

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE HONORABLE DAVID N. CICILLINE'S FAREWELL REMARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the House for the last time as a Member of this esteemed body. It has been the honor of my life to represent the people of the First Congressional District of Rhode Island in Congress.

At the end of this month, I will be stepping down from this position to become the president and CEO of the Rhode Island Foundation, one of the Nation's oldest and largest community foundations. I am excited to begin this extraordinary opportunity to build upon the work that I have been leading in Congress and to continue to make a meaningful impact on the lives of Rhode Islanders.

I would not be standing here today if not for the people of Rhode Island who placed their faith and trust in me to represent them in Congress. Every day over the past 12 years, I have put my heart and soul into the work we do here to improve the lives of every Rhode Islander and to protect our great democracy.

I thank my current and former staff, especially my longtime chief of staff Peter Karafotas and my district director Christopher Bizzacco. I cannot thank them and the rest of our staff enough for all of their hard work and dedication over the years.

I am particularly grateful for two people who have worked for me for more than two decades: Rita Murphy and Roger Suchite.

I have been blessed with the most committed, passionate, and talented staff on the Hill who have established a reputation for our office of excellence and effectiveness. They allowed me to take the lead on many more things than anyone thought possible.

Every day, they showed up and gave their all to help the people of Rhode Island, even when their own personal safety was at risk. I am so proud of everything we have accomplished together, and I know that everyone on my staff will go on to do bigger and better things.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an incredible honor to work with my friends and colleagues day in and day out to address the challenges facing our country.

It has been a special honor to serve alongside my colleagues in the Rhode Island delegation, Senators JACK REED and SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, and Congressmen JIM LANGEVIN and SETH MAGAZINER. While our delegation may be small, we never let that stop us from delivering big for our State. Their col-

laboration and friendship have meant the world to me.

One of the hardest parts of leaving this job is leaving behind so many dear friends: HAKEEM, JOE, TERRI, JAMIE, PRAMILA, ROBIN, FREDERICA, BILL, MARK, LUCY, VERONICA, MAXINE, MELANIE, ERIC, DEBORAH, GRACE—and the list goes on and on.

We have been through so much together over the years, and I will always cherish our friendship. I know that we will continue to stay close even after I leave Washington.

Let me say a special word about two colleagues, Speaker Emerita NANCY PELOSI and Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO.

I first came to know Speaker PELOSI while serving as mayor of Providence. I will forever remain in awe of her genius and extraordinary leadership and all the kindness she has shown me over the years. She has been a powerful ally in all of my biggest priorities during my time in Congress.

I thank Speaker PELOSI for the honor of serving as an impeachment manager to defend our democracy.

ROSA DELAURO has been my most important mentor, my friend, and my inspiration. She set a standard for all of us of hard work and deep commitment on every important issue facing our country. At every single moment I have turned to her for advice or support or help of any kind, she has been there. She has been like a sister to me, and our friendship will endure forever.

In fact, the only time she has ever been wrong is her claim that New Haven pizza is better than pizza in Providence.

I was first elected to Congress in 2010 as one of only nine new Democrats in the House. We modestly called ourselves the Noble 9. We were one of the smallest freshman classes ever.

The country and Rhode Island were just starting to recover from the Great Recession, and Democrats had lost the majority by 60 seats. Let's just say, it wasn't the easiest time to be a freshman Democratic Member of Congress.

Like most Americans, I was convinced that this place was completely broken, but I was determined to try to change that.

I came to Washington with my eyes wide open. I knew there were Members of Congress who were only interested in being combative and making headlines, but then I realized there were some Members who were interested in working together to get things done for the country.

Don't get me wrong, at times it could be incredibly frustrating and even disheartening to work with people who may agree with you on one issue but completely disagree with you on everything else, including how you live your own life.

I think it is important for the American people to know that there are a lot of people in Congress who put their country over party and work hard every day to improve the lives of their constituents and all Americans.

My first few years in Washington, I immersed myself in my committee assignments, the Small Business, Budget and Foreign Affairs Committees. I focused on trying to bring back American manufacturing jobs and help Rhode Island get back on its feet after the recession.

In 2014, I left the Budget Committee and moved over to the House Committee on the Judiciary to try to tackle some of the most pressing issues facing our country, including immigration, gun safety, LGBTQ+ equality, and campaign finance and criminal justice reform.

During the committee organizing meeting in 2016, Chairman NADLER convinced me to take the ranking member spot on the Administrative State, Regulatory Reform, and Antitrust Subcommittee, which at the time, to be honest, wasn't exactly the first choice for most committee members.

Chairman NADLER gave me great advice. He told me that sometimes you should take an assignment to stretch your mind and learn something new. I took that to heart.

From that moment forward, I learned all I could about antitrust, and I quickly realized just how important antitrust policies were in promoting competition and innovation to protect workers, small business, and our economy by providing consumers with more choices.

As the ranking member, I developed a great working relationship with Chairman Sensenbrenner. Over dinner, we would discuss our work on the subcommittee, and more importantly, we got to know each other better outside the Capitol and without the partisan noise.

It showed me that Washington wasn't completely broken and that you could get things done by developing productive working relationships and even friendships with colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

In 2016, I was elected by my colleagues to serve in House Democratic leadership as co-chair of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee, which was responsible for developing the long-term messaging for House Democrats.

Working alongside now-Minority Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES and former Member Cheri Bustos, we developed the For the People agenda that helped bring Democrats back into the majority in 2018.

It was during that time that I developed a real friendship and deep respect for the remarkable talent of HAKEEM JEFFRIES, who I know will be the next Speaker of the House.

Even though I was responsible for the Democratic messaging in the House, I stayed committed to finding Republican colleagues who I could work with to get things done for the American people.

That is what I did, on some of the biggest issues facing our country, from protecting our democracy to gun safety

to LGBTQ+ equality and antitrust reform.

I developed strong working relationships and friendships with some of my Republican colleagues, including KEN BUCK and BRIAN FITZPATRICK, as we found common ground on important issues.

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Even when we didn't see eye to eye on other policies and priorities, I respected their commitment and dedication to public service.

As chair of the Antitrust Subcommittee, I expanded on the bipartisan work of Jim Sensenbrenner and I and started by launching a 16-month bipartisan investigation into the digital marketplace.

In partnership with Ranking Member BUCK, we examined Big Tech's anti-competitive practices, documenting them in a 450-page report that informed our bipartisan, six-bill package to rein in Big Tech and finally modernize our antitrust laws.

For decades, our government failed to enforce antitrust laws on the burgeoning tech industry for fear of stifling innovation, which led directly to the problems we see in the industry today.

I am proud that some of our measures became law last Congress, reviving antitrust law and drawing important attention to these issues. I am especially thankful for the friendship and dedication KEN BUCK brought to this effort at great political cost to him.

None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary work of my chief counsel, Slade Bond.

While Democrats held the majority, I also tried to end discrimination against LGBTQ+ Americans through the Equality Act. This bipartisan bill, which would end discrimination against LGBTQ+ Americans in employment, housing, credit, education, and public accommodations, is the most extensive civil rights legislation to pass the House since the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

It passed out of the House twice, in large part because of the extraordinary leadership of Speaker PELOSI, with bipartisan support. It is only a matter of time before it becomes law, especially with my dear friend MARK TAKANO now leading the effort. I will be forever grateful also for the early and really critical support of the late John Lewis in this effort.

On the Foreign Affairs Committee, I have had the privilege of working with the great Chairman GREGORY MEEKS, and I have worked with Republicans, including MIKE MCCAUL, JOE WILSON, and ANN WAGNER to advance American national security interests abroad and promote diplomacy throughout the world.

With some of these colleagues, I established the House Diplomacy Caucus in the wake of attacks on U.S. diplomats in Ukraine following the first impeachment.

I also led numerous efforts to promote international human rights. Last Congress, we passed the Global Respect Act in the House to prevent individuals who commit gross human rights violations against LGBTQ+ people from entering the United States.

In January, President Biden signed the Justice for Victims of War Crimes Act into law, legislation I authored with Republican Congresswoman VICTORIA SPARTZ and with a bipartisan group of Senators.

On the Judiciary Committee, I was able to continue the work I started on gun violence prevention as mayor of Providence and as a founding member of Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

Following the Pulse nightclub shooting in the summer of 2016, I worked with the late John Lewis, now-Minority Whip KATHERINE CLARK, Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY, and Congressman JOHN LARSON to organize the first-ever sit-in on the House floor to demand that the Republican majority take action to address gun violence in this country.

Over the past 12 years, I have sponsored numerous gun safety bills to ban assault weapons, outlaw ghost guns, close the fire sale loophole, ban bump stocks, prevent people convicted of violent hate crimes from owning a gun, improving the background check system, and to create an active shooter alert system.

Once again, I was able to find colleagues on the other side of the aisle to work with me on some of these bills, including the assault weapons ban and the active shooter alert. Last summer, we passed legislation to reinstate the assault weapons ban with bipartisan votes in the House for the first time in 30 years.

Even during the most difficult times, like January 6, two impeachments, and a global pandemic, I have never lost faith in the resiliency and strength of our democracy.

It is not always pretty or easy, but we have always come out stronger on the other side because of the powerful heroes of democracy who serve in this place and fight to preserve it every day. I still believe in our democracy and the ability of Congress to tackle big challenges and improve the lives of all Americans.

We did that with the American Rescue Plan, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Respect for Marriage Act, and the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

I leave this body knowing that I left it all on the field and did everything I could to keep Americans safe from gun violence, to end legal discrimination against LGBTQ+ Americans, and to shine a bright light on the antitrust issues posed by Big Tech.

Every day, I woke up and came to work with the goal of improving the lives of Rhode Islanders and all Americans. That is what has motivated me every day for the last 28 years in public office, and I have done my very best to deliver on that promise.

While I may be leaving Congress, I will never stop fighting for what I believe in, and I will always be proud of the work we have done together.

I have taken this final opportunity to speak on the floor of this historic institution to highlight some of what we have been able to achieve over the past 12 years when we let understanding, integrity, and the willingness to find common ground take the lead in our work.

I come from a State whose motto is "hope." As I leave Congress, I want to leave with this parting word, hope. Hope for our democracy and for this institution. For centuries, the United States has been the hope of the world. We are the Nation where freedom, equality, opportunity for all, and unity have made us a beacon of hope in some of the darkest times in human history.

For generations, men and women have fought to preserve our way of life, and many have given their blood, sweat, and even their lives for it. Yet today there are forces working to undermine our democratic institutions and our shared values.

This institution has the sacred responsibility to honor the sacrifices made by so many in the work we do every day, in the way we treat one another as colleagues, and in our commitment to let truth, not fear; reason, not extremism; and respect for all, not division; lead our every effort.

Our unity as a Nation and the ability of our democracy to withstand the test of time depends on the resolve of this institution, those who serve in its Halls, and the people whose votes are their voice in this government to keep that hope alive.

Mr. Speaker, I once again extend my deepest gratitude to the people of Rhode Island for giving me the greatest honor of my life, the opportunity to represent you for the past 12 years here in the Congress of the United States.

May God bless you and protect you. May the spirit of hope forever endure in this institution and the people who serve in it.

May God bless the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the final time to speak in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. MAGAZINER).

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE DAVID N. CICILLINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. MAGAZINER) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of Members who have come to express their gratitude to Congressman CICILLINE.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Speaker Emerita.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and thank