

been on a waiting list for an organ transplant since March of 1996.

Wade died during surgery. At the time of his death he was 44 years old. I feel very fortunate to have known him for 20 of those years. He was a loving father and husband, active in his church and in his community. He leaves behind his wife Susan and two children, Eric and Laura, and my prayers are with him and his family.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to somebody I think is a hero, my good friend, Wade Stevens. On behalf of his many friends, I wish to extend my deepest condolences. He will be missed and remembered by all.

#### THE MARRIAGE TAX ELIMINATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, let me say, first of all, that one of my predecessors in this district, serving this district in the Congress, was another Gene Taylor, and I am honored to be able to follow the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAYLOR] on the floor tonight and recognize really the commitment that so many of our Members have to families, not only their own family but families in their district.

I want to talk for a few minutes about families when it comes to paying taxes. We need to repeal the marriage penalty, the marriage tax that penalizes 21 million American couples.

Few couples of course decide to marry based on their tax burden, but every couple understands the tax implications on April 15. On a web site that those of us who are sponsoring the repeal of the marriage penalty have established, we have gotten many letters from married folks who are concerned about that.

Sean McGowan from Jefferson City, MO, writes, "I think the marriage penalty is a major cause of the breakdown of the family here in the United States. Your bill would do a lot to cut down on the incidence of cohabitation by unmarried couples and give more children two-parent families where there is a real commitment between the parents."

Mark Wyckoff from Baldwin, MO, writes, "My wife and I have been truly among those hardest hit by the marriage penalty. In my position as a physical therapist, I have been fortunate enough to benefit from a well-paying, high-demand occupation. In the 4 years we have been married, we have had one refund, our first, mainly because of taxes taken out based on a full year's salary when each of us worked only part of the year. Since the 1993 tax year, we have paid out an additional \$8,868 as a well-earning, rich if you adopt the standards of the current administration, married, no dependents, no real property holding couple,"

and they pay a penalty because of what happens in the Tax Code. It is really another hidden tax, one of those kinds of taxes that Washington is famous for imposing.

Current law punishes many married couples who file jointly by pushing them into higher tax brackets. It takes the income of the family's second wage-earner, often the woman's salary, at a much higher rate than if the salary had been earned at the individual rate. For many couples where both the husband and wife work, the second income becomes used simply to pay the IRS. That makes the marriage tax a penalty for working women.

For example, an individual with an income of \$24,000 would be taxed at 15 percent. A working couple with incomes of \$24,000 each would be taxed at 28 percent, a significant increase on the tax burden of \$600 in new taxes simply because they are married, simply because they are forced into a higher tax bracket by filing a joint return.

In another case, a couple where one spouse earns \$75,000 a year while the other has no income, they pay \$3,872 less in income taxes than if they were single. Compare that to a husband and wife who each make \$37,500, a combined income of \$75,000, and they pay \$1,391 more in taxes simply because they are married. Mr. Speaker, \$1,391 or \$600 are no small penalties. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the average penalty for a married couple is \$1,400 a year.

What would a family do for \$125 of additional income each month? What would they do with \$125 of additional income each month as well? That is equal to half a year's car payments on the average car payment. It could be used to secure a down payment for the first home or to pay tuition.

For the Federal Government, it is an annual \$30 billion plum and it is a plum that we need to give up. We need to give up that \$30 billion; we need to eliminate the marriage penalty. We need to go back to a tax law that really honors marriage, does not penalize marriage.

The Marriage Tax Elimination Act of 1997 that I am cosponsoring eliminates the marriage tax. It allows couples to choose which method would be to their advantage in filing their taxes, whether the single taxpayer method or the married taxpayer method for a joint return would be the best thing for them to do.

The elimination of the marriage tax also fills a void left over from the tax relief package of 1997. We have directed tax cuts for families with children; we have broadened the scope of tax relief, and in 1998 we could broaden the scope of tax relief to include all married couples with the elimination of the marriage tax penalty.

Washington should take every opportunity to help families stay together. Many times that means bringing home an income that provides them with time together, time to share values,

and time to share experiences. This is the next logical step in the 1997 tax relief that we have given to families. We now need to give it to married couples by eliminating the marriage penalty, Mr. Speaker.

#### TRIBUTE TO HENRY B. GONZALEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] is recognized for one-fourth of the time remaining before midnight as the first designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, if I may, before I begin my remarks, I would like to request unanimous consent for all Members who speak on this particular special order to have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our distinguished colleagues who are here at this late hour here in Washington, DC, those who are from the Texas delegation, those who may have served with the individual we are here to honor by serving on the same committee, or those who just happen to know this individual and consider him a great friend and an honorable American. I would like to say to all of those folks from that committee, from that State, from this House, thank you for joining me and other Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus as we pay tribute to the dean of the Hispanic Caucus, the dean of the Texas Democratic Delegation, in fact, the Texas Delegation, period; and the former chairman and now ranking member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Honorable HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

Mr. Speaker, after 36 years of dedicated service to his constituents in Texas, the Hispanic community and the Nation, Dean GONZALEZ has announced that he will soon resign from the Congress.

Dean GONZALEZ was one of five founding members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus back in December of 1976. This is just one of the reasons why I am so pleased that we could pay this tribute to him during the month of October, a month that this country has celebrated as Hispanic Heritage Month for quite some time.

This special order is a particularly fitting forum in which to pay tribute to HENRY B. GONZALEZ, because Dean GONZALEZ, as we all know, has made effective use of this particular format, the special orders, in his 36 years in Congress. In fact, before the House rules on special orders were changed in the 103rd and 104th Congresses, Dean GONZALEZ had a standing request for 60 minutes each day to speak out on matters of concern to him.

For example, in his special orders, Dean GONZALEZ warned repeatedly about the impending savings and loan crisis years before the industry actually even collapsed. Dean GONZALEZ also used the special orders to educate the Nation about the wonderful and endearing cultural contributions of Americans of Mexican descent.

In recent years, some of Dean GONZALEZ' most popular special orders, especially those with C-SPAN audiences, have been those where he discusses history: his own, the history of San Antonio, of Texas, and the history of the founding of our Federal Government.

But Dean GONZALEZ did not reserve his special orders for the cameras, as some might think. He engaged in this practice long before cameras were ever allowed in the House Chamber. He spoke out in his special orders so he would be on the record on different issues of the day.

Of course, Congressman GONZALEZ was best known for his special orders uncovering and combating the fraud and exploitation in the savings and loan industry, but he also spoke out on many occasions about a number of things. He could have spoken out on any given day about the 500 or so hearings that he held while he was chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, or perhaps he took the time on an evening to speak about the 71 bills that he helped shepherd through the process from the beginning until enactment.

He could have easily spoken about the legislation he proposed that would guarantee depositors safe places to put their savings, or about the credit that he made available to small businesses so that they could grow and flourish, or about the reauthorization of the Federal housing laws for this country, and perhaps he could have spent time talking about how he was trying to strengthen our laws regarding money laundering, bank fraud, and other financial crimes.

Well, the issue of today is the unflinching commitment of our friend and dean, HENRY B. GONZALEZ, and I, for one, would like to go on the record, as Dean GONZALEZ often did, by saying that Dean GONZALEZ, HENRY B. GONZALEZ, is truly a living legend. He has been an inspiration and role model for us all. History books will have to make plenty of room for him and all of his accomplishments.

During these closing days of this month of October as Hispanic Heritage Month, we pause to honor one of our great American leaders. We wish Dean GONZALEZ, Mrs. Bertha Gonzalez, and members of the Gonzalez family our very best as he prepares to bring his illustrious career to a close.

Dean GONZALEZ has created a legend which inspires us today and will continue to inspire us for generations to come.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to a great respected friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST.]

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA], the chairman of the Hispanic Caucus, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues in honoring HENRY GONZALEZ, who has announced that he will retire from Congress at the end of this year.

Congressman GONZALEZ has been a pioneer in State and national politics. After having served in both the San Antonio City Council and the Texas State Legislature, he arrived in Washington in 1961, 36 years ago, as the first Hispanic Congressman ever elected from the State of Texas. He has consistently been a voice for the less fortunate and has fought tirelessly for civil rights, good education, and affordable housing for millions of Americans.

Congressman GONZALEZ has always had the courage and conviction to stand up for the things he believes in. Whether it is taking on Presidents, Republicans or even Members of his own party, HENRY has never backed down from a good fight when he believed his cause is right. The truth is, HENRY usually is right.

When he leaves the House later this year, he will be missed by his colleagues. However, I am hopeful that the return home to Texas and to his family will be just the thing for his health. I suspect that even in retirement HENRY will continue to weigh in on matters important to him and to all of us, and as the new Democratic dean of the Texas delegation, I anticipate seeking HENRY'S counsel for years to come.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield at this point to another colleague from Texas, Mr. CIRO RODRIGUEZ.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, it is great to see a speaker from Texas and a fellow colleague from the Texas House.

Today we set aside time to honor a man who served the House for 35 years. It is my honor to stand here before this respected body and share my personal tribute to HENRY B. GONZALEZ on behalf of myself, the citizens of Texas, and specifically San Antonio, whom he tirelessly served.

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Many of the Members may have read about the incident where I had the opportunity, at the age of 12 or 13, approximately, where I recall pumping gas in a gas station, and I remember HENRY B. coming by and putting gas in his car. To this day, I still remember that incident. I remember vividly that experience that I had, and the privilege that I had of knowing him and seeing him there for the first time, an individual that we know now and knew then as a legend.

Growing up in San Antonio, I looked to HENRY B. as a role model of what I wanted to be and what other individuals also shared, a strong individual with strong work ethics, an individual with integrity, an individual with hon-

esty, an individual who has worth, a man who had strong convictions, and continues to verbalize his concerns and his opinions.

As I experienced that first interaction with him when I was about 12 or 13 years old, I also remember my father, who passed away recently, who used to refer to HENRY B. as El Compadre GONZALEZ, which literally means Godfather, but in our culture it is more in terms of a buddy or a friend.

We grew up in our family knowing HENRY B. as Compadre GONZALEZ, as my dad used to refer to him. My dad's Compadre, Congressman GONZALEZ, has served this House proudly as a chairman, and now as a ranking member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

His accomplishments are many. As chairman, he helped to usher over 71 bills through the legislative process. These bills focused on areas he cared about and things we knew that mattered to the average person in our community, similar to those across the country.

He was an advocate for making more credit available to small businesses, helping find a safe place for people to put their savings, and reauthorizing Federal housing loans and laws. All this and much more is what we know HENRY B. GONZALEZ as a Congressman.

Back home in San Antonio, My Compadre, as my dad used to refer to him, has roots that go way back to those days when I also first encountered him when I was about 12 years old and I put gas in his car. He served my hometown in various positions, at one point being in the San Antonio Housing Authority, then in the City Council in San Antonio, and also in the State Senate in the State of Texas.

All along, HENRY B. served his people and continues to do that. I was one of those people that he helped serve. For these accomplishments and for all of those that he has helped in, we thank him.

Today I want to say, Gracias, Compadre, as my dad would have said, "Gracias por tu servicio y por el amor que en estos anos pasados nos has ofrecido." Thank you very much. Thank you for your service, and the love that you have given all of us. Mucha suerte, y que Dios te bendiga. Good luck, and may God bless you.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. JIM LEACH], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, someone who has served for many years with the Dean.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I join my friends on the other side to pay tribute to the gentleman from San Antonio, Texas, Representative HENRY B. GONZALEZ. I know of no more honorable Member of Congress.

More than 40 years ago, HENRY GONZALEZ began a long and exemplary career in public service. He served in the San Antonio City Council, and later in the Texas State Senate, where he was

at that time the first person of Mexican descent to serve in that body in more than 100 years. Elected to the Eighty-seventh Congress on November 4, 1961, HENRY has honorably and tirelessly served his constituents and his country for 35 years in the United States House of Representatives.

A sign that has hung on the door of his office for many years sums up his perspective on the seat he has held in Congress. It reads, "This office belongs to the people of the 20th Congressional District of Texas."

In January, 1962, HENRY was appointed to serve as a member of the Committee on Banking and Currency, which is known today as the Committee on Banking and Financial Services. There he served with distinction as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing from 1981 to 1994, and chairman of the full committee from 1989 to 1994.

When HENRY became chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services in 1989, the Nation was facing the most costly financial crisis in the history of the United States, the half a trillion dollar savings and loan debacle.

Throughout this crisis HENRY GONZALEZ led the Congress in enacting legislation to protect depositors, bring stability back to the beleaguered thrift industry, and restore the strength and integrity of the deposit insurance system. His leadership helped to avoid an even larger financial crisis with even more dire implications for the national economy.

On the heels of enacting this legislation HENRY held numerous hearings to bring to light the abuses of some of the Nation's most notorious financiers. An old-fashioned liberal, HENRY never had a conflict of interest. He did not simply advocate, he lived campaign reform. His only special interest was his constituents. He never let them down, nor did they ever countenance an alternative. Honesty has its rewards.

While HENRY's work as the chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services was marked by a commitment to protect the consumer, perhaps his greatest accomplishments can be found in his tireless devotion to improving the status of public housing and helping the Nation's poor.

As a young Hispanic male in San Antonio, and later in his work as a social worker, HENRY experienced and witnessed firsthand the effects of discrimination and the economic disenfranchisement of the poor.

The record of HENRY's tenure as chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing illustrates his commitment to helping those in need. Under his direction, the Subcommittee on Housing held the first hearing in January, 1983, on the growing homeless population of the United States, which led in 1987 to the enactment of comprehensive legislation to address the needs of the homeless, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

As colleagues on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, HENRY and I have held differing positions on a number of issues, particularly in matters involving the independence of the Federal Reserve Board. But Congressman GONZALEZ has been clearly right and deserves great credit for certain of his efforts to bring about more transparency to the operations of the Federal Reserve. He has also led Congress in efforts to uncover money laundering in various parts of the country, particularly in the San Antonio Federal Reserve District.

The legislative achievements of HENRY GONZALEZ, spanning more than three decades of service in the Congress, are far too numerous to mention during this special order. But the many public service awards and honors that have been bestowed on him over the years, including the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, stand as testaments to the difference HENRY GONZALEZ has made.

It is often said that the true riches in one's life can be measured by the lives one has touched and changed for the better. Throughout his career in public service, HENRY GONZALEZ has steadfastly stood up for those less advantaged in American life. He has literally represented and improved the lives of millions. For his honorableness, for his commitment to basic values, for his remembrance of his own roots, we in this House this evening honor a giant of a man, HENRY B. GONZALEZ of Texas.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE HENRY B. GONZALEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. BRADY]. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] is recognized to continue not beyond 11:18 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee for his eloquent remarks on behalf of the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ].

Mr. Speaker, I see the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE], who has been a voice, in many respects, helping replace the voice of HENRY B. GONZALEZ from Texas in her passionate way, and a good friend of mine. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California, and I appreciate his leadership, along with the Dean-to-be of the Texas delegation, for his leadership as well in calling this special order to pay tribute to one who stands among us as a great, great, great American. That is, Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

Let me discard all of the words that I might have wanted to say, for they would take longer than even the time that I might consume. I might want to continue giving praises to a true gentleman, a gentle giant, and not in physical structure, but certainly in

mind and in heart; someone who, before it was in vogue, if you will, to be politically correct, was a valiant battler, a soldier, a person who would stoop and lift up those who may be trying to traverse those trials and tribulations of life. That was HENRY B., as he was and is affectionately called.

It is worthy to note that he was first elected in 1961, that he has served his country for some 36 years, and he served it with pride. There was never a moment when he was not proud of the fact that he came from a community such as San Antonio, where he rose up, if you will, from the ashes, not in a negative way, not to say that he could not, but that he did, and that in his own way he was a role model for all to follow, a proud Hispanic American, a proud Latino, someone who always said, yes, I can.

For that reason I admired him, and as a Texan, loved him, and recognized that when I could not speak, when African-Americans were not in the State Senate, HENRY B. GONZALEZ spoke on our behalf, carried our message; said that we, too, in Texas deserved the equality of all human beings.

Yes, he continued to raise that leadership role as he pressed forward on issues dealing with all Americans, and particularly he emphasized his proud heritage as a Hispanic American, and someone who rose up and shined his particular light, not for himself, but for others.

I think it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that Congressman GONZALEZ, along with his subcommittee chairman, but under his leadership, conducted more than 500 hearings and shepherded 71 bills through the legislative process, from introduction to enactment. I think we might say that HENRY B. GONZALEZ was not just holding the Chair, he was actually working the Chair; 500 hearings, because he believed in this process.

I think HENRY B. GONZALEZ felt that this was the best place that he could live his life, because he thought there was something worthy to the fact that we debated the issues of this country, that we did not go out on the front lawn and get pistols and shoot at each other. He truly exemplified that process.

I would like to comment on the fact that he thought of those who were most vulnerable, as I have said before, by guaranteeing depositors to have a safe place to put their savings, and to make more credit available to small businesses, reauthorizing Federal housing laws, and strengthening the laws pertaining to money laundering, bank fraud, and other financial crimes. The savings and loan industry was reorganized and revitalized during his tenure. He certainly was a man of strength during an hour of crisis for our savings and loans.

He was a good friend of the holders of the seat, and in particular, the Honorable Barbara Jordan and Mickey Leonard.