

In fact, in Fortune's "50 Best Places to Live for Families 2024" in the United States, the city of Suwanee ranked 27th in the entire Nation. That is incredible. I congratulate Mayor Jimmy Burnette and the city of Suwanee on this exciting milestone.

I am honored to represent the great folks of Suwanee in Congress, and I look forward to seeing the city thrive for many years to come.

UNDO THE DISINCENTIVES TOWARD FORMING FAMILIES

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I had an interesting conversation today with someone who deals with people in the lower economic classes.

It was an interesting conversation because it was along the same theme that I often speak about behind this podium. That is the frustration she finds in the poor communities where the clergy again and again encourage young people to get married. The young people inform the clergy that they can't do it because the United States Government has established a bunch of programs that make it financially advantageous to not get married.

Indeed, it is not unusual to have \$20,000 or \$25,000 or \$30,000-a-year penalties for couples who get married, as opposed to situations in which a man is not in the household.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues in this Chamber to, over the next few months, undo the horrid disincentives toward forming families that were put in by Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society.

CELEBRATING THE SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE MICHAEL C. BURGESS

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to celebrate the remarkable life and legacy of one of our good friends, a great Texan, a great mentor, a great Member of Congress, our friend and our colleague, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

Sadly, Dr. BURGESS is stepping away from these hallowed Halls to hang up his boots back home. I am not quite

sure we are going to let him do that. We are going to give him grief over that, but he is leaving these hallowed Halls of Congress to hang up those great boots back home in the great State of Texas—check this out—after 22 dedicated years of service, not just to this institution, but to the people of America and the people of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS has exemplified the very best of what it is not only to be a Texan, but to be a physician, a husband, a father, and a Congressman. He is the real deal, Mr. Speaker, with unshakeable resolve and a servant's heart.

I have watched him up close and personal these last 12 years. With absolute unshakeable resolve and a servant's heart, MICHAEL BURGESS has tackled some of the most challenging issues facing our Nation. He has always had the needs of Texans and Americans at the forefront, both of those, Texans and Americans.

As one of the very few physicians in Congress, Dr. BURGESS' expertise has been an absolute guiding light on healthcare policy, and his unwavering advocacy for the unborn has been a testament to his absolutely deep moral convictions.

Dr. BURGESS, let me say: Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I could tell you things about him from being with him in a Texas lunch and knowing him personally and watching him up close and personal as he sits on what we call "The Texas Row" back here. I don't have enough time to tell you about the stories and the discussions we have had and what it revealed about the man, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

I could be here for a long time. I don't know how much time you have, Mr. Speaker, but I can be here for a long time.

In Texas, we believe in rolling up our sleeves, getting the job done, and never backing down from a fight. Let me tell you all: That epitomizes one Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, who has done that right here in what I call these hallowed Halls of Congress.

His dedication to conservative principles and his commitment to values that make not only Texas strong, but this country strong, has left an indelible mark on this institution.

MICHAEL, we are sad that you are leaving. I am still not sure we are going to let that happen, but bless you, brother.

As you return to the Lone Star State, we know that you will continue to embody the spirit of Texas, where faith and family and freedom remain at the center of everything we do.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS epitomizes that. He really epitomizes that.

So, Dr. BURGESS, as you step into the well-deserved next chapter, we must also recognize the support of your beautiful wife, Laura, who has been your steadfast partner throughout these 22 years of service.

You know what they say, behind every great leader is a strong family, but it is one that he built. It is one that he built, and his bride, Laura, has shared in those sacrifices that come with public service, standing by him with grace and strength.

Before I begin to conclude, I do want to yield to my friend also from Texas, Dr. BRIAN BABIN, for his comments as we absolutely salute Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS and applaud him and just absolutely love the work that he has done.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Thank you, my friend, RANDY. I appreciate you having this Special Order for such a very, very close friend.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to recognize really a close friend, a fellow Texan, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, for his distinguished career of 22 years, serving here in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I thank you, MIKE, for being a wonderful mentor over the years, and for showing me and so many others of our colleagues just how to serve the American people with integrity and with honor and the shining example that you have been to all of us here.

No matter the topic, your position on the Energy and Commerce Committee, as the chairman of the Rules Committee, or at one of our Doctors Caucus meetings over the years, you have always been an invaluable resource to me and countless others. We will miss your knowledge, your expertise, your brilliant intellect, your wise counsel, and how well you represented our great Lone Star State.

Your legacy will carry on for many, many generations to come, and I thank you for being a dedicated public servant, a proud Texan, and a great American, without any question.

I also want to extend our deepest sympathies and our prayers at the recent tragic and untimely loss of your daughter, Christine.

We want to wish you, Laura, and your entire family all the best. Godspeed, my friend. May God bless you all. We will see you soon, and I want to keep in contact with you for the rest of our days.

God bless you. Thank you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank Chairman BABIN for his great remarks, his heartfelt words, because he shares the sentiment of all of us, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) for his remarks.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman WEBER for the opportunity to participate in this important discussion this evening.

I can't think of a person who I have interacted with for the last 22 years that I have enjoyed any more than Dr. BURGESS.

Sitting in that general area back there, occasionally he would veer away from "The Texas Row" and interact with the Okies, where we analyzed the

leadership, analyzed the committees, and analyzed the work product.

His insights were just as amazing as his personality. Let's be honest. If you have toiled through the Budget Committee, as Dr. BURGESS did, as a good Member; if you worked diligently for decades almost on the Energy and Commerce Committee; and then had enough patience and grit and willpower to be a Rules Committee member for a number of years and chairman of the Rules Committee, that says something about your commitment to this body, this country, this Constitution, and, yes, Doc—I will admit it as an Okie—your commitment to the Republic of Texas.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman, an admirer of the Republic of Texas.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

I am here tonight, as we all are, to celebrate the career, the legacy, and the friendship of Chairman Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. We are going to miss you.

It has been an honor to serve alongside you in two committees, the Rules Committee and the Budget Committee, and an honor to work with you on healthcare policies and any number of things.

I have learned from you. I have probably made your life a little more interesting than you would prefer on the Rules Committee, but it has been an honor to serve alongside you. I truly mean that.

There are a lot of words that are thrown around about people who have an impact on us when we are here, but I will always remember your grace in front of a number of circumstances, but particularly in the last couple of weeks.

I will just say, as you said this last week: "And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," Philippians 4:7.

Your faith stands as a testament to all of us.

Godspeed.

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Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. BRETT GUTHRIE.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to honor one of my dear friends. When I first got on the Energy and Commerce Committee, the battle that was going on in that committee was over healthcare policy, and Dr. BURGESS knew it frontward and backward.

As a matter of fact, I always liked looking at his copy of the Affordable Care Act. I think it was tabbed, and he even diagrammed sentences, I believe, in that to make sure he understood it and could explain it and tried to figure

out how to fix it. He was always going that direction.

I was on the committee when he was chair of the subcommittee, and I became his vice chair. That is when he became more than a friend; he became a mentor. He was somebody that I just admired the way that he studied, he learned. He was an expert on whatever subcommittee you were on, particularly healthcare.

He mentored me. He set a standard that I tried to live by when I had the chance to become the subcommittee chair, now chairing the Energy and Commerce Committee. It is a privilege.

Congress truly is a snapshot of America. We come from all walks of life. We bring different perspectives. Chairman BURGESS being an OB/GYN, I will never forget the series of hearings we had on maternal health. If you controlled the studies for all the things you think was causing a problem in maternal health, we still were having issues with maternal health and the life expectancy of the mother.

We had detailed hearings because he brought his experiences, his care, and said this is a problem that should not exist in this country. One of the hearings I remember most is when we had Parkland Hospital from Dallas and other hospitals from New York talk about how we take care of the mothers of our children after they give birth and policies came out of that.

I think it is a legacy you will have about tying your career and your political drive, but, most important of all, you love Texas and you love this country, and that is infectious.

I appreciate your chairmanship in the Rules Committee and your mentorship of me.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) for his comments.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to just honor Chairman BURGESS. I thank you, Chairman BURGESS, for being just a good, solid, steady voice on a lot of complex issues. I thank your family. I will tell you, unless you have been here, nobody knows the toll it takes on your family. I was glad to see them here the other day when they unveiled your portrait that will hang in this Capitol for years to come.

I thank the people of Texas for sending you here. This place, this country, it is better because you have spent so much time up here in these hallways of Congress. You are just one of those people who always did right and was always working to find a way to get that good piece of legislation across the finish line, and we need more people like you up here. I am sorry to see you go, but just a good, solid American with good common sense standing up for the Constitution and our American way of life. Godspeed. I look forward to continuing our relationship for many years to come.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, thank you so much my colleague from Texas and all the people who have come here to praise Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. I join them in recognizing him on his pending retirement.

For over two decades, he has more than ably represented the people of the 26th District of Texas, as well as all Americans.

Alongside his outstanding service on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Budget Committee, MICHAEL BURGESS was selected this year as the chairman of the Rules Committee where he and I served together in years past.

Having engaged with him many times this year in the hot seat opposite the dais where he sat, I can attest that he has done a fine job of leading the Rules Committee.

Dr. BURGESS is a person of strong intellect and wisdom, along with collegiality and good humor.

Dr. BURGESS, you will be sorely missed for all your wonderful traits. I also want you to know that you and your family are in my prayers. I know you are in the prayers of our entire Conference, as well as many others.

Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the other kind comments and positive comments and true comments that have been made about you tonight. My hope is that God will continue to bless you and keep you and your family in the palm of His hands. We really will miss you, MIKE. Thank you for your great service.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I now recognize our friend from California, Ms. BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me just say that I associate myself with the remarks that have been made tonight about my friend, the Honorable Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

A couple of things that I thought, since I am retiring also and we are here on the floor tonight, to take a moment to tell Dr. BURGESS how much I appreciate his leadership and his friendship.

It is not often you hear about stories of Republicans and Democrats working together, so I decided to tell a few stories about Dr. BURGESS.

First of all, we believe that the taxpayer dollars need to be protected and to be used for what we intend taxpayer dollars to be used for. We talked and realized that the only agency that had never been audited was the Pentagon.

Dr. BURGESS and I worked for years to finally get the requirement into a bill that the Pentagon be audited because we know that there are billions of dollars in waste, fraud, and abuse, but we did not know how much and we were shocked that this was the only agency that hadn't been audited.

This never would have happened had it not been for Dr. BURGESS and myself working together. We finally put a requirement into the bill that the Pentagon conduct an audit finally, but guess what? We talked the other day

about this, the Pentagon has flunked its seventh audit now.

I am originally from Texas. I represent the beautiful 12th Congressional District of California. Just know that I am going to continue to work, and I know Dr. BURGESS will work to make sure that we finally get a clean audit from the Pentagon. Taxpayers deserve to know where their tax dollars are going and that they are not being scammed by the Pentagon.

Secondly, I thank you for your work on diabetes. As a member of the Diabetes Caucus—I think for a while you were co-chair of the Diabetes Caucus with Congresswoman DIANA DEGETTE, and you have done remarkable work when you look at diabetes and the disproportionate impact on people of color, on African Americans especially.

We looked at ways to prevent amputations and ways to really make sure that the healthcare is there for those who are suffering diabetes to prevent the terrible consequences of that disease. I just want to take a moment to thank you, Dr. BURGESS, for your work on that.

I know that I will be seeing you in this next chapter of your life and of my life, and I wish you well. May God bless you. You are also in my thoughts and prayers as you go through this very difficult period.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH).

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I rise to thank Dr. BURGESS for his friendship and for kindness. I wish him a very happy and restful and well-deserved retirement. It has been an honor to serve with Dr. BURGESS, particularly on Rules. I joined Rules as a freshman, and he has been a steady, guiding hand and an excellent example of a statesman.

As chairman, he has been a kind and thoughtful leader, and I will certainly miss you in that role, Dr. BURGESS.

I am also grateful for the time that we spent on a trip to Canada, and I enjoyed being part of the visit to your grandfather's home in Montreal. I will sincerely miss seeing you at work, and I am happy about your next chapter and your retirement. I thank you for your service. I thank you for your service to the country, to Congress, and to your constituents, but, most of all, I thank you for your friendship, Dr. BURGESS.

Congratulations and God bless you and your family.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I now recognize the gentleman from Waco, Texas, Mr. PETE SESSIONS.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman, Brother WEBER, for you bringing tonight this conversation that Members of Congress on a bipartisan basis can have about the gentleman from Texas, MICHAEL BURGESS.

I am one of a few Members that remember well when he was running for Congress in a contested primary. I listened to Dr. BURGESS on the radio be-

fore I had met MIKE, and he was very clear and professional and straightforward about his idea of not only the rules that Congress should exist under, but also the American people. They should be able to count on Members of Congress who would come and do what they said they would do and work hard and do their best every day.

MICHAEL BURGESS became not just a standard operating procedure in the Energy and Commerce Committee for understanding healthcare and commerce and certainly the things that happen in this country, he became a stalwart for understanding the debate of leading America to understand what good healthcare would mean; how rules and regulations should be in their best interest; and how a market-based product, not just in healthcare, but what consumers would expect would be a part of that.

Knowing MIKE, in 2013, I asked MIKE to come and join the Rules Committee. We had changed up a little bit at that time. I became chairman of the Rules Committee and knew that we needed experts from across the Congress. We changed from making the Rules Committee an exclusive committee to one where we would ask Members to double down, in addition to their normal committee where they had extreme expertise, but also come and do double duty at the Rules Committee where we met many times late at night and certainly for hours at a time.

After just 2 weeks of being on the committee, then-Speaker John Boehner, who had called me earlier and told me he didn't really know MIKE very well, came back and said: He is a real asset to our Conference and to the Rules Committee. I congratulated MIKE behind Speaker Boehner's back only to find out later that John did approach MIKE and say: We are very proud of the job that you are doing.

MIKE, tonight, we stand in awe of you. I often spoke about you being one of the most distinguished Members of Congress, not only in your presentation, but also in your hard work back home.

Tonight, we say thank you. Tonight, we say job well done. Perhaps more than that, service to a grateful nation that not only listened to your words, but listened to your advice about making life better for people, because, in fact, you, like VIRGINIA FOXX and other members of the committee at the time, believed that there was no problem in America that we could not tackle, help resolve, and make better for the American people. Every bit of that you did through your devotion and dedication to the American people and your idea of what service meant.

Congratulations to Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. Thanks to his family, his beautiful young wife, Laura, for the service that he has given to the people of America.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) to come up and share with us.

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am thinking about the fact that I have probably known MICHAEL BURGESS longer than anybody here because we both ran for office the same year.

He ran against one of the sons of the leadership, and I ran against the chairman of Energy and Commerce's son, so we had very similar races. We got the heck kicked out of us, but we won. We immediately had a connection and that connection has kept us close friends ever since.

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When people came to me with a question about healthcare, I would say: I am an old trial judge. You want to talk about justice, about the law, I can probably give you a hand. If you are going to talk about healthcare, I am going to yield to MIKE BURGESS. Go talk to MIKE BURGESS, and he can talk to me and tell me whether whatever it is you are doing is the right thing to do or the wrong thing to do. MIKE has never failed to give me the best advice.

He is a close friend, and he is very dear to me. We both made a pact that we would leave at the same time, and I tell you, I failed on this deal. He decided to leave, and I wasn't ready to leave.

Hold on, BURGESS, I am coming one of these days.

I wish he would stick around a little longer. He is such a friend and such a solid, solid human being.

We are blessed to have people like MIKE BURGESS in here. We can call him Doc. We can call him whatever we want to call him. He is always quietly ready to lend a hand on literally anything you want to do, as we heard about the conversation about looking at the Pentagon. I didn't know that. That was news to me, but a good idea, a dang good idea.

BURGESS, you and I know that we are friends. I am going to miss you, pal. I will miss you a lot. I may call you every once in a while just to make sure you are doing okay.

Please give my warmest sympathy to your wife during these trying times. You also have that sympathy.

You know that I consider you one of my very closest friends, and I am sorry to see you leave, but we will keep in touch, I promise. God bless you, buddy.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Will the judge yield for a question?

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Yes, sir.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I am like you with whatever pact you all made. We didn't want him to leave, but do you think his beautiful bride, Laura, had something to say about that?

Mr. CARTER of Texas. I think something like that, but I wouldn't guess.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia, BUDDY CARTER.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for hosting us here tonight.

I rise today in honor of my good friend and colleague and one of my mentors, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, for his impactful time in Congress. Dr. BURGESS has dedicated his congressional career to bettering not only the lives of his constituents in Texas but also the lives of all Americans.

I have had the distinct privilege of serving with MIKE BURGESS on both the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Budget Committee and together in the GOP Doctors Caucus.

In all of these roles, Dr. BURGESS has worked diligently to put America's patients first. He has worked on legislation to improve access to care for patients and improve the lives of those suffering from sickle cell anemia. Dr. BURGESS has also worked hard to increase maternal health outcomes and the enhanced quality of care for mothers.

I can confidently say that Dr. BURGESS has spent every second of every hour here in Washington, D.C., working toward the betterment of life for all of us. He has been a model Member of Congress, and we will certainly miss him.

I am excited for him to get to experience the relaxation of life after Congress. After the many years of service to our country, there are few more deserving of a great retirement.

Thank you, my friend. I really do appreciate all of your guidance, all of your work, all of your mentorship.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas, JAKE ELLZEY.

Mr. ELLZEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a full heart to honor my good friend, Chairman MICHAEL BURGESS.

For over two decades, he has been a true leader for Texas' 26th District and a steadfast voice for our State here in Washington. More than that, he has been a friend, mentor, and someone you can count on no matter what.

As a doctor, MICHAEL brought a special kind of care to his work here in Congress. His deep knowledge of healthcare shaped policies that have improved lives across this country.

Let me tell you, if you ever had a conversation with MICHAEL about infrastructure or energy policy, he dives in with the same kind of determination and expertise, and that is the man he is. He is focused, committed, and always looking out for the folks back home.

As a relatively new Member of Congress and of the Texas delegation, let me go off script here and just say that he is a giant. He has guided the Rules Committee for the last year in a way that I doubt very few people could. In turbulent waters, he has smoothed them with his composure, humor, knowledge, patience, and kindness. It is missing far too often in this place.

If you are looking on TV for MICHAEL BURGESS, you won't find him. You will find him in a committee room, the study room, or in the Texas delegation

lunch, instructing us on what is good and what is bad. He never went off in sound bites. He knows what he is talking about.

I had a great, beautiful speech written for you, but let me summarize by saying that the first thing that came to mind when I knew we were talking about you today was a song from 1988. Not everybody has heard this song, but a band called Cinderella sang: "Don't know what you got 'til it's gone."

When you are gone, we will always be missing you, and our delegation will have empty shoes that cannot be filled. Thank you for everything that you have done for us and this country. God bless you, sir.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to another gentleman from Texas, KEITH SELF.

Mr. SELF. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas. It is a real honor to be here tonight. I thank you for hosting this important Special Order hour.

MICHAEL BURGESS and I have quite a history. We were primary opponents 22 years ago, and I finished third by 91 votes. MIKE went on to win the runoff election and provide exemplary service to our Nation and the constituents in Congressional District 26. Shortly after that, I was recalled to Active Duty for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. It was obvious that God had his hand in both of our directions.

My sister-in-law also worked for MICHAEL BURGESS for 18 years in your district office. You provided her the same leadership that you did your colleagues here in Congress.

I am grateful for your friendship and for your tremendous service to our Nation.

I am also proud of your track record of defending the Constitution and your bold leadership in the pro-life movement. I will tell you, abortion is a talking point for many Members of Congress, but not MICHAEL BURGESS. You delivered about 3,000 babies in your career as a physician. Let me tell you, most of them, along with their parents and siblings, voted for you, which I realized in 2002.

Taking care of those mothers and their babies over the course of your 30-year medical career gave you a unique perspective on the value of life that you brought with you to Congress. You provided a bright beacon of light to the right-to-life struggle against those who advocate for abortion.

You always showed up. You knew your stuff. You were prepared. I will tell you, we will strive to carry on the mantle of pro-life, pro-liberty, and freedom for the next generation of congressional Members.

They have not only been your values, but they are our Texas values, and they are proving recently to be America's values.

Dr. BURGESS, I join my colleagues in letting you and Laura know that our hearts are heavy with yours. I will

quote C.S. Lewis: "Her absence is like the sky, spread over everything." We are truly sorry for your loss. May God bless you and Laura.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia, Chairman MORGAN GRIFFITH.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. WEBER for yielding to me to say a few words about my friend, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

First, I rise to congratulate you. You are finally graduating from Congress. You have done a great job during your two decades here, and your record highlights a staunch advocacy for healthcare legislation that addresses a variety of issues. Such issues include reducing healthcare costs, improving choices, and ensuring there are enough doctors in the country to tend to the healthcare needs of America's patients and veterans.

Through the Energy and Commerce Committee, your keen intellect and institutional knowledge have served as invaluable resources to me and to all. I am proud to have worked with you on healthcare-related legislation.

I have to tell you, when I first got to the Energy and Commerce Committee, we were all talking about ObamaCare. I looked back, and there was this guy I didn't know from Texas. He had the code sitting there, and it was about yea thick. Every now and then, a debate would start up, and somebody would say something, often from the other side of the aisle. They would say that we didn't do this or we did do this in the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare.

Dr. BURGESS would be on point to respond because, notwithstanding the fact that he had the book there, he could immediately tell you whether or not what was being alleged was or was not in the act. On at least two or three occasions, I can recall him citing the page and then reading from it. We are talking about on the fly. We are not talking about 10 minutes to prepare or 20 minutes to prepare. We are talking about somebody finishes commenting, people yield time to Dr. BURGESS, and he tells them what for—not in a bad way, not in a mean way, just: Well, that is not accurate. If you look at page 1206, you will see, yada yada yada.

There is no one else in the United States Congress who has that kind of knowledge of our healthcare system. I wish I could say I did. I do not. I don't know anybody who knows the American healthcare system the way that Dr. BURGESS does. It is absolutely amazing the way his mind works. Of course, it takes hard work. Even when you have a good mind, it takes a lot of hard work, as well.

Further, I have to confess that not having as much to do when I first got here, I used to go hang out from time to time at the Rules Committee. Dr. BURGESS was always there and was always asking key questions and important questions. Then, when I occasionally appeared in front of the Rules Committee, not just being a geek, he always asked the best questions.

Dr. BURGESS, I greatly appreciate all of that. As you are leaving Congress, I don't think you can be replaced. There might be 2 or 3 or 10 individuals who can combine to replace your knowledge, but there is no one individual who can do that.

Now, I have to also confess to you tonight that it is not only that we share spots on Energy and Commerce, but we also share an affinity for country music. Earlier this year, at Dr. BURGESS' personal invitation—I don't want anybody else to get mad at him—he invited me to join him and country music legend Randy Travis to discuss some issues related to the rights of performers in receiving benefits.

We have heard about issues from our colleagues on the other side where he was helpful. We heard about the stuff that he has done that has been great. He also has been working right up to the end to try to make sure that, on a myriad of different issues, the American policy is the correct policy.

I can't say enough about what a great asset Dr. BURGESS has been to the United States Congress, to the Energy and Commerce Committee, to the Rules Committee. I am so thankful for his service and leadership.

Dr. BURGESS, I wish you peace, and I hope that your time in Texas or wherever you may end up is a good one. I also hope that you will not be a stranger in the Halls of the United States Congress because, I have to confess again, oftentimes I would receive a phone call: Hey, MORGAN, have you thought about doing this?

I hope to continue to get those calls, Dr. BURGESS. It is always helpful. Thank you very much. God bless you, and God bless your family.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to DANNY DAVIS from Illinois for his comments.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise to pay tribute to my longtime friend, associate, and office mate. His office is around the corner from mine. We meet each other in the hall almost every day.

I really want to thank him for the tremendous service that he has provided to the people of this country and especially the outstanding work that he has done in healthcare.

I also mention the fact that he is as much of a politician as he is a political person, but a doctor first and foremost.

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I thank Michael for co-chairing the Congressional Sickle Cell Disease Caucus and working with Representative LEE and myself, all the many years that we have been a part of that.

I understand that our sickle cell bill is going to be in the CR whenever we get to it, and I also understand that one of the reasons that it is there is Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

As he goes, wherever he goes, however he goes in whatever he does, I will just leave him with this old Irish blessing, and that is:

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the Sun always be warm on your back.

May the wind push you forward; and until we meet again, may the good Lord hold you in the palm of his hand.

I wish Dr. BURGESS the best of wishes and good luck. I hope you enjoy your life. We will miss you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Dr. BURGESS).

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, this has all been so moving and so lovely, but if anyone tuned in late tonight in C-SPAN, they probably thought I passed because it really did sound like a eulogy.

I am still here, and I will continue to text and call and inform everyone, analyze, as I think Mr. LUCAS put it, I am good at analysis. I will still give the benefit of my insight. I thank Mr. WEBER for doing this. I didn't expect it.

I have got some of my great staff up there in the Gallery who have been watching and hanging on every word. This has been very, very kind. I really don't know what else to say, but I wanted to assure people that I was still here. It has been so moving. People might have thought I had left the building, but Elvis is still in the building.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, Dr. BURGESS has been quite a mentor, quite a friend, and quite an example. As he and Laura proceed on their next step in their history and their work for Texas, I want them to know from us, our deepest gratitude and thankfulness.

It has been an absolute pleasure to serve alongside him and get to know him and to watch him. He probably doesn't know this, but I have a little bit of a sense of humor, and he does too, and we really appreciate that.

Brenda and I will be praying for him and Laura, for his family, for God's blessings over this new chapter in his life. We hope it is filled with joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control, as Galatians 5 lays out in the fruit of the Spirit.

We love what he has done to serve this Nation faithfully, and he is leaving a legacy that will not soon be forgotten.

God bless Dr. BURGESS, and may God continue to bless Texas and the United States because of him. We are grateful for him.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand here today to express my gratitude to Chairman BURGESS for his years of dedicated service to our country.

Dr. BURGESS has maintained an unwavering commitment to public service, and his steadfast leadership has been a guiding light for many.

As both a skilled legislator and a respected physician, he has worked tirelessly to improve healthcare access and

affordability. Blending his expertise with compassion, he has shaped policies that make a real difference in people's lives.

During the debate on the Affordable Care Act, Congressman BURGESS brought critical insights from his time before Congress.

Given both of our backgrounds in health care prior to coming to Congress, I can tell you firsthand that his efforts to prioritize patient-centered care and strengthen our medical systems will leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Chairman BURGESS has set a high standard for public service—one rooted in integrity, hard work, and a deep belief in the values that make our Nation strong.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate Chairman BURGESS for his 22-year career of dedicated public service.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEE of California. 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.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to deliver my final floor speech as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

For 26 years now, it has been the privilege of my lifetime to serve my incredible constituents of California's 12th Congressional District.

I was sworn in on April 21, 1998. The late, great Ronald V. Dellums retired early. I was his former intern, his former staffer, and he was my former colleague, my mentor, and good friend.

Ron was actually the first African-American chair of the House Armed Services Committee, and I remember that day so well. He sat right here and encouraged me to give that first speech and to actually turn around and to sign a petition then calling for campaign finance reform. I was the 218 vote to sign the discharge petition on my swearing in day, which I was very proud of.

Let me just first and foremost start by thanking my staff and all of the members of Team Lee that have worked tirelessly to serve our district 24/7 and to help us achieve so much. These are truly dedicated public servants, and their commitment has undoubtedly left an indelible mark, not