

In my own community, heavily occupied by seniors, they cried out when post offices were closed that were close to their community, where they were able to walk and secure their checks. Some of them like to come directly to handle their business. We are better than closing down post offices in rural and urban America, and we're better than not finding a solution to employ hardworking Americans in an efficient and effective manner.

I look forward to working with our postal family, those hardworking Americans all across America who have been the good Samaritans to determine whether our seniors were in need of bringing medicine to home-bound patients, bringing information and helping small businesses.

We can work to solve this problem efficiently and effectively.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JOHN V. SULLIVAN, HOUSE PARLIAMENTARIAN, UPON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARDNER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

The Chair understands that all time yielded by Mr. DINGELL will be yielded through Mr. LATOURETTE.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the Speaker very much, and I understand that I can't ask unanimous consent to give half to the dean of the House, but we're going to work it out, and since we're talking about the Parliamentarian, hopefully we'll get a favorable ruling from the Parliamentarian on the distribution of time. I'm going to be joined on the Democratic side in this rare burst of bipartisanship by the dean of the House, Mr. DINGELL of Michigan, and a number of Members on both sides of the aisle are going to come talk about what to some of us was kind of a shock, and that is the announced retirement of our Parliamentarian, John Sullivan.

Because I'm going to be here for the full hour along with Mr. DINGELL, I'm going to yield to Members who have other time commitments, but I want to make sure that they have the opportunity to say what it is they feel they need to express about Mr. Sullivan's service to the House.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to Mr. THORNBERRY of Texas.

Mr. THORNBERRY. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, every person elected to the House believes that we're here to do important work on behalf of our district. Of course, the House is bigger than any one issue or any one person. Yet, there are a relatively small number of persons who are central to the functioning of this House. Too often, I'm afraid, Members get so wrapped up in what we're trying to do that maybe we take for granted the institution of

the House. But it is the institution that is established in the Constitution. It's the institution that provides the continuity of government as political majorities come and go, and it's the institution that provides the legitimacy and the respect for what we do here.

I say all that to make the point that I think, in many ways, the Parliamentarian is the central figure for the institution of the House. Since 1927, there have only been four of them, and in my time here, we have been incredibly privileged to have had two outstanding public servants, Charles Johnson and John Sullivan, serve in that position.

It is with some regret, but even more with respect and gratitude, that we honor the service, but I'd say just as much the character and the intellectual integrity, of John Sullivan as he leaves the House to begin a new chapter in his life.

As one of those who has benefited from John's steady guidance while I was in the chair, I can testify to his even temper. He guides our proceedings with intellect and logic, based on the Constitution, the rules of the House, and our precedent. But at the same time, he is able to factor in the human dimension, taking into account the personality of the person in the chair as well as that of the persons at the microphone. And that means it's as much art as it is science to keep the House running smoothly.

Much of the work he does, of course, is done off the House floor, advising Members and staff as to how they can accomplish their goals within the rules and precedents of the House. I have tremendous respect, though, for John's abilities and for his professionalism. But I have even greater appreciation for his commitment to and his love for this institution, for that portion of his heart that he has given to the House for the past 25 years.

He has elevated each of us who have worked with him, but more importantly, he has elevated the institution of the House of Representatives through which government by the people's representatives is possible. He is among our best and brightest, and all of us here, and the institution, will miss him greatly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and to extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the matter of this Special Order, referring very specifically to our dear friend, the Parliamentarian, Mr. Sullivan.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DINGELL. I want to thank the Chair for the kindness that you have shown me, and I want to express my

particular thanks and good wishes to my dear friend, Mr. LATOURETTE, before this matter, and now, through the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, I yield to the distinguished minority leader, my friend, Mr. HOYER, the gentleman from Maryland.

□ 1850

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan, but certainly also my friend from Ohio, both of whom have served here for a long period of time and who love this institution and know how critical the functions are of the Parliamentarian. I want to thank them both.

Mr. DINGELL has had the privilege of serving alongside all four of the men who have been the modern Parliamentarians in this House. I've had the privilege of serving with three of them.

When the Framers of the Constitution wrote article I, section 5, clause 2, they probably had little idea of the volume of precedents that would accumulate in the 224 years since the House convened and adopted its first rules.

Today, the job of the Parliamentarian is probably one of the most difficult in Washington. A thorough understanding of the rules of precedents is a prerequisite to be an accomplished Parliamentarian. John Sullivan has that. One must also, however, have the respect of every Member of this House. John Sullivan has that.

That is what John Sullivan achieved over the course of his 17 years in the Parliamentarian's Office. As our Parliamentarian for the last 8 of those years, John has sat beside the Speaker's rostrum through some of the most heated floor debates I've ever seen, indeed perhaps in which I've participated.

Throughout, he preserved the impartiality of and the high regard for his office in the eyes of both Democrats and Republicans—when Democrats were in charge and when Republicans were in charge—and he demonstrated his keen and incisive command of precedent issuing his rulings.

Hearing of John's decision to retire, I was among the many Members who felt that they were losing a respected colleague and friend. Because after his tenure here, John Sullivan has left his mark on the House no less than any of us who were elected to serve here by our constituents. He, no less than ourselves, has served the American people well.

As we wish him the best in retirement, we also welcome as our new Parliamentarian a man who is eminently qualified to succeed him in office. Tom Wickham has been at John's side throughout his tenure in the Parliamentarian's Office, and I know John is leaving us in very capable hands.

Mr. Speaker, I join you and my colleagues and everyone else who has come to the floor this evening celebrating John's service to this House and to our Nation.

I wish him well and thank him for all he has done to preserve the order—and with it the honor—of the people's House.

John, you have been a great public servant in the best traditions of that term. You have been someone, as I said earlier, who has been respected by every leader of both parties, an individual who has listened intently, who has judged fairly, and whose judgments have made this House better.

John Sullivan, well done, the House's good and faithful servant. Well done as a friend and colleague and adviser.

Many of us are better Members of this House because of John's counsel through the years, and this House is certainly a better place for his service. I congratulate him and wish him Godspeed.

And I thank the gentleman from Michigan and the gentleman from Ohio for leading this Special Order to praise and give testimony to the outstanding service of our friend, John Sullivan.

Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished minority whip for those observations.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee, Mr. DREIER of California, who, sadly, like Mr. Sullivan, has decided to move into retirement. And like Mr. Sullivan, he will be greatly missed for his institutional knowledge in the House of Representatives.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for yielding.

I want to join the distinguished gentleman from Maryland in expressing appreciation to my friends, Messrs. DINGELL and LATOURETTE, for taking time out to talk about John Sullivan. It is true that I decided to follow the Sullivan lead, and I too will be leaving the Congress. I'm going to stay a little longer than John has. I'm going to stay until January, but I will tell you that this place is a much better institution for the service of John Sullivan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by associating myself with the remarks of my friend from Maryland, with one very important correction. We scurried around over here when my friend said 17 years. It, in fact, is 27 years that John Sullivan has served in the Parliamentarian's Office. So I offer that one minor, but very important, correction to my friend from Maryland.

I take to the well to do something that I don't often do and that is to read. The reason I'm doing it is I'm trying to show off the Rules Committee. We're very proud of the fact that the House Committee on Rules—I'd say to my friend from Michigan and my friend from Ohio, however eloquent you all will be in talking about John Sullivan, you have not done what the Rules Committee did last night, and that is pass out a resolution, an enrolled resolution commemorating the great service of John Sullivan. So I would like to share that with our colleagues, if I might.

It says:

Whereas the Honorable John V. Sullivan has been a committed government servant for over 40 years and worked in the House of Representatives for 27 years;

Whereas Mr. Sullivan was appointed to the Office of the Parliamentarian in 1987 and, over the ensuing 25 years has served under six successive Speakers, the past eight years as Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives under the appointments of three successive Speakers;

Whereas Mr. Sullivan has displayed extraordinary rigor in the application of pertinent precedent to every parliamentary question and provided sage counsel and advice in matters critical to the institution;

Whereas the Committee on Rules constantly relies on the advice, counsel, and expertise of Mr. Sullivan to meet the Committee's obligations to the House;

Whereas Mr. Sullivan has cultivated and led a team of dedicated and nonpartisan deputies, assistants, and clerks committed to ensuring that the decisions of the Chair and the operation of the rostrum are regarded by all as fair, accurate, and professional;

Whereas Mr. Sullivan has served the House during a period of ongoing transition with shifting majorities, and has done so to the same standard of nonpartisan excellence expected from the Parliamentarian;

Whereas Mr. Sullivan participated in numerous programs of the House Democracy Partnership, providing advice and counsel to legislators from new and reemerging democracies around the globe as they work to strengthen their legislative institutions, reform their rules of procedure, and amend their constitutions;

Whereas Mr. Sullivan has endeavored to update the practices and procedures of the House to reflect developments in technology while remaining faithful to the institution's Constitutional underpinnings; and

Whereas Mr. Sullivan has informed the Speaker that he will be beginning a well-deserved retirement on the last day of March, two thousand and twelve: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Committee on Rules, on behalf of the Committee and the House, expresses its profound gratitude to the Honorable John V. Sullivan for his exemplary record of service and his steady, impartial advice and guidance as the Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Clerk of the Committee is hereby directed to prepare this resolution in a manner suitable for presentation to Mr. Sullivan.

I signed this, as did the ranking member, my good friend from Rochester, Ms. SLAUGHTER.

This is suitable for framing. We will have one for framing, and Mr. Sullivan will be able to have this. I would like to, Mr. Speaker, just take a moment, if I might, since everyone will be talking about John's work here—I mentioned the work up in the Rules Committee and we did have one whereas clause where we talked about the House Democracy Partnership. I would like to share with our colleagues the work of the House Democracy Partnership, because not everyone is aware of the projects that the House Democracy Partnership has taken on.

It is an extraordinarily bipartisan organization that in the post-September 11 world was designed to focus on strengthening the legislative branches. I see my good friend from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) here who is a member of our

partnership. It is designed to strengthen the legislative branches in new and reemerging democracies around the world.

□ 1900

My colleague from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) and I serve as cochairs of this effort, and we just established our 17th partner in central Asia, the country of Kyrgyzstan; and, in fact, we're going to be, at the end of this week, continuing our mission. We're going to be going to two of our partner countries, Kosovo and Macedonia; and we'll be in Libya and Egypt as well, where we're going to be talking about the importance of strong, vibrant parliaments.

Well, I've got to say that the House Democracy Partnership and these countries have been the great beneficiaries of John Sullivan's expertise, specifically in Kenya.

We had an opportunity to visit Liberia and Kenya, two of our partner countries. We were in Mali, as well, on this one particular trip. Following the very, very tragic aftermath of the '07 elections in Kenya, there was a huge change that took place—lots of disruption, to put it mildly. And Kenya has just gone through a whole constitution reform process.

When we were in Kenya, John Sullivan spent time looking at the proposed constitution, meeting with the staff members and members of Parliament in Kenya, and he was virtually immediately able to cite a number of discrepancies that took place in the constitution. And so his very, very shrewd skill and expertise has not only been utilized to the benefit of the United States House of Representatives, but, in Kenya and in other countries that we have visited, John Sullivan has been able to use his expertise for the expansion of democracies around the world. He's met with a number of our incoming delegations, and it has been, again, extraordinarily important work.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to express my appreciation to John for his work and to express best wishes. We all know that Wick has big shoes to fill, but he's going to do a stellar job in this very, very important position as Parliamentarian.

And I have to say that I hope very much that, as John Sullivan goes into retirement, he will continue, as his predecessor Charlie Johnson has, to focus on this institution and also on the imperative of doing what we can to expand self-determination, political pluralism, and the development of democratic institutions around the world as well.

So I say congratulations. I'm now going to present this to our friend, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my friends for yielding.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield to my dear friend from California (Mr. SCHIFF), through my distinguished friend from Ohio.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise to thank our House Parliamentarian, John Sullivan, for his years of service to his Nation and to the House of Representatives. John has been a trusted adviser and an honest broker of the rules of the House. He has served at a time when partisan rancor has, unfortunately, been prevalent in this body, but his integrity and impartiality have remained beyond question and beyond reproach.

John joined the Office of the Parliamentarian 25 years ago, rising to his current role in 2004 when he was appointed by Speaker Hastert. Before joining the Office of the Parliamentarian, he had a distinguished career as an active duty member of the U.S. Air Force. He also served as respected counsel on the House Armed Services Committee.

As Parliamentarian, John's keen legal mind and passion for the Constitution has always been apparent. I remember with great fondness working with the Parliamentarian on some very difficult issues involving the Armenian genocide, one of the most challenging parliamentary issues I think we've faced in terms of how to navigate questions of germaneness. Through that process, and every other that I have come to work with the Parliamentarian, I respected his insights, his intellect, his integrity, and his dedication to his job.

He has been a phenomenal asset to this institution, and I know that his successor, Tom Wickham, who currently serves as Deputy Parliamentarian, will continue in John's legacy of professionalism.

John, I want to thank you for your service to this body, and I know that my colleagues join me in wishing you the best of luck in future endeavors.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, it's now my pleasure to yield—and you'll notice a theme here. There's nothing greater than the honor of being asked by the Speaker, either Mr. BOEHNER or Ms. PELOSI or Mr. Hastert, to be the Speaker pro tem and preside over the House, and you'll see a theme of Members from both sides who have had the privilege of doing that and have had the benefit of the counsel of Mr. Sullivan.

One of our best presiding officers, the gentlelady from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT), I am pleased to yield to her. Mrs. BIGGERT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it's not every day we get to speak on the House floor about friends and colleagues that are not constituents or other Members of Congress, and tonight we have the distinct privilege to recognize a friend and fixture of Congress behind the scenes, Mr. John Sullivan.

Most of you will probably remember that John was appointed Parliamentarian by our former colleague, Speaker Dennis Hastert, in 2004 and did serve for 25 years. Those that have worked with him will tell you he's an excellent

Parliamentarian, an institutionalist, and a man of integrity that truly cares about the House of Representatives. He would never bend the rules to pursue a certain outcome. And how you play the game is more important to him than whether you win or lose.

I just wanted to tell a couple of things.

When I first came to Congress, at that time, freshmen always had a week to chair the floor at night. And so I guess because I had a "B" for a last name, BIGGERT, that I got to do it first. Now, the only problem with that was that it was the training was the next week. So I went to the floor and I stood up there and I had this microphone sitting there, and I looked out and I said, What am I doing here? And I think I was kind of frozen, and John said, This is what you do. And so I proceeded on.

Another time, I was in the chair and suddenly there was a lapse of decorum by two of our Members, one on each side of the aisle. I won't name the names. But suddenly they started moving towards each other, and I said, What do I do? And he said, Bang the gavel hard and multiple times. So suddenly they stopped in their tracks and they did retreat back to the desk to continue after we got things under control.

So I really appreciate that we have had this opportunity. It is really an honor to stand and chair this floor, and I think that the Parliamentarian, John Sullivan, made it easy.

I have a few other things that you may not know about John: that he went to the Air Force Academy, and as a graduate of Indiana University's law school, he is a huge Hoosier fan. And I can only imagine how proud he was of the Indiana Elite Eight basketball performance against Kentucky last Friday. The only thing wrong was that Kentucky beat Indiana by 1 point, 73-72, so that kind of ended Indiana in the March Madness.

Another part of the behind-the-scenes function of the House that John's strategic wisdom and advice was critical to the continuity of the House function was in the days and weeks following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and he performed there admirably.

John has led the Parliamentarian's Office in a collegial and a very professional manner to the benefit of the Office, the Members and the House. We are fortunate for his service and wish him well in retirement. We will miss him.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield to, through my good friend from Ohio, to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, Mr. MEL WATT.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. Of course I'm not from Virginia, I'm from North Carolina, but that happens to me and BOBBY SCOTT all the time. We get confused with each other, States and personalities, because we sit beside each other in Judiciary and we're good

friends. So I'm never insulted when anybody does that to me.

I dare say that if folks are watching this proceeding on C-SPAN or at home they're wondering, Who in the world is John Sullivan? And I think that's probably the highest commendation that we can give to John Sullivan as a Parliamentarian, because if he had been involved in any kind of controversy or one side or the other in this institution had accused him of misinterpreting rules, then people would know that there's a Parliamentarian that's basically the referee in this institution that both sides have to respect in order for the institution to work effectively.

□ 1910

There has been no controversy—I mean, that the people outside know about. We know inside our institution that the Parliamentarians are dealing with controversial rulings, close rulings, trying to figure out what the precedents are for what we can do and cannot do, what has been done this way in the past and, therefore, represents a precedent for us to be able to do it in the future. But outside, nobody has ever heard of John Sullivan because there has been no controversy, and that's a great thing to have said about him.

He has been absolutely even-handed. You've heard the word "nonpartisan" because this is a position that you cannot be or take the Republican side or the Democratic side. You've got to call the rules as you see them. There's nothing worse than at the end of March Madness, at the end of the game, one team saying that the referees influenced the outcome of the game. So that's a high mark for John Sullivan.

When he replaced the prior Parliamentarian, Mr. Johnson, I thought surely we would go into some level of chaos; but the only difference I've ever been able to distinguish between him and Mr. Johnson is that he can't throw a baseball like our prior Parliamentarian did. If he can, he hadn't told me about it.

I just wanted to take this moment to express our gratitude. He's been a tremendous mentor—well, you can't call him a mentor—teacher of those of us who have been in this institution, who have tried to abide by the rules and go to the edge and not violate the rule, but knowing full well that we'll get absolutely nonpartisan advice and counsel from the Parliamentarian about how to do things when we don't know how to bring them to the floor, and about how to maintain the decorum and respect of every single Member in this House.

I thank him for his friendship and the role that he has played in making our institution a much, much better place to live and work.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for those remarks.

I'm glad that Mrs. BIGGERT talked about her experiences in the chair because I think all of us have memories

of that, going back a number of years, or a few years.

Just before I yield to my next colleague, I just want to say, in the very first speech I gave on the floor, I had brought in the American humorist, Dave Barry, to be my guest press secretary. Some folks in my party said I should have my head examined, and I'm sorry to report that isn't the first or the last time that that's happened to me over the last 18 years. But he wrote my speech, and it was all about the warning labels that need to be on stepladders. Mr. Johnson was the Parliamentarian, but John was his deputy at the time. And Dave Barry wrote in my speech: "Now, I'm not saying that all lawyers are scum-sucking toads." And we had to go to the Parliamentarian's Office to get it checked out to see if I could call lawyers "scum-sucking toads." I'm pleased to report to the House 18 years later that that's not a violation of the rules, so I intend to use it in future speeches.

It is now my pleasure to yield to someone who, during his championing of eliminating pork and earmarks, wore a path out between where he was seated and the Parliamentarian's desk, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it's a bittersweet honor to take the podium during this altogether appropriate recognition of House Parliamentarian John Sullivan upon his retirement. I recognize it as bittersweet because it's truly sad for me—and all of us—to see him go, but I'm sure he will enjoy the break from all of us.

I'm certain that tonight we'll hear—and we have already heard—his praises sung, particularly for his esteemed career that spanned some two-and-a-half decades. We saw him rise from counsel to assistant, to deputy, to finally the full-fledged Parliamentarian of this special institution.

I venture to say that few Members or offices outside the Office of the Rules Committee are able to sing his praises having had quite as much experience as my office has had with him. According to a cursory review, it would appear that during Mr. Sullivan's tenure heading up the left side of the Speaker's dais, I've brought to the floor somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple hundred amendments and privileged resolutions and have filed countless more with the Rules Committee. So it is with some experience that I say that both I and my staff have found the Office of the Parliamentarian, under Mr. Sullivan's leadership, to be fair and open, responsive, deliberative, and consistent. In fact, we've come to rely on it.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that what I most admire about John is his irrepressible respect for the House of Representatives as an institution. Partisan politics, heated rhetoric, games of gotcha, finger-pointing and

-wagging are as common around here as, well, as common as Flake amendments.

Whether vetting germaneness issues with a provision or two, or being given a few pointers about surviving on a desert island somewhere, I have darkened the door of John's office more than a few times. I can tell you this: when you spend time with John Sullivan, it's easy for your thoughts to turn to the genius of the Founding Fathers, the intention of the Framers of the Constitution, and the beacon of freedom and democracy that the Congress represents. The veneration of this institution just rubs off when you spend any time with John Sullivan.

As James Madison noted in the *Federalist Papers*: "Stability in government is essential to national character." I can think of no higher compliment to pay John than to say his stable influence in this Chamber has been a credit to our national character.

As a Member of Congress, I thank him both for his service and for ensuring that the House will be more than ably served by those who assume the same responsibility. As a friend, I wish him the best in his next adventure. May it involve a deserted island somewhere in the South Pacific.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield, through my good friend from Ohio, to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona. I thank the gentleman from Michigan and the gentleman from Ohio.

In the 110th Congress, as well as the 111th Congress, I had the opportunity to preside frequently. I was given that honor by Speaker PELOSI, and several of those years I clocked over 100 hours in the chair. So I had an opportunity to be with John and see John's work as the Parliamentarian, and I associate myself with all the remarks given by the previous speakers.

John is very knowledgeable and well read about the rules of the House. As my colleague, JEFF FLAKE, said, John was fair and John was respected—and is respected—by the leadership of the House on both sides, as well as his staff.

I have to tell you that his staff was always well prepared. They anticipated, especially in debates that we had controversial bills, they anticipated probably some of the areas that would hit some rocky roads, and they were always prepared.

□ 1920

His staff was prepared, and they were always kind and caring to the person who was up in the chair, and many times they assisted me to make sure that I read the paper right or gave the right response. So I have to tell you that, John, as Parliamentarian, did bring stability and respect; and I thank him for that.

During some of the debate that was pretty boring or during votes, we had a chance to talk to each other about

more social things. We talked about vacations he took, when his daughter Margaret was in town, restaurants, movies that we had seen. So during those times, I had the opportunity to know John as a person, and I found him in those conversations to be a caring husband to his wife, Nancy, because he talked about some of the trips they went on and some of the things they did over the weekends, and obviously he was a caring father to his three children.

So, for me, it was a great joy to be presiding over the debate here at the House and to know that the people who were going to be assisting me as Parliamentarians were well prepared and were fair and that they respected the House. More than that, I knew that I was dealing with a person, John V. Sullivan, who truly loves this House and who wanted to make sure that this House was able to function well and that there would be order.

JEFF FLAKE is correct: when JEFF sometimes would get up, John would say, Oh, no, here comes another Flake amendment. But we got through them. In each case, we did the best we could, and I know that his professionalism will always stand out.

I congratulate Tom for succeeding him. Yet, to my friend John Sullivan, I wish you the best. May you have a great retirement and continue to care for this House as you care for your family. Best wishes.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am a little bit surprised that the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. PASTOR), who was a great presiding officer during what we called on our side of the aisle the "troubled years," those of the Pelosi speakership, thinks that our debates are boring and that they're not riveting, seat-of-the-pants, edge-of-the-seat type things.

Another wonderful presiding officer on our side, whose stern countenance keeps the House in order, is the distinguished gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BONNER), and I would yield to him.

Mr. BONNER. I thank the gentleman, and I join in the comments that have already been made in expressing our deep gratitude to a young man who, by many standards, is still a young man and who obviously has a very bright future in front of him, but who has decided to embark on a new chapter in his already storied career.

Tonight, Democrat and Republican, North and South, the dean of Congress—someone who has been here longer than many of us have been alive—and others who are coming tonight who are expressing their gratitude to a man named John Sullivan are all here to really offer our heartfelt thanks for the example you have set, for the inspiration you have provided, and for the legacy that you are leaving behind.

Many a young lawyer in this country—and John is an attorney as has already been noted—when asked who inspired them to go into law, into that

profession, cited a fictional character, someone of whom I am proud. The author of "To Kill a Mocking Bird" is from my home in Monroeville, Alabama, and the story is of Atticus Finch and of the example that he set in a very difficult time in our Nation's history. One of my favorite lines out of "To Kill a Mocking Bird" that Atticus said is: The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience.

I believe that we can all agree that, while we have rules in this House and that no one more than the Parliamentarian helps us abide by those rules and to follow the spirit of them, John Sullivan has set the example of being an outstanding Parliamentarian by using the rule but also by using his heart and his conscience.

His rulings have sometimes been questioned, but never disputed in a real sense because his rulings and the rulings of the men and women who work with him have been seen as the gold standard by those of us who have been given the privilege of serving as Members of Congress. It truly is the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. If a ruling were appealed to the chair and if the chair turned to the Parliamentarian, as is often the case, we knew that the answer was as good as gold. He is truly the unbiased umpire who calls the balls "balls," the strikes "strikes," and who oftentimes has to tell us what we don't want to hear but what we need to know.

I am so honored to stand here tonight, along with my colleagues, to say thank you to someone who represents an army of professionals, of men and women over the years and throughout the decades whose names have never been on the ballot but who have made a lasting mark of love and support for this Institution. Some, like myself, have served on personal staffs. Others have served on committees, on committee staffs, and still a few others have had the privilege of wearing the title of Sergeant at Arms or Chaplain or, in this case, Parliamentarian.

He is a man whom we truly respect, someone who has truly made this place a better place. As Mr. WATT said earlier tonight, if the people back home who are watching this discussion tonight are hearing this debate, there is no debate. John Sullivan may not be a household name in some parts of America, but John Sullivan has made the House of Representatives a better place by his service and by his example.

Mr. LATOURETTE, I appreciate you and Mr. DINGELL for hosting this Special Order for 1 hour in order for all of us to have a chance to say thank you for a job well done.

May God continue to bless you, your wife, and your family.

Mr. DINGELL. With thanks to my good friend for his kind comments, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Maryland through the distinguished gentleman from Ohio.

Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to our Parliamentarian, our friend John Sullivan, for his service to this Nation and to the United States House of Representatives. His departure as Parliamentarian of the House comes as a sad note to many of us who have come to know John and who have come to depend on his wise counsel and expertise, as I have since I first entered this Chamber in 2008 and as many others have through the years. I am happy that John is leaving on his own terms, and I wish him every happiness as he moves on to the next phase of his life.

As has been said, John was born in Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from the Air Force Academy, received a law degree from the Indiana School of Law, and served honorably in the United States Air Force.

John has dedicated his life to the noble calling of public service. Whether as an officer in the Air Force, as counsel of the House Armed Services Committee, or as a member of the Parliamentarian's Office for the past quarter century, he has ably served this House for 27 years. Some of my colleagues say 28 years. Others say 25 years. It has been a long time. He served the people of this country, the Nation, for nearly 40 years.

The job of the House Parliamentarian is an exceedingly difficult one. We Members would, no doubt, be a rather unruly lot without our Parl. One must have a scholarly grasp of our Constitution and of the rules and legislative procedures governing this Institution, the integrity to be an honest and fair arbiter at all times, and possess the ability to work with both sides of the aisle at sometimes contentious moments. Throughout my time in the House, I've seen John Sullivan exhibit these qualities time and time again.

□ 1930

It's a testament as to why he is so well respected by both Republicans and Democrats, which speaks volumes as to how successfully he's handled this job.

I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know John, learning from him the importance of the rules and precedent in this institution that he so clearly loves and respects and how to serve fairly and effectively as Speaker pro tempore. Indeed, I tried mightily to imitate his calm and tempered demeanor. I spent quite a bit of time in the 111th Congress doing just that, and it helped me during one of my most proud moments as I presided under John's wisdom and guidance during passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

I remember well John's skilled mastery of our House rules when I presided during a blizzard, and our Parliamentarian called to our attention a never-before-used rule to enable us to remain in session without disrupting a lot of winter holiday plans.

I also learned that John likes to use sports analogies to describe his work almost as much as I do. He stressed to me and to other Members the impor-

tance that when serving as Speaker pro tempore, we become umpires and have to make rulings irrespective of partisan considerations.

As important as it is to celebrate and honor John's professionalism, we honor him also as a person. Since John is an avid basketball fan, I wonder if it's a mere coincidence or if there is some deeper meaning in his resignation taking effect this Saturday, March 31, the date of the Final Four of the 2012 NCAA men's college basketball tournament.

Though I'm not certain for whom John is cheering in this year's tournament, I do know that he has closely followed former Indiana and Texas Tech Coach Bobby Knight's career since Coach Knight was at West Point decades ago. They have met on numerous occasions, and John has a couple of basketballs signed by Coach Knight. So I wish him an uninterrupted time through the finals. And here, John, through the Speaker, I would just say that it's okay to choose sides.

As we say good-bye to John, I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome his respected successor Tom Wickham, the Deputy Parliamentarian, whom John has mentored. And I know Tom and the rest of their team will continue to guard the principles and rules that keep our democracy, our Republic, and this Chamber functioning with the level of dedication and integrity we witnessed from his predecessor.

My first 4 years in Congress, the House of Representatives, and our country are better off thanks to John Sullivan's public service. I wish you, John, your wife, Nancy Sands Sullivan, and your children, Michael, Margaret, and Matthew, continued success.

John Sullivan has made me a better Member, more willing to heed the gavel, more respectful of the Chair, more able to value this institution, as he does, and more confident as a Member of Congress.

I wish you much happiness. I know that your family has been a tremendous support to you and your service in this House and to our Nation. And to John Sullivan, you leave behind a legacy of service that others can and should aspire to, and I thank you.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I want to thank the gentlelady from Maryland for her remarks.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), another frequent presiding officer and accountant by training and trade prior to his service in the House of Representatives.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I will certainly not attempt the eloquence of all the previous speakers. I just simply want to say thanks to John Sullivan. He is the only Parliamentarian that I've served under. His service as Parliamentarian began just before I got here in January of '05. So it's been my privilege to serve with John.

He has been even-handed throughout, from my perspective, serving both 4 years in the minority and now back in the majority. You can't tell from John's conduct which side you belong to because he really does call them even-handedly.

When you love the institution the way I do and the way other Members do, it's easy to recognize that love of institution. There is no one that I know of whose love for this institution is evidenced greater than what is demonstrated by John Sullivan. The precedents of the House, all of the things that are a part of this institution that make it one of the most valuable legacies of our Founding Fathers, John has upheld those traditions and those precedents in a very admirable way.

So, John, thank you for the many chapters of your life that you have spent in service to the House of Representatives. Thank you for that. And Godspeed in the many chapters of your life to follow this one. This institution is better for your long service. I'm a better Member of Congress for your service. Thank you, John.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, again, through the kindness of my good friend from Ohio, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman from Michigan and the gentleman from Ohio for the opportunity to praise our departing House Parliamentarian, John Sullivan, as he prepares to leave the House of Representatives after 27 years of distinguished service.

I represent the Ninth District of Massachusetts, where, in my new district, I have 727,514 people, most of them named Sullivan. So this seems like an Irish wake here, but it is certainly not.

As we all know, John has served in the Office of the House Parliamentarian for most of his distinguished career, and the last 8 years as House Parliamentarian in this body takes a fair amount of skill and an enormous amount of patience. It is, at times, challenging, and it is that skill and ability and patience that John provides us as Members that we rely on to also allow the House to function in an orderly manner. I think all the Members here today know that the advice we receive and guidance we receive from John Sullivan, as our Parliamentarian, is given in an analytical, unbiased, and nonpartisan manner.

Following in the footsteps of his mentor, former House Parliamentarian Charlie Johnson, John has served as the Parliamentarian in both Democratic and Republican Houses. And I think it is a tribute to John's integrity and trustworthiness that he was appointed by three Speakers of the House: Speaker Dennis Hastert, a Republican; Speaker NANCY PELOSI, a Democrat; and now Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, again a Republican.

In a time period when we can just about agree on nothing between us, we agree on the great service of John Sullivan. And he has received the support

and admiration from both sides of the aisle, and that is on display in the House tonight, as both Republican and Democratic Members pay tribute to a true man of the House. And while, as Members, we are allowed to publicly pay tribute to John, I know that John's fellow coworkers and former coworkers also wish him the best as he prepares for his next challenge.

John has not let us know what his future professional plans will be, but we, as a body, know it will not be golf. We have seen John golf, and John Sullivan and the sport of golf are nongermane. But we all do know that he is enormously dedicated and devoted to his wife, Nancy, and their three kids, Michael, Margaret, and Matthew. And we wish him the best as he leaves his professional family and begins to enjoy his true family.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to personally thank John for his friendship and guidance to me during my time in Congress.

John, you know that on many occasions, the passions of this House have threatened to overtake proper decorum. I think it's been your integrity and your ability to reason and your reputation for nonpartisanship that has pulled us back from the brink on many occasions. You have certainly raised the bar in terms of dedicated service to this institution.

I thank you, and I wish you and your family Godspeed and good luck. God bless you. And thank you for your service to this House of Representatives.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for his observations. And I would simply say that if you and Mr. DINGELL and Mr. VISCLOSKEY were in charge, we would get a lot more done around here.

With that, every sport needs to have an anchorman. If you want a tug-of-war, you've got to have an anchorman. If you are in baseball, you need to have a closer. And when trouble is a-brewing on the House floor, our side turns to our next speaker, the distinguished gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), and I would like to yield to him.

□ 1940

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I think I thank the gentleman from Ohio for that introduction.

Since 1857, if I count correctly, John Sullivan is the 19th Parliamentarian we have had in the House of Representatives, even though the term actually wasn't used officially until 1927. But of those Parliamentarians in the 20th century, Lewis Deschler served for 46 years as Parliamentarian, and I believe his replacement, William Brown, served for 20 years.

So John, in all sincerity, serving only 8 years as the Parliamentarian here makes you a Parliamentarian slacker. I think a couple more years would be appropriate if you'd like to reconsider and stay with us.

But through those almost 8 years as the Parliamentarian, 20-plus years

working in that office, your ability to help the majority meet its goals while at the same time respecting the minority is not an easy task. But John Sullivan did do it with aplomb.

Former Senator Eugene McCarthy once said, The Senate has rules, but none of them over there care about it. In the House, the House rules are too complex. Don't learn them; just ask the Parliamentarian. I think for all of us, we do that.

I do know from my time in the chair, Parliamentarians do not like ad libbing. There is one time I simply turned to John and said, Why don't we just mike you, and I will move my lips. I still think that would be far more appropriate, but I don't think anyone in his office found that funny.

George Will once wrote that the only thing he remembers about his wedding day was the Cubs lost a doubleheader. I say that because John's grandfather pitched for the 1919 Chicago Black Sox, and John is still a fan of the White Sox and closely associated with that franchise. His replacement, Tom Wickham, who will come in, is a fan of the Cardinals. For a Cubs devotee like myself, there is just no hope in this world.

But I do want to know, even though both of you are on the wrong side of the baseball sphere, I want you to know that I thank you so very much, Mr. Sullivan, for your personal friendship. I also thank you for your two-plus decades of loyal service to this House. I also thank you for your lifetime of service and dedication to this country. We wish you well. We are a better place for having worked with you here.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield through my good friend from Ohio to my friend from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY).

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. DINGELL, I appreciate your yielding. I want to thank both you and my good friend from Ohio for reserving this time, and the Chair's indulgence.

Mr. Speaker, it is with fond admiration and profound respect that I take this time to recognize a very dear friend and one of Indiana's most distinguished citizens, the Honorable John Vincent Sullivan, whom I will always claim as a resident of the First Congressional District, having graduated from Munster High School in Munster, Indiana.

It has been mentioned that he has served this country in the United States Air Force for 20 years—9 years active service, 11 years in the Reserve, and retiring with the designation of lieutenant colonel.

What has not been mentioned, I don't think, this evening is that for some inexplicable reason John also wanted to jump out of airplanes, and became a qualified paratrooper. Ultimately, he found himself at Indiana University Law School, as has been mentioned by Mrs. BIGGERT, but which was qualified by the gentlewoman from Maryland, who indicated that in fact I don't think that John is so much an IU fan as he is a rabid Bobby Knight fan.

But I do think that the mark of the man is the recognition of his legal acumen, his grace under pressure, and his scrupulous fairness when a Democratic Speaker, Tip O'Neill, requested that he join the Parliamentarian's office in 1987. And that 17 years later, his leadership skills and his ability to make nimble and wise decisions in very stressful and momentous situations was recognized by Republican Speaker Dennis Hastert, who asked that he become Parliamentarian of the House.

Mr. Speaker, John comes from a strong family of nine children, and his siblings love him deeply and know him better than any of us. I am happy to share some of their thoughts with my colleagues.

Margaret mentions:

As a teacher, I know about the incredible power of a good model. John has provided the best model of a good brother, husband, public servant, son, and man throughout my life, and I adore him.

His sister Anne said:

As a little sister, I chose John as my role model for integrity. Later, I chose him as my role model for word choice, too.

Patty remarks that:

My heart is so full, I do not know where to start. You know how I feel about my magnificent big brother.

Gary, for himself and for Mary Fran, John's sister whom he has lost, said:

I speak for Mary Fran and myself in sending love and thanks to John for his service to our country.

His brother Matt said:

I would like to add my voice to my siblings' in expressing my love and appreciation of our brother John.

Michael noted:

John and I played together, ate together, fought together, got in trouble together, slept together, walked to school together, and talked to each other about everything. That is really where I learned all the important things about life. That is where I learned what it took to be a good man. John was my big brother, but he has always been my confidant and mentor. He is my number one phone call when I need advice. He has the discipline and fairness that I lack. So it is good to have him to lean on. I love you, John, and I look forward to enjoying a piece of your retirement with you.

Jerry observed that:

John went to take his physical qualification test for the Air Force Academy and came back and told Dad he didn't seem to do as well as he had expected. He did plenty well enough, passed, and graduated the Academy. Turned out there was a reason for his feeling a bit less than full strength during the test. He had a case of mononucleosis that had not yet been diagnosed. He plowed through the tough test in typical fashion for John. Only he, as his own toughest critic, got any sense that something was not quite right. The rest of the world did nothing but approve of his skill, dedication, and durability, which have always added up to make him the best sort of guy.

His brother Jim noted—and I would like to state for the record that John looks a lot older than Jim:

I am 4 years older than John but have looked up to him since I can remember. He is simply the finest man I know. He is as tough

as they come, and he is as gentle as a lamb with the innocent and those less strong than he. He is fearless, and I have seen him risk much to speak for the right, regardless of the risk to himself. I have seen him operate, in the right, with all the advantages, and yet let the vanquished foe up and off the hook, time and again. He embodies the idea of following the harder right rather than the easier wrong, and of being humble and gentle in victory, stern and unyielding in defeat. His goodness and strength are clear from the moment you meet him.

Mr. Speaker, I would add that I will miss the opportunity that John provided every time I had young people in the gallery since 1987 for the opportunity to point him out with pride as being from "back home," and emphasizing that he was someone they could emulate; that by studying hard, by using the talents God had given them, they, too, could achieve a position of great responsibility and great opportunity to be of service to others and to their country.

We will all miss you, John—a man who has dedicated and devoted his life to serving his country. This institution and each of us have become more effective and judicious stewards of the public trust because of John Sullivan's example, his wisdom, and yes, his good humor.

So I would conclude by saying, Mr. Speaker, that despite all of the disparaging remarks John has made over these many years about the quality of the football team in South Bend, Indiana, called Notre Dame, I do sincerely wish him, his wife Nancy, and their family every blessing and happiness life has to offer.

□ 1950

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. DINGELL. We have no further requests for time, but I would like to say a couple of words.

Mr. LATOURETTE. As do I. The gentleman is the dean of the House. You go first.

Mr. DINGELL. This, I will tell the gentleman, is his time. He has led in the matter. I am prepared to accede to his leadership.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I think we need to hear from you, Mr. DINGELL.

Mr. DINGELL. I begin then by thanking my good friend from Ohio for his leadership in this matter and express to him my great personal respect and high esteem. I am particularly pleased that we have been able to have these brief remarks from his friends, colleagues, and coworkers about our good friend, Mr. Sullivan, our coworker and Parliamentarian of the House. I have known all the Parliamentarians during their sitting back to Mr. Deschler, Mr. Brown, Mr. Charlie Johnson and now, of course, our good friend, Mr. Sullivan. And before them, I had the privilege of knowing the distinguished gentleman from Missouri, a Member of this body and also a prior Parliamentarian of this body.

I'm sure that this has been an evening that has been somewhat pain-

ful to our friend, the Parliamentarian, because he has heard all kinds of nice things about him at a time when that is rather an unaccustomed practice. But I would like to tell him how proud we are that we have had such dedicated public servants to work for and on behalf of the House of Representatives and on behalf of all of us.

As he retires at the end of this week as the Parliamentarian of the House, I hope he knows that his work would be approved, and enthusiastically so, by all the gentlemen that I have mentioned earlier. I would also hope that he understands that he has seen the greatest respect and affection from his colleagues here in the House for his fairness, impartiality, for his decency, for his integrity, and for the fair and nonpartisan—he would note I did not say "bipartisan," I said "nonpartisan"—way he has conducted his responsibilities as the Parliamentarian of the House.

Each and every one of us could count on Mr. Sullivan to take our calls on even the smallest questions about motions and procedures. And all of us, without any question or any doubt, knew that the advice we were getting was completely honest. We also knew that he would help us work out our problems so that we could be functioning and effective Members of this body. And we also knew that he would take a firm stand for the protection of the traditions and the institutional values of this body and would ensure that the rules were always interpreted properly.

He was a true institutionalist. He loved and revered the House of Representatives, and he knew something that was very important that many of us had not yet learned, and that is that this body, as an institution, is more important to all of us and to this Nation than is any single issue or aggregation or congregation of issues or any individual or any group of individuals, because without the trust, the affection, and the respect of the American people, this institution cannot function, cannot lead, cannot govern, and cannot carry out the trusts that we have been given back to the days of the Founders of the country.

I want Mr. Sullivan to know that he will always be missed; but we know that he has left us in capable hands because he has built a fine office, and Tom Wickham, like Mr. Sullivan, has already proven to be dependable, discreet and well versed in the rules and procedures of the House; and we know that he will serve the House with the same dedication, decency, integrity and honesty that his predecessor, Mr. Sullivan, has characterized his work with.

All of us are going to miss him. He has been a distinguished public servant in the highest sense of the term; and all of us will wish him well as he goes off to do his business, whatever it may be, and we will hope that he has tremendous success, long life, great happiness, and a chance to come back here

from time to time to see his old friends and to join in talking about the memories that we share together, the great things that we've done, the small things that we've done, and all the wonderful stories that we have to tell and share about the privilege of serving in this, the greatest legislative body in the world.

I am going to express to him the wish that he will have happiness in his retirement. I know that that wish is shared and honored by all of his colleagues and all of our colleagues, and I know that the very fine group of Parliamentarians who are here to show their appreciation to him for his wonderful leadership share in the thoughts that you have heard.

This has been an extraordinary bipartisan expression of the affection and respect that we have for our Parliamentarian, which he has earned. We have not praised him; we have simply told the truth about him. And that is something that he can be proud of that we are able to do and willing to do. I would note that there are some who might live in mortal and desperate fear of having others telling the truth about them.

So, in any event, we express to him our thanks and our admiration, and also that of the entire membership of the House of Representatives who have been honored by your service, your guidance, your friendship, your dignity, and your great appreciation of this body and the responsibilities we have.

Now I thank my good friend from Ohio for being so generous and for his leadership in this matter.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for your indulgence, and I also want to thank the dean of the House for organizing this Special Order.

The House of Representatives is a building. It's a nice place, but it's really the people. And JOHN DINGELL is the House of Representatives, as his father was before him. PETE VISCLOSKEY is the House of Representatives. When I got here, Charlie Johnson was the Parliamentarian, he was the House of Representatives, and John Sullivan has replaced him; and he is, in fact, an institution with the House. I don't want to break the mood here, but in my opinion, the jury is still out on Wickham. We'll see how he does, but I think things have the opportunity to be okay.

I just want to tell two quick stories that for me told the measure of the man. The first was a number of years ago when we had a Member who was going to be expelled from the House of Representatives. It was only the third time in modern history that that occurred. The last one was in the 1970s. Nobody had really had a chance to study the precedents and things of that nature, and I was kind of surprised that that process only took an hour of floor time—an hour to basically end somebody's political life.

So I went to John, and he gave me advice, and then he told me to file something to postpone it to a date certain, which I had never heard of, and I bet most Members never heard of, but that gave Members of the House an additional hour to discuss the case. And I think at the end of that, because of John's stewardship and knowledge of the rules, the House, as a body, felt better at the conclusion of that 2-hour debate.

It happened to be a Member of Ohio; and we are celebrating in Ohio that Ohio State is in the Final Four; our guy, JOHN BOEHNER, is the Speaker of the House; and it also marks the first time in 8 years we haven't had a member of our delegation in prison. So we're pretty pleased about that as well. But I will tell you that it was John's counsel that got us through that.

The second one was more recently. A couple of years ago, August, on our side, we call it the day of the stolen vote. I think the distinguished minority whip, Mr. HOYER, called it a procedural hiccup. But regardless, if you were here that night, it was wild. People were screaming, yelling, and crying.

And I had the opportunity to watch the videotape about 300 times because we then had a special committee to look into it. And always in all of the frames, there was one rock like the Rock of Gibraltar standing there above the fray saying, We need to be calm. It reminded me a little bit—I don't know if you saw Kevin Bacon in *Animal House*, where he says, stay calm, stay calm, and the crowd runs him over, and he's nothing but a uniform in the end. That's what was going on around John.

The place could have devolved into a very serious problem. It looked messy, and it was messy, but the measure of John's stewardship of the rules of the House—I would say that there was pressure on him and the rest of the Parliamentarian staff to do what one side or the other wanted him to do or for his opinion to come out one way or the other. The Republicans, we wanted him to say, hey, they stole the vote. It was 215–213, the gavel came down, you hoodwinked us. And from the Democratic side, the pressure was, these things happen, stuff happens; that no rules were broken, no harm, no foul.

□ 2000

John, as he has throughout his service, both as Deputy and now as Parliamentarian, didn't pick sides. He called the game right down the line. He told us what he thought based upon the rules, the precedents of the House. And I will tell you you knew it was a good decision, because neither of us liked it. The Republicans didn't like what he had to say and the Democrats didn't like what he had to say. That to me is the mark of a fair ruling, because he called it as he saw it.

There's one last thing that I want to say about his service. I got here in 1995, and 1995 was the first time the Repub-

licans were in the majority for 40 years in the House of Representatives.

I remember going to my first conference meeting and all these guys—Charlie Johnson was the Parliamentarian at the time. Speakers would get up and say to Mr. Gingrich: We're not going to keep the Democrats' Parliamentarian, are we? I didn't know what the heck they were talking about. Of course, Mr. Johnson, in fact, stayed. I imagine there were some discussions about that in the Democratic Caucus when things changed in 2007, and I imagine I know there were discussions about that when it changed again in 2011.

The fact of the matter is John is the embodiment of the Parliamentarian's Office. He's not the Democratic Parliamentarian. He's not the Republican Parliamentarian. He's the Parliamentarian for the House of Representatives, and that's what makes his service unique and unique to all of our Parliamentarians.

In closing, I don't know what John is going to do; but, Mr. Speaker, if John writes a book and I have to pay \$147 to get it on Amazon.com, I'm really going to be honked off.

I hope, John, if you do write your memoirs or some tome with the Speaker of the House over in Great Britain that you let it come out in paperback so that all of us can enjoy it. And, please, make it a good read and not so dry.

To John and your family, I really appreciate your friendship and your service. You have gotten me out of a lot of messes and not into too many. For your friendship and for your guidance in this House over your career, I'm very grateful. And I thank you and I wish you well in whatever you decide to do.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for your patience, and I would yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, there is no greater honor or privilege than to serve the American people. As Members of Congress, every day we work to remain worthy of the tremendous trust bestowed upon us by our constituents. While the spotlight is often focused on us, there are people who serve this great body and the American people without fanfare and recognition. In many ways, they are the backbone of this institution—without them, we could not do the People's work. One of the finest examples of this selfless commitment and tireless service can be found in our House Parliamentarian John V. Sullivan.

Following his graduation from the United States Air Force Academy and the Indiana University School of Law, John served 10 years on active military duty. His service in the House began almost 28 years ago when he became Counsel for the Committee on Armed Services. In 1987, he began what would become a distinguished career in the Office of the Parliamentarian, serving as an Assistant Parliamentarian and Deputy Parliamentarian. In 2004, he was appointed to the position of Parliamentarian of the House.

The Office of the Parliamentarian is commonly known as the nonpartisan umpire for

the House. Continuing this tradition throughout his tenure, John has been a shining example of integrity and fairness. John has served under six successive Speakers, both Democratic and Republican. He has truly been an innovator in the House—being the first to incorporate computer technology into the Office of the Parliamentarian. His ability to offer procedural guidance on the workings of this Chamber has earned him the respect and admiration of Members across both sides of the aisle. During my tenure as Chair of the House Rules Committee, John and his Office were invaluable resources to the Rules Committee and me.

John Sullivan has served the House with distinction during some of the most important debates of recent history. His unparalleled knowledge of parliamentary procedure helped guide us through the debates on the Affordable Care Act which ensured quality, affordable healthcare for millions of Americans, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which is helping to create new jobs and encourage investment in our economy, and the Emergency Stabilization Act which has been credited for preventing the collapse of our financial system.

While I join the chorus of voices in offering my best wishes to John on his well deserved retirement from the House, I will certainly miss his warmth, his sense of humor and his humility in this Chamber. Those are attributes that are far too rare these days.

Fortunately, John is leaving the Parliamentarian position in the able hands of Tom Wickham, who I am confident will do a wonderful job. However, I am sure even Tom will agree that he has some rather large shoes to fill. On behalf of a grateful chamber, I'd like to wish John the best of luck, as he starts the latest chapter of his distinguished life.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary 25 year career of retiring Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives, John V. Sullivan.

A graduate of the United States Air Force Academy and former Air Force Judge Advocate, John exemplifies public service. He began his career in the House of Representatives by serving as counsel to the Committee on Armed Services, and soon transitioned to the Office of the Parliamentarian. John took on the role of Parliamentarian in 2004, after seventeen years in the Office of the Parliamentarian.

Serving as only the fourth Parliamentarian in modern history, John has consistently conducted himself in the most professional, non-partisan manner. He has been a constant through multiple Congresses, and under Speakers of both parties. John's knowledge of House procedure and traditions is unparalleled, and he was a model of decorum and even temperament. His service will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed calling John a colleague throughout my time in the House, and ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him all the best in his retirement.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Sullivan the House Parliamentarian, who is retiring after serving 28 years. John has dedicated his career to public service. Prior to arriving on Capitol Hill, John served our nation for 10 years in the Air Force.

I have known John for nearly two decades. In that time, I have often been impressed by

his in-depth knowledge of House Floor procedure and the legislative process.

John has a calm, knowledgeable, and warm demeanor. It is no small feat to be well-liked by Members of both parties. Debate on the House Floor can be contentious at times; however, it is a positive reflection on John's expertise that he been able to consistently offer his assistance to Members in a manner that balances the rights of Members from both sides of the aisle. John, I hope you enjoy your retirement.

WE NEED TO TELL THE TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, this is something we try to do out of my office every few months, where we try to update a number of the budget numbers we're seeing coming from particularly the President and try to put them in some perspective. I thought this would be one of those opportunities—because we're about to work on the budget for the rest of this week—to stand here and help everyone understand some really scary things that are out there in the numbers and some things we've been talking about for the last year and the fact that they're getting worse.

Mr. Speaker, you also, being my friend from Arizona, you've actually heard me tell this story.

A year ago, we stood here and did this presentation. When I got back to the office, my phone was ringing. I reached down and picked it up, and it was a gentleman from my district who was nice enough but kept telling me over and over that he didn't believe me, that the numbers didn't feel right. After about a half an hour of discussing it with him, I probably was a little too harsh. I said: I don't know where the feelings key is on my calculator. I think at that point he hung up on me.

Look, the numbers are real. It doesn't feel warm and fuzzy, but it's real.

I'm actually going to break one of the congressional rules in communication where we're often supposed to talk at a 30,000-foot level. I'm going to drive down into some of the weeds here, but it's important. This is the future of our country. This is our destiny, unless we make some substantial changes.

The first slide up here—and all of these are going to be up on our Web site within the next week, the congressional Web site—is just trying to demonstrate how unrealistic many of these numbers coming from the White House are.

The year 2008 was the peak of revenues into the Federal Government. We'll give you an idea. The President is saying in 5 years that revenues are going to be up 50 percent from that peak in 2008. So we're going to have this dramatic rise in revenues over the next 5 years, and that's where their deficit projections are coming from.

Guess what? On the slides I'm going to show you, we still use the President's numbers. What I want you to understand is that they are based on, I think, substantial fantasy when you start to understand the White House's use of what they are predicting as revenues and GDP growth.

As we go through these—and I'm going to throw a lot of slides here. The next two slides are the easiest to understand and hopefully tell the greatest part of the story.

This is 2011. Sixty-three percent of all of our spending is Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, interest on the debt, veterans benefits. We'll call those the mandatory spending. Many people call them the entitlements.

This year, 37 percent of our spending is what we'll call discretionary, military, and the line of alphabet agencies that we all think of. It's foreign aid, veterans, all discretionary over here. It's 37 percent of the spending. This is this year. Do you see, 63, 37? What happens a year from now?

In 2017, basically 5 budget years from now, you notice a little difference. We went from 63 percent to 75 percent which is now in Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, interest on the debt, and veterans benefits. Five years from now, 75 percent of our budget is in mandatory entitlement spending, and the discretionary keeps getting smaller and smaller and smaller in real dollars.

I'm going to show you some slides in a little bit that are going to demonstrate that even the military goes down in real dollars. No more of this discussion of, well, you guys are just slowing down the growth. No, it actually goes down in real dollars. This is our future.

Understand, the mandatory and entitlement side is growing so fast that in about 10 or 11 years, if you held everything even, it would consume every dollar of the budget. There's no more military; there's no more discretionary. Everything is Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, interest on the debt, and veterans benefits.

This is our future. We need to tell the truth.

Look, Washington, D.C., has had a bad habit of avoiding a lot of these hard decisions that are ahead of us, and it's almost like they forgot there were going to be baby boomers. We knew people were going to turn 65 for how many years? Sixty-five years.

We're now into year one of the baby boomers retiring at the end of the next 17 years. At the end of the 18-year cycle of baby boomers, about 36 percent, 37 percent of our population will be on Social Security. You have to understand that's about 76, 78 million of our friends and neighbors who will be over 65.

This should have been decades of planning for that retirement, for that baby boom, and Washington, D.C., did not do it. Now Members of this House—and I'm one of the freshmen here; I've been here 15 months—need to step up