

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Elestine Smith Norman. Born December 12 of 1949 to the late Wilbert and Elese Morton Smith in the Promise Land Area of Greenwood, South Carolina, she is the youngest of five children.

She attended the public schools in Greenwood and is a graduate of Piedmont Tech and Limestone College. She was the first in her family to graduate from college.

She has been married to Pastor Willie Neal Norman for 37 years. Willie is the pastor of Weston Chapel AME Church in Greenwood where Elestine and he have served faithfully for over 18 years. She and Neal have never had any children of their own, but there are lots of folks that would call Elestine their spiritual mother.

She has survived a diagnosis of breast cancer twice in her life and has ministered to many, many others with cancer throughout the years. Her positive attitude through these trials has always inspired others to fight a strong fight. She has trusted faithfully in her Lord Jesus Christ to bring her through the many hardships.

Mr. Speaker, she is a former president of the Greenwood Business and Professional Women's Club. She has served on the Greenwood United Way Board, the Lander University Board of Visitors, and the Piedmont Technical College Board of Visitors. She is also the recipient of the 2007 Women's History Month Government Award from the AME Church for the State of South Carolina.

In 1972 she went to work for then-Congressman of the Third Congressional District of South Carolina, Bryan Dorn. She has continued to work as a senior caseworker in the Greenwood district offices for the following Members: Congressman Butler Derrick and Congressman, now Senator, LINDSEY GRAHAM. She has worked for both Democrat and Republican Congressmen, always putting the love of serving people above politics.

When I was elected to succeed Senator GRAHAM as the Representative from the Third Congressional District, I was honored that Elestine agreed to continue her dedicated service in my Greenwood office. Now after 34 years of public service, she has decided to retire. And all these years of compassionate service, she has never lost her heart for people. And I know she will always continue to serve throughout the community for as long as the good Lord keeps her on this Earth.

Mr. Speaker, I had these prepared remarks that I wanted to say so I didn't forget anything. But I want to share one short story about Mrs. Elestine Norman. When I was elected in 2002, I knew Elestine had worked for three other Congressmen, and I thought to myself, well, there is no way that she could have the compassion and the fire and the desire to help people. And this lady has proved me wrong time and

time again. Her love, her can-do attitude, her sweet spirit, she has been a rock for me, for my staff, and for all the people of the Third Congressional District.

Mrs. Elestine, I hope you're watching tonight. We love you. I love you. We will miss you greatly. Godspeed.

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

(Mr. CUMMINGS 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 North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina 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 gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY 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 Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

□ 2200

PROPOSED CHANGES TO MEDIA OWNERSHIP RULES IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, the FCC held the last of six public hearings about proposed changes to media ownership rules. They did so in Seattle after I called for that meeting so that people in the State of Washington could let their government know what they thought. It was really an unbelievable showing at this hearing. The FCC callously only gave them 5 days' notice. But still it is estimated that 1,000 people showed up on a Friday night for a 9-hour hearing that ended up at 1 a.m. on Saturday morning.

Most Friday nights Americans won't be going out to hearings. But in Puget Sound country, and indeed across the country, people understand how important a media consolidation could be as a threat to our diversity and our democracy, and 1,000 people showed up to testify. I encouraged my constituents to attend. I want to credit Reclaim the

Media, the Free Press and the Seattle Times who also got the word out about this important hearing.

At the hearing, FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein prophetically stated that if the FCC quickly proposed a new rule, "you know your input was dismissed." He was right, unfortunately. Despite the protestations of almost every single witness in Seattle on Friday displaying the overwhelming sentiment against this consolidation, on Tuesday, one business day later, Chairman Martin announced his plans to end a 32-year-old ban on radio and television broadcasters owning newspapers in the Nation's largest media markets, including right in Seattle where 1,000 people asked him not to do so.

The fact that Mr. Martin had an op-ed piece published in Tuesday's New York Times just a couple days later shows this was clearly a preordained decision and that appearance in Seattle was just a stunt, and, frankly, an insulting one to the citizens who attended. He went through the motions, but Seattle people did not.

Now, those people knew that weakening the ownership rules would allow the media landscape to be dominated by a few massive corporations, putting too much control in a few hands and producing a system where only the powerful can be heard in our democracy. It would lead to a lack of diversity of voices, programming that is out of touch with local concerns, as well as a continuation of the homogenization of our news and our entertainment.

Already, consolidation has brought us to the point where in the average radio market, two companies control 70 percent of market revenue. That is why the Senate voted to overturn the first try, the first run that Mr. Martin and then-Chairman Powell took in 2003 to loosen these rules. It is why a Federal court tossed out the ill-advised rules in the Prometheus decision, and it is why we need to stop a second attempt to do the same thing that 1,000 people in Seattle asked to be stopped.

Therefore, I am working with my colleague, Congressman MAURICE HINCHEY, to reintroduce our legislation that would derail Commissioner Martin's cross-ownership scheme that is so contrary to the wishes of the public. Mr. Martin claims that his proposal is a modest one. In fact, it would impact half of Americans who live in the top 20 media markets and could impact even more with possible waivers and exemptions. I wish 1,000 voices in Seattle and thousands more in hearings across the Nation would have knocked some sense into a particular commissioner, maybe three of them on the FCC who are heck-bent, or perhaps hell-bent, on loosening media consolidation rules.

Now that this Federal agency has disclosed its real plan to move ahead with a plan that runs so counter to public sentiment and the public interest, the time has come for Congress to weigh in. We are one voice that the

FCC can't tune out. It is time for Congress to act. Let's make sure the will of the American people is heard, not just this preordained stunt by an FCC commissioner.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Ms. FALLIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FALLIN 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO 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 gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York 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 gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATERS 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 gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

HONORING MRS. MARIANNE HEINEMANN RUSSO

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

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored and I want to thank Members of Congress for allowing me to make this statement. This is concerning the death of a very dear friend of mine and a great American that has served our country, Marianne Russo. On November 12, 2007, Ms. Russo died at the age of 71 in her home in Elkdale House in Lincoln University, Pennsylvania.

Ms. Russo was born on May 7, 1936, in New Canaan, Connecticut. She graduated from Little Red Schoolhouse, New Canaan Country Day School, the Baldwin School and Mount Holyoke College.

She earned a master's degree in history at Columbia University and a master's in linguistics at the University of Delaware. During the peak of the civil rights movement, Ms. Russo

and her husband, the late Paul Anthony Russo, made a significant contribution to history by teaching at Lincoln University, a historically black institution.

Ms. Russo's passion for teaching and writing prompted her to organize a local writers' group and participated in the Key West Literary Seminar, which created the Marianne Russo scholarship for inspiring writers.

In addition to this achieving excellence as a teacher and a writer, Ms. Russo coordinated grass-roots efforts to elect progressive Democratic candidates to serve on local, State and Federal Government levels. In fact, she was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the OxGrove Democratic Committee.

Today I ask Members of Congress to take time to honor Ms. Russo who is not only a patriot but a great American. Ms. Russo dedicated her life to serving others as a teacher and a published writer.

As an accomplished author, teacher, political activist, and recipient of numerous awards and honors, Ms. Russo has truly left behind an excellent legacy. Her excellence will continue to shine through her four children and four grandchildren, all of the individuals she enriched in her classrooms, organizations and literary works.

As a member of the Congressional District 17 in Miami, Florida, I have the honor to be the Congressman for her daughter, Monica Russo, President of SEIU Healthcare Florida, and also serves on the international board of SEIU.

In addition, I have the opportunity and great honor and the blessed privilege to be the godfather for her granddaughter, Giovanna, who I love and appreciate, and I know that she will continue the family legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we recognize Americans like Ms. Russo and her husband, Mr. Russo. They are in a better place now. And what they have left here in this country and here in the United States of America is a sense of pride, a sense of activism, and a sense of love.

I would also like to state into the RECORD that a memorial and celebration in her honor celebrating her life will be held on Saturday, November 17, 2007, at 2:00 p.m. at Penns Grove School Auditorium, 301 South Fifth Street, Oxford, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to furthermore say that many times Members come to the floor to share with the Members of Congress the great contributions of Americans that have moved on to a greater place, some on the battlefield in an area of war, some that were patriots here teaching and pushing Americans to take part in this democracy. I am very proud of Ms. Russo's accomplishments. I know that her spirit will continue to live in this country, and I know there are other Ms. Russos that are out there that are going to carry the spirit at the grass-roots level.

I say to the Russo family that is gathered at the family home to celebrate her life, celebrate her life as though she is still here, because she is. And she will live within you and live within me and live within other Americans that appreciate Americans like her.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great honor, before we go on this Thanksgiving break when we surround ourselves with family and friends, to let you know that sometimes we have to cry, sometimes we have to pray, and sometimes we even have joy. I ask during the holiday season, and especially for the Russo family, to live within the joy that you remember in your heart and your mind of her contributions to your family and to our country.

□ 2210

LETTER FROM REBECCA SHOWERS

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the people's House to give voice to the pain and courage of Rebecca Showers, one of my constituents. I do so, believing that we must take every opportunity in this Chamber to tell the stories of the American people.

With Rebecca's permission, I would like to read part of a letter she sent to me earlier this month. Rebecca's husband had every expectation of completing his service in the Army after two tours in Iraq. But recently he received word that he now faces a third deployment, this one for 15 months.

Speaking of her husband, Mrs. Showers writes this: "I don't want him to miss a year and a half of our lives. Our son is 2, and he will miss the most important times in his life, the forming of sentences, learning new words, learning the alphabet, even two of his birthdays, which, by the way, he already missed him turning 2 on October 17.

"He will also miss two Christmases and two Thanksgivings. Just to let you know, in the last 6 years he has only been home twice for Christmas, and not once for Thanksgiving. I'm sure you hear this a lot from other Army spouses, but I just want my husband to be home with his family, where he belongs. I would like to know what the government is willing to do about getting our guys home sooner, or at least if they are willing to send them over for shorter tours. A year and a half is just too long, and I am not sure they understand that.

"Is there anything you can do for me and my son or know anything else that maybe I could do? Please help me, Mr. SARBANES. He shouldn't have to go for so long. It's tearing me apart."

Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether it's possible to accelerate this young man's return, but I have contacted the Department of the Army, asking for its consideration based on these circumstances. In the meantime, my colleague, Ellen Tauscher, has introduced