

I want you to know, MARY, that all of us in this Chamber loved and admired Sonny. Of course, we still do; and, like you, we miss him dearly. But today we are here as a family to say welcome to you and to Chesare and Chianna and to all the other little Whitakers who are here.

MARY, after winning a stunning victory on April 7, you have earned your own place in Congress. We know that you will bring a strong voice, a woman's voice, to your job. Every bit as important to me, you will bring a mother's voice to the House.

The citizens of California's 44th congressional district are fortunate to have you as their voice in Congress. They are lucky to have you on their side.

MARY, just one last thought from this friend. Sonny would be so very proud of you today. I know in my heart that he is looking down upon us at this moment and he is smiling. So, MARY, it is my privilege to say to my colleagues, welcome to Congresswoman MARY BONO.

COMMON SENSE APPROACH TO SERVING PEOPLE OF THIS NATION

(Mrs. BONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I want first to express thanks to my wonderful family for being with me on this special day. It is an honor and a privilege to share this moment with my mother and father, Karen and Clay Whitaker, my children Chianna and Chesare, my godson William Rodriguez, and all the other members of my family, along with the many friends and staff who are here today. Your help and support have made this possible.

However, one person who is not with us today is very much in my thoughts and always in my heart. His wisdom and his guidance helped me prepare for the difficult road I have traveled, and his spirit is giving me the strength to meet the many challenges that lie before me.

Sonny was an incredible force in my life, and many of you who served with him will recall the impact he had on everyone who met him. I want to thank each of you and the thousands of people from around the world who expressed their sympathy and love on his passing for your generous words of tribute and praise.

As I stand here in the people's House, I understand why this Chamber held so much meaning for my late husband. More than any of his other accomplishments, and there were many, Sonny's service to the people of California's 44th district was his proudest achievement. I will do my best to live up to the legacy that he has left and continue to bring his common sense approach to serving the people of this great Nation.

Over the past few months, I have come to know well the people of the

44th district. It has been a privilege to share time with them, to listen to their concerns and to their dreams. I understand what it is like to be a single mother trying her best to raise young children in a difficult situation. I am concerned that we need to do more to provide our youth with an education that offers them hope for the future.

I have heard from senior citizens and veterans who served our country and are now in need of our support. I have witnessed firsthand the challenges facing our law enforcement, especially in their war against drugs and gang violence. And I have been inspired by the hundreds of people in our community who daily make a difference, asking for no recognition, just a little help.

I believe that the people of the 44th district sent me to Congress for much the same reason that they sent Sonny, because they knew they could trust me to do the very best I could do. While I have much to learn, I know if I serve honestly and honorably, I will fulfill that trust.

There are many difficult and complex issues facing our Nation, and there are very few simple solutions. However, every child knows that you cannot spend more than you have. We must continue to show fiscal responsibility in our Nation's budget. Tax reform needs to be enacted to provide relief to individuals and small businesses. And it is imperative that we maintain a strong national defense, for without it there will be no peace.

I do not come before you today with solutions, only resolve. It is my great honor to have this opportunity to serve, and I thank from the bottom of my heart all the voters from the 44th District of California. Thank you, and God bless.

INTRODUCTION OF HON. BARBARA LEE OF CALIFORNIA TO THE HOUSE

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce a friend and now a new colleague, BARBARA LEE, as the new representative of California's 9th Congressional District.

Congratulations, BARBARA. And we are all delighted to welcome you to Congress. BARBARA, of course, is not unfamiliar with this Chamber or these halls. Her years of dedicated service to the people of California's 9th Congressional District began with her service as the senior adviser and also as chief of staff of our former colleague and dear friend, Ron Dellums.

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Although we will miss you, Ron, we know that BARBARA is well prepared to step into your shoes and to blaze new trails of her own.

BARBARA is and will continue to be an effective representative for her constituents. In the 7 years that she served

in California State legislature, 67 of her bills and resolutions were signed by the Governor, impacting a broad spectrum of community concerns; including public safety, education, environmental protections, labor, health, and women's and children's issues.

I was privileged to work with BARBARA in the California State Assembly from 1990 to 1992. More recently, I had the pleasure of working with BARBARA on Team California, our delegation's State/Federal working group.

Through my work with BARBARA, I know her to be an energetic and extremely effective and dedicated advocate for her community, and an enthusiastic and prolific legislator.

BARBARA is a staunch advocate for job creation and economic development because she recognizes the positive impact that jobs have on the community's quality of life. In the same vein, BARBARA has worked with Federal, State, and local governments to create local and economic community development at decommissioned military bases.

BARBARA has also been committed to developing closer economic, political, and cultural ties between the State of California and Africa; a role that she will no doubt continue and expand upon when she is here in Congress.

It is worth noting that, with BARBARA's election, a record 12 out of California's 29 Democratic House Members are female. Now, this number is especially significant when you consider that it was a mere 10 years ago that there were only 12 Democratic women in the entire Congress.

Welcome, BARBARA. I know that you will have a productive and a distinguished career in Congress. We look forward to working with you on behalf of the State of California and the Nation as a whole. So please join me in welcoming Congresswoman BARBARA LEE.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE TO CONTINUE TO BE A LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER FOR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL JUSTICE

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, first, to Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, to Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. BONIOR, to the entire California delegation, to all of the Members of this great institution, I am grateful for your support and for your leadership as we move into the next millennium.

I would like to pay special recognition, first, to my family; to my mother, Mildred Massey; and to my father, Garvin Tutt; and to all of my family for their consistent support and their love. They instilled in me at an early age a deep sense of passion for justice. And I am extremely grateful to each and every one of my family members. And I want to take this opportunity to publicly tell them that I love you very, very much.