of the Appropriations Committee and chaired its transportation subcommittee, which controlled billions of dollars in federal projects.

Soft-spoken and adroit, as a politician he was not at all the caricature of the flamboyant, hard-sell salesman. Long gone were the days when he appeared in advertisements sitting on cotton bales and “making deals as solid as a bale of Alabama cotton.”

He was much more subtle in the House. As a member of the so-called “college of cardinals,” so named for their seniority, he worked quietly to pass bills with the least resistance.

His attentiveness to his constituents, in the form of authorizing public works projects for South Florida, occasionally caused turf disputes with the House Public Works Committee. When the committee’s then-chairman, Rep. James J. Howard (D-N.J.), called “egregious” Mr. Lehman’s efforts to approve a large mass-transit funding bill, the Floridian backed down.

That is to say, he found another way to get his projects approved—through an omnibus spending package.

William Marx Lehman was born Oct. 5, 1913, in Selma, Ala., where his father owned the American Candy Co. A 1934 graduate of the University of Alabama, he focused on business at his father’s behest.

Early in his career, he worked for CIT Corp., an industrial finance company, in New York. He went to Miami on a job to finance auto dealerships and soon decided he would take some family money to finance a car-sales venture himself.

During World War II, he learned airplane mechanics and went to Brazil to help train others aiding the Allied effort.

Mr. Lehman was a member of Mensa International. For years, he wanted to teach English. After studying at Oxford University in the early 1960s, he became a high school English teacher in Miami.

He also won election to the Dade County School Board and became its chairman. He ran for the U.S. House when a new district was created.

In Congress, he championed public transportation, especially light-rail systems in his district. He also helped shepherd legislation to allow federal workers to donate their paid leave time to co-workers.

He made several publicized mercy trips.

In 1984, he flew to Moscow and smuggled an artificial heart valve to an ailing young woman who was related to one of his constituents.

Describing his part with cloak-and-dagger mystique, he told Roll Call that he sneaked the device past customs and immigration authorities.

He then went to a pay phone as arranged, where a voice told him to be at a certain address and to watch for “a woman in red standing next to a short man.” The woman eventually got her heart valve.

In 1988, he traveled to Cuba and successfully appealed to Fidel Castro to release three longtime political prisoners.

Mr. Lehman had a massive stroke in 1991 that hastened his retirement.

A daughter, Kathryn Weiner, died in 1979.

Survivors include his wife of 66 years, Joan Feibelman Lehman of Miami; two sons, Bill Lehman Jr. and Thomas Lehman, both of Miami; six grandchildren; and two great-grandsons.

[From Roll Call, Mar. 17, 2005]

EX-FLORIDA REP. BILL LEHMAN PASSES AWAY
(By Jennifer Lash)

Former Rep. Bill Lehman (D-Fla.), considered a strong advocate on both race and transportation issues, died Wednesday at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami. He was 91.

Throughout his tenure in Congress, which began in 1972, Lehman voted against such issues as a constitutional amendment banning flag burning and sending troops to the

Persian Gulf. He also fought to aid victims of political repression in areas such as Cuba, Argentina and the Soviet Union.

Lehman remained in Congress for a decade following a jaw cancer surgery that left his speech slurred in 1983. Eight years later, the Florida Democrat suffered a stroke, and in 1992 he announced his decision to retire, citing health reasons.

Lehman, the son of candy factory owners, was born Oct. 5, 1913, in Selma, Ala. He received his bachelor’s from the University of Alabama in 1934. Three years later, he married Joan Feibelman. The couple had three children—a daughter, who died of a brain tumor 1979, and two sons.

Before entering the political arena, Lehman sold used cars for 30 years, referring to himself as “Alabama Bill” in his advertisements. He also spent time as a teacher and school board chairman prior to his election to Congress.

Lehman never allowed his Congressional duties to cause him to lose touch with his Florida district. He regularly ate breakfast at a restaurant in North Miami, and he resided in Biscayne Park, Fla., through his final days.

Although Rep. Kendrick Meek (D-Fla.) came to Congress 10 years after Lehman had retired, Meek said he was “struck” by the friends Lehman had made on both sides of the aisle.

“Only three people have ever represented Florida’s 17th District in Congress: Bill Lehman in the 80’s; Carrie Meek in the 90’s and now me,” Meek said in a statement. “I will always cherish the photo of the three of us together, because Bill Lehman was my Congressman when I was just a teenager and it is such a privilege to continue his service here.”

[From The Hill, Mar. 17, 2005]

FORMER REP. LEHMAN DIES

(By Mark H. Rodeffer)

Former Rep. Bill Lehman (D-Fla.) died yesterday morning at a Miami Beach hospital. He was 91.

Lehman, who chaired the Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee until he retired from Congress in 1992, was known for running the subcommittee by consensus and for a willingness to earmark money for district projects.

Before his 1972 election to Congress, Lehman was a used-car salesman for 30 years. “Even though I came to Congress 10 years after Representative Lehman left it, I was struck by how many good friends he made, in both the House and the Senate and among both Democrats and Republicans,” said Rep. Kendrick Meek (D-Fla.), who today holds the seat Lehman held. “He didn’t just make government work; he brought people together.”

Carrie Meek (D) was elected in 1992 to Lehman’s north Miami district. She served until 2002, when she was succeeded by her son, Kendrick.

“I will always cherish the photo of the three of us together because Bill Lehman was my congressman when I was just a teenager, and it is such a privilege to continue his service here,” Kendrick Meek said.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, my wife, Emilie, and I are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Congressman Bill Lehman. I will always remember his good sense of humor, his leadership and his unrivaled sense of duty. He had a reputation of having the courage and conviction to do what was right for his constituents, and his country.

Bill was a good friend, and was a political mentor when I first came to Washington. He led a remarkable life; from his service to his community to his strong leadership in Congress. Bill was the Chairman of the Transpor-

tation Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. Many of the transportation facilities in South Florida are a direct result of his tireless efforts as Subcommittee Chairman.

Bill will be missed by so many, but has left an extraordinary legacy. His family will remain in our thoughts and prayers.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to our former colleague, the late William “Bill” Lehman, who recently passed away in his home state of Florida.

Bill represented the 17th Congressional District of Florida from 1973 to 1992. While he was a great advocate for transportation, foreign affairs issues, and racial equality in education, he has received very little or no recognition for his work on behalf of Haitian refugees. In 1979, Haitian refugees faced significant due process violations by the Federal government. At the time, he represented almost all of the fledgling Haitian community in South Florida. Bill felt very strongly that he could not successfully oppose the onerous civil rights violations faced by Haitians, because of their national origin, without additional political support. It was at his urging that the Congressional Black Caucus formed the CBC Task Force on Haitian refugees. The Task Force eventually succeeded, accompanied by various legal victories, in establishing an immigration designation, “Cuban-Haitian entrant status”, that permitted Haitians seeking political asylum to remain in the country while they pursued their asylum claims.

Without his personal intervention and commitment on their behalf, the Haitian community in South Florida may have never received some form of equitable treatment under our immigration laws. With his passing, our colleague, Bill Lehman’s contributions to improved immigration laws in this country should not be forgotten. I am proud to have served with him during his last 10 years in Congress.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember and honor my friend and distinguished former colleague Bill Lehman.

Bill Lehman represented South Florida in the House of Representatives for twenty years beginning in 1972. Bill and I came to Congress together that year. It is with sadness that I stand to pay tribute to him today as one of the last remaining members of the class of ‘72.

Though Bill left Congress in 1993, he and I kept in touch. It was less than a month ago when we last corresponded. He noted my name in an article in the Miami Herald and wrote to encourage me to keep up the fight. I’m going to miss those notes and his many years of friendship.

Bill was unique. He was special among those who’ve served in this institution. He was an individual of great principle and compassion beloved by the community he represented. As his hometown paper the Miami Herald eulogized him, Bill Lehman was a “legendary figure of South Florida politics considered a visionary on racial issues and public transit.”

Bill Lehman was legendary in this House where he served ten years as Chairman of the powerful Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation. He was a tireless advocate of progressive causes at home and abroad, known for taking principled stands on international and constitutional issues.

Bill Lehman had another distinction, too. He’s the only politician I ever met that, when

compared to a used car salesman, he was proud to be a used car salesman.

Born in Selma, Alabama in 1913, he took the moniker "Alabama Bill" when he moved to South Florida and opened a used auto dealership in Miami in 1936. Playing country music in his advertising, "Alabama Bill" earned a modest reputation as a country western singer. That original business has grown into one of South Florida's largest auto dealerships carried on today by his son Bill Lehman, Jr.

After nearly 30 years in the used car business, Bill Lehman went off to Oxford University. In the early 1960s, he returned to Miami and began a second career teaching high school English. In 1966, he began yet a third career running for and winning a seat on the Dade County School Board and went on to serve as Board Chairman in 1971. A year later he was elected to Congress.

I was greatly saddened to hear of Bill Lehman's passing on March 16 of this year and commend my colleagues for dedicating this evening in his honor.

My thoughts are with Bill's wife Joan, to whom he was married for 66 years, their two sons Bill Jr. and Tom, and their 6 grand children and 2 great-grandsons.

Bill's years of dedicated public service in this House will never be forgotten. His spirit and the principle and compassion he brought to the job will continue to be greatly admired by those of us who knew him.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GILLMOR (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mrs. MCCARTHY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DENT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today and April 13.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, April 13 and 14.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, April 13 and 14.

Mrs. BLACKBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and April 13 and 14.

Mr. BURGESS, for 5 minutes, April 13.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BOUSTANY, for 5 minutes, April 13.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 13, 2005, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1455. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the Department anticipates it will be prepared to commence chemical agent destruction operations at the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility in Newport, Indiana, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1512(4); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1456. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities for Fiscal Year 2004, pursuant to Public Law 104-201, section 827 (110 Stat. 2611) Public Law 105-261, section 812; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1457. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Selected Acquisition Reports (SARs) for the quarter ending December 31, 2004, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2432; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1458. A letter from the Director, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, transmitting pursuant to the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76, the Service has implemented the government's Most Efficient Organization (MEO) to perform Security Assistance Accounting operations, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2461(c); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1459. A letter from the Senior Paralegal, Office of Thrift Supervision, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Community Reinvestment Act — Assigned Ratings [No. 2005-09] (RIN: 1550-AB48) received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1460. A letter from the Senior Paralegal, Office of Thrift Supervision, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Rules for Adjudicatory Proceedings for Certain Holding Companies [No. 2005-08] (RIN: 1550-AB96) received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1461. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS): Electronic Transmission of Reasons for Rejecting Rated Orders [Docket Number: 041026293-5031-02] (RIN: 0694-AD35) received March 3, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1462. A letter from the General Counsel/FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations — received February 28, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1463. A letter from the General Counsel/FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket No. FEMA-7861] received February 28, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1464. A letter from the General Counsel/FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations — received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1465. A letter from the General Counsel/FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations — received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1466. A letter from the General Counsel/FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket No. FEMA-7865] received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1467. A letter from the General Counsel/FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket No. FEMA-7867] received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1468. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Prescreen Opt-Out Disclosure (RIN: 3084-AA94) received March 3, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1469. A letter from the Associate General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Loans to Members and Lines of Credit to Members — received March 15, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1470. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's FY 2004 annual performance report to Congress required by the Prescription Drug User Fee Act of 1992 (PDUFA), as amended, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 379g note; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1471. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled, "West Nile Virus Prevention and Control: Ensuring the Safety of the Blood Supply and Assessing Spraying Pesticides," in compliance with Pub. L. 108-75; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1472. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Part 80 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Use of Frequency 156.575 MHz for Port Operations Communications in Puget Sound — received February 9, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1473. A letter from the Legal Advisor to the Bureau Chief, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Walla Walla and Burbank, Washington) [MB Docket No. 02-63; RM-10398] New Northwest Broadcasters, LLC Station KUJ-FM, Walla Walla, Washington [File No. BPH-20041008ACV] For Construction Permit to Modify Licensed Facilities (One-Step Upgrade) — received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1474. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary for Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report of