

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebratory support of H.R. 34, the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the 21st Century Cures Act. As a breast cancer survivor, I am celebrating. As a Representative from the City of Houston, I am celebrating.

Because of the Texas Medical Center, this plan will provide an ambitious action that called for \$6.3 billion in mandatory funding to be delivered over the next 10 years to the National Institutes of Health. It also provides and estimated that every \$1 of NIH funding generates about \$2.21 in local economic growth and 402,000 jobs. But most of all, it will deal with the curing of diseases and developing research that will help save lives.

In furtherance of this initiative, this legislation before us allows for the creation of an innovation fund through the National Institutes of Health so that we can design the most innovative ways of curing disease, of helping children, of helping seniors, of helping people who are dealing with incurable disease.

The Cures Act is an act of the 21st century. It moves forward on the President's Precision Medicine Initiative.

I thank Mr. UPTON, Ms. DEGETTE, and all the Members. I serve as an original cosponsor. I am excited about the legislation, for it will save lives.

□ 1900

COMMEMORATING AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MS. JACQUELINE ELLIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand before the House tonight to commemorate and celebrate the life of my former Chief of Staff, Ms. Jacqueline Ellis.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Ellis served well. In the sense of many, she was the 436th Member of Congress. She helped to educate not only new persons who were here in administrative capacities, but also Congresspersons. She helped us to understand what Congress was all about.

I am honored tonight to say some kind words about her and to acknowledge a colleague who is here and will be saying a word as well.

To my right is a photograph of my very dear friend and former coworker, Jacqueline Ellis. She was born in Mobile, Alabama. She was born at a time when persons of African ancestry could buy a hat, but they couldn't try it on; at a time when persons of African ancestry would have to step aside so that others could step forward; and at a time when persons of African ancestry were relegated to certain places in life, certain schools, and certain places of business. They had to go to the back

door for their food. They would drink from colored water fountains. She was born at a time when this country did not respect all of her rights.

Who could have known that when she was born in Mobile, Alabama, that she would make her way from Mobile to Capitol Hill?

There was no way to predict at the time of her birth that she would come to this Nation's Capitol and that she would serve three Members of Congress—one United States Senator and two U.S. Representatives: the Honorable Major Owens from New York's 11th Congressional District, the Honorable Senator Heflin. And, of course, she served in my office. No one could have known.

I think, quite frankly, that this speaks to the greatness of the country, that we have moved light years away from some of the circumstances that we had to endure earlier in the history of this country.

Notwithstanding all that has been done, there is still great work to be done. Tonight I want to say to you that this person born in Mobile during very difficult times has received an indication from the President of the United States of America that he was saddened to learn of her demise. I include in the RECORD a letter from the President.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, September 28, 2016.

Mr. CHRIS ELLIS,
Bowie, Maryland.

DEAR CHRIS: I was deeply saddened to learn of the loss of your sister, Jacqueline. My heartfelt condolences are with you as you reflect upon her life.

May cherished memories help temper your grief, and may you find comfort in the support of loved ones. Please know you will remain in my thoughts.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. She has also been honored by a good many of my colleagues here on the Hill, including the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, who sent a letter to my office and expressed verbally her condolences and her sympathies. She has also been honored by the Honorable STENY HOYER, by the Honorable JIM CLYBURN, and by the Honorable XAVIER BECERRA. She has been honored by Members of Congress in many capacities. We have a resolution that has been filed. This resolution is one that pays tribute to her. It has been signed on to by a good many Members of Congress as well.

So tonight I am pleased to say that Jacqueline Ellis, born in Mobile, Alabama, and matriculated her way to and through the Halls of Congress is now resting in peace.

She was a person that lived every day of her life in the sense that she was busy doing something for someone every day of her adult life. She worked up until the moment she was hospitalized. Literally, I was the last person to speak to her. She and I were going to an event, the ALC dinner, the Congressional Black Caucus dinner as it is

called, and she was there to pick me up and take me to the dinner. She called me and said to me: I will be waiting for you. I am downstairs.

I said that I will be down in about 10 minutes.

Within that period of time, she called me back and informed me that she needed to go to the hospital. I rushed down to her, and when I got there, the emergency assistance was already there. She called them prior to calling me apparently. I immediately assisted them, and we went to the hospital together. She stayed in the hospital for some days and made her transition.

The important point to make is that she was working. Her work was her life. She lived to perform her duties. She was on her job in the sense that she was assisting that evening, and she was there all day long. She was ill, but she would not stop working. There were times when we would ask that she take some time off, but she always wanted to come to work.

Her work was her inspiration in a sense. Her work was the thing that gave her a reason to continue to go on, and she never, ever complained. There is a song that speaks to the kind of person that she was because there are many of us right here in Congress who can relate to this. When you see the great eagle flying, you assume that it is the wings. But there is a song that addresses how it is that the eagle can soar to these high heights. That song says that it is not the wings, but rather it is the wind beneath the wings. She was the wind beneath the wings of a lot of people who were able to soar to high heights, a lot of people who did not understand all of what was before them when they accepted the responsibility to become a part of a congressional staff or a Member of Congress. She became the wind beneath their wings and helped to guide them through Congress.

I am pleased to tell you that we have had several celebrations of her life. We had one in this area immediately after her untimely demise—untimely to me because I had hoped that she would be with us a lot longer than she was. We also had a celebration of her life in her hometown of Mobile, Alabama, attended by a good many dignitaries and staffers from the Hill; a celebration of her life in Houston, Texas, similarly attended. She has been recognized and honored by people that she came in contact with.

She made a difference. I will relate one brief vignette before I ask my colleague to come to the podium. When I was looking for my first chief of staff—and she was my first and only chief of staff, I might add. When I was looking for my chief of staff, I was a neophyte in Congress, and I brought her on board. You are always unsure about a new hire, especially a person who is going to be key to the office, a person that everything sort of evolves around. So I was unsure as to whether or not I had made the right decision.

She and I were together, and I saw her pull over rather abruptly. She was driving. My recollection is that this happened more than once, but on this occasion, she was driving. When she pulled over, she ran over to a person, and I saw her hand the person something, and then she came back to the car. I immediately wanted to know who this was. Was it somebody that she knew? Because she did it so abruptly.

She said: No, I didn't know that person.

The person was not dressed in a suit and tie. The person did not have the appearance of what we would call status, although I think everybody has status. The person did not appear to be a captain of industry, if you will. She went over and she gave that person money. I found out later on that she would go to the credit union, and she would extract dollar bills—some stack; I don't know how many in the stack—and she would use that money to just give to people that she would encounter that she was of the opinion needed some help.

When she did it on that day, I knew that I had made the right decision because I then knew that I saw the sermon that many people preach. It is truly better to see a sermon than to say one, or to be one than to say one. I saw that day "love your neighbor as you love yourself." I saw on that occasion "help somebody."

I saw her live up to the true meaning of the spirit of the story of the Good Samaritan who saw the person in the streets of life and went over and took that person to the inn and said: Here is money. Use this to help this person. And if this is not enough, when I come back, I will give you more.

I saw the good neighbor in Jacqui Ellis. I knew then that I made a good hire because I had a person who would not only speak a sermon, but would be a sermon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who is my colleague from Houston, Texas. The Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE hails from the 18th Congressional District. She serves on the Judiciary Committee, she serves on the Committee on Homeland Security, and she has served us in Congress for a good many years.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the Honorable AL GREEN of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, we are like family in this House, Republicans and Democrats, as we work together and work with our staff. I am very clear in the fact that Ms. Ellis was the only chief of staff that Congressman AL GREEN of Texas had, and that he made an A-plus choice, and she, likewise, in accepting his offer to be his chief of staff.

She was a 30-year veteran, and she brought to his office and brought to this House a sense of affection and love for the institution, for democracy, and for America. Not only did she have the privilege of working for Congressman

AL GREEN of Texas and he the privilege of having her as his chief of staff, she worked previously for Congressman Major Owens of New York, and the late former Alabama Senator Howard Heflin.

□ 1915

It means that she understood the institutions that helped to lay down the pillars of democracy.

She was a spiritual mother to the tens upon thousands of young people who came to this place with starry eyes to make a difference—spiritual mother, sister, mentor, and friend to many people, including elected and people of high ranking status.

She was a graduate of a historically Black college, and, as well, she had a background in government affairs.

But, more importantly, she had a big heart. And she was eager, as I am told by the staff, to be able to help all the new and young staff. They knew they could go to Jacqui Ellis.

She was a Christian woman as well, and she served on many important organizations. In particular, I worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. She was a national board member, the organization founded by Dr. Martin Luther King, and Ralph David Abernathy, and where Andrew Young worked, and Josea Williams, and so many others. James Orange, and those of us young people who believed that we could overcome.

She was a recipient of the Ella Baker Award from the SCLC and Martin Luther King, III.

But where I got to see Jacqui really making it and doing it was in her leadership with C. Delores Tucker, and her work with the National Congress of Black Women. As a board member, I remember coming as a young Member of Congress, and we would go to that very famous breakfast, Congressman GREEN, the Sunday after the Congressional Black Caucus, and there was Jacqui. She was the orchestrator, the guider. She respected C. Delores Tucker. She honored the women who came. She was at their beck and call—we need this.

She was the person that the likes of Malcolm X's wife, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King, because they used to come during their lifetime every year, and those of us who were young Members of Congress, she welcomed us with open arms and allowed us to sit in the royal place at the feet of these great women who she had come to know, and they had come to know and love her, as we held this wonderful program about the empowerment of women and, in particular, African American women.

She was, as well, the co-chair of the Bethune DuBois Institute, Inc. Leadership Forum and, as well, she has received awards from the Congressional Black Caucus.

So I close by simply saying, yes, she has a litany of accolades and honors. We wish that she could have lived on and on and on. Some say that the

young die young. We certainly believe that Jacqui Ellis, our friend, our lover of this institution, this great staff person, was taken way too young.

As I told my friend and colleague, earlier this year, I experienced an enormous tragedy in losing a dear staff person, who, though a short time, had become so much a part of our extended family. And so, Congressman GREEN, I know it hurts. It hurts many of her fellow staffers and friends. Certainly we know her family suffered great pain.

But I can say, as we salute great Americans, and each have done something in their way to move this country forward, I want to say that Jacqui Ellis lived in the greatest country in the world. It was already a great country. But she was so much a part of making this country a country that welcomed all of the young talent and those new faces that desired to be part of the greatness of this country. She did it with open arms and a big heart. We will miss her greatly, but she has left a legacy of service. As you have noted, she stopped along the highway of life and gave what she had to someone who looked like they needed it more.

So to Jacqui I say: farewell our dear friend, farewell, for you are certainly one who is a good and faithful servant. May you rest in peace.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. JACKSON LEE for her very, very kind words. She did know Jacqui well. She had a lot of respect for her. I appreciate her taking the time to come by this evening.

I want to also acknowledge that the Honorable EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON was here but had to step away.

I want to also acknowledge that some 150 individuals have given us expressions concerning Jacqui, a number of organizations, at least 20, and we have 41 cosponsors of the resolution that I spoke of earlier, H. Res. 905, which expresses condolences to her family, and it commemorates her life.

Finally, we have elected officials, at least 64, including the President and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who have expressed their sympathies and condolences. She was truly a person who touched a lot of people in a very positive way. I am honored to say that I was associated with her and that she truly made a difference in my life.

Mr. Speaker, as we travel the road of life, we meet many people. We remember some and a good many we do not. Jacqueline Ellis is someone that I will remember, and my belief is that a good many other persons who came into contact with her, whether it was for a very short period of time or for some duration, will remember her as well. These would include the members of the sorority that she was affiliated with, Delta Sigma Theta. She was very active in this sorority. She was loved, and is still loved, by the members of Delta Sigma Theta. They would come to the Hill on an annual basis and they

always took time to come by and visit her. She would always welcome them and provide services.

This is but one of the many organizations that will continue to honor her, I am sure. The others that will remember her that she came in contact with would be SCLC, as was mentioned by my colleague, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This was the organization that Dr. King led. This was the organization that fought for human rights, civil rights, and human dignity across the length and breadth of this country. She was part of that organization. In fact, she was on the board.

She and Martin King, not Martin King the father but Martin King, III, the son of Dr. King, were the very best of friends—the very best of friends. He has traveled great distances to pay tribute to her. He was there in Mobile, Alabama. He came here for the services that we had. And he always, when he was in Washington, DC, would take the time to come by our office to say hello to Jacqui.

People who met her along life's way would also include the Links. The Links was an organization that she was affiliated with and that she took great pride in assisting as they were having their various events. She was always helpful to other people to make sure that they were able to be successful in their endeavors. When you travel the road of life, the highway of life, you meet many people. You don't remember them all, but there are some who are special, and these are the persons who will stand out in your mind and will be remembered in the very years to come of your life.

So tonight, I am grateful that the leadership has allowed us this time to pay tribute to Jacqueline Ellis, who was born in Mobile, Alabama, on October 22, 1957, a very difficult time in the life of the country, and who made a transition on September 21 of 2016. She is gone, but she is not forgotten. She will be remembered. We are grateful that we have had an opportunity to commemorate her life and celebrate the wonderful person that she was.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I join my colleagues to recognize a true pillar in the congressional community, Ms. Jacqueline Ellis. Jacqui began working on Capitol Hill when it was not common for a woman, let alone a woman of color to work here, but she never let that stop her. Her path in life is admirable and truly shows her resilience and dedication to public service.

During her tenure, she changed the lives of countless men and women, particularly those of color that she came in contact with. It was not uncommon for her to give her all to anyone that came through her door without asking for recognition. She stayed humbled and committed to her purpose to fulfill her life's mission of service.

Her love and dedication to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. was felt with all her sorors, especially those who work on Capitol Hill. She assisted with hosting Delta Days at the Nation's Capitol and ensured that all who attended felt welcomed and loved. She also was the matriarchic for Deltas on the Hill, which gave members of her sorority a space to laugh, love and support each other on Capitol Hill. To my colleagues who are members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., I mourn with you all today for the loss of your sister.

She was a true humanitarian and her presence is missed throughout the halls of the Capitol. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family, Congressman AL GREEN's staff, her sorors, and all those who she impacted in her lifetime.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and Congressional Black Caucus colleague, Congressman AL GREEN of Texas, for leading tonight's Special Order Hour to honor and in memorial to beloved Congressional staffer, Jacqueline A. Ellis, known to most of us as Jacqui.

On September 21, 2016, the world lost Jacqueline Ellis, a beloved mentor, friend, colleague, and sister, and we, here in the halls of Congress, lost a legend.

Through her nearly 30 years of service in the people's House, Jacqui helped to expand diversity on the Hill and inspired countless young people to dedicate their lives to public service.

She served as a mentor for many young African-American staffers who came to Capitol Hill looking to make a difference in our nation.

When Jacqui became a House staffer in 1988, there were few people of color in the corridors of the Congress, but that did not dissuade Jacqui. Instead, it inspired her to assist and help numerous Black staffers thrive.

Upon her passing, hundreds of former and current Congressional staffers took to social media to share their stories and memories of Jacqui. Words like "good listener"—"wonderful woman"—"especially there to help young people"—and "enormously respected" were used.

As one of the first Black women to serve as a Chief of Staff on Capitol Hill, she was a trailblazer who opened the door so other that women of color could follow in her footsteps.

She founded the Organization of African-American Administrative Assistants for Chiefs of Staff in the House. And, she worked quietly behind the scenes to expand equality of opportunity and to strengthen our democracy.

Jacqui was also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and one of my sorors. She was instrumental in planning and executing the annual "Delta Days" on the Hill.

She was also a proud member of The LINKS Incorporated and coordinated its Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Issues Forum.

Her charitable nature, her unbridled spirit, her selfless dedication to public service, and her strong faith will certainly be missed.

RECOGNIZING THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, today I and other Members of the House, most especially members of the Virginia delegation, but other House Members who served with three of our Virginia colleagues, are here to express our thanks and pay tribute to their service, to the people of Virginia, and the people of the United States of America. We are saddened to lose three members of our great Virginia delegation, but we have the utmost regard for all of them, and we wish them well in their future endeavors.

I am going to start by recognizing my dear friend and colleague on the House Judiciary Committee, Congressman RANDY FORBES. I remember when RANDY arrived here. I had known him many years before he was elected to the House. I was, frankly, thrilled when he decided to run for the House of Representatives and got elected. Of course, his first priority, representing the Fourth Congressional District, was to get on the House Armed Services Committee.

Once he secured that, he was looking for a second committee. I encouraged him to seek a position on the House Judiciary Committee and helped him in his effort to do that. He is a fine attorney and someone who was a great value to me and my predecessors who have had the honor of chairing the House Judiciary Committee.

Born and raised in Chesapeake, Virginia, RANDY FORBES has never forgotten who he is or where he came from. Growing up as the son of a World War II Normandy veteran, RANDY was raised on the values of duty, hard work, family, and faith. He carried those principles with him to Randolph-Macon College, where he graduated as valedictorian of his 1974 class, and throughout his years at the University of Virginia School of Law.

Since first elected to Congress in 2001, RANDY's highest priority has been to protect and defend our Nation, the fundamental freedoms it was founded upon, and the men and women who fight for those freedoms. As chairman of the House Armed Services Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, RANDY is one of the Nation's forceful advocates for a strong national defense.