

which the Navy League of Central Pennsylvania Council strives to promote.

Lance Shaner, chairman of the Shaner Group, is known throughout central Pennsylvania for his various community efforts, which include the Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County, United Way, Centre Volunteers in Medicine, the Boy Scouts of America, the YMCA, Mount Nittany Medical Center, and many other programs that benefit our community.

I want to thank Lance Shaner for his service to our community, and I congratulate him on this distinguished award.

CORVALLIS WILL NOT BE BULLIED BY CHINA

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Recently, the Chinese consul general sent a letter to the mayor of Corvallis, a small city in my district. The letter was followed up by personal visits by the vice consul and the deputy consul general. Now, we always welcome visitors, but under these circumstances, we have some concerns.

They are trying to pressure the mayor of the City of Corvallis to compel a local businessman to remove a mural dedicated to free Tibet and Taiwan independence from his downtown building. It was characterized by the local newspaper as a shakedown because the original letter broadly hinted that it might be in Corvallis' best interest economically to cooperate with the request.

I am shocked and appalled that apparently Chinese professional diplomats have failed to read the Constitution of the United States of America before traveling here to represent their country.

This represents the basis of our representative democracy, our freedom of speech, and our rights, and it will not be bullied by China or any other overseas interest.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JERRY COSTELLO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCKINLEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order honoring Congressman JERRY COSTELLO's distinguished service in Congress.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great legislator and a close personal friend, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, who will retire from the House of Representatives at the end of this 112th Congress.

JERRY has long been known as one of the most effective and well-liked Members of Congress since he took office in 1988. It is my honor to lead this Special Order in his honor.

I knew JERRY before I was elected to Congress in 2004. I had the privilege of working in his congressional office in the mid-1990s. Today, we serve together on two House committees: the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

JERRY has been an important mentor to me throughout my time here. I have always been impressed with his work on behalf of his constituents and his work to improve America's transportation network. He is someone who is here to get things done, and he knows how to do it.

His retirement from this body is a loss to us all. Congress will not be the same without JERRY, and I know we would all benefit if we had more colleagues like him.

There are a number of Members on both sides of the aisle who want to speak, so I will continue with the rest of my speech later if we have time. But right now, I want to recognize the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

□ 1740

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We could devote much more than an hour to JERRY COSTELLO's career in Congress.

I sat next to JERRY on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for more than two decades, and there is no more knowledgeable, dedicated advocate in the United States Congress—most recently on aviation issues, but across the board on infrastructure issues which underlie our economy and our productivity and our growth—than JERRY COSTELLO. His work has been phenomenal. He has done more than I could have imagined in his period of time. And we will miss him.

I congratulate him upon a well and hard-earned retirement.

Mr. LIPINSKI. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I apologize to my good friends, but this has to be a two-way street—bipartisanship—because I do believe that JERRY was an example of the Congress that I knew and loved where we worked together to solve problems. JERRY was very good at that. I, as chairman of the Transportation Committee, we worked through with Jim Oberstar, and we never had an adversarial vote in that whole period of time because he did believe in bipartisanship for the bills in transportation, not only in his district, but for the Nation as a whole.

JERRY was a gentleman at all times. Sometimes I get a little excited, and he would remind me as the chairman that maybe I could be a little more kinder. I told him that doesn't always work. That worked for JERRY. And I do respect his capability to not only serve in his district, but making sure that this Nation had a transportation system in place that would serve this whole Nation.

I look forward to JERRY's retirement—in a sense. I'm sure he'll do good and great things after this, but we will miss his time in Congress. And as a Republican, I definitely will miss him. I do thank JERRY.

Mr. LIPINSKI. I thank you, Mr. YOUNG.

I want to recognize now the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I want to thank my friend from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for yielding to me.

When I think of JERRY COSTELLO, I think of the fact that those of us in Illinois sort of had two go-to members of the Transportation Committee for many years, Bill Lipinski, who is the Congressman's father, and JERRY COSTELLO. We used to call them the "Gold Dust Twins." One of the reasons is because they had such a great relationship and worked cooperatively to make sure that our State, the State of Illinois, the home of Abraham Lincoln, was well taken care of in terms of infrastructure, but they also worked for the entire country.

I had an opportunity to travel with JERRY and his wonderful wife a number of times. Of course she is a delightful lady who is a higher education administrator, the president of a community college. And other members of their family are engaged in public service as well as what they do privately. I've never known a more congenial Member of this body or any other legislative body that I've served in than JERRY COSTELLO.

I think he's actually too young to retire, and so I've got a feeling that he's got some other things on his mind, some other things that he's going to do. I think he'll still be fishing down in the East St. Louis area, making sure that the catfish and the other creatures out there give up their habitat and become members of the land gentry.

So JERRY, take care of yourself. Have all the fun that you can, but I'm certain that there is something else that you're going to be doing.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Next, I want to recognize the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for organizing this hour and concur with my colleagues that an hour is not nearly enough to highlight the virtues and certainly the public service of our distinguished colleague, JERRY COSTELLO.

JERRY, as has already been said, and his lovely wife, Georgia, their beautiful

family, we're all very happy and proud that he will be joined with them. In whatever endeavor he does, we know he will bring the kind of energy, the kind of commitment, and the kind of integrity that he's brought to the floor of the House.

Robert Remini, also from Illinois and a historian, has written a significant history about the House. In his book, he talks about the character of the people that serve here. I'm proud to say that I've had the opportunity to serve with someone who is so genuine, who cares so deeply about this institution, his home State of Illinois, and the people he has served with. He does it the old fashioned way, the Bill Lipinski way, with a handshake and a commitment and always looking you directly in the eye. As DON YOUNG from Alaska indicated, he also has the great capacity to reach across the aisle, understanding implicitly that things don't get done unless we're capable of working together. An incredible wise sense of humor, always sage advice, and an incredible understanding of politics, not only the local flavor of his great State of Illinois, but also the ebb and flow of business here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

He is honored by his colleagues and respected not only for his political acumen and his professionalism, but most of all because of the integrity that he brings to this floor each and every day. He will be sorely missed. It's an honor to have served with him. I look forward to a continued relationship with this great man from Illinois, JERRY COSTELLO.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Next, I want to recognize the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

Mr. CLAY. Let me thank my friend from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for yielding.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that I rise today to honor my great friend and colleague, the distinguished senior Member from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO). Let me also mention that Mr. COSTELLO served in previous Congresses with my father, so he was here when I got here. And our districts are just across the river from each other. He represents southern Illinois, and I represent the city of St. Louis, the Gateway to the West.

As he prepares to retire at the conclusion of the 112th Congress, Congressman COSTELLO has been a trusted friend and mentor to me for the last 12 years. When I first arrived as a freshman Member of Congress in 2001, Congressman COSTELLO was here to greet me and guide me along the right path, and over the years I have continued to rely on his good advice and wise counsel. His departure is a great loss for the State of Illinois, the citizens of the 12th District, and the St. Louis regional delegation.

For the last 24 years, Mr. COSTELLO has been a tireless advocate for southern Illinois and Metro East. He has been a champion for rebuilding and en-

hancing our transportation infrastructure. The magnificent new Mississippi River bridge that is currently under construction will be a powerful symbol of his legacy of leadership.

Congressman COSTELLO has also been the patron saint of Scott Air Force Base, the largest employer in southern Illinois. Our region, and indeed our Nation, are stronger because of his continuous efforts to preserve and expand this vital national defense asset.

□ 1750

Mr. Speaker, I consider it a great blessing to have had the opportunity to serve with Congressman COSTELLO and to call him my good friend. I honor him for his service to his State, the St. Louis region, and our Nation, and I salute him on a remarkable congressional career.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Thank you, Mr. CLAY.

Next I want to recognize the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. First, let me thank the gentleman, Mr. LIPINSKI, for organizing this opportunity to come to the floor today and recognize the remarkable achievements of our dear friend, my dear friend, Representative JERRY COSTELLO.

I want to thank JERRY, my friend and colleague, for his 24 years of remarkable, outstanding service to his district, to Illinois, and to the country. And although he's retiring at the end of this Congress, I know that his impact will be long-lasting.

Since arriving in Congress in 1999, I have been very fortunate to have JERRY COSTELLO to rely on for advice and guidance and support. And as you hear from one Member after another who gets up and says the same thing, you can see how JERRY COSTELLO has been a friend to so many on both sides of the aisle.

When I came, he and then-Representative Ray LaHood, now Secretary of Transportation, convened routine meetings of the Illinois House delegation to discuss how we could work together to meet the needs of our State. A fierce advocate for southwestern and southern Illinois, JERRY was eager to help all parts of the State to obtain Federal assistance and meet the needs of our constituents.

Our delegation may have had some disagreements on policy, but we were firmly united, under JERRY's leadership, in our desire to bring funding to Illinois to create jobs, improve access to health care, help farmers and promote Illinois businesses.

It wasn't until I was in Congress for a while longer that I realized that not every State delegation met in this manner. It was because of JERRY's leadership, his dedication to getting things done, and his ability to work in a bipartisan manner that the Illinois delegation could get together, not just to talk, but to achieve concrete results.

Throughout his career, JERRY has been a real workhorse. As senior mem-

ber of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and ranking Democrat on the Aviation Subcommittee, he has shaped transportation policy and is responsible for unprecedented improvements in aviation safety. He is a recognized expert on transportation issues, and he is known for his commitment to protecting the interests of travelers, riders and passengers and the rights of transportation workers.

He has brought his policy interests to other areas as well, from his role on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, to his interests in agriculture, education and children.

JERRY COSTELLO is the go-to leader of the Illinois House delegation, and it is easy to see why. It is not just that he loves the State of Illinois and the House of Representatives. It is not just that he can put together strategies to pass legislation or bring Federal assistance to his district. It is his entire being, a calm but determined demeanor, a commonsense approach to problem-solving, and a welcoming attitude for his beloved constituents and his colleagues.

Throughout my time in Congress, JERRY has been generous in sharing with me his time and his talents, and for that I'm extremely grateful.

I have also been so happy to get to know JERRY's wonderful wife, Georgia. Georgia is the president of Southwestern Illinois College, an advocate for the Illinois Green Economy Network, and she also brings a spirit of public service to her work in improving the community.

My dear friend, JERRY, your record of accomplishments over the past 24 years is enormous. And while you may be retiring from the House of Representatives, I know that you and Georgia will continue to work to inspire and improve the lives of Illinoisans. I thank you for your friendship that I hope will endure and for all that you have done for our great State.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Thank you, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, for your comments.

Next I want to recognize the gentle lady from Texas, who JERRY and I both serve on Transportation and Infrastructure and Science, Space and Technology with, and who's also the ranking member of the Science, Space and Technology Committee, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Thank you very much, Mr. LIPINSKI, for reserving this hour.

And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to speak in honor of a very cherished colleague and a dear friend in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, after 24 years of dedicated service, is retiring, and that is a very tall order for me to accept because I have served with him on both of his major committees from the time I came to Congress 20 years ago; and he appears to be, starting this term, a part of a vanishing breed of people who came here to work across the aisles.

When I think of JIMMY DUNCAN, when I think of Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, when I think of Ray LaHood, I think of the camaraderie that we have shared on the committees working together to get things done. And I look up and many of them are leaving. It's so unfortunate that we're losing such a stellar example of the commitment needed to be an effective public servant.

He began his public service at an early age, working in law enforcement while attending college. He has built his career on bipartisanship and dependability and has always kept the needs of his constituents and the American people foremost in his mind and close to his heart.

Congressman COSTELLO is a devoted family man who treasures his wife, Georgia, and their three children and eight grandchildren. And I have shared with Georgia and Lynn, JIMMY DUNCAN's wife, trips around the world where we became almost like family.

His companion has given the Congressman a unique perspective, making him much more effective as a Member of Congress.

I remember one time we went on a trip, and at the last minute, Georgia couldn't go and we ended up being seatmates all the way. And he said at the end, I enjoyed you being my seatmate, but you'll never be Georgia. And he was right.

I've had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Congressman COSTELLO on both the House Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Science, Space and Technology. As a matter of fact, I would not be ranking member had he chosen to use his seniority to become the ranking member of Science, Space and Technology.

He's an effective legislator and has shown an unwavering commitment to furthering scientific research and building our Nation's infrastructure. Having served both as chairman and ranking member on the Aviation Subcommittee with Congressman PETRI from Wisconsin, just like two brothers, they have been guests in my district where we did work together on a very bipartisan basis to improve the safety and innovation of the aviation industry.

Mr. Speaker, the bonds that we form with our fellow colleagues in Congress are unlike anything else. You become closer in friendship, and you begin to see people as individuals. This last 2 years, however, has not been the example that I lived with 18 years before that.

Congressman COSTELLO and I developed, over the years, a very special relationship. The House of Representatives is losing a distinguished colleague and one of those from the old guard that we call the bipartisan focus on business people.

I have immense respect for Congressman COSTELLO, and I will miss him dearly. I wish him well, and I wish his family the best in future endeavors.

And I do hope that this is not the last of a vanishing breed of the persons who came here to work to get things done and not be so partisan.

□ 1800

I really will miss the camaraderie that we shared with JIMMY DUNCAN, DON YOUNG, Ray LaHood—all the people who can see beyond partisanship.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Thank you, Ms. JOHNSON.

Next, I want to recognize the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE).

Mr. ALTMIRE. I thank the gentleman from Illinois.

I, too, rise to pay tribute to our great colleague, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO. We've spent a lot of time during this hour talking about what a great person JERRY COSTELLO is, which is certainly true. He is a kind and decent man. He operates in a bipartisan manner, and he is a friend to nearly everybody in this institution. We could continue to take the entire hour just talking about what a very fine person JERRY COSTELLO is. Yet, when you look at the legislative record over the decades of service that he has offered to his constituency and to the country, there are a few things that stand out.

On the Transportation Committee, JERRY COSTELLO has a long and lasting record of many achievements, but he also has a lot of things he has done back home that those of us in Washington maybe don't see every day. For example, when the Base Closing and Realignment Commission slated for closure a military base in JERRY's district, JERRY COSTELLO did what is nearly impossible—he got the realignment commission to review the facts; he had that decision overturned; and he saved that military base and the thousands of jobs that go with it for his district. That's a lasting achievement he can be proud of.

When you look at things on the Transportation Committee that have lasting significance, a changing in the law to benefit all Americans. There was a tragic, terrible catastrophe—an air disaster in Buffalo several years ago. JERRY COSTELLO took the lead in this Congress and in this country in changing the laws dealing with pilot fatigue and the requirements for the pilots on the planes. That is going to save lives around this country, and that is going to allow for the averting of this type of disaster in the future. That happened because of JERRY COSTELLO's leadership.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we think about the lasting contributions that JERRY COSTELLO has made, yes, many of them are personal. Many of them have to do with the relationships he has built and the friendships he will carry forward into his new career, but let's also remember the many significant legislative achievements for his district that are unparalleled to anyone else's in this institution.

So, JERRY, we wish you the best. We are going to miss you.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Thank you, Mr. ALTMIRE.

Next, I want to recognize the Democratic whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I want to thank my friend, Congressman LIPINSKI, for taking on this Special Order.

For someone who had been regaled, as I understand it, earlier, by his colleagues who know him best, before I came to the floor, this is a body in which you get to know people. You get to know their characters, their personalities, their civility, their effectiveness, their work ethic, their patriotism, their willingness to work with others. On all of those counts, all of his colleagues found JERRY COSTELLO to be one of the best among them.

JERRY COSTELLO came to this Congress in the election of 1988. He has been my colleague for all of the years that he has served in this House. I was privileged to come just a few years before JERRY COSTELLO. He was elected by the people of Illinois after an extraordinary career early in life, as a young man. He was not only attending to the court system of Illinois but also as the county executive, as the leader of one of the largest counties in Illinois. He was chosen because of his judgment, chosen because of his good sense, his common sense, chosen because of his effectiveness as a representative of the people. There has not been a day that has gone by that I have served with JERRY COSTELLO that I did not have all of those affirmations affirmed here in this House. So I rise with my friend, Mr. LIPINSKI, to honor JERRY COSTELLO.

Now, we're going to have the opportunity to serve with JERRY COSTELLO for another 3 months at least. JERRY COSTELLO is very much alive. This is not a eulogy. JERRY COSTELLO is someone who is still a young man for whom I see a very bright future. In whatever endeavor he chooses to pursue, he will be successful; and with whomever he works, they will be advantaged. In whatever he does, I know that we're all going to stay in close touch with JERRY COSTELLO.

The preceding speaker and Mr. LIPINSKI—and whose dad before him—now serve on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. It is a critical committee of the Congress of the United States, one of the most important in terms of growing jobs and expanding our economy because it invests in the infrastructure, which is the underpinning of a growing economy. My friend Mr. LIPINSKI has fought so hard for legislation to expand manufacturing—a Make It In America agenda item—and has focused on making sure that we have had an infrastructure that has supported manufacturing, the distribution of goods and the transportation of goods to our shores to be sent abroad for purchase by our trading partners.

JERRY COSTELLO was part of the leadership of two of the major transportation bills that have passed this House

in recent years, ensuring not only that Illinois received particular attention but that America received particular attention, every part of this America. The best traditions of a Congressman are, yes, in representing his district effectively, but also in understanding that his responsibility is to all of America. JERRY COSTELLO has fulfilled that expectation with flying colors and great effectiveness. We are going to miss JERRY COSTELLO.

But I want to tell JERRY COSTELLO—and I hope he's listening—that we have a few days left to go, and I'm going to look forward to working with him. I am hopeful that, in the lame duck session, we'll address one of the most vexing problems confronting this country, and that is getting ourselves on a fiscally sustainable path. I expect JERRY COSTELLO to be in the leadership of that effort as he has been in the leadership of so many efforts.

Again, Congressman LIPINSKI, I want to thank you for your leadership, for your service, for your commitment to the same kinds of things that JERRY COSTELLO has been committed to in building up this country and in making sure that average working men and women have had jobs and that we have expanded our economy by investing in our economy. So it is appropriate that you lead this Special Order on behalf of a kindred soul, JERRY COSTELLO. You and he represent a real leadership on behalf of growth, jobs, and economic success in America.

We thank JERRY COSTELLO for his service, but we look forward to working with him in whatever capacity he chooses to follow in the years ahead.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. HOYER.

I just want to wrap up here and continue on in talking about JERRY.

I know JERRY has been extremely popular among his constituents because he is a lifelong resident of his district and always has been focused on helping them. He was born in East St. Louis, Illinois. He attended Assumption High School there, and later graduated from Southwestern Illinois College and Maryville University, which is just across the Mississippi River in St. Louis. After graduating with a bachelor's degree, JERRY worked in various positions in southwestern Illinois, culminating with his election to the House of Representatives in August of 1988 in a special election.

He was known then and is still known today as a person with a special ethic and earnestness to roll up his sleeves and get the job done. Since that time, his accomplishments have been numerous and outstanding. We've heard from many of our colleagues before this about some of his accomplishments. I could spend hours standing up here listing them all, but some of his most important, recent accomplishments include helping to pass four national highway investment bills, seven Federal Aviation Administration bills, and helping to secure funds for a new

Mississippi bridge for the residents of Illinois and Missouri.

□ 1810

He has a great reputation for delivering for his district. A couple of examples include helping prevent the closure of Scott Air Force Base, the largest employer in Illinois south of Springfield, and helping extend St. Louis' Metrolink to St. Clair County, providing public transportation to many thousands of people. He has received recognition as a leading advocate for farmers and for many other causes, including the arts and multiple sclerosis.

His dedication to an effective transportation network in the U.S. has remained steadfast throughout his career. As Mr. ALTMIRE has mentioned, a perfect example of this is his drafting and passing of the Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009. In response to a tragic plane crash in 2009 in Buffalo, New York, that killed 51 due to lack of rest for the pilot, JERRY wrote a bill that made requirements for pilot rest and training much more stringent. This legislation has resulted in safer travel for millions of Americans. The legislation is a lasting reminder of the fine work JERRY has done while in Congress.

During his time, JERRY has sat in positions of leadership as chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, now serving as ranking member, as well as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics within the Science and Technology Committee. He has always worked in a bipartisan manner on those committees, doing everything he could to make those committees work.

I, and this legislative body, will miss Mr. COSTELLO and the leadership he has provided, but we can all take comfort in knowing that he will be able to spend more time with his wife, Georgia, who serves her community as the president of Southwestern Illinois College; their three children, Jerry, Gina, and John Patrick; and their eight grandchildren, Jay, Austin, Rorey, Ireland, Jerry, Victoria, Georgia, and John Patrick. He will undoubtedly continue to serve his neighbors and all the residents of southwest Illinois in his day-to-day activities.

Please join me in honoring JERRY COSTELLO for his tireless hard work, dedication, and skill serving the people of America and Illinois. I congratulate JERRY and thank him for all he has done for his constituents and for his Nation. I thank you, JERRY, for your mentorship here in Congress, and I wish you the best as you retire from the House of Representatives.

I know, as other speakers before me have said, JERRY is much too young to retire. I'm sure there are many great things that he will be doing, and he will always be remembered as a great man who served his country and served his constituents of Illinois. We will cer-

tainly miss him here, and we can certainly use more JERRY COSTELLOS in this body.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congressman COSTELLO on his pending retirement and thank him for his service to his country and district.

Serving in the House of Representatives since 1988, Congressman COSTELLO has become a key figure in this body, serving as the dean of the Illinois delegation and working across lines to find sensible solutions to the day's most pressing challenges. JERRY has proven himself to be a gentleman whose dedication and service to his constituents and to the United States of America went above and beyond the Halls of Congress.

I had the pleasure of serving alongside Congressman COSTELLO on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee where I was proud to have called the Congressman not only my colleague, but my friend. I observed as he worked to build the transportation infrastructure in Southern Illinois and the country. Over the years, JERRY has built a reputation for not only his hard work, but also his ability to work with Members of the other party. It is these qualities—work ethic and bipartisan spirit—that will be missed most in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Congressman COSTELLO on his retirement. While his mark on the Nation and his district are permanent, his presence in this chamber will be missed.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, and to thank him for his 24 years of service in the House of Representatives working on behalf of the people of the 12th congressional district of Illinois.

JERRY has worked tirelessly during his time in Congress to create jobs and improve the lives of the people of Southwestern and Southern Illinois, as well as in his role on the Aviation Subcommittee. His leadership in aviation is best illustrated by the passage of The Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009 in the House, the strongest aviation safety bill passed in 50 years.

I wish JERRY the best of luck in his future endeavors, and know that I speak for many other Members when I say he will be dearly missed.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to honor a dedicated public servant—Congressman JERRY COSTELLO. JERRY has served the people of Illinois as a law enforcement officer, as St. Clair County Board Chairman, and as a member of this House.

As you know, JERRY and I are from different political parties. But when I first came here to Washington, he was one of the first people to help me and to give me advice. He was always willing to answer my questions—some that probably seemed very basic to him. We found that despite our political differences, our callings were both based in faith—and that has allowed our relationship to grow.

I consider JERRY COSTELLO a close friend and confidant. I cannot remember a single issue relevant to our part of the state that we have disagreed on. It has been a pleasure joining him in working on behalf of Scott Air Force Base, the levee and flood insurance issues we continue to face, and legislation related to industries important to southern Illinois like coal and renewable fuels.

Finally, I want to thank JERRY's wife Georgia and his children Jerry II, Gina and John for sharing their husband and father with all of us. And to Jay, Austin, Rorey, Ireland Keen, Jerry III, Victoria, Georgia Danielle and John Patrick—I know your grandpa is looking forward to spending more time with each of you.

Thank you, JERRY. May God continue to bless the Costello family.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the service of my colleague and good friend, JERRY COSTELLO. I have had the privilege of serving with JERRY for almost 20 years. Perhaps the greatest compliment that I can pay him, especially in this town, is that he remains the same guy today that he was when I first met him in 1993. JERRY is a serious legislator and a thoughtful statesman. He has served his constituents with devotion and distinction, but more than that, he has worked on a broader scale to advance good policy for the betterment of all the citizens of Illinois and those nationwide.

As one of the foremost transportation experts in Congress, JERRY has worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to improve America's transportation infrastructure and increase the safety of our skies. JERRY earned the reputation of being a hard worker and an approachable colleague. In his various leadership roles, you could count on JERRY to listen to the needs of your district and provide assistance when able. Even when you find yourself on the other side of a policy issue from JERRY, he treats you with fairness and respect. Differences of opinion with JERRY are never personal, and that is why so many colleagues consider JERRY to be a personal friend.

Given that a Member's staff is a reflection of the Member, it should be no surprise that JERRY assembled a team of considerate and effective public servants. Along with his talented chief of staff, David Gillies, JERRY consistently worked to promote a constructive and collegial environment within the Illinois delegation regardless of which side was in power.

Given his rock-solid reputation, impeccable character, and impressive resume of accomplishment, other colleagues will likely describe JERRY as part of a dying breed of statesmen, a sentiment with which I concur. On behalf of the constituents of Northern Illinois, I thank JERRY for his service and for the infrastructure improvements he supported in our neck of the state. I wish JERRY and Georgia all the best as they begin this new chapter of their lives together.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the 113th Congress, the Illinois delegation in the House of Representatives will be missing a familiar face. Representative JERRY COSTELLO, after over two decades of service to the people of southern Illinois, will retire at the end of this term. He leaves Congress with an exemplary record of accomplishments and a long list of friends on both sides of the aisle, and he will truly be missed.

Among the many issues that JERRY worked on during his tenure, he and I share a passion for infrastructure improvements. During my first term, I served on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee with JERRY, and his example and determination to work with both sides to get things done was invaluable to me. His spirit of putting the people he represented before partisanship is one that all of us, his colleagues, strive to embody as well.

Over the course of his time in the House of Representatives, JERRY earned the respect of his colleagues and staff, but his successes and achievements in Washington never made him forget where he came from. He and his family maintain their deep roots in Illinois, and every weekend he could be found somewhere in the 12th District holding a town hall, speaking at a local gathering, or participating in a media event.

JERRY's retirement means that Illinois has lost a great Representative, but it retains a great citizen. Whatever he decides to pursue in the coming years, I hope he finds time to get some well-deserved rest and relaxation with his wife and family. I wish him all the best.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the life and career of my friend, the Honorable JERRY COSTELLO.

Born and raised in the Midwest, Congressman COSTELLO has dedicated his life to serving the residents of the state of Illinois. Prior to being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, he had a career in law enforcement and worked as a county bailiff and deputy sheriff. His service to the State of Illinois and St. Clair County in the early days of his career led him to seek office in the House of Representatives in a special election in 1988. He has consistently put the needs of his constituents first for the past 24 years.

Today, Congressman COSTELLO is the most senior member of the Illinois delegation and has been a guide to freshmen members throughout the past dozen Congresses. He has been a leader in areas such as infrastructure and science and technology. JERRY has also been dubbed "the patron saint of Scott Air Force Base," one of the largest employers in the State of Illinois. Above all, the Congressman has been a fearless and dedicated representative of his constituents in southern Illinois.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating our friend and colleague, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, on 24 years of service to the residents of southern Illinois and the United States of America. His wisdom and leadership will be missed in the halls of Congress.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about my friend Congressman JERRY COSTELLO of Illinois. JERRY is retiring at the end of this session and we wish him well.

By the time I arrived in Congress, JERRY was already a senior Member. I did not know him and had never heard of him. We met through our mutual friend, Congressman RICHARD NEAL. We had a fair amount of mutual background—having been elected executive officials from our home states and having a deep respect for the art of politics and government.

First and foremost, JERRY serves his constituents. We usually sit together during votes and we discuss most of them. I want to hear his opinion and I want to argue with him because we often see things differently. I know for certain that the most important factor he weighs for every vote is what is in the best interest of his constituents and what they would want him to do.

JERRY embraces the concept of compromise. Many newer Members see compromise as defeat—but they are wrong and, hopefully, someday soon they will realize their folly. Compromise is essential to advance any

society—our founders knew it, democracy demands it. Compromise does not mean declaring victory on every aspect of every issue—it means having a clear goal and knowing when you cannot achieve it, it means recognition that some progress is usually better than none, it means that you accept the fact that other people have valuable opinions that they hold as dearly as you hold yours. Unless your constituents want no changes to anything in life, compromise is essential.

JERRY is also a true friend. To me, a friend is not the person who simply tells you how wonderful and correct you are all the time. A true friend knows how to tell you when you are wrong. A true friend stands by you when they can and doesn't hurt you when they cannot. JERRY is a true friend.

Finally, JERRY COSTELLO has his priorities straight—God, country, family, constituents. Religious beliefs are personal. I have told you what he has done for his country and his constituents. But a complete person also has a private life of friends and family. As a friend, I have often heard JERRY boast about his entire family—his parents, his wife, his children, and grandchildren.

As you can see by now, I think JERRY COSTELLO is a wonderful person. I will miss him on the floor. I will miss him in Committee. I will miss sharing an evening meal together. But more importantly, Congress will miss him. America will survive and prosper after he leaves Congress; thankfully, none of us is that important to this House. But JERRY COSTELLO will not be easily replaced in these halls and he will be remembered as a good Member of Congress and a good man.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the tireless service and dedication of my friend and colleague, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO of Illinois. Congressman COSTELLO has announced his retirement from the House at the end of the 112th Congress after 24 years of faithful and effective service to the people of the 12th Congressional District of Illinois.

Known to his friends and colleagues simply as "JERRY," Congressman COSTELLO began his career shortly after graduating from high school, working as a law enforcement officer while attending Maryville University. In 1980, Congressman COSTELLO was elected Chairman of the St. Clair County Board, the chief executive of one of Illinois' largest counties, where he gained valuable leadership experience. In 1988, JERRY was elected to Congress.

I have had the privilege of working closely with JERRY throughout my tenure on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, on which he has been an influential and a senior Democratic member. JERRY is perhaps the leading expert in the House on aviation issues and I feel fortunate to have been a member of the Aviation Subcommittee when he chaired the panel during the 110th and 111th Congress. Congressman COSTELLO also served as the second ranking Democrat on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, playing a leading role in writing and passing several major pieces of legislation to improve our Nation's infrastructure and technological advancement.

As Chair of Aviation Subcommittee, JERRY played an indispensable role in passing the \$68 billion Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act. JERRY has worked to pass

major bills for our Nation's transportation infrastructure, including obtaining a significant grant for a new Mississippi River Bridge. He also secured the passage of the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009.

JERRY has been a champion of bipartisanship throughout his tenure in the House, and is deeply respected by members on both sides of the aisle. He refused to allow partisanship to keep him from finding the common ground necessary to advance the interests of his constituents and the American people.

JERRY's talent for finding common ground enabled him to assemble and lead the coalition that saved Scott Air Force Base from closure and led his constituents to dub him affectionately as the "Patron Saint of Scott AFB."

I am honored to count JERRY as one of my close friends and colleagues. Throughout his tenure, JERRY has proven to be a shining example of the type of dedication and devotion we should all strive to match. I have long been an admirer of Congressman COSTELLO's work, and we will all surely feel the loss of his presence.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman COSTELLO is a Member's Member: honorable, hardworking, selfless, and dedicated to public service. It has been an honor to serve with him in the People's House. I wish JERRY and his family success and happiness as he embarks upon the next phase of his remarkable career of service, all the best in his future endeavors.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I am truly honored to have had a chance to serve in Congress with my colleague and friend, Representative JERRY COSTELLO.

Beloved by his constituents, Congressman COSTELLO has been a staple in southern Illinois for many years. For me personally, he has been a model, a mentor and an example of how to succeed.

In an age of hyper-partisanship, Congressman COSTELLO fearlessly crosses the aisle for his district. Last year, he even championed the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

I've also had the pleasure of collaborating with the Congressman on two committees: Science, Space and Technology, and Transportation and Infrastructure. He has been such a mentor for me on these committees during my first term in Congress, and has been a great ally, especially on transportation issues and 2nd amendment rights.

Congressman COSTELLO will be sorely missed, both on these two committees and in the Illinois delegation. On behalf of my staff and the people of the 14th, I thank him sincerely for his service.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, today, we take time to honor our friend and colleague Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, who retires this year after 24 proud years representing the 12th District of Illinois.

Throughout his career, JERRY earned the respect of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and is known as a man dedicated to his family, his community, and public service.

Born and raised in East Saint Louis, JERRY spent his career representing his friends and neighbors first as the Chairman of the St. Clair County Board, and then as a Member of Congress.

Since coming to Washington, JERRY has worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents, Illinois farmers, the transportation community and Scott Air Force Base. The State of Illinois will certainly miss having such a senior legis-

lator and consummate professional in Congress.

But this body's loss is the gain of the entire Costello family, especially his wife Georgia, their three children and eight grandchildren. I wish them all the best as they embark on this new chapter of their lives, and congratulate Congressman JERRY COSTELLO on a career of service to Southwestern Illinois.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my friend and colleague and the Dean of the Illinois Delegation, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO.

Congressman COSTELLO has been a fixture of these halls since his arrival in 1988. Since my own arrival to Congress in 1993, I have known JERRY COSTELLO to be a kind, diligent, and caring public servant for the people of Illinois and the United States.

Whether working towards FAA reauthorization, creating local jobs, or saving Scott Air Force Base from closure, JERRY COSTELLO has shaped and improved Southwestern Illinois.

I will miss JERRY COSTELLO's collegiality and his leadership. Just because he is departing Congress does not mean there is not much work left for him to do. I look forward to seeing what the next chapter of his life brings and, on behalf of my wife, Carolyn, myself, and the people of the First Congressional District of Illinois, I wish him well on his journey.

Congratulations, JERRY!

Mr. SCHILLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of JERRY COSTELLO, who will be retiring at the end of the 112th Congress. We need more Members of Congress like JERRY—Representatives who are willing to reach across the aisle and work to get the job done regardless of party.

There is no limit to what you can accomplish when you don't care who gets the credit. JERRY is one of those guys, and his commitment to Illinois and our country will definitely be missed.

JERRY has served on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and has helped enact national highway policy to improve our country's roads and bridges. This is a bipartisan issue and after nine term extensions I am glad that this Congress came together to pass the first multiyear highway bill since 2005. JERRY has been extremely strong on transportation and infrastructure issues and future representatives will have large shoes to fill.

JERRY is a committed family man and early on in my first term, I quickly realized how hard it is to be away from your wife and children so frequently. I respect him for keeping his family home in Illinois, traveling to DC to serve, and returning home. Public service is about serving the people, not serving one's own self.

Over the past 24 years, the people of the 12th district have been fortunate to call JERRY COSTELLO their Congressman. His leadership, bipartisanship, hard work, and dedication to public service will not soon be forgotten. On behalf of the 17th district, I wish Congressman COSTELLO a happy and healthy retirement. Thank you for your service.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great statesman, a great chairman, and a man who always put his district first. When Congressman COSTELLO retires after a long and distinguished career of service, he will be missed not only by his colleagues, but by the institution of Congress itself.

I am proud to have worked with JERRY COSTELLO as we fought for critical transportation infrastructure funding to prepare our county for the future. His leadership as Chairman and Ranking Member of the Aviation Subcommittees made the world's aviation system more efficient and safer, while facing some of the most challenging times for the industry.

I enjoyed traveling with JERRY and his lovely wife Georgia, who offered great support both personally and professionally for her husband. Together, we went on various congressional delegation fact finding missions to further our understanding of comparative transportation systems around the world, and to augment U.S. relations abroad, particularly with respect to cooperation in the transportation and infrastructure sector.

During his many years of serving in the House, Congressman COSTELLO has always been regarded as a Member who can get things done because of his results-oriented focus, and bipartisan approach to issues. As a senior Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the second ranking Democrat on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, he has played a major role in writing several major pieces of legislation while focusing on improving the nation's transportation-infrastructure system.

Examples of his effectiveness include helping to write two national highway bills, securing \$150 million for a new Mississippi River Bridge in the last highway bill—one of the largest single earmarks in the legislation—and the passage of the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009. This legislation, the strongest aviation safety bill in over 50 years, enhances airline safety by significantly increasing the flight hours required for commercial first officers and strengthening pilot training.

Additionally, Congressman COSTELLO served four years as Chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee and now serves as the subcommittee's senior Democrat. In 2007, he wrote and helped pass a \$68 billion bill in the House to reauthorize the programs of the Federal Aviation Administration to ensure that our aviation system remains the best and safest in the world. Two years later, he reintroduced the legislation and it passed the House once again.

In closing, Congressman COSTELLO will be missed in Washington not only for his legislative accomplishments but for his good natured way of interacting with his colleagues and staff. A beloved family man, and a Member who is very well liked on both sides of the political aisle, JERRY contributed a great deal both to the Committee on Transportation and to a general feeling of political collegiality on Capitol Hill.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my colleague and my dear friend Representative JERRY COSTELLO for his 24 years of outstanding service to his district, Illinois and the country. Although he is retiring from Congress at the end of this year, his impact will be long-lasting.

Since arriving in Congress in 1999, I have been very fortunate to have JERRY COSTELLO to rely on for advice and guidance. He and then-Representative Ray LaHood, now Secretary of Transportation, convened routine meetings of the Illinois House delegation to discuss how we could work together to meet the needs of our state. A fierce advocate for

Southwestern and Southern Illinois, JERRY was eager to help all parts of the state obtain federal assistance and meet the needs of our constituents. Our delegation may have had disagreements on policy, but we were united in our desire to bring funding to Illinois to create jobs, improve access to health care, help farmers, and promote Illinois businesses.

It wasn't until I had been in Congress for a while that I realized not every state delegation met in this manner. It was because of the leadership of JERRY COSTELLO, his dedication to getting things done and his ability to work in a bipartisan manner that the Illinois delegation could get together not just to talk but to achieve concrete results.

Throughout his career, JERRY COSTELLO has been a real workhorse. As a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure and ranking Democrat on the Aviation Subcommittee, he has shaped transportation policy and is responsible for unprecedented improvements in aviation safety. He is a recognized expert on transportation issues and he is known for his commitment to protecting the interests of travelers, riders and passengers and the rights of transportation workers. He has brought his policy interests to other areas as well—from his role on the Science, Space and Technology Committee to his interests in agriculture, education and children.

JERRY COSTELLO is the go-to leader of the Illinois House delegation and it is easy to see why. It is not just that he loves the state of Illinois and the House of Representatives. It is not just that he can put together strategies to pass legislation or bring federal assistance to his district. It is his entire being—a calm but determined demeanor, a common-sense approach to problem-solving, and a welcoming attitude for his beloved constituents and his colleagues. Throughout my time in Congress, JERRY has been generous in sharing with me his time and his talents—and for that I am extremely grateful.

I have also been happy to get to know JERRY's wonderful wife, Georgia. Georgia, the president of Southwestern Illinois College and advocate for the Illinois Green Economy Network, also brings the spirit of public service to her work in improving our community.

JERRY, your record of accomplishment over the past 24 years is enormous. While you are retiring from the House of Representatives, I know that you and Georgia will continue to work to improve the lives of Illinoisans. I thank you for your friendship that I hope will endure and for all you've done for our great state.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. COSTELLO.

Next year, at the beginning of the 113th Congress, I will reluctantly assume the title of Dean of the Illinois delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives. I say reluctantly because two things are true. One, to paraphrase Groucho Marx, I would never want to be a Member of a Delegation that would have me as its Dean. Secondly, I have tremendous shoes to fill and a hard act to follow.

The current Dean is my friend, colleague, and mentor Rep. JERRY COSTELLO, who will leave the House at the end of his current term. It saddens me that he is leaving the House and bequeathing the title of Dean to me.

JERRY was re-elected twelve times to represent the people of the exotic and—at least

to us in the City of Chicago—distant lands in southern Illinois, anchored by the City of Bellville, JERRY's home town. He has served his district, the people of Illinois and the people of the United States with distinction for 24 years.

His diligent work as a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the Aviation Subcommittee, and the Science, Space and Technology Committee teaches an important lesson to young Congressmen and women: specialize. JERRY has made transportation a central theme in his career and the work he has done to ensure that infrastructure and transportation systems in Southern Illinois are world class is but one testament to his success.

Together with his wife, Georgia, the distinguished President of Southwestern Illinois College, I know JERRY will continue serving the people of Illinois in some capacity. It is in his nature.

When I came into the House in 1993, JERRY had already been here for more than two terms and helped young people like me find our way. Over the years, we developed a friendship and a kinship. Even as Democrats from the same State, I could not always vote for what he supported and he could not always vote for what I supported, but we could always look beyond that.

The people of Illinois may not even realize it yet, but they will miss JERRY in the House of Representatives. The Democratic Caucus probably doesn't realize how much we will miss JERRY. But I know how much I will miss JERRY and I wish him tremendous success and good luck.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in honoring Congressman JERRY COSTELLO on his 24 years of service to this body and the great State of Illinois. As dean of our delegation, Congressman COSTELLO set a great example, especially for me and other freshman Members from our State. He has been a helpful institutional resource and a strong champion for the needs of Illinois.

Congressman COSTELLO has a long tradition of legislative leadership, particularly on transportation issues. During his time in the House, he worked diligently with Members on both sides of the aisle to improve transportation infrastructure across this country. I appreciate his strong work ethic, and commitment to achieving results through a bipartisan manner, and believe this chamber and this country is better for it.

Most importantly, I want to applaud Congressman COSTELLO's unwavering commitment to his constituents in the 12th District of Illinois. For the last quarter century, he has been their strongest advocate in Congress, and the communities in southern Illinois have benefited greatly from his leadership.

I would also like to recognize Congressman COSTELLO's family—his wife, Dr. Georgia COSTELLO, and his three children, Jerry, Gina, and John Patrick—for supporting him during his storied tenure. I wish Congressman COSTELLO and his family all of the best as he leaves Congress, and hope that he finds happiness and fulfillment in all his future endeavors.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, throughout his career as a public servant, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO has displayed a commitment to his fellow citizens, starting with his career in law enforcement and

transitioning to become a very successful court administrator. In 1980, he was elected chairman of the St. Clare County Board and acted as its chief executive for 8 years until being elected to Congress from Illinois' 12th district. Congressman COSTELLO's wife, Georgia, has also displayed a dedication to the people and communities of southern Illinois, working as a teacher, school principal, administrator, and most recently, the President of Southwestern Illinois College.

Throughout his 24 years in Congress, Congressman COSTELLO has been a tireless advocate for the 12th district, working to improve the region's economy and enhance its transportation infrastructure. As a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congressman COSTELLO helped write two highway bills that included funds for many local projects, including the construction of the New Mississippi River Bridge. He led the push to construct the MetroLink Light Rail, a rail system connecting St. Clare County to the St. Louis region. In addition, Congressman COSTELLO was instrumental in developing southern Illinois' clean-coal industry, working to secure research and funding grants for various local universities.

Congressman COSTELLO served four years as the Chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee, helping to shepherd numerous airline safety and Federal Aviation Administration reform bills into law. One of his most significant legislative accomplishments is helping to write the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009, a bill that increased the required number of commercial pilot training hours and set new rules to limit pilot fatigue.

For his work protecting and enhancing the Scott Air Force Base, Congressman COSTELLO has been recognized as the base's "Patron Saint." He championed the base through numerous rounds of the Base Realignment and Closure process from 1995–2005, establishing Scott as one of America's leading Air Force bases. His efforts not only preserved the base, but brought the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command and added 800 jobs the region.

In my two years working with Congressman COSTELLO, I have had the privilege to get to know and learn from him. The Illinois delegation will surely miss his expertise and leadership. He leaves behind a legacy of being able to work with any Member, regardless of party, to get the job done and do what's best for the Nation. I am grateful for the time during which I was able to call Congressman COSTELLO my colleague and friend, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend and fellow Illinois Representative, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO.

I can say with sincerity that JERRY COSTELLO, after 24 years of dedication, has gone above and beyond in every way possible to serve the 12th District of Illinois and this nation. Throughout his tenure, Congressman COSTELLO has worked tirelessly to improve the economic standing of Southern Illinois, as well as foster positive change for this nation.

JERRY COSTELLO has been one of the most ardent workers for improving national transportation and has received many honors and recognition over the years for his work on agricultural issues of great importance to Illinois

farmers. With his bipartisan approach to issues, Congressman COSTELLO has garnered results time and again for the State of Illinois.

Not only do Congressman COSTELLO and I share this strong, cross-party attitude, but we also sit together on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. Through our work together, I have witnessed first-hand the amount of effort and hard work that he has put into the improvement of transportation infrastructure in the 12th District of Illinois as well as nationwide. Most importantly Congressman COSTELLO never left his district and always came back to Illinois after the session was over. This enabled him to truly stay grounded and in touch with his constituents.

I would take this moment to honor Congressman COSTELLO and all his years of service. Thank you, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO and congratulations on your numerous achievements. I wish you the best of luck in all future endeavors.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, as we are approaching the final days of the 112th Congress, I want to join with so many other House Members in paying tribute to my friend and colleague, Representative JERRY COSTELLO.

While JERRY and I have served together on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for over 20 years, I really have come to know and admire him during the last six years as we have served together in leadership positions on the Aviation Subcommittee. JERRY was Chairman for four years while I served as the ranking minority member, and this Congress that was reversed with the Republican majority.

But no matter which of us was Chairman, we forged a working relationship based on respect and a desire to work together on a bipartisan basis to get things done. And we have had a productive six years together. We passed the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009, one of the strongest safety bills to pass Congress in a long time. We spent a number of years working on a comprehensive FAA reauthorization bill, which culminated in the signing of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 on February 14, 2012.

We have been committed to providing oversight and support for the effort to modernize our air traffic control system, known as NextGen. As we were first starting out together with JERRY as Chairman back in 2007, we discovered the FAA could not even succinctly tell us just what NextGen actually was. We determined then that a major priority for us was to do all that we could to make sure this program was on track, that the FAA was held accountable for management of the program, and that other stakeholders be involved and consulted in this effort. Just this morning, we held our final NextGen oversight hearing, and I believe that we have been an effective team over the years on this program which is so critical to the future of our aviation system.

There has been much well-deserved concern expressed about the lack of civility and bipartisanship these days in the House. JERRY and I have shown that, even though you may not always agree, when you work through issues to actually accomplish something rather than just trying to score political points, we can do things that improve our nation.

JERRY is one of the workhorses of the House who has been an effective Representative for the 12th District of Illinois. He is a de-

cent and honorable man, and I consider it an honor to have served and worked together with him. My best wishes go to JERRY, his wife Georgia, and the entire family as they begin this new phase in their lives.

Mr. LUJAN. Mr. Speaker, for more than two decades, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO of Illinois has served the people of his district and his state with distinction. Congressman COSTELLO represents the type of individual we need here in this body to advance the important business of our country. As a thoughtful, fair, and dedicated representative, he is held in high esteem by colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to serve with him on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and see firsthand the knowledge and passion that he brings to his role as a leader on the Committee. His Committee colleagues and I have the greatest respect for him, always valuing his opinion on the important issues before us.

While JERRY will be truly missed in the halls of Congress, I thank him for his service and wish him well on his next endeavor. I know that his wife Georgia, his children, and grandchildren will be glad to have more time to spend with him.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my colleague, Representative JERRY COSTELLO, who has announced his retirement at the end of this Congress. I am honored to have served with JERRY on two committees, and I respect and admire his bipartisan approach to our work here in Congress.

During my first term here in Congress, JERRY addressed an issue in the Science Committee with the force and backing to make a real impression on me. He has provided us all with a model of how a leader can engage in robust debate with respect and an open mind. Whenever a colleague approached JERRY, he has always been willing to listen and give valuable input.

Congressman COSTELLO has been a wonderful leader and colleague, providing us with a great example of how we can accomplish things in Congress to benefit the areas we represent. The entire country and I thank JERRY for his 24 years of service to his constituents in Illinois and to all Americans, and while I am sorry to see him go, I wish him the best in his next endeavors.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, even though the Science Committee prides itself on bipartisanship, at times, the discussions got a little heated. Luckily, we've had JERRY COSTELLO there to help cool things off. JERRY's business-like approaches and pleasant smile have always been a positive factor in getting things done. Unlike so many of us, JERRY likes to listen as much as he likes to talk. This unique characteristic actually enabled him to disagree in a very agreeable way.

In short, even those of us who do not agree on particular issues, respect and like JERRY COSTELLO. He will be missed on both a personal and professional level. I wish him the best because he has been one of the best.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor my dear friend and colleague Congressman JERRY COSTELLO.

For 24 years Mr. COSTELLO has served the people of Southwestern and Southern Illinois with a will and determination I have long admired. As a member of the Illinois delegation,

I have often looked towards his bipartisan work ethic and unique ability to reach across the aisle as a reminder of what can be achieved when lawmakers put the American people before themselves. Congressman COSTELLO "gets it." He's a man of character who has never lost sight of his ultimate purpose: to serve the people of Illinois' 12th District.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman COSTELLO is also a man who has never shied away from working hard to make his goals a reality. After high school, he worked full time as a law enforcement officer in order to pay his way through college. He went on to serve his community administering the region's court services system, and in 1980 he was elected Chairman of the St. Clair County Board.

After proving his ability as a leader, the good people of Southwestern and Southern Illinois saw fit to send Mr. COSTELLO to Congress in 1988, and he took his vision for a new regional Illinois transportation network to the national level. As a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, he has worked tirelessly to expand transit, having championed the \$670 million Mississippi Bridge between Madison County and downtown St. Louis. In addition, through his role on the Aviation Subcommittee, he helped pass some of the toughest aviation safety laws our country has seen in over half a century.

It is because of efforts like these that Congressman COSTELLO has established himself as one of Congress' most effective members, someone who can be counted on to get things done. For the past 24 years the people of the 12th Congressional District of Illinois could rest easy knowing that Congressman JERRY COSTELLO was working hard for them in Washington. His constituents, and those of us who have had the pleasure of working with him, know that if there is a tough task or issue to address, JERRY COSTELLO is the person to see it through.

Mr. COSTELLO has spent most of his life serving the public. He is admired by his family, district and his peers and rarely is there a member who has worked so well across party lines and accomplished so much during his time in office. I want to thank him for setting an ideal example that we should all strive for when we come to DC. It is part of the larger legacy he leaves in Congress, which will stay with many of us as we continue where he leaves off in working for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, JERRY COSTELLO's presence in the halls of Congress will be sorely missed. I am proud to call Congressman JERRY COSTELLO a friend and wish him all the best as he heads back to Illinois to seek new endeavors.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to my distinguished friend and colleague from Illinois, JERRY COSTELLO, as he enters his final days serving the Prairie State in Congress.

JERRY has been a loyal advocate and dedicated fighter for the people of Southern and Southwestern Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives. JERRY'S unyielding commitment to Illinois, however, dates back even further—to his early days working as a full-time law enforcement officer as he worked his way through college. No matter how far JERRY traveled, his heart has always remained with his community—and his family, at home in Belleville.

Since I first arrived in Congress in 2003, I have had the privilege of serving as a member

of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. During our service together, I have continually been impressed by JERRY's understanding of key issues, especially those pertaining to aviation, as well as his knowledge and passion for the legislative process.

Members of Congress and influential figures on both sides of the aisle have praised Jerry for his willingness to work across party lines to get things done for his constituents and the nation. As the rough winds of partisanship have made getting things done in Washington difficult, Illinois and Congress have benefitted from an experienced pilot who still believes that by working together, Congress can push ahead through turbulence to a better flight plan for our nation.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring my friend and colleague, JERRY COSTELLO, for his eleven terms in Congress and his continued dedication to our nation.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my good friend and distinguished colleague from Illinois, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO. It is an honor for me to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to commend and thank him for his outstanding leadership and long record of service to this nation.

As this session's adjournment and his retirement approaches, I also wish to take this opportunity to thank JERRY for his friendship and guidance as my senior colleague on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, on which I have had the honor of serving with him since I was first elected in 2002. When I first met JERRY, he was already a veteran member of this body with a broad knowledge and understanding of the many important and complicated issues under our committee's jurisdiction.

JERRY's guidance and counsel in those early years were invaluable to me as a new Member. I have continued to look toward JERRY in this Congress as the standard-bearer for our committee with an unrivaled insight, institutional knowledge, and vision of the many complex issues facing our nation.

As the former chairman and now ranking member of the aviation subcommittee, JERRY has performed a critical service in shaping federal aviation policies to ensure our system remains unrivaled and the safest in the world. As a senior member of the Science, Space & Technology Committee, JERRY has proven there is no stronger advocate or more successful champion for our nation's space program or national STEM initiatives to better prepare students for a 21st Century economy.

Indeed, JERRY has achieved tremendous success and distinguished himself with an impeccable record of accomplishments in public service and leaves an indelible mark on the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Congressman JERRY COSTELLO the best of luck in his future endeavors and bid the gentleman from Illinois a fond farewell.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the congressional career of our colleague, the gentleman and legislator from Illinois' 12th Congressional District, JERRY COSTELLO. It is hard to imagine this Congress, the Science, Space and Technology, SST, Committee, and the Transportation and Infrastructure, T&I, Committee without him as he retires at the end of the 112th Congress. I am happy that he is leaving on his own terms and I wish

him every happiness as he moves on to the next phase of life.

When I became a Member of the House of Representatives in 2008, I was new to elected public office. I was given the opportunity to serve on the SST and T&I Committees, both of which I have had the honor of serving with Representative COSTELLO. As a new Member of Congress, there are certain members you observe and seek to emulate. Right away, I admired Rep. COSTELLO's preparation, diligence, and his quiet and tempered leadership.

Throughout my time in the House, I have seen Representative COSTELLO exhibit these qualities time and time again. That is likely why he has managed a feat rare in this day and age, being admired by both Democrats and Republicans as a man who exemplifies public service.

On the T&I Committee, Rep. COSTELLO fought to make air travel safer with the passage of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2007. Responding to the crash of a commuter airplane outside of Buffalo, NY, he sought to improve safety standards to ensure better pilot training in 2009.

He has fought tirelessly over his 26 years in the House of Representatives for his constituents by expanding critical infrastructure in the 12th Congressional District of Illinois, growing the local economy, and bringing good paying jobs to the region. Southern Illinois is better off to have had such vigorous and able leadership.

All of us in this institution are referred to as the gentelady or gentleman from the day we are sworn in as a Member of this body. However, Rep. COSTELLO truly deserves that title since he is a true gentleman. His retirement will leave a void in this House that cannot be filled.

My first four years in Congress, the House of Representatives, and our country are better off thanks to JERRY COSTELLO's public service and efforts. I wish you JERRY, your wife Georgia Cockrum Costello, your children Jerry II, Gina, and John Patrick, and your eight grandchildren continued success, happiness, and hopefully some well-earned rest. I know they have been of tremendous support to you in your service to this House and our nation. You leave behind a legacy of service that others can and should aspire to.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, my colleague on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, who is retiring at the end of this Congress after 24 years of service to Illinois' 12th Congressional district.

Congressman COSTELLO began serving his community long before he was an elected official. As a college student, Mr. COSTELLO helped make communities safer by working as a law enforcement officer. Though hard work, dedication and leadership, Mr. COSTELLO earned the respect and trust of his peers, leaders throughout the State of Illinois and most importantly, his community. A few years after graduating from Maryville University, Mr. COSTELLO was elected as Chairman of the St. Clair County Commission Board. Fittingly, when his community was searching for an exceptional leader to replace 22-term Congressman Melvin Price, they turned to Mr. COSTELLO. Over the next 24 years, he would lead his community through some of its most challenging times.

When the Scott Air Force Base, one of his district's largest employers, was facing closure, they turned to Congressman COSTELLO. He not only stood up for them, he delivered. In addition to convincing the Department of Defense (DOD) to keep the base open, he worked with them to bring hundreds of additional jobs to the region.

Congressman COSTELLO has worked in a bipartisan manner to make flying safer and strengthen our nation's infrastructure. He helped write and pass legislation that has pumped billions of dollars into our nation's infrastructure, and heightened aviation industry standards. As Chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee, Congressman COSTELLO prioritized passenger safety, held airline companies accountable and pushed for innovations rather than accept the status-quo.

While he will be missed in Washington, through his countless contributions, his presence will linger. His wife Georgia, three children, eight grandchildren and constituents will be happy to have him home.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman COSTELLO epitomizes what it means to be a public servant. I am grateful for his 24 years of service to our nation and I encourage my fellow members of Congress to commend him for his service. Thank you Congressman COSTELLO.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute my friend and colleague, Mr. COSTELLO on over two decades of admirable service to our country and especially to the people of Southern Illinois.

I have been honored to serve with Mr. COSTELLO as a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where I have seen firsthand his skill at working on a bipartisan basis to improve our nation's transportation infrastructure. As the Ranking Member of the Aviation Subcommittee, his patience and willingness to work with all Members of Congress was critical in the passage of the recent Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill.

He has provided leadership, guidance and a long-term vision of how we can move our country forward. I am thankful for his friendship and advice over the years, and I wish him the best in his future steps.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the retirement of my dear friend, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO. During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, his absolute dedication to the 12th district of Illinois, and his success in passing beneficial legislation has gained him the admiration of colleagues and constituents alike. He is fully committed to the prosperity of the economy, the well-being of his constituents, as well as solving the issues of the day.

As a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Congressman COSTELLO made his mark through the improvement of the transportation industry for both his district and the nation. He is responsible for the creation of MetroLink extension in St. Clair county and for funding the construction of the Mississippi River Bridge. Congressman COSTELLO is also an active member of the Aviation Subcommittee and the Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee. He worked relentlessly to pass the Airline Safety and the Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009, the strongest aviation safety legislation in fifty years, following a passenger jet crash killing fifty-one people. Congressman COSTELLO will also always be remembered as

"the patron saint of Scott Air Force Base," for preventing the base's closure in Belleville, IL during the Base Realignment and Closure process and for expanding its operations.

As a senior member of the House Committee of Science and Technology, Congressman COSTELLO is known for his dedication to developing clean coal technology and for providing a voice for Illinois farmers and workers. Due to his many accomplishments, he won the "Friend of Agriculture Award" three times since 2004, the "Labor Man of the Year Award" in 2010, and countless other awards and recognitions.

Having served with him since I was first elected into Congress, I am truly honored to have worked with such a dedicated and passionate member of the House. I am grateful to call Congressman COSTELLO my friend, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great colleague, a wonderful Member of this House, and a very dear friend, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO.

I have had the great privilege of serving with JERRY COSTELLO on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee since I've been in Congress. Over the years, I have learned so much from JERRY and have enjoyed our partnership on the Committee.

During his twenty-four years in Congress, JERRY has been a passionate advocate for his constituents and improving the transportation infrastructure in the Illinois 12th Congressional District. As the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Aviation Subcommittee, he has been a tireless champion of general aviation and modernizing our aviation system. His effective leadership and extensive knowledge of these issues have led to countless infrastructure improvements in his district and state.

JERRY's commitment to service extended beyond Illinois. When visiting my home state of Iowa, JERRY took the time to meet with some of my constituents to understand the transportation needs of our state and see how potential investments would affect our communities. He took the concerns of Iowans as seriously as those of his own constituents and made certain that these concerns were addressed in Washington.

I will greatly miss working with him, but I wish him and his family my very best wishes for a very bright future.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a cherished colleague and dear friend in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO. After more than twenty-three years of dedicated public service, Congressman COSTELLO will be retiring from the U.S. Congress. Congressman COSTELLO is a true statesman, and he will be sorely missed.

Congressman COSTELLO is a stellar example of the commitment needed to be an effective public servant. He began his public service at an early age, working in law enforcement while attending college. He has built his career on bipartisanship and dependability, and has always kept the needs of his constituents and the American people foremost in his mind and close to his heart. Congressman COSTELLO is a devoted family man, who treasures his wife, Georgia, their three children, and eight grandchildren. His compassion has given Congressman COSTELLO a unique perspective, making him that much more effective as a Member of Congress.

I have had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Congressman COSTELLO on both the House Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Science, Space, and Technology. He is an effective legislator, and has shown an unwavering commitment to furthering scientific research and building our Nation's infrastructure. Having served both as Chairman and Ranking Member on the Aviation Subcommittee, Congressman COSTELLO continues to work with his colleagues on a bipartisan basis to improve the safety and innovation of the aviation industry.

Mr. Speaker, the bonds that we form with our fellow colleagues in Congress are unlike anything else, and the friendship Congressman COSTELLO and I have developed over the years is very special to me. The House of Representatives is losing a distinguished colleague, and the constituents of the 12th District of Illinois are losing a loyal advocate. I have immense respect for Congressman COSTELLO. I will miss him dearly, and I wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavors.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of JERRY COSTELLO. In this vast body, JERRY is well known and admired by Members on both sides of the aisle. Republicans and Democrats alike have praised his tenure since JERRY announced retirement last October. He has served since 1988 and I have had the pleasure of sitting with him on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for nearly five years.

Serving four years as Chairman of the House Aviation Committee, and now as the Ranking Member, JERRY has been able to drive sound policy to make sure that America's skies are safe. JERRY wrote and played an instrumental role in passing legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, he helped write national highway bills and secure \$150 million for the Mississippi River Bridge in his district. JERRY gets the job done and I have been enriched by sitting on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee with him.

JERRY has been a true and effective advocate for Illinois's 12th Congressional district. His list of accomplishments is long and he truly cares about protecting the interests of his constituents. For example, he was not only able to keep Scott Air Force Base open during several rounds of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, but JERRY added 800 jobs. The base is Illinois's largest employer south of Springfield.

While the halls of Congress and particularly the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will be less bright, I know that JERRY will find joy in his next journey back home in Illinois. I wish him and his family all the best.

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great appreciation that I rise today to remember and honor the congressional career of my good friend, JERRY COSTELLO. JERRY and I have served together for the last twenty years.

Not only do I consider JERRY a dear friend, but he is also a mentor. He was there to provide sound advice and tutelage when I joined the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in the 105th Congress. He is widely seen as a leader in Congress on transportation issues. JERRY and I also worked closely together on matters concerning the people of Ireland. JERRY never forgot his ancestral roots in trying to better the lives for the Irish.

It wasn't only in matters before Congress that JERRY provided guidance, but also in life. I had the great fortune of sharing the same travel agent as JERRY which has enriched my life greatly.

JERRY, you will be greatly missed in this body and Congress will greatly miss you. I wish you all the best in your next endeavors and know you will bring your pragmatic approach to the task at hand.

Mr. Speaker and fellow colleagues, please join me in celebrating my dear friend, JERRY COSTELLO.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my great friend and colleague, the distinguished senior member from Illinois, Mr. COSTELLO, as he prepares to retire at the conclusion of the 112th Congress.

Congressman COSTELLO has been a trusted friend and mentor to me for the last twelve years.

When I first arrived as a freshman Member of Congress in 2001, Congressman COSTELLO was here to greet me and guide me along the right path.

And over the years, I have continued to rely on his good advice and wise counsel.

His departure is a great loss for the State of Illinois, the citizens of the 12th district, and the St. Louis regional delegation.

For the last twenty-four years, Mr. COSTELLO has been a tireless advocate for southern Illinois and metro east.

He has been a champion for rebuilding and enhancing our transportation infrastructure.

The magnificent new Mississippi River Bridge that is currently under construction will be a powerful symbol of his legacy of leadership.

Congressman COSTELLO has also been the patron saint of Scott Air Force Base—the largest employer in southern Illinois.

Our region, and indeed, our nation are stronger because of his continuous efforts to preserve and expand this vital national defense asset.

Mr. Speaker, I consider it a great blessing to have had the opportunity to serve with Congressman COSTELLO and to call him my good friend.

I honor him for his service to his state, the St. Louis region and our nation.

And I salute him on a remarkable congressional career.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of this body's finest members, Congressman JERRY F. COSTELLO, for his long-time service to the Congress.

Mr. COSTELLO has worked on behalf of the people of southern Illinois for more than 24 years, passionately bringing their concerns with him to Washington and diligently partnering with his colleagues to get the job done.

Beyond his service to the people of Illinois' 12th District, Congressman COSTELLO has been a steadfast leader for our nation's transportation infrastructure. He was instrumental in the creation of national highway bills that have become the groundwork for a more prosperous America, and a tireless advocate for aviation measures that have made our skies safer and our airlines stronger.

It has been a privilege to serve in this House with Congressman COSTELLO, and I am proud today to stand with my colleagues and pay tribute to his distinguished career and leadership. We salute a gentleman who has

made a positive impact on the lives of those he has served, and who leaves a legacy worthy of this institution. I wish him, his wife Georgia, and his family well on their future endeavors.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to rise and salute my friend and colleague, the distinguished gentleman from Illinois' 12th district, JERRY COSTELLO, as he prepares to conclude 24 years of service to his country and the people of southern Illinois as a Member of the House of Representatives. I have worked with JERRY regularly over the years on a number of bills and issues, but he and I collaborated especially closely these past two years on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure as we worked to pass a long-term Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill. And at every juncture, I never failed to be impressed by his earnest and apparent desire to do right by his constituents and the American people.

JERRY first came to Congress as a freshman Member of the Illinois Delegation after his election in 1988, but, even before he took the oath of office, he had already distinguished himself as a faithful public servant of the people of Illinois through his service in the state court system and then as chief executive of one of Illinois' largest counties. JERRY came to Congress—and this was apparent to me from some of my earliest collaboration with him—with a strong sense of duty to his constituents and to the public at large. For 24 years, this has been reflected in the strong spirit of bipartisanship in which JERRY works with our colleagues across the aisle. He finds compromises where others cannot.

Whether working with JERRY to advance clean coal or to make our aviation system safer and stronger, I always got the sense he was practically an expert in the subject matter. And, indeed, he was. In 2007, he was instrumental in helping write and secure House passage of a \$68 billion FAA reauthorization. He worked to pass the bill again in 2009, and he negotiated tirelessly with the other body to enact a final bill before the clock ran out last Congress.

Moreover, in the aftermath of the tragic crash of Colgan Flight 3407 in 2009, JERRY wrote and worked in a bipartisan manner to pass an airline safety bill that called for the strongest aviation safety improvements in more than 40 years. The bill made sweeping airline safety and pilot training reforms that have made the traveling public safer. JERRY's vision, knowledge, and leadership resulted in those reforms becoming law.

This Congress, JERRY and I worked very closely as we negotiated with our House and Senate colleagues on a long-term FAA bill. Before that process began, there were probably some who thought "slots" are something you might find in Vegas or Atlantic City. But JERRY would patiently explain the other type of "slots" that loomed large over the FAA bill: slots for airlines to fly to Washington National Airport. Explaining slots—or any complex aviation issue, for that matter—JERRY would boil down years of legislation, rulemaking, and airline mergers and bankruptcies into a few simple words that reflect his good Midwestern common sense.

When JERRY retires at the end of this Congress, we will lose the benefit of his institutional memory, his knowledge of aviation issues from top to bottom, and his bipartisan

approach to solving problems and finding common ground. I have no doubt that JERRY's family—his wife, Georgia, his daughter and two sons, and his eight grandchildren—are looking forward to having him closer to home for longer periods of time. On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to thank them for sharing JERRY with us for these 24 years. His good work has made a tremendous difference not only for the people of his district, but for every American who flies, drives, or takes a train in this country.

Mr. Speaker, with great admiration, I salute my friend as he prepares to retire from this body, and I join with my colleagues in extending to him every best wish in his future endeavors.

GOP DOCTORS CAUCUS

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, as many of you may know, before coming to Congress, I was a physician in northern Michigan for nearly 30 years, and tonight I want to spend a little time talking to you about Medicare, the President's health care bill, and just health care in general.

In practice, many of my patients were on Medicare, and I know how important medical care is to our seniors. It's an important part of their ability to take care of themselves as they get older. Really, the reason I'm here today is to explain that the GOP and the Republicans want to preserve Medicare for our current seniors and for the youth that are coming up because right now the way Medicare is organized, the trust fund will be out of money within 10 to 12 years. Different accountants have different numbers. But basically, unless we do something, we're going to run out of money. We just don't want that to happen. I want to see people still have access to their care.

In discussing this issue, it seems as if we've been attacked for trying to end Medicare. But if you see that there's a problem with a system that is running out of money and you don't want to address it, that's just not right.

The Doctors Caucus in the House is 18 physicians, nurses, and dentists that represent different areas of the country, and we have a good understanding of health care as it exists right now in America. Certainly, there are problems with health care and access to it. And although we have great health care in America, the problem is it's too expensive. Frankly, the President's health care bill makes it more difficult to keep Medicare viable. Those are a few of the things I want to talk to you about this evening, just touch on to let you understand what I think about how the system is working and how we can improve it.

I don't think it's a partisan issue. I think it's something that we need to discuss. Frankly, I just don't think

that some of the people that have passed these laws in Congress really understood what they were doing. They admitted the fact that they passed the bill without really knowing what was in it. I just don't think that's really a good idea.

What is really the problem with Medicare? The problem is that the population of our country is changing. There are more older citizens than there were; in other words, there are 10,000 new Medicare beneficiaries being added each day. Right now, a little over three people are paying into the system for every person that is collecting. Because of the large numbers of people that are being added to the roles, within a few years there are only going to be two people paying in for each person collecting. That creates a problem in the fact that there are not as many people paying in as are receiving benefits. With the cost of health care going up, it makes it a fiscal cliff.

The other big problem that we see with the Medicare situation is the fact that the President's health care law, in order to pay for it, takes \$700 billion out of Medicare. That's a lot of money to take out of Medicare and still expect it to provide care for our seniors, more and more of which are coming on to it every day. I think that there is certainly some waste, fraud, and abuse that can be eliminated, and that will help, but it's just not enough. We have to change the system.

The system that I think we should change to, frankly, is the system of PAUL RYAN and Mr. WYDEN of Oregon, who brought together a program where we can put some changes in for those people under 55 that will allow them to choose between different private insurance plans similar to what Federal employees and Members of Congress have. These private plans would be inspected and reviewed by the government to be sure that they're adequate and give people some flexibility in how they spend their money.

One of the problems I see with Medicare is that the government ends up deciding how to spend the money rather than the patient. The patient, to me, is the one whose money it is. The people who are spending the money should be the ones who are deciding how it's spent, not some government person or bureaucrat in Washington.

Show me the slide on the \$700 billion. I just want to show people the slide that demonstrates what's happened to this money. I represent the northern half of Michigan. We have many small towns and small hospitals in my district. Every little town has their community hospital, and it's hours sometimes to the next facility.

□ 1820

This slide here shows the \$716 billion coming out of the Medicare program, and \$294 billion of that money is payments to hospitals. The President describes the Medicare cuts as cutting waste and overpayments to providers.