

mustard and ketchup and salt at us. We sat there taking all of that.”

“After graduating from Florida A&M law school, Alcee Hastings went into private practice as a civil rights lawyer in Fort Lauderdale, but when he first arrived a motel refused to rent him a room; a humiliating experience inflicted on African Americans whenever they traveled in the United States before passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

As a civil rights lawyer, Alcee Hastings successfully filed lawsuits to desegregate the public schools in Broward County, Florida, as well as the Cat’s Meow, a restaurant that was popular with white lawyers and judges but would not serve African Americans.

It was poetic justice indeed when then Florida Governor Reuben Askew appointed Alcee Hastings to the circuit court of Broward County in 1977 and held the investiture ceremony at a high school he had helped desegregate.

In 1979, Alcee Hastings was nominated by President Jimmy Carter to serve as United States District Judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, becoming the first African American federal judge in Florida; he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on October 31, 1979, sworn in on November 2, 1979, and served for a decade until leaving the bench in October 1989.

As a judge, Alcee Hastings established his own style, eschewing the typical judicial mien of grave reserve; he cracked jokes from the bench, dropped slang in rulings and interviews, and was unflinching in his support for the poor and the dispossessed.

In 1981, Judge Hastings exasperated the Department of Justice when he extended a court order blocking the deportation of 76 Haitians after the Immigration and Naturalization Service had stepped up removals.

Many thought that with his departure from the federal bench, Alcee Hastings’s career in public service had come to end but they underestimated this irrepressible and indomitable human being, who never forgot the lesson taught him years ago by his father: “Be your own boss man!”

So three years later, in 1992, Alcee Hastings ran for Congress from the newly created 23rd Congressional District of Florida and won election in November of that year and, along with Congresswomen-elect Carrie Meek and Corrine Brown, became the first African Americans elected to Congress since Reconstruction, where he would go to be a productive and constructive member as Dean of the Florida Congressional Delegation, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Rules, and Vice-Chair and senior member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

One of the great joys of my life was serving with Alcee Hastings when he chaired the Helsinki Commission, the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe, and we traveled often to distant capitals to meet with our counter-parts in Europe and work on ways to strengthen economic and political ties and support their democratic aspirations.

Alcee Hastings was held in such high esteem by international legislators that he was elected the first African American president of the 323-member OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, an institution of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe charged with facilitating inter-parliamentary dialogue, an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area.

Madam Speaker, in these days of trial and challenge, I am reminded that our dear departed colleague Alcee Hastings always counseled us to remain steadfast, saying:

“Continuing to do nothing in the face of continued threats to our people and our way of life is hardly what the American people elected us to do.”

Alcee Hastings, the recipient of numerous honors and awards bestowed on him from organizations both at home and abroad, firmly believed that progress and change can be achieved through mutual respect and appreciation, and that individuals and communities can see beyond the limits of parochialism, enabling them to better understand each other.

And we all know how proud he was to be a Nupe, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., and a member of the National Bar Association.

Alcee Hastings’ commanding presence will forever be missed; we all mourn his loss and extend our deepest sympathies to his wife Patricia Williams; his children, Alcee Hastings II, Chelsea Hastings and Leigh Hastings; his stepdaughter, Maisha; and all the relatives and friends who loved him so dearly.

My deepest sympathies go out to them, and I pray they find consolation in the certain knowledge that the Judge is now resting in the Heavenly Chorus.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in honoring the life and legacy of our dearly departed friend and colleague Congressman Alcee Hastings, who passed away earlier this month.

Alcee and I were both elected to Congress in 1992. We were part of a historic class of new African American lawmakers from the South. Few would make such a tremendous and impactful mark on this institution than Alcee Hastings. He was one of Congress’ most steadfast advocates for civil and human rights, working families, and the most vulnerable in our society.

He bravely battled pancreatic cancer for the last year and a half. And despite this devastating diagnosis, Alcee remained a powerful and active voice for his constituents and the state of Florida.

I will miss seeing him on the House floor. I will miss his sharp-witted questioning in the House Rules Committee. I will miss his friendship.

Madam Speaker, our nation lost one of its most dedicated public servants. And in Alcee Hastings, we lost one of our most unique, friendly and hardest working colleagues. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Patricia, children, staff, constituents and many, many friends.

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor our friend and colleague, Alcee Hastings—a pillar of our Congressional Black Caucus.

Congressman Hastings was a compassionate leader who always spoke his mind and served his constituents with purpose.

For nearly thirty years, he used his position in Congress to speak truth to power and advocate for our country’s most vulnerable.

I admired both his courage and his unique ability to bring reason and deep thought to the many conversations we had together. He was a friend and mentor we all respected.

One thing I’ll never forget about Congressman Hastings is his wonderful sense of style, his fun, colorful socks, and—I have to say—his great taste in hats.

And, while he will be deeply missed here in Congress and within our Caucus, we will carry on in his memory by advocating for the causes he dedicated his life to—supporting working families, communities of color, children, immigrants and all those in need.

His legacy as a civil rights activist, judge, and powerful, passionate leader in Congress will live on, and be a model for us all.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Congressman Hastings spent more than 30 years in Congress and fought for racial equality during his storied and historic life. At the time of his passing, he was the Dean of the Florida Congressional delegation as the Representative from Florida’s 20th District. Before that, he was Florida’s first African-American federal judge and a strong civil rights advocate. Congressman Hastings died on April 6, 2021 after a long bout with pancreatic cancer.

Congressman Hastings was a life-long public servant. He served as a Circuit Court Judge in Broward County, Florida and then became a U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Florida. After his election to Congress in 1992, Congressman Hastings was a leading member of the Congressional Black Caucus and a senior Democratic whip. He served as a member of the House Rules Committee and a senior member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, where he was chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. He was an esteemed member of Congress throughout his time there.

Personally, I am devastated at the loss of my colleague and mentor, the Honorable Alcee Hastings. We would talk about his time spent in Newark as a child and his fond memories of growing up there. While voting, I would spend many days sitting next to him and listening to the wisdom he imparted on me. His blunt honesty and brilliance as a legislator were second to none. We even shared our love of colorful socks. The Lord has another one of my Fathers on the Floor of Congress with him no and I will miss him dearly.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS CELEBRATES THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE ALCEE L. HASTINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairwoman so very much for yielding tonight, and I thank her for establishing the uniqueness of this Special Order.

It is a special Special Order in tribute and in remembrance of Alcee Lamar Hastings, a tireless fighter for justice and equality, dean of the Florida Congressional Delegation, former United States District Court judge, first African American elected to Congress from Florida since Reconstruction, vice chair of the Committee on Rules, and former member of the Intelligence Committee, chairman of the Helsinki Commission, Member of Congress for 28 years, mentor, beloved colleague, and dear friend.

Madam Speaker, tonight, with humility, gratitude and a broken heart, I rise to anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order in remembrance of Congressman Alcee Hastings, a senior member of the Committee on Rules, a man who traveled the world. Most of all, he loved his family, he loved his country, he loved his State of Florida, loved his friends and his colleagues. We humble ourselves today to honor him.

Madam Speaker, I will reserve my words and tribute so that I can acknowledge one of his dear friends, the Honorable BENNIE THOMPSON. BENNIE THOMPSON, the chair of the Homeland Security Committee, a distinguished gentleman from Mississippi, a fighter for justice himself, but as well, the opportunity to be able to lead this country into safety.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), and if I might say, the gentleman with the white jacket as a member of the great Divine Nine, the Kappas.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman allowing me to talk about my friend, Alcee Hastings.

Madam Speaker, Alcee Hastings to a lot of us, is what we call a Renaissance man. When you knew Alcee, you knew somebody who knew exactly what he was talking about at all times. I carried Alcee Hastings to the Second District of Mississippi a number of times. You know, for a Florida boy, he could have been a Mississippi boy. He knew Bobby Rush, the blues singer. He knew how to go to catfish fries. He could just about adapt to any situation. But Alcee Hastings, more importantly, provided significant direction and guidance to a number of us who came to this body.

Madam Speaker, so today I rise to pay a special tribute to a close and dear friend that I shared many memories with: The Honorable Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Alcee was a champion civil rights legend, who served the people of Florida and this country for over 28 years as a Member of Congress. He dedicated his life to uplifting and empowering his constituents, colleagues, and our Nation. All of us have at least one Alcee Hastings story. Some of us have two or three or more Alcee Hastings stories, and they all are memorable.

All through my district, he was one of those individuals who people wanted to know what was Alcee Hastings like. And the only thing I can tell you is you have to meet him because you really can't describe him. The dictionary doesn't provide enough adjectives to give you who he is, but that is the kind of person Alcee Hastings was.

To Patricia and the kids: We all miss him. Absolutely, I know that all of you will miss him, too.

You know, I wonder what Alcee would be saying to us right now. I have a good idea. And he probably would say: "Look, I don't have time for all that noise. Get on with the business of helping our people."

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those words of reminding us how forthright and direct Alcee Hastings was.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), distinguished majority leader of the House, who gave an eloquent portrayal this morning at our celebration service of his relationship with Congressman Hastings and his understanding of Congressman Hastings' contribution and value to all of us.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her service. I thank Chairwoman BEATTY and members of the Congressional Black Caucus for organizing this Special Order tonight.

Madam Speaker, Alcee Hastings was a dear friend, a close friend, a wonderful supporter, adviser, counselor, a friend who will be greatly missed not only by me, but by so many with whom he served on both sides of the aisle.

Madam Speaker, he and I served together in this House for 28 years, almost three decades. Over the course of that time, I came to know him very well. I visited his district. I know his wife. I saw his passion for public service, his sharp intellect and ability as a legislator, and his kindness and decency as a human being.

□ 1900

Alcee was someone who held strong convictions, as all of us know, and he would impart those to you, and he fought hard for what he believed in. One of those convictions was that all people on this Earth deserve the same basic freedoms and access to democracy as Americans are privileged to enjoy.

Madam Speaker, he and I served together on the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and Alcee later served as its chairman, as I once did. He was the first African American to lead that body. And he was also honored, Madam Speaker, by legislators from 57 different nations when he was chosen as president of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. The only American, the only African American, obviously, to have had that honor, and the only person of African descent to have that honor.

Before the pandemic, Alcee traveled the world to promote democracy and human rights where they were newly enjoyed or not yet achieved. Wherever he went, he brought his deep commitment to constitutionalism, rule of law, equality, justice, and opportunity for all.

In doing so, he was an excellent envoy of this House of Representatives, the people's House, and the democratic mission it embodies to the nations of the world.

I want to take a moment to speak about a part of Alcee's life that shows his true character. It is no secret that Alcee faced difficult and painful rebuke earlier in his career. I am not going to

go into the specifics. Most people know the outlines.

But what stands out, Madam Speaker, for me and for others more than anything about what happened is that most people, after having been through such an experience, might have turned away from public service and harbored a debilitating anger and self-pity. Not our friend Alcee Hastings.

He was determined to continue giving back and serving his State and his country. So he ran for Congress and received the imprimatur of his neighbors and friends and constituents as a person of great worth whom they wanted to represent them. He served his constituents faithfully and with great ability for 28 years and, indeed, prior to that as well.

Those he served and those with whom he served are grateful that he made that choice. We are grateful that he persisted and persevered. And we are so fortunate, Madam Speaker, to have been blessed in our own lives by the wonderful life of service and contributions by Alcee Hastings.

I join others in offering my condolences to his wife, Patricia; to his family; to his devoted staff; and to the communities of southern Florida he represented so skillfully in this House.

Another Representative of southern Florida, my dear friend, DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, will be relating from her personal experience serving with him from southern Florida the extraordinary impact that he had on Florida and that region.

Madam Speaker, I spoke this morning at a memorial service led, again, by the Congressional Black Caucus for Alcee, and I related the story that a few days before his death, I had called Patricia and talked to her about how Alcee was doing, and she said: Not well.

Two days later, I called her back. It was probably 7 o'clock, about this time, in the evening. I said: How are things?

She said: Not good.

I said: Can I talk to him?

She said: I don't think he will understand you and I don't think he will be able to respond, but I will put the phone to his ear and you can say something to him.

She did that, and I said a few words very briefly, and then I closed with the sentiment that I have today and that I had for most of the time that I had known him. I said to him: I love you, Alcee.

I said this morning that I don't know whether he could hear or understand what I said at that point in time, but the good news for me is I knew that he knew that I loved him. He was a man of great worth, of great feelings, of great expectations, of great service, of great vision. I will miss Alcee, my friend.

May Alcee's memory be a blessing and inspiration to us as we continue to work here in this institution that he loved and served so well.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the majority leader for that

personal tribute of the bond of love between his friend, Alcee Hastings, and himself. I thank him for that story and tribute.

Madam Speaker, it is now an honor to yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), the co-chair of the Florida delegation, the cardinal of the Appropriations Committee, but I think this evening what she would most want to be known as, certainly a mentee of earlier years, but a very dear friend of Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor one of the foremost fighters for justice Florida has ever known, Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Throughout my public service, I have been proud to be associated with and stand alongside this fierce but gentle and courageous statesman. The shadow he casts in my own political life is long. It started at the University of Florida, when I ran for Student Senate side by side with his son, Alcee "Jody" Hastings, II. Twenty years later, I had the honor and pleasure of serving alongside his father, a man who was my dear friend and mentor.

Alcee revered this institution, and he loved his 20th District, from Belle Glade to Broward, and the Sawgrass to Sistrunk. Anyone who knew him knew he was Florida through and through, and he brought that to these Halls of power. He valued every part of the cultural and ethnic mosaic that enriches our great State, and he contributed to that throughout his life.

With his passing, his constituents lost a brilliant, fearless, and giant-hearted advocate for the community he so dearly loved. Our folks back home will miss their "on his mind, on his tongue," firebrand voice in these Halls of power.

The common refrain among anyone unfortunate enough to follow Alcee Hastings on a speaking program was: Well, this is the last place on a program you want to be.

He was a powerful, impactful orator. Here in Congress, as you all know too well, each of us lost a wise, patient, and humane statesman; and our delegation lost a seasoned, thoughtful, forceful leader.

Personally, I lost a treasured friend and trusted teacher. I can't count the times I leaned on him for his honest, perceptive counsel. Even when I didn't know I needed that advice, Alcee did, and he provided it generously. Afterwards, I was always grateful for his words of wisdom.

Alcee Hastings devoted his life to righting the world's wrong. He championed the most vulnerable, and he himself knew what it meant to overcome. He fought for human rights at home and abroad. Alcee was a champion of the U.S.-Israel relationship, and a steadfast friend to the Jewish community. He knew that Jews and African Americans were much more alike than we were different, and we often joked about the similarities.

Years ago, as police brutality stretched the fabric holding our community together, he and I joined together to ensure that law enforcement and our people would be able to pledge to protect one another and had a safe forum to communicate.

When it came to protecting the world's most unique tropical wetlands, Alcee always spearheaded our Everglades restoration efforts. In just the last month, he led the delegation in a letter to the President advocating for record-level funding. Even on battles dearer to me, he poured his own heart in it.

Alcee was one of my most fierce allies in battling breast cancer. These last 10 months, I spoke to him almost every day. It was an honor to cast his proxy vote. Good days or bad, he made sure he personally told me his vote preferences. Some days he might say in his Alcee kind of way: Why are we even voting on this?

And I left out some of the choicer words.

I cherished catching up with him every opportunity. Other days, he would just share his vote, and that call would end far too quickly. No matter how he felt, he always ended those calls by saying: "DEBBIE, thank you for this."

He was always gracious, always grateful. But it was I who was grateful for the gift of this man.

I was also so proud to swear him into this 117th Congress. He took what he must have known was his final oath with such pride, dignity, and authority.

In our last conversation, he told me he was at peace.

And why shouldn't he be?

He rose from a young man in the orange groves of the segregated South to become the first African-American Federal jurist in Florida and part of a historic 1992 class of the United States Congress. His political life took him as far off as the Parliamentary Assembly in Europe.

Congressman Hastings did it his way, and he leaves an immense personal and political legacy, both in these Halls and in our hearts. I know that I and this hallowed body are better off from having been in Alcee's midst. And that lasting impression he left behind, we will always carry with us. May his memory be for a blessing.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, it is certainly a privilege as well.

I thank Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ for the personal stories she has shared with us, and her friendship.

Madam Speaker, it is now my privilege to yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP), known as an expert on all things agricultural; a civil rights leader; as well in this place, in this House, a cardinal himself. But I believe what he will share with us tonight is a personal relationship with Congressman Alcee Hastings, a Kappa. And, yes, Congressman BISHOP is a Kappa.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Shakespeare wrote: All the world is a stage. And all the men and women, merely players. Each has his entrance and his exit. One man in his time may play many parts.

So it was with our beloved Alcee Hastings. He was a son, father, grandfather, husband, civil rights activist, attorney, judge, Member of Congress, international parliamentarian, colleague, my brother in Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, a faithful friend, and a fearless foe.

His performance in each of these roles was always par excellence. His was a life well-lived. He was authentic, brutally frank, but always a powerful advocate for marginalized humanity. He did so much for so many for so long. We will miss him, but the world is a better place because of the life of Alcee Lamar Hastings.

My wife, Vivian, and I send our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Patricia, his other family, his staff, and all who mourn his loss.

□ 1915

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman BISHOP for letting us know that the world is a better place because of Alcee Hastings.

Now it is my privilege again to introduce another of Congressman Hastings' dear, dear friends, the chairwoman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee as well as a proud member of the Divine Nine and a great Texan.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JOHNSON).

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I simply cannot eulogize the life and legacy of Congressman Hastings every single minute, but I will try my best.

Alcee and I came to Congress together in the class of 1992, and almost instantly I knew that I was in the presence of a giant.

Our class doubled the size of the CBC.

Alcee let everyone know that he came from humble beginnings. But I can say this: he carved for himself a path to success first in the field of law and ultimately in Congress.

As many have already noted, he was a man of sharp words, and perhaps sharp is an understatement.

Who could forget his infamous declaration that Texas is a crazy State?

We shared so many laughs and quiet whispers. A story that many may not know is that I convinced him to come to Texas and speak in our crazy State, to which he responded, "Y'all may want to hear me speak now, but after I'm done, you won't ever invite me back."

Well, it was colorful.

Alcee and I cofounded the Congressional Homeless Caucus and served as co-chairs together until his passing. Because of his tireless advocacy on behalf of the homeless, more constituents in his district and mine and across the

country now sleep with a roof above their heads.

His wife and I were close, and we shared many social occasions together.

So I say: So long my dear friend, rest in peace. And kudos for the 30th District of Texas based in Dallas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE, Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her recognition of Alcee's complimentary words about Texas, but he was still our friend. I thank Congresswoman JOHNSON for that tribute.

Again, this is a very special tribute, and I might say special, special tribute to our friend, the late Alcee Lamar Hastings.

To provide another tribute is one of our members of the Congressional Black Caucus, a member of the leadership of the cochair of the Democratic Policy and Steering Committee, a cardinal on the Appropriations Committee, and it is known that often people say: BARBARA LEE speaks for me.

The Honorable Congresswoman BARBARA LEE is from California, a State that loves Texas as well.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JACKSON LEE for yielding. I also was born and raised in El Paso, Texas, so I thank my sister.

Let me say tonight that I rise to celebrate the remarkable life of our dear friend, a dedicated public servant and a warrior for justice, the Honorable—he truly was the Honorable—Alcee Hastings.

I thank Congresswoman BEATTY for organizing this Special Order to honor our friend this evening.

I would like to offer my deepest condolences to Congressman Hastings' family; his wife, Patricia; his staff; all of his loved ones; his children; and his grandchildren. I know that this loss is deeply felt, and I am praying for the Hastings family and also for his constituents whom I had the honor to meet during my visits to his district.

Congressman Hastings was a trailblazer, and he lived a life of firsts as the first African-American Federal judge appointed to the State of Florida and the first African American to lead the Helsinki Commission.

I have had the privilege to travel with Alcee to Europe several times and to work with him to establish a transatlantic dialogue to improve social and political inclusion of people of African descent in Europe and the United States. This was a visionary idea that Congressman Hastings wanted to see happen in his lifetime, and he has made so much progress toward achieving that goal and his dream.

Alcee's political and diplomatic acumen was strengthened by his very warm and caring spirit. Many may not be aware, but while he was fighting the fight for human rights and democracy, he was also a devoted caregiver to his ailing mother. When I was struggling with the health challenges of my own

beloved mother, he was there to offer comfort and guidance. He made me realize how blessed I was to be able to take care of her during her last years on Earth. For that I will be deeply grateful.

When I first met Judge Hastings back in the 1980s, even before I was an elected official, I knew I had met someone special. He gave me his honest opinion and offered guidance without hesitation even before I was elected to office.

Despite his no-nonsense attitude and direct nature, myself, like all of us, had our own inside jokes. He called me Bob. I loved his socks—like so many of us—so much so that he gave me six pairs for my birthday. They are my Alcee socks which I will always cherish and wear.

Congressman Hastings always supported and guided me when I presented my bills to the Rules Committee, and he encouraged me by always saying: "I'm with you, Bob. I'm with you, Bob." Even if he disagreed with my progressive bills, he would say: "I'm with you, Bob. I'm with you, Bob. We are going to get this out."

He taught me some colorful words to use during very challenging times.

I feel beyond blessed to have known Alcee Hastings. His loss will be felt not only in Florida, in his district, throughout the country and here in Washington, D.C., but also around the world. He was truly a beloved and brilliant world leader.

I am reminded of 2 Timothy 4:7. I am reminded of Alcee tonight as I think about and read this Scripture: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

Yes, our brother, our friend, our colleague, our warrior for justice and for peace fought the good fight, and now may he rest in peace and may he rest in power.

Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JACKSON LEE for yielding and for this Special Order tonight.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. We will be reminded of those colorful socks. That was his trademark, and that is very special. This is a special tribute to Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Our next tribute presenter is GWEN MOORE from the great State of Wisconsin. GWEN MOORE has been a fighter for the vulnerable and serves on the distinguished and powerful Ways and Means Committee. I thank my colleague and friend on the Helsinki Commission.

Madam Speaker, may I ask how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Texas has 25 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding, and I want to thank the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus for pulling this all together.

I am GWEN MOORE from the great State of Wisconsin, and I was first elected in 2005. I was so excited about becoming a Member of Congress and especially excited about becoming a member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Every year the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation hosts a great gala, and I was eager in September of 2005 to march across the stage with the likes of John Lewis, BARBARA LEE, and MAXINE WATERS with my brand new classmates, CLEAVER, G.K. BUTTERFIELD, AL GREEN, and Senator Obama. I was ready for the pageantry. All my relatives were coming to see me curtsy in my African outfit made with red and gold African wedding cloth. But then I learned that all but one member of the Congressional Black Caucus would suit up. Then when I discovered that, I commissioned myself to implore him not to ruin the evening with his recalcitrance.

Mr. Alcee Lamar Hastings' prompt and declarative declination was peppered with his famous street vernacular. Even though he was disinterested in the pomp and ceremony of the CBCF gala, he attended CBC meetings regularly. His excellent judgment, powers of discernment, and strategic thinking silenced the room every time and had Members on the edge of their seats as he weighed in on tactics and strategy.

I wondered: Where in the world did this man get his confidence that he exhibited on a daily basis?

Where did he get the courage?

His swagger was more than just his socks and his tie. There was something that I wanted to know about him.

Well, fortunately for me, Mr. Hastings drew me in as a mentee. He was familiar with my legislative agenda around equity and justice for women and people of color. So he invited me to accompany him in 2006 to the annual session of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, held in Brussels that year, wherein he was serving his third term as parliamentary assembly president of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

He was first elected in 2004. You have heard from other speakers, Madam Speaker, that this is an international organization of 57 member countries, and he is the only person of African descent to ever hold this position and he is the only American to ever hold this position. He would have to whip and get votes and everything, and Alcee did that.

When I saw him, I was stunned to witness on this international stage the mastery of his indefatigable leadership. He commandeered the agenda on human rights to take a deeper dive into minority rights, and not just Black versus White, but Jews and other ethnic minorities, gypsies, women, and migrants.

In fact, under his leadership the OSCE broadened its mandate to address human rights to include intolerance, migration, and organized crime.

The global consensus around the plight of Blacks at the hands of police was a topic of this international body. Indeed, I learned that racial oppression was global, and Alcee shepherded this international body through dozens and dozens of resolutions around global racial equity.

I was hooked. I went with Alcee every time. What I found is that language was not a barrier, culture was not a barrier, and even adversarial relationships with people like the Russians or some of the other known dictators who attended the meetings did not prevent him from engaging them in side meetings to advance the international dialogue.

Because of my association with Mr. Hastings, I have met around 300 parliamentarians of African descent in Europe, Spain, Italy, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Canada just to name a few.

The last trip I took with Mr. Hastings—we all knew it was his last trip—we went to London, and we gathered in a circle with parliamentarians from Britain. We talked about the historic relationship of the United States and Britain, and indeed that same connection that BARBARA LEE referred to, he made us promise to continue the Atlantic engagement with our brethren. We have to keep that promise to him because he gave birth to those relationships over 30 years.

□ 1930

Do you know what? I figured out where he got his swagger from. He was not concerned with little things and petty things, what people thought, and pomp and circumstance.

He was a universal human rights leader. When I thought about him, I don't know why I thought of this song that I first heard Sarah Vaughan singing. But some of the lyrics in "Universal Prisoner" were:

Most people go around thinking they're free
Believing it's an easy way to be
They run in guilt and fear
From all the things they truly hold dear
The question is asked, do you give the love
that is inside
Or do you run to the phony world where
most people hide?

Mr. Hastings embodied the universal precepts of equality, equity, and justice. He was a true humanitarian.

Enjoy your flight into the universe, Mr. Hastings.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman from Wisconsin for her kind words. Those were memorable times, and the historic nature of his leadership was not only national; it was international.

I am privileged again in this very special tribute to be able to yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia. States are quite close to each other, and of course, her passion matches the deep passion of Congressman Alcee Hastings. That is the obvious reason for her kinship to Congressman Hastings, but also the ability to have suffered in loss but stand up to fight for justice,

and that is our friend and colleague, LUCY MCBATH, from Georgia.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH).

Mrs. MCBATH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise in celebration of the remarkable life of our dear friend and colleague, Congressman Alcee Hastings, known affectionately as The Judge. People called him that long before I got here. He was the first African-American Federal judge in the State of Florida, appointed by President Jimmy Carter, where he served for 10 years before being elected to Congress in 1992.

I know that a lot of my colleagues and persons in this great Chamber tonight might wonder what kind of a relationship I would have had with Alcee Hastings. I would have only been here for 2 years. But what I do know is that I recognize Alcee truly from his spirit.

He and I both had cancer. I was a cancer survivor, and oftentimes, here on the floor, every single day, I would come to his side and sit next to him, and I would say: "How are you doing today?"

He would say: "Not so good today," or he would say: "Today is a great day."

But I remember his kindness, and I remember his words of wisdom to me, always telling me: "You are doing the right thing. You are standing up. Stay strong. Look forward."

I am really grateful for even that 1 year that I had to stand and to serve with a giant such as Alcee Hastings.

Alcee and I were both very proud to serve in the House together as fellow members of the Congressional Black Caucus. We talked about it, and oftentimes, I said to him: "I still can't believe I am here. I cannot believe I am here, but I am so grateful to be here to serve with you."

As I said, we were also bonded over our shared kinship as cancer patients because I understood what he was going through. I understood the treatment and the pain and the suffering. But what I admired about him the most is his tenacity, his strength, and his fortitude to come here every single day in spite of it and to push his way through for the sake of this Chamber, for the sake of this body, for the sake of the people who he loved so dearly in his community.

He offered me encouragement, telling me to stay the course and to continue to work on behalf of the American people. I remember he said to me: "I may not be here when you pass that gun bill, but you must pass it."

I will always be grateful to him for his friendship and for the wisdom and leadership that he shared with this body and with me.

I always find that I am so grateful to be in this body, to be among some of the most wise, intelligent, compassionate, and driven people I have ever met in my life, particularly those of

the Congressional Black Caucus like Alcee Hastings, a giant among us.

Madam Speaker, I am so grateful today to be able to stand here and pay reverence to him, the giant among us.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for that sense of kinship, with her tribute and a reference to his kindness and his wisdom.

I hope everyone knows that we are telling a very special story this evening. To join us in that is a Floridian. I always like to pronounce it in a way that indicates the bonding of Floridians, but, certainly, Floridians of a certain kind, like Alcee Hastings with the distinguished former chief of police, VAL DEMINGS, a senior member of the Intelligence Committee, a member of the Judiciary Committee and Homeland Security Committee, and a Floridian with deep roots and a friend of Congressman Hastings.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Congressman Alcee Hastings.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said: "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of convenience and comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Madam Speaker, what we all know in this Chamber is that Congressman Alcee Hastings was never afraid to stand during times of challenge and controversy. You see, Congressman Hastings was born in central Florida in Altamonte Springs. He was always so proud to share his stories with me about growing up in a city not far from the district I now represent.

Alcee Hastings was a giant in our State, the dean of the delegation. When I think about what it meant for Alcee, being the dean was a lot more than being the longest serving Member.

Alcee Hastings was a giant of a man in Florida, but he was a giant of a man around the Nation and a giant of a man in our world.

As you have heard, he was the first Black person, period, man or woman, appointed as a Federal judge in Florida. We all know the joys and the pain of being a first and paving the way for others to follow, paving the way for other boys and girls and men and women, regardless of the color of their skin, paving the way for them as a first.

I remembered that appointment. I was working at the Orlando Police Department, and I was so proud to know of this giant of a man who was appointed as the first Black man to serve as a Federal judge. We were all so proud of him.

One of the things I most appreciated about Congressman Hastings, my colleague from Florida—and hear me clearly, there were many things that I loved and appreciated about him. But

one of the things was that he was big enough to share his space with you regardless of whether you were a freshman or you had been here for a considerable amount of time. Congressman Hastings never hesitated to share his space with you. He never hesitated to give advice. He never hesitated to mentor, and he genuinely wanted you to do well.

Congressman Hastings was a true friend, and it didn't matter if he agreed with everything you said. He didn't have to. If you were his friend, he understood that friends didn't always agree on everything because, see, Alcee was his own man. We heard the song earlier today, and he did it his way.

He was his own man with his own beliefs, his own principles. He allowed me to be my own woman with my own beliefs. He allowed all of us, in our respective places. That is the kind of man, the giant of a man, that he was.

Congressman Hastings didn't waste a lot of time fighting over trivial matters. He was on a mission. He was fighting for justice. I really can't remember a time he was not fighting for justice. He didn't mind fighting for women's rights even after he had made it himself. He didn't mind fighting for equal rights. He didn't mind fighting for human rights. He didn't mind fighting for the LGBTQ community. He didn't mind standing up and fighting for people who were different from him.

Congressman Hastings dedicated his life to fighting for a better Florida and, therefore, fighting for a better Nation.

I say to my colleagues that if you were in a fight, you wanted Congressman Hastings on your side. Madam Speaker, as we know, someone will take his space, but I don't believe that anyone can ever take his place.

I would like to close with just a short scripture from Psalm 56 that says: "In God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? I am under vows to You, O God; I will present my thank offerings to You. For You have delivered me from . . . stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life."

Congressman Hastings was not afraid, and we are forever grateful for his life well lived.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. We are truly grateful for his life.

Madam Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 4 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I will bring this Special Order to a close, and I want to remind our colleagues of this very special Special Order led by Chairwoman JOYCE BEATTY. Then, we heard from DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, SANFORD BISHOP, BENNIE THOMPSON, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, our Majority Leader HOYER, BARBARA LEE, and GWEN MOORE. We heard from LUCY MCBATH and VAL DEMINGS, and we heard from others in their voices throughout the day and in their statements.

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So let me try to summarize this life. This giant of a man was a Federal judge and a tireless fighter for justice and equality. He was the dean of the Florida delegation. He led an international organization never before led by an American, never before led by an African American.

But let me tell you what I believe really meant something to Alcee's life. First, his beautiful wife, Patricia, and all of his family members who we pay tribute to for sharing him with us. But he was a Florida A&M man. He was a Fisk man. All over the country, I would hear Fiskites saying: "Alcee Hastings went to Fisk." And Alcee Hastings would let you know he went Fisk University. He honored that university, and they honored him.

As a member of the National Bar Association myself, that is where I got to know Alcee Hastings. Oh, as a little, small pip of a lawyer myself, I looked up to Alcee Hastings and the words that he would say. In his own organization, he would be a guest speaker, a civil rights lawyer, as well as a civil rights fighter.

Yes, Alcee Hastings was born to a butler and a maid who left the South so that they could get money for him to go to school. And his dad said to him: "Be your own boss."

As I said, he ultimately went on to law school. But he also sat at the sit-in counters: Walgreens, where the individuals put ketchup and smashed eggs on him. Oh, Alcee could have turned around with vengeance, but he understood the message of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that violence begets nothing, and he peacefully sat. But that didn't mean that he was going to allow them to get the best of Alcee Hastings.

He went on to be a civil rights lawyer. He went on to file lawsuits and desegregate the schools and the Cat's Meow restaurant that he had gone to.

Wasn't it poetic justice when he was named a circuit court judge and the investiture ceremony was at the high school that he had helped desegregate?

Yes, he was a Federal judge. Yes, of course, he did great things. He stopped the deportation of 76 Haitians, when they thought they were gone.

Then, in 1992, he made history again, becoming one of the first African Americans coming up to this great body from Florida since Reconstruction, joining Corrine Brown and Carrie Meek.

The Helsinki Commission was a special love for him. Can you imagine an international organization led for the first time—they had to vote for him. And that was a place where they raised up the issue of slavery. They raised up reparations. They raised up human rights. They raised up stopping hatred around the world. Alcee set that tone.

Then, of course, he continued to counsel, even in these times. I would come to him. LUCY MCBATH reminded me, as a cancer survivor, you would always check on him. But I tell you, he

would walk in with those socks and those suits, and he would be having a pep in his step.

But let me leave you with this: Continuing to do nothing in the face of continued threats to our people and our way of life is hardly what America elected us to do.

So as I close, let me simply say: Deepest sympathy. But let me remind his family that those who die in the Lord—and I paraphrase—they will, in fact, rest from their labor, but their deeds will follow them. Alcee Hastings' deeds will follow him. A tribute to America, a Floridian, a son, and a great man, both of this Nation and as a freedom fighter.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam 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 topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE BIDEN BORDER CRISIS AND SO-CALLED INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) for 60 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam 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 this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, during my Special Order tonight, my colleagues and I will address the inaction by the Biden administration and House Democrats to address this major crisis that we see on our southern border, this humanitarian crisis. And, yes, that is the right word. It is a crisis by any objective measure.

We are also going to address tonight the President's so-called infrastructure plan. That is a lot for us to talk about. So we will squeeze it into this hour.

When President Biden was inaugurated, the American people will remember, Madam Speaker, that he called for unity. He promised to work across the aisle, to work with Republicans in Congress. But so far those words have been completely empty promises.

Everyone can acknowledge and everyone can see on television that there is a real crisis at the southern border,