

husband Rick accepted a position with Denver Public Schools. Cathy had a strong desire to give back to her new city, and she landed on the Denver City Council in 1975.

During her 28 years serving on City Council, Cathy proved to be an effective and hard-working elected official. Evidence of her achievements can be found throughout the region—from our world-renowned airport to our popular football stadium and convention center.

But Cathy's most important legacy was her unwavering and fearless commitment to social justice. When she moved to ban assault weapons in Denver, she faced numerous insults and even threats against her own life with the kind of grace and resolve that earned the respect of some of her fiercest opponents. And with similar fortitude, Cathy led the fight on changing local zoning ordinances so that LGBTQ individuals and those who are differently-abled could no longer be excluded from living in certain neighborhoods. Truly, Cathy Reynolds was a force to be reckoned with, as those with whom she served would quickly tell you; however, she was also fair, and funny, and kind to everyone she met.

Not surprisingly, Cathy's unique personal traits and organizing ability led her to fill key leadership roles, including the role of council president, a position in which she served five times. Additionally, beyond the City Council, Cathy's leadership qualities and passion for social progress resulted in her serving two terms as president of the Colorado Municipal League and chair of the National League of Cities.

As a political activist and then a young state legislator in the 1990's, I admired Cathy's style—tough but accessible—and her unwavering commitment to civil rights for all. Cathy was a model for me as I fought at the state level for many of the issues she had successfully championed in Denver.

Put simply, Cathy Reynolds was a trail-blazing and tireless advocate on behalf of the community she loved; and her longtime public service was an inspiration to young leaders regardless of their gender. Though Cathy's legacy will remain alive for many decades to come, her powerful presence will be deeply missed.

My heart goes out to her husband Rick Reynolds, as well as to their two children and four grandchildren. I hope they find comfort in the knowledge that their dear loved one was not only a treasure and inspiration to them, but also to the countless Denverites whose lives she touched.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF OSCAR BUNCH

#### HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Oscar Bunch. A Virginian, strong and humble working man of uncommon grace, Mr. Bunch passed from this life at age 90 on Friday, December 11, 2020 surrounded by his family in his home.

Delivered by a midwife, Oscar Bunch was born to Myrtle and Edward Bunch on March 12, 1930 in Portsmouth, Virginia. Born in the

depths of the Great Depression, Oscar knew hard times and hard work early on. As a child he was already working long ten-hour days alongside his family as sharecroppers picking cotton, peanuts and corn and earning less than one dollar a day. This experience, along with values earned from a devoutly Christian mother who believed in unconditional love and hard work, taught him that all people have value and worth, that hard working people deserve to live decently, and that compassion matters.

When he was thirteen years old, Oscar went to work in the Norfolk Navy Yard when World War II created a shortage of workers. At age fifteen, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and saw tours of Germany, France and Belgium during the war. After the war ended and Oscar returned home to Virginia, the GI Bill gave him the opportunity to go the school. He earned his Journeyman's card as a pipefitter, finishing his apprenticeship in 1952. Along the way Oscar met and married his wife Ruby, and together they raised their children Michael, Brian, Wesley and Donna.

The young family moved to Toledo, Ohio, and in 1956 Oscar began his career at the Chevrolet Transmission plant on Alexis Road where he promptly became involved in the UAW. In 1972 he was elected as the Skilled Trades Bargaining Representative of UAW Local 14. He was elected the Local 14 President in 1978 and was re-elected to ten consecutive terms. To date, Oscar Bunch is the longest serving union local President in UAW history. An outstanding negotiator as labor leader, Oscar always looked out for the rank-and-file, ensuring their voice was heard and their needs met. Among his lasting legacies is Oscar Bunch park, a lovely greenspace between the plant and the union hall he worked to establish and dedicated in his name upon his 2006 retirement, where the families of GM workers could gather.

Oscar spent his career as a labor leader putting into practice the lessons he learned in his youth. Humble and unassuming, nonetheless his words and actions carried great weight. He was well respected by labor, management and community. After retirement, Oscar dedicated his efforts to growing the Toledo Public Schools' Toledo Technology Academy to educate students in the skilled premier institution it has become. He remained an active participant in many community ventures.

Throughout his life both in public and private, Oscar Bunch sought to ensure a better life for the common man. He never forgot where he came from and carried with him his modest roots. He instilled those values in his own family. We wish for his wife, Ruby, his son and daughter Wes and Donna, his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, his many friends, that they find some comfort in the memories they share and the gift of Oscar Bunch's life to them all, and for our entire community.

#### TRANSPARENCY AND EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES FOR VETERAN CAREGIVERS ACT

SPEECH OF

#### HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and the Homeland Security Committee, I rise in strong support of S. 2216, the "Transparency and Effective Accountability Measures for Veteran Caregivers Act," (Team Act), which strengthens transparency and communication for veterans and caregivers participating in the program.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting and proper that the VA provides stipends and support to caregivers for wounded veterans.

To be eligible for this program, veterans must have sustained or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001 and need personal care services for supervision and protection to help them with daily living activities.

Caregivers can include family members or other members of the veteran's support group that regularly help veterans recovering from injuries.

Unfortunately, according to reports, caregivers and veterans have been arbitrarily discharged or downgraded from the program, with benefits subsequently revoked or reduced—often with little explanation or time to appeal the decision.

In fact, the VA Office of the Inspector General reported in 2018 that VA failed to adequately manage the caregiver program and recommended improvements and reforms.

The TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act takes a number of steps to improve the program.

First, the legislation ensures that all caregivers are included in the veterans' medical records.

Currently, only certain caregivers participating in the Caregiver Support Program are included in veterans' medical records.

Including all caregivers in medical records strengthens communications between VA and caregivers and recognizes them as part of the clinical team.

Second, the legislation requires a minimum standard of information in downgrade notification letters in that it requires VA to provide an explanation of downgrade or termination decisions.

Caregivers have reported that their decision letters are sometimes missing important information that would be necessary to file an appeal.

Finally, the legislation extends benefits after certain veterans are deemed ineligible for the program.

Caregivers have reported being dropped shortly after receiving a termination letter without adequate time to appeal or make new accommodations.

This codifies a goal of maintaining care for an extended period of 150 days in certain cases where a veteran is terminated from the program.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is strongly endorsed by Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a charitable organization with the singular focus and mission of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

In supporting the TEAM Veterans Caregivers Act, DAV states:

“Family caregivers are the unsung heroes for thousands of severely injured veterans, as they not only perform complex medical and personal care tasks but are often the lifeline of many ill and injured veterans to lead dignified and independent lives. However, mismanagement of the VA’s Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers has, in far too many instances, caused the improper disruption or termination of benefits family caregivers need to support their veteran.”

I support this bipartisan legislation because it provides needed support for veterans who can least afford to be without it, those disabled in connection with their service to our country.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass S. 2216, the TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act.

DON FOWLER

HON. JOE CUNNINGHAM

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the wonderful life of Don Fowler.

Don Fowler fervently worked at improving and molding the South Carolina Democratic party to be inclusive, inspiring, and of strong moral ground. He served as chairman of the S.C. Democratic Party and Democratic National Party. Fowler served 30 years in the United States Army, was a member of the Washington Street United Methodist Church, and was a lifetime member of the NAACP.

Fowler loved politics and he loved people. His years of educating spanned over five decades and his teachings will be passed down by his beloved students for many decades to come.

For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Romans 7:8.

Don Fowler lived to serve his loved ones, his community, and the party he cherished, and he now rests in Heaven. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends, students, and anyone that was lucky enough to know the legend of Don Fowler.

TRIBUTE TO CHUCK SASSARA

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mr. YOUNG. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a long-time friend and a great Alaskan, Chuck Sassara, who died this Fall at the age of 89, just weeks before turning 90, after living an incredible life. Chuck was born in Detroit, Michigan on Oct 19, 1930, and we lost a great friend and Alaskan spirit on September 25, 2020. Chuck was an Aviator, Husband, Father, Grandfather, State Legislator, Sailor, Advocate, Author, Businessman, Athlete, Storyteller and, an amazing Character. He is known and loved by thousands around the

globe and died on a Friday afternoon while refueling his Toyota van, preparing to go . . . somewhere.

Chuck loved life. He was always headed to the next adventure—whether that was driving the Alcan Highway almost 50 times, ferrying aircraft across the continent, driving across North Africa with his young family at the end of the Algerian war, or sailing across the Atlantic. He believed in the best of human nature and was never cynical about the future. He was unafraid to try new things, but he didn’t always succeed. Lately, it was his repeated failures to master his “smart phone” with 89-year-old fingers.

Born to Charles Sr. (Pappy) and Kathleen Agnes (Nana) he, along with brother Richard (Dick) Sassara, grew up between Miami, the Panama Canal Zone, and Los Angeles. Meeting his true love Ann at University HS in Los Angeles, the couple married while Chuck attended UCLA. Upon graduation they had a discussion; go back to Panama or see Alaska? In the spring of 1955, they drove north in a VW bus to build a life and help bring a new state into being. In the early 60’s Chuck ran for the State House and quickly became the Majority Leader and Finance Chair. In these roles he championed such important work as the 1964 Equal Rights Amendment, Women’s Rights, and the creation of University of Alaska Anchorage. His peers in the Legislature included Nick Begich, Willie Hensley, Ted Stevens and me. The group of us were often competitors, often allies, and after session “happy-hour” compatriots, bound together by circumstance, a common purpose and shared values. We were great friends and had great respect for one another, whether we agreed or disagreed on the politics of the day. We need more of that spirit of bipartisan friendship, not less.

As an aviator Chuck flew commercial, multi engine aircraft and was an IFR rated pilot that flew 161 different types of aircraft, logging over 25,000 hours in planes as small as the Breezy to as large as the four engine Lockheed Constellation. As a sailor he crossed the Atlantic, made passages from Miami to Los Angeles, sailed solo from Seattle to Whittier Alaska, and made several dozen trips to the Bahamas and beyond, finishing with an offshore passage from Florida to the Carolina Outer Banks with son Charlie, nephew Rick and friend Michel Bourquin in 2017. As a writer, his memoir “Propellers, Politics and People: Chuck Sassara’s Alaska” is a testament to his skill as a storyteller and the craft of putting others first, in narrative and in life.

He is survived by his proudest achievement: his sons Charlie and Richard, grandchildren Tyler, Rachael, and Annalyssa, and his daughter-in-law Mary, Mimi Bourquin, his nephew Rick and his wife Amy, their daughter Katy, niece Lisa and her daughters Alexandria and Gabrielle, and his sister-in-law, Ellen.

Most of all, Chuck will be survived by the raucous and wonderful stories he told to friends over coffee and beer, the lives he saved, and the spirit of Alaska he imbued in everything he touched. All of us who knew him rest comfortably knowing he’s somewhere on a broad reach, steering by starlight, and reunited with his beloved Ann. We love Chuck, sail on and Godspeed.

A WORD OF THANKS TO GEORGIAN PARLIAMENTARIAN AND OSCE PA PRESIDENT GEORGE TSERETELI

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2020

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, during this challenging year I have periodically taken the floor to update my Congressional colleagues on my continued work with our friends and allies across the Atlantic as we confront the challenges facing Europe and beyond. This has included not only the direct impact of the COVID pandemic itself on public and economic health but also in regard to ongoing issues like Russian aggression, the violation of human rights in Belarus and other countries, and the common threat all countries face from terrorism.

Today, I take the floor to praise one of our best friends and allies in these efforts, George Tsereteli, who is stepping down as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly—the OSCE PA—as a result of leaving the parliament of the Republic of Georgia. During his tenure as President, I have significantly deepened my engagement in this valuable forum, including being appointed by President Tsereteli earlier this year to serve as chair of the OSCE PA committee dealing with security matters.

George Tsereteli is a true leader. During his time as President of the OSCE PA, he has spoken out forcefully against the violation of the Helsinki Principles which guide relations between OSCE countries and emphasized the linkages between these principles. That includes condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine and other neighbors, including his own country of Georgia. That also includes condemning the violation of human rights that is today so brutally evident in Belarus but has in fact been an ongoing issue there as well as in Russia and far too many other OSCE countries. True peace, in his view, requires respect for human rights. At the same time, George worked with parliamentarians from across the OSCE region, respecting their more specific concerns on a variety of issues, from combating corruption to environmental protection, and giving them a venue to raise these issues in this multilateral forum.

In this sense, George Tsereteli represents his country well. He understands that, if the international community is to assist Georgia with the challenges it faces, Georgians must make their contribution to security and cooperation across Europe, the OSCE region and beyond.

George Tsereteli is also a true friend of the United States and of the Congress. He keeps in close contact with me and other Members from both sides of the aisle. George does the same with our colleagues in the Senate. When he visits the United States, George never fails to reach out. In between, despite his heavy schedule, George is always available when we need his input. In his speeches, George regularly recognizes the good work done by the U.S. Helsinki Commission.

Finally, George Tsereteli understands that it is not only diplomats or parliamentarians who contribute to positive change. He has engaged