

This provision could prevent the Corps from carrying out a necessary element of any reasonable and prudent alternative to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of the endangered least tern and pallid sturgeon, and the threatened piping plover.

In addition to the objectionable restriction placed upon the Corps of Engineers, the bill fails to provide funding for the California-Bay Delta initiative. This decision could significantly hamper ongoing Federal and State efforts to restore this ecosystem, protect the drinking water of 22 million Californians, and enhance water supply and reliability for over 7 million acres of highly productive farmland and growing urban areas across California. The \$60 million budget request, all of which would be used to support activities that can be carried out using existing authorities, is the minimum necessary to ensure adequate Federal participation in these initiatives, which are essential to reducing existing conflicts among water users in California. This funding should be provided without legislative restrictions undermining key environmental statutes or disrupting the balanced approach to meeting the needs of water users and the environment that has been carefully developed through almost 6 years of work with the State of California and interested stakeholders.

The bill also fails to provide sufficient funding necessary to restore endangered salmon in the Pacific Northwest, which would interfere with the Corps of Engineers' ability to comply with the Endangered Species Act, and provides no funds to start the new construction project requested for the Florida Everglades. The bill also fails to fund the Challenge 21 program for environmentally friendly flood damage reduction projects, the program to modernize Corps recreation facilities, and construction of an emergency outlet at Devil's Lake. In addition, it does not fully support efforts to research and develop nonpolluting, domestic sources of energy through solar and renewable technologies that are vital to America's energy security.

Finally, the bill provides nearly \$700 million for over 300 unrequested projects, including: nearly 80 unrequested projects totaling more than \$330 million for the Department of Energy; nearly 240 unrequested projects totaling over \$300 million for the Corps of Engineers' and, more than 10 unrequested projects totaling in excess of \$10 million for the Bureau of Reclamation. For example, more than 80 unrequested Corps of Engineers construction projects included in the bill would have a long-term cost of nearly \$2.7 billion. These unrequested projects and earmarks come at the expense of other initiatives important to tax-paying Americans.

The American people deserve Government spending based upon a balanced approach that maintains fiscal discipline, eliminates the national debt,

extends the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, provides for an appropriately sized tax cut, establishes a new voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit in the context of broader reforms, expands health care coverage to more families, and funds critical investments for our future. I urge the Congress to work expeditiously to develop a bill that addresses the needs of the Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, October 7, 2000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the message and bill will be printed as a House document.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that further consideration of the veto message be postponed until Wednesday, October 11.

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

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE BRUCE VENTO, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 618) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 618

*Resolved*, That the House has heard with profound sorrow of the death of the Honorable Bruce F. Vento, a Representative from the State of Minnesota.

*Resolved*, That a committee of such Members of the House as the Speaker may designate, together with such Members of the Senate as may be joined, be appointed to attend the funeral.

*Resolved*, That the Sergeant at Arms of the House be authorized and directed to take such steps as may be necessary for carrying out the provisions of these resolutions and that the necessary expenses in connection therewith be paid out of applicable accounts of the House.

*Resolved*, That the Clerk communicate these resolutions to the Senate and transmit a copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

*Resolved*, That when the House adjourns today, it adjourn as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. FOWLER). The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, it was with great sadness, a sense of personal loss, and a loss to this body that at the opening of session today I took the well to announce that at 11:20 this morning our colleague, our dear friend, BRUCE VENTO, succumbed to mesothelioma, asbestos-induced cancer of the lung and peritoneal cavity.

Madam Speaker, I will reserve my comments for this great and distinguished legislator, friend, hard-work-

ing great American until later in this 1-hour.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO).

(Mr. SABO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SABO. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), for yielding me this time.

It is a sad day. BRUCE VENTO and I have been friends for 30 years. I remember him when he came to the Minnesota State legislature as a new member. We served 6 years together there, then he preceded me by 2 years in Congress. I watched this young man, who came to the State legislature as an eager young freshman legislator, grow into one of our great national leaders on so many issues.

I want to offer my condolences to his wife, Susan, to his sons, his grandchildren, and the rest of the Vento family. BRUCE was always very close to his family and so proud of them. That was part of his being, just as being from the east side of St. Paul was part of his being. He never forgot those roots. He represented the people of that district with a passion.

BRUCE was a person with passion for many, many things: to make sure that the recent immigrants, the Hmong from his district, who had served our country, could become citizens.

1900

A broad array of housing legislation with little special emphasis on the homeless, but it really went to the totality of housing programs in this country because he felt people needed decent housing, to dealing with the complexity of how we deal with financial institutions in this country.

I always thought it was so fitting that BRUCE, the biology teacher in south Minneapolis, became chair of our Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands because this was another real passion for him. And he left a real legacy in terms of expanded public lands, expanded parks and a whole variety of other public facilities in this country that will be a legacy for many, many future generations to enjoy.

So it is a sad day. But I think, and most importantly, of simply a good friend.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I am now happy to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) the chairman of the Committee on International Relations.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the privileged resolution offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

I want to express my deep sorrow regarding the passing of not only a good

colleague who was an outstanding Member of this Chamber, but a dear friend.

I have known BRUCE VENTO since he first came to this Chamber back in 1976. He brought with him at that time an enthusiasm, a dedication and patriotism which caused him to become one of our most respected colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Having enjoyed three successful terms in the State legislature of Minnesota, BRUCE brought with him to this Chamber a deep understanding of the legislative process and the knowledge of how to get things done.

In a testimonial just this past June, President Clinton credited BRUCE with steering into law more than 300 bills to protect our Nation's natural resources.

I had the opportunity to come to know BRUCE well when we had occasion to travel together overseas. He participated on several occasions in the U.S. delegation that meets with the European parliament where he made particularly significant contributions to discussions on areas such as transatlantic cooperation to protect the environment.

As chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, I worked closely with BRUCE in his commendable efforts to make American citizens of the Hmong, an ethnic Laotian group which fought with our own forces during the Vietnam conflict. These courageous people were indeed fortunate to have such a champion as BRUCE VENTO.

When Democrats controlled the House, BRUCE VENTO served as chairman of our Subcommittee on Natural Resources, and in that capacity he helped my own district preserve Sterling Forest as a virgin territory.

To his wife Susan and his three sons, my spouse Georgia and I and our colleagues unite in extending our deep condolences with the knowledge that BRUCE VENTO was a giant among us whose shoes will be difficult to fill.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks, and I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON).

(Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, it is a tough day for all of us from Minnesota. BRUCE was not only a good friend of ours and a colleague, but he was someone that was, in the tradition of Minnesota, which has sent all kinds of outstanding elected leaders to Washington and St. Paul and throughout our elected offices in Minnesota, without a doubt, BRUCE VENTO was at the top of that list of great leaders that we have sent to Washington from Minnesota.

As many of you know, he spent a good part of his life teaching and then serving the interests of his people there in St. Paul, both in the legislature and in Congress. And he did that with so

much compassion, so much dignity. I am sure that his constituents are the ones that are feeling the loss as much as anybody, because he really went to bat for them. No matter who they were, no matter what status in life they came from, BRUCE VENTO was always there fighting for his constituents.

I extend the deepest condolences to his wife Susan and his family, who BRUCE thought so much of.

BRUCE and I worked together on a lot of things. We agreed on a lot of things, and there were things that we did not agree on. But the thing that I really appreciated about BRUCE was that, even though we sometimes would be on opposite sides of the issue, we always were good friends and he always treated us with tremendous respect and dignity.

I just think that he is, without a doubt, one of the greatest Members of this House. He will be missed a lot by myself and I think all of our colleagues and especially by the people of Minnesota.

So I thank the gentleman very much for inviting me to speak.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD).

Mr. RAMSTAD. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding and for organizing this resolution and tribute to our dear friend and colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO).

This is, Madam Speaker, truly a sad day for all Minnesotans. We have lost a great public servant. Congress has lost its champion of the environment.

Our thoughts and prayers are certainly with BRUCE's family, with his wonderful wife, Susan Lynch Vento; with BRUCE's sons, Michael, Peter and John; and their families as well.

For 24 years, BRUCE VENTO served the people of Minnesota's Fourth Congressional District with great integrity and a strong commitment to helping people in need. His work to protect the environment, provide affordable housing, his work to help the homeless and open new doors for immigrants, his work has truly established a lasting legacy.

I was privileged over the last 10 years to work in this body closely with BRUCE VENTO on a number of legislative initiatives, and I deeply respected BRUCE as a colleague and a friend like all of us here in the House.

The people of Minnesota and the Nation will sorely miss BRUCE's vigilant protection of our environment. When it comes to protecting the environment, BRUCE VENTO was truly a global champion. Whether it was defending our precious Boundary Waters Canoe Area wilderness, helping the homeless, providing affordable housing, or aiding our newest immigrants in Minnesota, our Hmong community, BRUCE always made his case with great eloquence and great passion.

BRUCE VENTO, Madam Speaker, represented the best in public service. And

his integrity, his work ethic, his strong commitment to the people of Minnesota will continue to inspire all of us.

May you rest in peace, dear friend.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LUTHER).

Mr. LUTHER. Madam Speaker, I thank very much the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for organizing this evening's effort, the leader of our delegation in Minnesota.

Madam Speaker, I think one of the most difficult things that any of us can do is to come to this floor to talk about the passing of a friend and a colleague. And I, like the others, want to extend my sympathies to Susan, a good friend as well, and to the entire Vento family. The family is just an outstanding Minnesota family, and I want to extend my sympathies to each and every member.

BRUCE was a dear friend and an extremely sincere, hard-working, dedicated person as a Member of this body. He touched all of us in so many ways.

The adjectives could go on and on when describing a person like BRUCE. I think most people will remember him for his tireless work on behalf of the environment, on behalf of the homeless. I will remember him for these efforts and a dimension that has already been touched on here but that is the dimension of always looking out for the interest of the common person.

No matter what the issue was, BRUCE just had this ability to see beyond the special interests and all the glamor of Washington and the influences in Washington and just look at how this would affect the common person and how he could best represent that common person.

I will also remember BRUCE as a legislator who was more concerned about rolling up his sleeves and getting the job done rather than issuing press releases and taking credit. And I think that really truly earned him the respect and friendship of so many people in this body. So that, even if he could have a battle over an issue with others in the body, he developed an incredible friendship and following here within this body.

I think that was pointed out so vividly at the time that he came to the well of the House and actually advised us of his particular illness. The outpouring of support that day just shows that a person that conducts himself the way he did, the kind of support and friendship that he can have in this body.

I think young people looking to get involved in public service in our country can look to BRUCE VENTO as a model of a public servant, the kind of person we learned about as young people that are the models for us. And I think young people today can look at his life.

Perhaps most vivid in my own personal memory will be the way in which

he welcomed me to the House when I was first elected here after the 1994 election. I had served briefly with BRUCE in the Minnesota legislature for a couple of years before he came to Congress; and so, I knew BRUCE. But he had moved on to this body long before I had. He welcomed me with open arms. There simply is no one who spent more time making sure that I was adjusted, that I understood how this institution operated compared to the Minnesota legislature.

Afterwards I started thinking about that and I thought to myself, you know, he is not treating me any different than he would treat anyone else. Yes, I knew him from the Minnesota legislature. But it did not matter who you were, BRUCE VENTO would open his arms to you, he would welcome you in, he would take whatever time was necessary in order to make sure that you felt comfortable, that you were achieving what you wanted to achieve. That is the kind of person we are talking about here this evening. He was really just an outstanding Member of Congress and an outstanding individual. I have no doubt that his legacy will live on for many years.

In conclusion, I would simply say that, now that he has passed away, it is up to the rest of us to carry on the work and the commitment of BRUCE VENTO.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Minnesota for offering this resolution tonight.

This hardly seems possible. It seems just a few months ago that BRUCE was strong and healthy and vigorous. I would see him in the House gym in the morning. He loved to go for a swim, and so did I. And he would be in the pool when I got there at 7 o'clock and he would still be in the pool when I left. He was probably in better condition than virtually any other Member here in the Congress. And to think that this terrible disease drained the life out of him in such a short period of time just really does not seem possible.

1915

In many respects, BRUCE VENTO typified, I think, the best of public service. And I think those of us from Minnesota do have a special pride for the kind of public service that BRUCE VENTO believed in. In many respects, the way he died also symbolized the way he lived. He was prepared to fight for what he believed in, even against insurmountable odds, as he fought these last several months against a disease which would not surrender. But he was passionate about those things. And I have come to respect and admire him so much for the way that he would fight even on those issues on which we disagreed, and as a member of the Minnesota delegation, the institutional wisdom that he brought on all of the

issues that affected our entire State and when we worked together on issues that were important to Minnesota, we all worked together and we all listened when he spoke and we all appreciated his wisdom. The contributions that he made on the environment and so many other issues will be remembered for many, many years to come.

There is an expression up above the Speaker's rostrum, a quote from Noah Webster and it closes with these words: "So that we in our day and generation may not perform something worthy to be remembered." Well, BRUCE VENTO will be remembered, because he performed many things in this body worthy to be remembered. BRUCE VENTO will be remembered and ultimately he will be succeeded. But he will never be replaced. We can only hope and pray, and I will say that as he approaches the next part of life's journey, that he will be greeted with these words, "Well done, o good and noble servant."

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE).

Mr. MINGE. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for arranging for this opportunity to pay our tributes to BRUCE VENTO. BRUCE had a distinguished and very vigorous career here in Congress. He was an advocate for the environment and for all Americans. His work set a high standard for public service. He raised the bar for all of us. We are and we will continue to be challenged to match his level of commitment and accomplishment.

I certainly learned from him of the ways to be more effective in this legislative process, in this body. I have been inspired as have many others by his commitment to opportunity, particularly in the areas of education, housing, financial services and citizenship. BRUCE clearly believed that all Americans, especially those of us from humble backgrounds and limited means, must have full opportunity to participate in our society and that this meant very vigorous and dedicated work on behalf of all of our constituents.

I would like to simply point out two things that BRUCE worked on that I deeply respected and certainly felt keenly his sense of accomplishment. The first is his work on behalf of Hmong residents of our country, a group of individuals from Laos that had come to the United States after the Vietnam War who were essentially people without a nation, without a home. He championed their cause here in Congress and spearheaded the effort in the House of Representatives to grant citizenship to Hmong.

In connection with conservation and the environment, he and I shared a keen interest in cleaning up and providing wildlife habitat in the river systems in the upper Midwest, and particularly the Minnesota and the Mississippi Rivers. What he did for the river front area of St. Paul is truly re-

markable and is a lasting accomplishment for our State and our Nation. What he did in connection with the Boundary Waters Canoe Area is also outstanding. He was a tireless advocate. It was a controversial issue within our delegation, within our State. But BRUCE would not give up. He insisted on protecting this important resource. And in the end, he and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) reached an understanding or an accommodation, shook hands and moved forward shoulder to shoulder on behalf of an arrangement which he believed preserved the very best and the very essence of this important Boundary Waters Canoe Area. I and many others shared that commitment and that concern with him.

I have gotten to know BRUCE's wife, Susan Lynch, a remarkable person, and our sympathies go out to her and to BRUCE's sons, to his grandchildren and others in the Vento family in this great loss. It certainly is an occasion for all of us to examine our priorities, our commitments, our role and, as I said earlier, when it comes to our role and our work, BRUCE VENTO raised the bar and all of us are challenged to redouble our efforts to maintain the level of commitment and accomplishment that BRUCE has established.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota and his fellow Minnesotans for taking responsibility to introduce this resolution for our friend BRUCE. BRUCE and I came into Congress together and for 24 years we served on the same committee. Of all the Members I have ever dealt with and known, BRUCE combined an almost innate sense of idealism with a can-do practicality and how to apply it to the legislative process.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote:

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.

BRUCE succeeded in each and every way. He will be much missed.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, it is a high privilege for me this evening to join in this resolution introduced by the dean of the Minnesota delegation and the Minnesota Members to participate in this remembrance of our beloved colleague, BRUCE VENTO. I can

say that I have known BRUCE for 18 years now. As a new Member of Congress, he sat right behind me, that meant he had more seniority, on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services. He welcomed me just as other Members have indicated he welcomed them as they came. What was great for me, and I say this to his family as they are enduring this great, great loss, he was so friendly. In the days when he first came, there were only about two dozen women in the House, and I was not an attorney in a body with about 75 percent of the Members who were attorneys, and to discover he was a biologist who had been an educator made me feel right at home. As we would go through amendments in the committee, I found a real friend who would talk to me and who would bring me along, that made me feel that I was an equal Member. As I came to know his other committee work outside of banking where he championed the needs of the homeless before it became a popular expression in the country, or homes for people who had difficulty with affordability. I learned about his tremendous interest in the environment. He was quite a bicyclist. And I watched his work in literally every congressional district across this country, as a real successor to Johnny Appleseed and the great American tradition of love of the outdoors.

In my own district, for example, we have the Maumee Heritage Corridor now. The Maumee River is the largest river that empties into the Great Lakes. Without BRUCE VENTO, that designation would not be possible. And the discovery of the Fallen Timbers battle site which ranks with Yorktown and Gettysburg as one of the three most important battle sites in the founding of the republic would not be possible without the legislative efforts of BRUCE VENTO.

And so I just wanted to come down here to say that I shall always remember BRUCE VENTO. And as a representative of the people of my district, I will say that I remember his great ability, his great humor, his great service as an educator as well as a lawmaker. I will remember him talking to me throughout my career about the importance of housing as well as the needs of the underserved and America's greatest, greatest lawmaker in my era in terms of the environment and our open spaces and our needs to continue to conserve our beautiful land and our resources.

I just say again to his family and to his beloved Minnesota colleagues, we have lost a dear friend and a great lawmaker.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Madam Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for organizing this opportunity for us to pay tribute to a great representative of the American people.

The men and women of this House have lost a warm and wonderful colleague. The people of St. Paul and Minnesota have lost a passionate and powerfully effective advocate. And the people of America have lost a very model of what a Member of this Congress should and ought to be. BRUCE VENTO was all of that and more. I had the privilege of serving with him for 6 years on both the Committee on Banking and Financial Services and the Committee on Resources. In that experience, I learned a great deal from him about the Nation's banking system and our need to protect and preserve soundness and security within that system, and although I thought I knew a great deal about the environment and America's natural places, I learned more than I ever thought was possible from listening to BRUCE and traveling with him.

My first term here in the Congress, he organized a trip as chairman of the Subcommittee on Parks of the Committee on Resources into the Bob Marshall which is the wildest area in the lower 48 States. After a day of traveling to a remote camp, we arose early the next morning and rode 10 miles on horseback and then later in the day another 10 miles on foot to a very remote lake on the edge of the Cascade Mountains. In that experience with BRUCE and members of the Forest Service, I learned a great deal about America's wild places and the need to protect and preserve them. And I learned them from someone who as a biologist was fortified with the knowledge that made his advocacy as a conservationist and a naturalist even more effective.

BRUCE VENTO was, yes, a great representative for the people that he served and for all of the people of this Nation, but I think fundamentally he was a teacher. In everything that he did, he sought the opportunity to expand knowledge, his own as well as those around him. Anyone who had the opportunity to spend any time with him whatsoever, engaged in conversation with him, learned a great deal about a myriad variety of subjects on which he was very, very knowledgeable. We have lost a dear friend, a good colleague, a strong advocate.

I would hope that at a time not far from this moment, this Congress would turn its attention toward designating some appropriate place in this country among the wild areas, among the natural areas of America, to name in honor of the service of BRUCE VENTO to the people of Minnesota and to the people of America.

1930

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and for his suggestion of a naming, and I would say that we are working on one or two in Minnesota. Already an elementary school has been named for BRUCE VENTO. There are two other designa-

tions that we are working on that we hoped to have accomplished before the end of this session, but his death precluded our best efforts.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Cleveland, Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for organizing this hour.

Madam Speaker, as I sit here, I realize I am probably the person who is speaking who knew BRUCE VENTO the least amount of time. I just came to Congress in this 106th Congress and had the fortune of serving on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services with BRUCE VENTO, as well as the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity. Now, when one is a freshman, as the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) said, one sits way down in the front and the more higher ranking members sit way in the back. So when we started, because this is such a large body, one does not get to know all of the Members; but one gets to know the people they serve on the committee with.

The thing I remember first about BRUCE VENTO was that deep voice. So when we went through the roll, they would say VENTO, here or yes, and I would turn around and try to figure out who it was.

Luckily on the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, the room was much smaller, and so he sat right behind me. Many chances I got to say so and so and how are you doing and the like. All I can say is having only known him about 20 months or less, he was good at, as everyone said, instructing and teaching. Through the H.R. 10 financial modernization, I always looked to hear what he had to say as we went through our hearings. Through the housing situations, I agreed with him about the need for affordable housing.

Dr. Martin Luther King says these words: "God can do tremendous things through the person who does not care who gets the credit," and I think that most exemplifies BRUCE VENTO.

I am pleased to be here this evening. I did not know his wife. I did not know his family; but as just one little Member of Congress, I say to them that they have my condolences and my prayers, and I know where BRUCE VENTO is. He is up among the birds and the trees on a lake somewhere just laying back and enjoying it, and I pray that he enjoys the rest of his time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), who sat side by side with Mr. VENTO for so many years on the Committee on Resources.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for yielding me this time.

BRUCE VENTO and I came to Congress together in 1977, and for many years we

were seat mates on the Committee on Resources. Like me, he was a school-teacher and brought his ability to instruct others to this Congress. He understood and could explain the intricacies of banking legislation in very, very clear detail. His well-known love for the environment and its protection has enriched our country beyond measure. For several years, his family and my family would celebrate Thanksgiving together, with great joy and filled with wonderful animated conversation.

This country is clearly a better country because of BRUCE VENTO, and I know that I am a better person because of BRUCE VENTO. May the angels receive you into paradise, dear friend.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS). He may be the gentleman from Georgia, but he is also the gentleman from all America.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), for holding this special order and paying tribute to our friend, our colleague, and our brother, BRUCE VENTO.

Madam Speaker, I came to the Congress in 1987 when I first met BRUCE VENTO. I was more than lucky but really truly blessed to serve on the old Interior Committee with BRUCE. BRUCE was our Chair, the Chair of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands; and it was a delight and wonderful to serve with this wonderful, gifted, talented human being.

He loved America. He loved open space, the land. He wanted to do as much as possible to preserve some of this beauty and leave it a little cleaner for future generations.

I had an opportunity to travel with BRUCE on one occasion, I will never forget, for a hearing we held in Minnesota at the State Capitol, dealing with protecting the Mississippi. While I was there, I am not sure whether it was on a Monday or a Tuesday, but it was a Taste of Minnesota Day. BRUCE took me out of the State Capitol, and the members of the subcommittee. We went out on the grounds and we tasted all of this wonderful food that BRUCE introduced me to.

He was very delightful in introducing a poor guy who grew up in Alabama, now living in Georgia, to this very special and wonderful food in Minnesota.

I had an opportunity to invite BRUCE to come to Atlanta, and he came to Georgia. We held a hearing on the Martin Luther King Historic Site, and I would say today if it had not been for our friend and colleague, BRUCE VENTO, neither the Martin Luther King Historic Site in Atlanta, nor the historic trail, Highway 80 from Selma to Montgomery, would be in existence.

BRUCE never gave up. He had a vision of making America better, saving the land, saving the forests; and I truly believe when historians pick up their

pens and write about this period in our history they will have to say this man, our colleague, our friend, BRUCE VENTO, made a difference.

So on behalf of myself and my wife, Lillian, that BRUCE would ask me about from time to time, how is Lillian, I want to say to BRUCE's family, his wife and children, you have our sympathy. You will be kept in our prayers; and we will never, ever forget the likeness of this one giant among us. He will be deeply missed.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) for those heartfelt, very touching words.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), my good friend and colleague, for giving me time to say these things concerning this great American.

Madam Speaker, I too am truly saddened to learn of our colleague's passing today. Congressman BRUCE VENTO was truly a champion and one of the outstanding leaders of this institution whenever conservation and environmental issues were deliberated and debated in this Chamber. As a senior member of the House Committee on Resources, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO) let it be known to all the members of our committee and to all of our colleagues where the line is drawn whenever environmental issues are taken up by this body.

In the many years that he served as chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, I can attest to my colleagues and to our Nation that some 300 bills that have become law have VENTO's signature on them. I can honestly say that even the national park that is now established in my own district was due mainly to VENTO's leadership and legislative skills that Congress passed a law to have this national park in my district.

I want to express the sense of appreciation and gratitude from our traditional leaders and from the people of American Samoa to Mr. VENTO.

Madam Speaker, I am going to miss this gentle giant, and I say giant, from Minnesota. I have always valued his opinions and how much he has influenced my own thinking about life itself. I remember when he visited our national park in American Samoa, none of us were able to catch up with them when he was climbing one of the steep mountains, even on the roads and the trails that were so muddy that not even the four-wheel vehicles could make it.

Madam Speaker, I want to convey to Mrs. Vento and the family the condolences of the people of my district. Our people have a saying in a traditional sense, ia manuia lau faigamalaga lau afioga BRUCE VENTO. May you have a good and successful voyage, Your Honor, BRUCE VENTO.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for yielding me time to honor this great American.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for those wonderful words from your native land that our colleague would so much appreciate.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I commend him and the rest of the Minnesota delegation for organizing this special order to pay tribute to a dear friend, BRUCE VENTO.

BRUCE VENTO was a dear friend and a dear colleague of mine, who I greatly respected and admired. Even though I have had the privilege of serving with him for the past 4 years in the United States Congress, I knew of BRUCE VENTO as an admirer from afar, given his work on conservation and environmental measures and as a resident of western Wisconsin just across the river from his congressional district.

Since coming to Congress, I had the privilege of serving with him on the Committee on Resources and the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands; and he was a natural leader on the Committee on Resources, unquestionably, given his profound interest and depth of knowledge and expertise on these issues of 24 years serving on the Committee on Resources; 10 of those years as Chair of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, to which the Nation owes him a debt of gratitude.

His strong leadership on the Committee on Resources resulted in protecting hundreds of thousands of acreage and the enactment of over 300 laws preserving the environment, from the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Area, a place that holds special meaning to me since I try to get up there for a week every summer with some brothers and friends to spend time in the Boundary Waters Area canoeing and camping; to the Minnesota National Wildlife Refuge; to the new parks and wilderness that were created in Alaska and even in American Samoa, as our good friend just stated earlier.

What especially impressed me about BRUCE VENTO was his concern about some of the most disenfranchised and politically powerless people that exist in our country, from the homeless to his concern for housing issues but especially his tireless advocacy for the Hmong population in this country. Both BRUCE VENTO and I share a sizable Hmong population in our respective congressional districts. That is why I was especially proud to be able to join forces with BRUCE on a number of issues that affected Hmong rights, but most particularly the Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act that BRUCE championed for quite a few years and which

ultimately was passed into law this year, that recognizes the tremendous contribution that Hmong veterans and their families gave U.S. armed services personnel during the war in Southeast Asia.

These were people who fought side by side with our veterans of the Vietnam conflict. They were there building the landing strips for our air personnel. They were there rescuing downed pilots during the Vietnam War, and they were the ones who were most persecuted after the war, many of whom were able to seek refuge and safety in the United States. But these were not a very politically powerful or a large political constituency, and they were a group of people who were in search of a leader to represent their views and to bring fairness and decency to their cause, and that is what BRUCE VENTO provided them.

This was not a political issue for him, but it was an issue of doing right by our friends and allies and recognizing their contribution. Perhaps there are going to be many living legacies that BRUCE VENTO has given us in this Nation, but I could not think of one more important or more lasting than providing a home in a country for the Hmong population who live with us today.

The people in Minnesota and Wisconsin and the entire United States will sorely miss Congressman BRUCE VENTO. I am proud to have served with him and to have called him my friend, but I especially appreciated the moments we shared together on our numerous flights to and from the Twin Cities and out here to Washington.

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He and I would oftentimes be sitting next to each other, which gave me a wonderful opportunity to pick his brain and talk about legislation and policy issues. I enjoyed listening to his stories of his recent bike trips that he enjoyed doing time and time again, but I especially liked listening to his stories about his family.

For a guy who was as busy and as committed as BRUCE VENTO was on the great public policy issues of our day and the work that he did in the United States Congress, he always kept family first. He was so proud of his children, but especially proud of his grandchildren. You could just see his face light up with joy and excitement talking about his latest discovery of a grandchild, or of seeing the world anew through his grandchildren.

That, for a young Member of Congress, that drove home a very important point and lesson that I have committed to my own service here. That was to not lose focus or proper perspective on the role and the importance of family life and spending enough time with our own children, and hopefully someday for myself, even my grandchildren.

He will be missed. He will never be replaced. But I can honestly say that

this country is definitely a better place due to his efforts. I thank him for his advice and guidance, and may he rest in peace.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

I am feeling very sad today and bad today because I had meant to write a note to BRUCE VENTO and did not do it in time. What I wanted to tell him, maybe I can pass on in some way to his family, was to thank him for his incredible generosity to a freshman Member of the United States Congress.

I served with him on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services and on the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity. At one point last year, early in my very first term, I had a press conference dealing with funding for low-income housing. While I had invited a lot of Members to come, one of the few that showed up was Bruce Vento, who is a very important member on that committee. I was really honored for him to be there.

Among the things he said were nice things about me, which was so greatly appreciated, and so unnecessary. When I presented my very first amendment on the floor of the House, rather clumsily, it would have been a whole lot worse if BRUCE VENTO had not been there, because he stood by my side and told me exactly what I should do. And then he spoke to the amendment, which was fairly noncontroversial, a big deal to me, and I think he knew that, because he came down not so much because he supported it, which he did, but I think he came down to the floor to support me, which, again, was greatly appreciated.

In a town where people say, "If you want a friend, get a dog," BRUCE VENTO was the kind of person who would really be a friend, no strings attached. He wanted to help people because he was a kind and a generous and a decent and a nice person.

So in addition to all the wonderful contributions that he has made to our country, I wanted to tell him that I really appreciated how kind he was to me. I want to express my deepest condolences to his family, and just to say that I will miss him very much.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD).

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

I, too, rise to pay tribute to the passing of our friend and colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota, BRUCE VENTO. Much has been said already by a number of Members regarding how he dealt with freshman Members and how willing he was to devote his time and energy to explain things.

I would have to say that as a first-term elected in the 103rd Congress,

he was chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands. He helped me pass my very first bill, which was a bill relating to the War in the Pacific Park in Guam, and how he took the time not only to help me shepherd that bill through, but there was a significant amount of time that he devoted committee resources to.

He was a marvelous teacher, and in many respects, coming from the field of education, I feel a very special kinship to him because I, too, am a teacher. He was able to evidence the best in teaching behavior, not only in how he carried himself here as a legislator, but how he interacted individually with Members.

He was a persistent, unrelenting friend of the environment, constantly on focus, sometimes much to the distraction of those who opposed him. Having observed him and participated with him in many discussions in the Committee on Resources, he was very unrelenting, but I think in an admirable way in and in a way that people honored and recognized his expertise and his commitment and his passion.

There will be or there should be no occasion for any American not to know the work of BRUCE VENTO when they go around and see the national parks in this country, and see his commitment to protecting the environment and making sure that, for generations yet unborn, they, too, will benefit and profit from green spaces and from understanding the connection that we all have to the environment and to each other.

In my capacity as chairman of the Congressional Asian Pacific caucus, I learned another dimension about BRUCE; that is, his passion and his work for the Hmong people, and again, in a way that I had not thought about. Again, he demonstrated what kind of a legislator he was; that he was wide-ranging, that he understood his responsibility to his constituents, and he understood the unique circumstances which the Hmong people in his district lived under, and he took steps to alleviate and to mediate, help mediate their experience here in the United States.

Of course, his work for the homeless is legendary.

So in many, many ways, we will all miss BRUCE. I wanted just to have the opportunity to express my personal gratitude for his efforts in helping me as a freshman Member shepherd my first piece of legislation through this body and through committees, and also to thank him for his efforts in that regard; to pay tribute to his unrelenting commitment and passion for the environment; and to express my sincerest condolences to his family.

We will miss him, and I am sure he is in a better place.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I would express my great appreciation to all the

Members who have stayed long after the legislative business of the House to express their profound respect for the work of BRUCE VENTO in this body, for the friendship that he has meant to each of them.

BRUCE VENTO, like all of us, had great moments in this body, but none was greater than the moment that he took some months ago in the well of this House to address us all about the illness which had afflicted him and which he knew would take his life.

What stands out is that in a time of rancor, in a body where campaigns have moved from the hinterlands to the House floor and have so often spilled over into invective, that was a shining moment for this House, where he spoke of the politics of joy and of hope, of the meaning of public service, and his pride in serving the people of his district, of his State, and of his country.

It was a great moment for the House of Representatives, one that will be enshrined forever, not just in the RECORD, but in the hearts of all of us who were privileged to hear that beautiful outpouring of the meaning of this great deliberative body.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), who sat side by side with BRUCE VENTO throughout all these 12 terms.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I think my friend for yielding time to me.

Indeed, BRUCE VENTO was a dear colleague to me, as well. Having served with him, as well as the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), side by side, first on the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, and now on the Committee on Resources for my 24 years in this body, to say that BRUCE VENTO knew what was in every piece of legislation that came before our committee is not an understatement.

As I said, having sat next to him, I could see him and would marvel at the way he would read every piece of bill upon which he were asked to vote, with that red highlight pen underlining the pertinent pieces of every piece of legislation that came before our committee.

Truly, he was a knowledgeable Member of this body. He was dedicated to our environment. He came with me to my district in southern West Virginia, rode on our whitewater rivers, and came back and helped me craft legislation to preserve those rivers for generations to come.

BRUCE was in my class. We came to this body in 1977. Throughout our years together, he was a man who truly lived the words "public servant" to their fullest.

To his wife, to his family, to his friends back in Minnesota who he so ably served, I do say, we shall all miss him. BRUCE VENTO was a dear friend to all of us.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in the few moments that remain, there was only one other person who in my memory stands out for having taken the well of the House to address his colleagues on the meaning of life and the meaning of legislative service. That was Senator Hubert Humphrey, who was invited by this body to address the House from the Clerk's desk.

Parenthetically, when he arrived there, he looked out over this assembled gathering of Members of the House and Members of the Senate and said, "Oh, you don't know how long I have waited to stand here and make this speech."

BRUCE and I were standing together and marvelled at this wonderful expose of the meaning of the legislative process and of service to humanity. Little did either of us realize years later he, too, would take the well to give a similar civics lesson, one from the heart, on the meaning of comity and of service.

At the fundraising event in BRUCE's honor where funds were raised for a scholarship program for science students, little red pine seedlings were handed out. I took three of those, one for each of his sons, because I had a sense then that we were witnessing a drama that would play itself out in the end of his life in some months.

I planted those seedlings in our backyard. They are thriving. They will get another place where they will get more light, more strength. They will be a symbol to all of us of this recurring resource that BRUCE fought so hard to preserve, to protect: the flora, the fauna, the water, the air, the land.

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At the end of life, we will not be judged by how large a surplus we left, how large a nuclear arsenal, how great an Army we left behind us, or by how many bills had been enacted into law. We will be judged by, I was naked and you clothed me; I was hungry and you fed me; I was homeless and you took me in.

When we cloth our fellow human beings in dignity, when we take the homeless into our hearts, into our lives, and when we feed the hungry with the spirit that gives life, we are truly doing the Lord's work in this life. That was BRUCE VENTO. That was all that he committed himself to do in public service.

With Samuel Gompers, BRUCE can say I came into the labor movement with one purpose, to leave it a better place and a better movement than I found it in. BRUCE leaves this body, his city, his district, his constituents these resources of land and air and water and the creatures among them in better condition than he found them in.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I join my colleagues tonight in this tribute to Congressman BRUCE VENTO. We all knew that someday Members of Congress would stand in the well of the House in tribute to BRUCE VENTO's many accomplishments, it is truly sad that this

day has come too soon. Since coming to Congress 8 years ago, I have had the pleasure of a close relationship with Congressman VENTO on the Banking Committee.

The Banking Committee deals with some of the most complex issues in all of Congress. Congressman VENTO put in the time, attended all the hearings, and mastered all these complex problems. As a teacher himself prior to coming to Congress, he became a resource to all Committee members, providing counsel on a host of from financial modernization to complex housing programs.

Congressman VENTO served as a tireless advocate for all consumers on the committee. He truly stood up for working people of all stripes time and time again. He made it a focus to make sure that individuals rights are protected by law as they interact with the most powerful financial companies in the world. His legacy on the committee and his impact on consumer banking law will live forward for decades to come.

From timeless issues such as housing for the poor, to newer issues like the protection of consumers' private banking information in the online world, Congressman VENTO was ahead of the curve, and on the people's side. I will truly miss Congressman VENTO, Congress is truly diminished by his absence. Let me convey to Congressman VENTO's family, his dedicated longtime staff here in Washington and Minnesota, and to the people of Congressman VENTO's 4th district my strongest, and heartfelt condolences.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. FOWLER). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

#### SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING BURMA

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 328) expressing the sense of the Congress in recognition of the 10th anniversary of the free and fair elections in Burma and the urgent need to improve the democratic and human rights of the people of Burma, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 328

Whereas in 1988 thousands of Burmese citizens called for a democratic change in Burma and participated in peaceful demonstrations to achieve this result;