

Even in the early days of his congressional career, Representative GIBBONS was a tireless champion of efforts to help the poorest among us. It was under his leadership and guidance that antipoverty initiatives such as Head Start were successfully steered through the House. In his more recent service as acting chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, he committed himself to efforts to ensure that all Americans would have good health care. In this, the 104th Congress, he has continued this long tradition of leadership as ranking member and leader of the Democrats on my committee.

I know that my Ways and Means colleagues and I will certainly miss SAM GIBBONS. His leadership, companionship, good humor, and fierce commitment to what he believes is right make him a valued ally whose presence will be sorely missed.

SAM GIBBONS, A LEGEND IN FLORIDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MILLER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, after my colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN], spoke and read passages from the Bible, I thought we should be in the great rotunda or something. We are here to praise SAM, not to bury SAM. SAM is going to be around for a lot longer, both here in this session of Congress but also, of course, I think here in Washington with family here, and also back in the Tampa area.

My congressional district in Florida adjoins SAM's. I was an undergraduate at the University of Florida when he first came here in 1962. You know about SAM. He is a legend in our area. When I first had the opportunity to come to Congress in 1992, I remember meeting SAM and he would introduce me. We would have Florida gatherings, and he would say, "I am so glad that DAN MILLER now has Sun City, Florida."

Sun City is an area that SAM actually helped develop as an area of large retirement communities in south Hillsborough County. They are very Republican oriented and they were not the Great Society Democrat supporters, so they are great for me as a Republican but they always gave you a lot of trouble, I know.

Ms. BROWN was giving us some of the great things that you accomplished, whether it is Head Start and Job Corps or NAFTA and GATT and such. People do not understand our area and some of the great contributions that you have made, and I think I need to bring it to the attention.

You made the contribution to allow golf carts to cross the State highway in Sun City. That is how people get around, is driving golf carts. Instead of having two cars in every garage, you have one car and one golf cart, and it was against the law to have golf carts across the highway until SAM GIBBONS

got involved. I do not think that rates in the category of Head Start, but it is something that you have been helping with the community and the area for a long, long time.

SAM and I do not necessarily agree on all the issues. We have a lot of things we do agree on, and I do respect SAM for believing in an issue and he stands for it. I can tell you two issues in the past couple of years that had strong bipartisan support, and very controversial issues, that SAM was willing to stand up and talk about it and take a stand regardless of what anyone else said within his party or such.

One is NAFTA and GATT. The Florida delegation, 23 strong, we held back, 22 of us, on doing anything on NAFTA and GATT. SAM was right out front all along, saying NAFTA is an important issue for world trade and for our growing economy in this world economy of ours, so he was a leader on that. He did not care that it was not that popular in some areas of Florida, but SAM was willing to stand up and debate that issue.

Another issue, one recently that I was involved in, was the issue of sugar. Sugar is a powerful factor in the State of Florida and a powerful influence. I, along with CHUCK SCHUMER on the Democratic side, led the drive to do away with the sugar program, very controversial. SAM was the only Democrat to stand up and speak on the floor of the House for that particular piece of legislation. We only had half of the Republicans support the legislation, but SAM was willing to stand up there and take a stand.

Last week we had a hearing in Ways and Means talking about a tomato issue and 22 of us signed a letter, but SAM felt strong enough on the issue to say that "I am not going to sign just because all of you all signed it." The point was his basic philosophy on trade and trade issues. I respect and admire SAM for taking that stand.

I also thank SAM for, as a newcomer coming to Washington and never involved in politics, how you and Martha were always so nice to us. We shared a lot of flights to and from Tampa. Your wife has been nice to my wife Glenda, and you have been to me.

And here as a chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, and I was a lowly freshman Republican, you were always friendly and supportive and talkative in sharing your thoughts and ideas with me, and reminiscences. We will miss you. We will look forward to the next 4 months, and I am sure I will see a lot of you in the next years. Congratulations, SAM.

TRIBUTE TO SAM GIBBONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. BEVILL] is recognized during morning business for 1 minute.

Mr. BEVILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my long-time

friend and colleague, SAM GIBBONS of Florida.

I was sorry to hear that SAM has decided not to seek reelection in November. I had hoped that he would stay to continue giving our Nation the benefit of his wisdom and leadership.

But, after 34 years of outstanding service in the House of Representatives, SAM certainly deserves a well-earned retirement.

I want to thank SAM for being such a good friend to me over the years. I have certainly enjoyed working with him. And, I also want to thank him for his service to our Nation and to the people of Florida.

SAM is a true hero in my book. His bravery during the D-day invasion of German-occupied France is legendary. One of 12,000 paratroopers who landed behind enemy lines, SAM was awarded the Bronze Star for his World War II service.

He is a dedicated patriot and a dedicated public servant. SAM GIBBONS cares about people and about improving their quality of life. He spearheaded the drive to pass Lyndon Johnson's antipoverty programs in 1965 and he has been a champion for the poor, the elderly and for children ever since.

As chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee in the 103d Congress and as its ranking Democrat in this Congress, SAM has played a key role on critical issues such as health care reform, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and free trade.

SAM has served this body with integrity and deep commitment. He has stayed true to his values and true to the American people.

SAM, I salute you as you approach the end of your congressional career. Your accomplishments are many. They will always be remembered and appreciated.

I wish you and your lovely wife, Martha, all the best in your future endeavors.

SERVICE WORTHY TO BE REMEMBERED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to join my colleagues from Florida and also from across the United States to honor my colleague and my friend, SAM GIBBONS. I came here, too, just 3 short years ago from a different party, from a different philosophy, but I have known SAM GIBBONS for a number of years even before I was elected to this Congress, and I have always held him in the highest respect. So it is indeed a great honor for me to come before the House today to pay tribute to SAM GIBBONS.

Most people do not realize the difficulty of this job. As I said, I have only been here 3 years, and I served in the minority and I served in the majority, and you realize the burdens of responsibility coming and representing

the people of this great Nation and our great State and the tremendous personal sacrifice. Unless you have been there and done that, you just have no idea what it entails, the sacrifices for SAM personally, for Martha, his lovely wife, and for his family.

But I have been here for 3 years and I have seen that he has been here for three decades and he has done that. So he deserves our praise and the credit, the thanks of a State, the thanks of his colleagues and the thanks of his Nation in this short tribute to him.

Many people also see the conflict, and heaven knows we have had the conflict. SAM and I have gone at it on the floor here, and we both express our opinions and our viewpoints. But what is interesting, most people do not see, is that we come together. We come together for the State of Florida and for the country. That is the greatness of this institution, and certainly SAM does typify all those great traits and that coming together and that leadership.

So we have, my colleagues, today an opportunity to honor a distinguished leader for many years of service, not just here, in our State House in Florida and, as I said, three decades of dedication in this great body.

We have a distinguished veteran. He is a model for what made this country great in his service to his Nation, and we certainly owe him our debt of gratitude for his tremendous service as a veteran.

Then, the part I said that is so important about SAM is his distinguished character as a family person. I know his family and his wife, and he is indeed a distinguished family man, which is so important. When all the other trappings of office leave us, you still have your family. He has certainly been a great family man, a distinguished family man, which I think is so important.

So I join my other colleagues today in thanking him for his years of service, for caring about people. He is so sincere in his caring, not only for the people of Florida but for the entire country, and no matter where they came from or their persuasion or their standing in our society.

I often look up here behind me at the top of the podium, the very top of the House Chamber, and remember the words of Daniel Webster. I first looked at them when I came here. Dan Webster actually asked the question when he served here, and his comment was whether we also in our day and generation may not perform something to be worthy to be remembered.

Certainly, SAM, you have performed something worthy to be remembered, and you have served your generation and generations well. So I join my colleagues from the Florida delegation, from around the country, in saluting you today and thanking you for a job well done.

FAREWELL TO SAM GIBBONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ] is recognized during morning business for 1 minute.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, I speak for the people of Puerto Rico in saying that we wish SAM GIBBONS the best of times following his retirement from the House of Representatives. After 34 years of devoting himself to the welfare of the people of Florida, his home State, and to the welfare of the American people, he more than deserves the opportunity to devote his time to himself and his family. I again speak for the people of Puerto Rico in saying that we also view his departure with a strong sense of personal loss. We have no voting representation in Congress, but we have always had the benefit of a few special friends who have shown great understanding in working to protect the interests of 3,700,000 disenfranchised U.S. citizens. SAM GIBBONS is one of these special friends.

SAM has honorably represented his home district in Congress since 1963, while never losing sight of the importance of being fair to the people of other districts. The intensity of his commitment to the principles of fairness and compassion for the disadvantaged and the deserving against all odds, can be summarized in one word—fearlessness.

More than 50 years ago SAM GIBBONS parachuted into Nazi-occupied France on the night before the Normandy invasion. Upon his entrance to Congress almost two decades later, he immediately began applying this same fearlessness to the defense of the disadvantaged of this country.

His early battles included floor managing President Johnson's anti-poverty programs, including Head Start, and supporting the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He has continued this fearless fight in recent years, cosponsoring the civil rights restoration bill of 1990 and fighting for health care reform and for legislation to aid the elderly. In his work as a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee he has also fought for the equal participation of the people of Puerto Rico in Federal programs and has stood against legislation which would harm the disadvantaged.

Sam has also been a strong advocate of politics aimed at creating peace and security for our country and for the rest of the world. He is well known for his view that a "world bound together by the ties of trade is a world strongly inclined toward economic growth and peace." As chairman of the Subcommittee on Trade he has successfully guided through the House such important and controversial trade legislation as the North American Free Trade Agreement, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the Caribbean Basin Initiative. This last initiative has been particularly important to the development of the economies of several countries and the security and regional integration of the Caribbean Basin.

It is a loss to the Nation and particularly to the people of Puerto Rico to

have a man of such compassion and fearless idealism leave this institution. With gratitude for all he has done, I speak for the people of Puerto Rico in wishing him and his family the best in his retirement years and the recognition he so definitely deserves.

SAM GIBBONS, A REAL HERO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. HOUGHTON] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I hope I am not going to bend too many rules by referring to this distinguished gentleman over here, and SAM, I am not going to say anything unusual. You have heard it, but I want to reiterate it because it means something to me.

After 50 years of public service you are stepping down, and that is pretty unusual. You are a real hero in anyone's mind, and I suppose no one can replace any one of us as individuals but you are somebody very special.

Let me go back to this World War II experience which many people have referred to. I was in World War II, but I am not a hero like SAM is. The concept of dropping 15 miles behind the enemy lines in Utah Beach, 2:30 in the morning on January 6, to wipe out the enemy, to make it safer for those boys to come in on the beach, is really an act of heroism.

And that is not all. SAM went then on to Holland and, as many of you know, remember the story "A Bridge Too Far" and the Rhine campaign, and then there was the Battle of Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge, and then, ultimately, the final attack on Berlin. You were there. As somebody who was associated with you, but in a different part of the war, I will always be grateful for that, SAM.

So, what do you say about somebody who leads a group, there are less than 25 in this House Chamber now that served in World War II, and will be going on to other things and will not be here to give his wisdom? It is going to be a different place.

I mean, every one thing leads to another thing. In talking to SAM'S son, Cliff, a terrific young guy, he was saying, "One of the things that differentiates my father from many other people is that that experience in World War II carried on to everything he did in life."

There were two particular areas when he came to Congress. One was the field of education, and you have heard a lot about Head Start. People could say, well, anybody could have started Head Start. They could not have. They did not. This is the man who did it. But you did not do it in a vacuum. You did it because of your feeling that if people can be educated and not beaten by the time they go to first grade, they could learn, they could understand the world in which they lived.

That was the whole genesis of the great service that SAM performed in