

like her husband—a beautiful, beautiful person.

It is a sad day that IKE SKELTON leaves this Chamber. It will not be today but in a few weeks, but it is a wonderful day for all of us to count ourselves blessed by being part of the life of this extraordinary, good, and decent man, IKE SKELTON of Missouri. IKE SKELTON, patriot. IKE SKELTON, a wonderful, great American.

Thank you, IKE SKELTON.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN IKE SKELTON

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

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, in 2003 I was teaching at the Bloch School of Business at the University of Missouri in Kansas City, serving as a talk radio show host on NPR and pastoring a congregation.

□ 1800

I received a phone call from Congressman IKE SKELTON, who began the request for me to give up my peaceful and loving life to run for Congress as my predecessor, Karen McCarthy, had decided not to seek reelection. I chose, in large part, to pursue this office at the request of Congressman IKE SKELTON.

Mr. Chairman, I have three sisters whom I love dearly. From the age of about 3 to about 7, I made requests repeatedly to my parents for a brother. I'm not even sure I knew how that brother could come into existence, but I made the request nonetheless. That never happened, but I can say here in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, that, if I had had a brother, I would have liked for his name to have been Ike. If I had had a brother, I would have liked for him to have had the patience, the intellect, and the spirit of IKE SKELTON.

There is very little secret around our home as to who is the favorite Congressman for my 7-year-old grandson, Isaac Cleaver. One of the great delights of his life—and probably the older he gets the more significant it will be—is already having been introduced to Congressman IKE SKELTON at an event at Royals Stadium. In that introduction, he said that IKE SKELTON was named after him. So, in our household, from my wife, Dianne, all the way to Little Ike, we all have great admiration and love for IKE SKELTON and his family.

It will be difficult to roam these Halls and not see IKE SKELTON or to come into this hallowed room and not look at the seat where he usually sat and where the Missouri delegation would, from time to time, gather around him. I have said to him and to others in his presence that this man has the ability to walk with kings and Presidents and not to lose the common touch.

As chairman of the Armed Services Committee, IKE SKELTON was one of

the most influential human beings, not only in this country but in the world—the most revered Member of Congress by the military of the United States of America. Yet any Member of Congress, frankly, from either side of the aisle, could stop IKE SKELTON and hold a conversation. He never lost the common touch.

It will be difficult for me not to see him in this place. I speak of the man IKE SKELTON from Lexington, Missouri; and I speak of a man whose career in this body will be recorded by historians as a majestic moment for the military of the United States of America.

I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker, because I think IKE SKELTON deserves far more eloquence than I can present. Hopefully, a combination of everything we say will match, in some small way, the elegance with which he served this Congress.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN IKE SKELTON

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a fellow colleague and a person I have grown to love—our distinguished colleague from the Show Me State.

I was blessed when coming into this Congress that the first committee I was appointed to serve on was the Armed Services Committee and to be there under the guidance and tutelage of IKE SKELTON. I was the last person appointed to the committee that year.

In fact, my mother would often say to me, How come I never see you on C-SPAN? That was because I was sitting behind the camera so they couldn't actually see me on C-SPAN.

But IKE SKELTON, as he does with everyone, treated the lowest member on the committee, who was me, with the same kind of dignity and respect and solid advice as he does with every Member of this Chamber.

IKE SKELTON, as has been said by so many speakers with great eloquence, cares so deeply for his home State, for his community, for his great family, and legacy. Imagine, in this Chamber, sitting and serving with a direct descendent of Daniel Boone and knowing how proud he was of that legacy and how proud, growing up in his great State, he was of his dad, whom I learned about in so many conversations with him, and about Harry Truman and the great history of Missouri.

When you would go there to Lexington, when you would travel and stay at his home—and as STENY mentioned—with his wonderful wife, Susie, who was such a kind, generous and kindred soul mate of IKE's, you would walk around that district and see the respect and the reverence that the people held for IKE SKELTON.

I think I was there to talk about ethanol, but I've got to be honest with

you. Joanne Morrison probably knows a lot about it, but I didn't know a great deal about ethanol. By golly, by the time I was through, you would have thought I was an expert at it.

To travel with this man abroad, you see the respect at our war colleges, amongst our military leaders, amongst heads of state, but most important to him are the men and women who wear the uniform of this country.

He carries his legacy, his great family name, his State, his community, and his country. He wears that well on his face. He shoulders it well, but he carries in his heart a love and devotion for the men and women who serve this great country of ours, and everything he has done on this great floor has been on their behalf.

All men and women who serve in our Armed Forces owe such a great debt of gratitude to this humble, passionate servant of our country and the proud standard-bearer of his great State of Missouri in the way that he has held forth on behalf of the citizens he has sworn to serve and the men and women who have represented this great country of ours and who have given the full measure of their devotion.

□ 1810

Like so many here, I love IKE SKELTON. He is a man of the House, a man for the ages because he led with that big heart of his and cared so deeply about people who serve this Nation.

God bless you, IKE SKELTON. We are all better for having served with you.

A TRIBUTE TO IKE SKELTON

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, let me first say that I, too, am here to thank IKE SKELTON for his friendship, for his service to this country, and especially for his friendship to me.

My relationship with IKE SKELTON goes back more than 30 years. I was a teenager when I first met him because he served with my father—both represented the State of Missouri—and I can remember the day he arrived here. I went on through college and happened to wind up serving in the State legislature for 17 years in his district, in Jefferson City, so our paths would cross on occasion.

But ladies and gentlemen, this country will never witness an individual like IKE SKELTON. There will never be another one like him to cast a shadow on this floor. You have served this country and your State well, and you have also given me a great appreciation for our armed services, the men and women who some make the ultimate sacrifice for this country.

As Rev. CLEAVER and others have said, I have also visited Lafayette and have been to IKE's home, but I have also been to the military bases with IKE, to Whiteman Air Force Base where

they house the B-1. And he has been my compass in this House on military issues.

He has also been, as Rev. CLEAVER said, a brother to me. I had two sisters, too, IKE. I never had a brother, but if I could ever identify somebody as a brother, it would be you. I know I will miss you. I will miss your guidance, I will miss your mentoring.

We have truly witnessed a legislative giant in our midst. You have done your job, you have done it quite well. I know this won't be the last time that we see each other and I know that you will frequently visit us, but for the Missouri delegation, you were there for all of us.

He was the senior member of the Missouri delegation and never hesitated to call us together. We have so much cohesion as a State because of his leadership. I appreciate that, IKE. I appreciate how you have taken me under your wing and given me guidance here, and I will love you for it for the rest of my life. As the saying goes, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." But you won't be fading too far.

I love you, IKE SKELTON. God bless you, and God bless the United States.

A TRIBUTE TO IKE SKELTON

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

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and an honor to be here this evening to honor a great American. I have had the privilege of traveling throughout the world with IKE SKELTON. One of my first trips was with IKE SKELTON. We went to the Far East. We had Thanksgiving with our troops at the DMZ in South Korea. Subsequent to that, we also took a trip to Bosnia several times, spent one Easter with the troops. So many memories of trips to visit the troops and their families to look at the facilities, to make sure they had all the equipment they needed to have, all the support that we could possibly have been able to give them on the committee.

I have had the privilege and honor of visiting IKE's district in Missouri, and I invited Chairman SKELTON to come to El Paso. I grew up in a little town right outside of El Paso by the name of Canutillo. The main street of this little town was Doniphan Drive. Never did I dream that I had grown up in this environment with a direct connection to Missouri, because when IKE SKELTON came to my district, he immediately recognized the connection. He said, This street was named after Colonel Alexander Doniphan, who was a Missourian and came to Texas to save Texas. Immediately a connection there.

Chairman IKE SKELTON is, in my eyes, a professor of history, a professor of, particularly, military history. We all famously have a list of recommended readings from IKE SKELTON.

I have to confess I haven't read all those books yet, but I am working on it. It gives you a better understanding; but for me, it gives me a unique perspective on who the man, IKE SKELTON, is.

I couldn't agree more with my colleagues here this evening in paying tribute to a great American, a giant that has served this institution with dignity, with honor, with great passion, and with great love and care for our military men and women and for their families.

IKE, it has been a tremendous honor to serve with you. I have learned so much from you that I think, by any measure, if there is a new Member coming here, my recommendation would be to emulate the great Chairman IKE SKELTON.

Thank you. And thanks to the people of Missouri for sharing you for over three decades of great public service to this great country. For me, an honor; for this country, an American legend. Thank you, IKE.

God bless you, and God bless this country.

A TRIBUTE TO IKE SKELTON

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to just add my voice to these remarks this evening about our friend and colleague, IKE SKELTON of Missouri.

He first came to this Congress in 1976 with my predecessor, Congressman Dick Gephardt. That was the first year I voted, 1976. I was a senior in high school that year. And to watch him grow in leadership to become what I believe is really a national treasure—his voice advocating for American troops and their families, his leadership on national readiness for current conflicts and future conflicts that we may face—has really been unparalleled.

□ 1820

We respect his leadership and what he has done for the strength of this country. In Missouri, he has been a leader. He has been the dean of our delegation.

I had the honor to work with him. I also had the honor to travel with him to visit our troops in Kosovo and elsewhere. And we've seen what he's done to transform two vital military facilities in Missouri—Whiteman Air Force Base and Fort Leonard Wood—to become what they are today.

He's not only a student of history, but he has been a great teacher and a great mentor. He's been a family friend. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with him, to call him "colleague," but also to see his example for public service. He has been a model for what public service is all about.

I know that he has several chapters left to write for what he does to give back to this country and our great State, and we look forward to seeing those for years and years to come.

Best wishes to you, my friend.

HONORING IKE SKELTON

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. I rise today to say thank you, thank you to IKE for being such a great mentor, for taking me under your wing, for telling me a little bit about what it was like for you when you chaired the Personnel Committee a number of years ago. And I think you told me that early on, when I came onto the Armed Services Committee, but it was a few years later when I actually had the great honor of chairing that subcommittee. And then I felt such an incredible burden because I thought, you know, IKE has done this before, and how could I live up to who he had been and the way he had cared for the troops and their families and kind of got through some of the really tough times, because when you deal with those issues, you know that you're going to be looking, wanting to do everything in the world when you can't, when there are limits to what you can do.

And I just really remember you telling me about that and letting me know, get in there, but you better do a good job, he said. I want you to do a good job. I don't want you to screw it up. And so I certainly had that burden.

But more than anything else, IKE, you are such a splendid gentleman, and we use the word kind of loosely here. Sometimes I think we often say "to the gentleman from" whatever State that might be. You are the gentleman. You are the epitome of what we all believe to be someone who serves in this body and who cares so deeply and who has such strong principles and who teaches us all. And I think we all want to live up to that standard you set. It's not easy, and you made it really hard for everybody to do that, but I think we all strive for that the best we can.

I know that I didn't have an opportunity to be in your district, but you came to my district. And you and your late wife, Susie, were there, and we had just the most marvelous evening.

I remember I was then at an event that you spoke at, and I remember looking around the room and everybody was just, you know, transfixed, really, on your words. You were telling one of those stories and it went on forever, but that didn't seem to bother anybody. They were just delighted to be in your company and to hear you speak and to hear the way you interacted with all the people in the room, but telling those stories. President Truman, of course, came into that story and your father.