

Mary Beth is only 15 months old, but someday, when she is old enough to understand the sacrifice that her mother gave, it will be quite a story that Ron will be able to sit down and tell her about.

Mr. Speaker, I think about next week or the week following when we start debating the partial birth abortion again, and 10 days ago in the hospital I told Margie that we would pass the partial birth abortion bill and that we would get it through the Senate and, with God's help, we would override a veto this year. Because I believe that probably the most important thing that we can do for Margie, for the Janovich family, is to pass a bill that respects life, that respects the unborn child, that gives hope and opportunity to every unborn child.

Mr. Speaker, as I think about the President's dilemma, as he was presented so much false evidence last time by the pro-abortion lobby, I would hope and I would pray that our President would think seriously again about this legislation; that when it comes before him this year that he would think about the Janoviches, that he think about the sacrifice that Margie Janovich gave and made for her child.

Life is precious. As he talked last week during his speech on the cloning issue, talking about that an embryo has a soul, well, Mr. Speaker, I would hearken to advise the President that, yes, an embryo has a soul and that embryo is an unborn child only 9 months later.

So Margie was a tremendous inspiration to me, Ron and the kids. I want to thank them for everything that they have done because it has been a story that has touched every life in Omaha, NE, in the Midwest, and I believe that as America finds out about Margie Janovich, we will once again turn our hearts towards the value of life and the value of the unborn child. May God bless her.

THE PERSIAN GULF WAR HELP LINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to report some good news for our Nation's Persian Gulf war veterans. The Veterans Administration has set up a help line phone number that gulf war veterans can call for health examinations. Veterans who are in need of care or who wish to take advantage of the physical examination under the Persian Gulf registry or who have general questions about their experience in the Persian Gulf war can call the VA's Persian Gulf information hot line. That number is 1-800-PGW-VETS. Or, if they need the numbers, 1-800-749-8387.

Active-duty service members who were deployed to the gulf during the war may receive a health examination

through military treatment facilities by calling 1-800-796-9699. The VA encourages all gulf war veterans to participate in this important program.

I am proud to support President Clinton's action to make it easier for Persian Gulf war veterans to collect compensation benefits for undiagnosed illnesses resulting from this war. At the urging of Veterans Affairs Secretary Jesse Brown, the President agreed to extend the period during which undiagnosed illnesses, such as Persian Gulf war syndrome, will be considered related to a veteran's service in the gulf, thereby entitling that veteran to compensation benefits.

Congress had begun to address this problem prior to President Clinton's decision. My esteemed colleague, the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. LANE EVANS, the ranking member on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, introduced a bill earlier this year that would lengthen the time that gulf war veterans can file for disability compensation. I was proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill, the Persian Gulf War Veterans Compensation Act.

President Clinton listened to Congress, and to the thousands of veterans across the Nation who are suffering from the mysterious illness known as Persian Gulf War Syndrome. Mr. Speaker, our inability to find an exact cause of gulf war syndrome requires that we give our veterans the benefit of the doubt. We must move forward and provide care for our suffering Persian Gulf war veterans even as the search continues for a cause of this syndrome.

America and this Congress must not shirk its responsibilities to its veterans. I applaud the actions taken by President Clinton and the Veterans Administration to give our veterans the care that they need and deserve.

Remember that help line phone number. It is 1-800-749-8387. Please get the help that is now offered through the Veterans Administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

BIPARTISAN RETREAT IN HERSHEY A SUCCESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. KIND] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my colleagues in the House, both Republican and Democrat alike, who attended the bipartisan retreat in Hershey, PA, last weekend, but especially to commend the gentleman from Illinois, Republican Representative RAY LAHOOD, and the gentleman from Colorado, Democratic Representative DAVID SKAGGS, for their vision

and all the hard work they put into making the retreat last weekend, I think, an unequalled success.

I would also like to commend the political leadership of both parties, the gentleman from Georgia, Speaker GINGRICH, and the gentleman from Missouri, DICK GEPHARDT, for their presence, without whom this whole attempt to try to find greater civility in the House of Representatives will not go anywhere.

I also want to thank the Pew Charitable Trust and the Aspen Institute for investing in this retreat and making sure not one taxpayer dollar went for this retreat, and to give the Members a chance to explore civility.

The premise for this historic gathering, unprecedented in our Nation's history, was very simple, and that is for any legislature to function, its members must have a level of trust and understanding of one another. That trust can only develop when the members have an opportunity to get to know one another a little bit better, as people, and outside the partisan political arena.

When people know each other and their spouses and their children, they are less likely to let policy differences turn into personal animosity or hostility or to question one another's motives. In short, it is a lot harder to demonize someone when you know them on an individual and personal level.

Over 200 Members came together in an attempt to explore ways in which to bring greater civility to the House of Representatives. No legislative business was conducted, no political games, just Members and their families taking time to get together, to get to know one another a little better, and to examine the environment in the House of Representatives and figure out how we can do the Nation's work at a level of decorum that this great democracy deserves.

This was not a hug-fest. We continue to recognize that there will be deep, passionate policy differences between the parties. I think today's debate on the House resolution was a classic example, and we have no desire to blur those distinctions. Conflict in Congress is unavoidable, and the Nation is well served by healthy and vigorous debate. In fact, it is crucial to the functioning of this democracy.

The retreat, rather, was about handling those disagreements constructively and honoring our democracy with debates that are more civil, more respectful and, ultimately, more productive; in short, to explore ways where we can disagree without being disagreeable.

To build upon the future, we have to have knowledge of the past. History teaches us that when we unite as a country for a grand purpose there is nothing that we cannot accomplish. It was altogether fitting that during the course of the retreat some of us Members took time to tour the Gettysburg National Battlefield. That is the site