

forever cherish his friendship; and, I join my colleagues in extending the Honorable SAM GIBBONS my very best wishes for the future. God bless you, SAM.

SAM GIBBONS: TRULY AN AMERICAN HERO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in honoring the gentleman from Florida, my dear friend, SAM GIBBONS. I would like to say thank you to the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN] for organizing this tribute to a man who has served his country with distinction for over half a century.

SAM GIBBONS is truly an American hero. Most people know SAM for his work here in the House in steadfast defense of Medicare for our Nation's seniors. He understands what Medicare has meant in the lives of seniors. He understands what health insurance has meant to the seniors of this Nation. He has been inspiring in leading the charge in that important fight and I am proud to have served with SAM GIBBONS.

Yet, outstanding service to our Nation is nothing new to SAM. Mr. Speaker, 52 years ago this June SAM GIBBONS led the charge as American and Allied troops stormed the beaches in Normandy in Operation Overlord, the invasion that liberated Nazi-occupied France and marked the beginning of the end of World War II.

SAM won the Bronze Star for parachuting into France the night before the invasion. As President Clinton remarked during the 50th anniversary ceremony commemorating brave men like SAM, and I quote, "What we must remember is that when they were young, these men saved the world."

Throughout his 34 years of service to the American people in this House, SAM GIBBONS has worked long and hard to provide opportunity and progress for the American people. SAM was instrumental in the enactment of President Lyndon Johnson's Job Corps, Head Start, and other antipoverty initiatives.

As the former chairman and current ranking Democrat of the Committee on Ways and Means, SAM has long been a leader on pension reform, international trade, health care, welfare, and tax policies.

Again, to the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN], I thank you for allowing me to participate in this tribute to this true American hero. The people's House, which is what this body is, will not be the same without SAM GIBBONS. We will miss his intelligence, his dignity, his indomitable will, his commitment to the people of this country, his love for a good fight, and his desire to make this place a better

world, a better country for American men and women.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the gentleman from Florida the best fortune in his future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO SAM GIBBONS

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I also want to participate in this commemoration to our good colleague, SAM GIBBONS, and I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida, MS. BROWN, my colleague, for setting aside this time to do this.

Mr. Speaker, it came as a surprise when SAM GIBBONS announced his plans to retire from Congress at the end of this year. SAM GIBBONS' name has become synonymous with Florida politics. He has represented the Tampa area for the past 44 years, first venturing into politics as a State representative and then the State senate. He was sworn into Congress during the Kennedy administration and for the past 34 years has represented Tampa in the House of Representatives.

When I first heard about SAM's plans to retire, I couldn't help but recall the 50th anniversary D-day invasion ceremonies that I had the privilege of attending and to which SAM GIBBONS was appointed as a special representative, by President Clinton.

It was indeed fitting that Mr. GIBBONS was specially designated as the President's representative. SAM has a long and distinguished career in service to his country. A decorated World War II veteran, he showed extreme bravery by parachuting into Normandy the night before D-day and then made his way behind enemy lines during the Normandy invasion.

After the war he returned to Florida and commenced his law practice. He then began a political career that spanned several decades.

Although we have not always agreed politically, I believe SAM has served his constituents well and has worked tirelessly as a champion on their behalf. SAM has long been considered a leader and supporter of free trade which he attributes to his experience during the war. SAM has often been heard to say: "I believe fundamentally, people who trade together and work together do not fight."

As a fellow Floridian, I can assure you, SAM, that you will be missed. Your spirit and energetic nature have set you apart and truly demonstrate your commitment and willingness to fight for your convictions.

Leaving can sometimes be difficult, but you leave knowing that you gave it all you've got and then some. Perhaps, now you will be able to find time for another great passion in life—arranging a tee time will now be a little easier. I wish you well in the future and I

venture to say that whatever you do you will do with great passion and gusto.

SAM GIBBONS WROTE THE RULES FOR THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from California [Mr. STARK] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, it is a joy to get a chance to speak to SAM when he has to sit and listen to us.

Mr. Speaker, I have worked with SAM my entire 22 years on the Committee on Ways and Means. It is interesting. SAM opposed expanding the Committee on Ways and Means when all of us new youngsters came on the committee. They had a nice little club and they really did not want to add to it.

But once the caucus worked its will and the Committee on Ways and Means learned about democracy and expanded its membership, SAM turned out to be the fairest of the titans on that committee for opening up and sharing the responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, he wrote the rules for that committee which stand today I think as a mark for other committees in its fairness and its openness. And many of us who worked with SAM for so long remember that. He could oppose you and he is not shy and he is willing to speak out. And unlike some of us, he does not need to learn more diplomacy and reticence because he has Martha, and Martha has been able to keep SAM mellow and happy when he has been fighting like hell for something that he believes in.

Mr. Speaker, SAM wrote the rules for the Committee on Ways and Means. He is an expert on trade. Then in the last Congress when we were attempting to pass welfare reform, SAM sat through every markup with our subcommittee, even though he was not on that committee, and when the bill came to full committee it was the expertise not only from his experience as he had been with Medicare from the time he voted for it as an original bill but from all the service on the Committee on Ways and Means he was able to help us pull together that coalition that was able to present to the American public a health care bill that was fair, did not increase the deficit, and opened up health coverage to every American.

I hope, SAM that he can provide that for you in your retirement and you can come back and share with us when under the leadership that you set, and the goal you set for us with the President, we will accomplish that.

God bless you, SAM. We will miss you.

SAM GIBBONS: AN IDEAL CITIZEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Texas [Mr.