

ON THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF JIM BATES TO THE HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE

**HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2007

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, with the recent decision by Jim Bates to leave the Budget Committee staff to serve as a program associate director at OMB, the Congress has lost a dedicated public servant and the Budget Committee has lost an important institutional resource. But our loss is OMB's gain. Jim served on the Budget Committee staff for nearly 20 years, starting in 1988 as a budget analyst for the Republican staff and eventually becoming staff director to Jim Nussle when he was chairman and to Paul Ryan as ranking member. During that long tenure, Jim rightfully came to be known as one of the top budget experts in Washington.

Jim has a deep knowledge of both the programmatic and numbers side of the budget, on the one hand, and the budget process, on the other hand. One reason Jim knows the budget rules so well is that he helped to write them. He has been centrally involved in such budget milestones as the budget agreements of 1990 and 1997, as well in the debates we have had over the years about how to best structure the budget process.

Year in and year out, he has been critically involved in the development, consideration, and enforcement of the congressional budget resolution—the key blueprint for Congress's spending and revenue decisions. Throughout, Jim has been a strong advocate for the importance of the congressional budget process, in general, and the role of the Budget Committee, in particular. We will miss Jim Bates and his steady presence as he leaves the Congress to begin his new job. But he departs with great respect and sincere appreciation that he has earned from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

**DEPARTURE OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SECRETARY R. JAMES NICHOLSON**

**HON. STEVE BUYER**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2007

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and bid farewell to a distinguished leader and patriot, the Honorable R. James Nicholson, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Throughout his life, Secretary Nicholson has been a devoted servant to his country and fellow citizens. His bio is a classic American story that illustrates the potential each individual holds as a result of the liberty and freedom we cherish in this great Nation.

Secretary Nicholson's deeply held faith and hard work ethic reflect his heritage. One of seven children, he left his family and the peaceful Iowa farm on which he was raised, to graduate from the United States Military Acad-

emy at West Point. During his 8 years on active duty, Secretary Nicholson served as an Army officer and Airborne Ranger in the Republic of Vietnam. He also served in the Army Reserves for 22 years, retiring with the rank of colonel.

In addition to a distinguished military career, Secretary Nicholson holds an impressive list of academic accomplishments. He holds a master's degree from Columbia University and a law degree from the University of Denver. Secretary Nicholson was also successful as an entrepreneur and political activist. He established a thriving business in Denver, and ascended to become chairman and chief executive officer of the Republican National Committee.

In 2001, President George W. Bush appointed him Ambassador to the Holy See. Secretary Nicholson was subsequently knighted by Pope John Paul II in 2003 for his advocacy on a number of humanitarian issues.

Secretary Nicholson's life of service to others culminated in his appointment as head of the second largest Cabinet Department. As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, he proved to be a tireless and innovative advocate for his fellow veterans.

Our Nation will be eternally grateful for his devotion to the men and women who have defended our freedom and way of life. Secretary Nicholson decided to leave Government service to pursue other interests, and fulfilled his final day as VA Secretary on September 30, 2007.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the tremendous career of Secretary Nicholson and to thank him for his leadership and honorable service to our country. I wish him and his wife, Suzanne, the very best of luck and happiness during the next chapter of their lives.

**TRIBUTE TO MR. JOSEPH M. LAUFER**

**HON. JIM SAXTON**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2007

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Joseph M. Laufer. On November 29, 2007, Mr. Laufer will receive the 2007 Lloyd Ritter Community Service Award on behalf of the Volunteer Center of Burlington County, NJ.

In 1997, Mr. Laufer retired as an associate dean at Burlington County College after 27 years of tireless service. Yet, he has continued to reach out and dedicate his time to the residents of Burlington County. Some of his recent activities include maintaining and updating the Southampton Township website and assisting a local fire relief company in obtaining a preservation grant. He has also served as a member of the Jack Allen Early Country Living Museum, the Roebling Main Gate Museum, the Rancocas Valley Tourism Association, the Burlington County Historical Society, and he volunteers at the Holy Eucharist Parish in Tabernacle.

In addition, Mr. Laufer does not shy away from providing valuable leadership to area or-

ganizations. He was appointed the Burlington County Historian in 2003 and elected president of the H.B. Smith Industrial Village Conservancy, the director of alumni relations for the Lenape High School District, and finally, was a past president of the Southampton Historical Society and Library Board.

Madam Speaker, the Burlington County community has truly benefited from Mr. Laufer's experience. As he is honored by the Volunteer Center of Burlington County for this very special award, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for his desire to utilize his talents for the greater good and enduring commitment to improving the lives of those around him.

**TRIBUTE TO WANDA CHANEY**

**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 29, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise on this occasion to honor Wanda Chaney, a dedicated employee of the CAO, for her service to the House of Representatives.

Wanda Chaney began her career at the U.S. House of Representatives in 1994 serving as a user information specialist in the User Assistance Office, now known as the CAO Technology Call Center. Wanda soon went on to be a technical support representative (TSR) providing excellent service with enthusiasm and passion. Wanda's dedication and leadership qualities soon found Wanda leading a team of TSRs whose mission was to provide timely and efficient services to Member offices.

Throughout Wanda's career, she continued to expand her services beyond technical support. Wanda's contribution to the transitioning of Congresses cannot be overstated. Wanda moved services to a higher standard, raising the bar for all who assisted her in these endeavors. Wanda identified the problems facing Members as they transition in and out of Congress and presented practical and time-saving solutions for Members and staff. Wanda can be credited for infusing technology in the dissemination of information critical to new Members of Congress. She created an interactive CD-ROM to familiarize Members with technology services provided by the House. She introduced an interactive web page to help offices navigate through the transition.

Wanda's contribution to the rollout of U.S. Active Directory for user authentication to the House ensured that Members' requirements were satisfied and complete. There are countless examples of how Wanda made a difference in the provisioning of technology services to Member offices.

A common theme shared by her customers and colleagues speaks to her commitment, resourcefulness and drive to provide a meaningful solution to any problem sent her way. Wanda's ability to see the "big" picture, understand the needs of her customers and passion for doing what's right are inspiration to all.

Wanda gave tirelessly in the pursuit of excellence and it is an honor to recognize her service to the U.S. House of Representatives.