

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE VENTO

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to offer a tribute to a humble man.

Yesterday, while I was in Minnesota, I received word that one of my former colleagues from the House of Representatives, Congressman Bruce Vento, had passed away after a battle with cancer.

My tribute cannot adequately communicate his successful career, because to Bruce, words always paled in comparison to acts.

Bruce was a tireless advocate for the residents of St. Paul, first in the State Legislature and, for the past 24 years, in the U.S. Congress.

He was a man of his word and a man of principle.

He was a man committed to doing the right thing for the right reason, no matter how long it took.

Take for example his work on behalf of Hmong veterans—a large number of whom reside in his Congressional district.

He worked on it for over a decade: educating his colleagues about the need to help their constituents and offering the compromises needed to get the job done.

I was pleased that after his tireless work Congress after Congress, year after year, Bruce's effort paid off.

Earlier this year, Congress passed and the President signed into law his legislation to facilitate citizenship to Hmong veterans who served with us in the Vietnam War.

Bruce was an effective Congressman for the St. Paul area.

We worked together on a number of fronts to support Minnesota and the people of St. Paul such as improving senior and low-income housing in St. Paul, supporting St. Paul's effort in becoming a Brownfields Showcase Community, and pursuing projects to improve the St. Paul Community.

Bruce is best known for his efforts to protect the environment and to improve our national parks and wilderness areas.

All Minnesotans will benefit from his work to ensure the outdoor activities we all enjoy will be there for our children and grandchildren.

That is his legacy, and we are all proud and grateful for his achievements.

Minnesotans were represented well by Bruce Vento, and he will be missed.

To his family and friends, I extend my deepest sympathy.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we all in the Senate and the House have been saddened by the death of Bruce Vento. Congressman Vento came to the Congress 2 years after I did. We served together and worked together on many issues. He belonged, proudly, to a sort of informal Italian-American caucus. We would talk about from which parts of Italy our families had come, and we became close friends.

I remember talking with Bruce when he was first diagnosed with cancer. I

told him he was in my prayers, my wife's prayers, our family's prayers. He was a good man.

I was sad when I heard him announce he would not run for reelection because of his illness. Of course, we have been notified of his death.

There are Senators and House Members who come here who, under the old saying, some are show horses and some are workhorses. He was a workhorse. One of his priorities during his last year in Congress was the plight of the Hmong people, many of whom settled in Minnesota. They are people from Laos who had fought with the United States and its allies in the Vietnam war and came to the United States afterwards. They very much wanted to become citizens here but had great difficulty learning English because they come from a culture that does not have a written language.

Bruce Vento was the primary House sponsor of the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act, a bill that passed the House and Senate earlier this year and became law. This bill waives the English language requirement for naturalization, and provides special consideration for the civics requirement for Hmong veterans and their spouses and widows. It has been a small concession on our part in return for the great sacrifices these men made in fighting for the American cause in Southeast Asia. I am pleased that with the help of Senators WELLSTONE, FEINGOLD, HAGEL, MCCAIN, and others the bill became law before the Congressman's untimely death earlier this week.

There is another bill that addresses an outstanding issue in the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act. H.R. 5234, cosponsored by Congressman Vento, will extend the benefits of the new law to widows of Hmong veterans who died in Laos, Thailand, or Vietnam. The bill was passed by voice vote in the House on September 25. The Senate companion bill is strongly bipartisan with seven Democrats and five Republicans joining Senator WELLSTONE as sponsors. I urge my friends on the other side of the aisle to lift the hold they have on this bill and allow it to pass so we can complete our work on this important issue. We can do this in Bruce Vento's memory, but we can also rectify an injustice that has been done to the Hmong people who have come to this country.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, it is with great sadness that I join my colleague from Minnesota, Senator WELLSTONE, in paying tribute to the life of our colleague, Congressman Bruce Vento. I learned of the Congressman's passing upon my return to Washington. I send my condolences to his wife Sue and his family, along with all of the people from the great state of Minnesota who mourn and who thank him for his many years of service in the House of Representatives. He is deserving of special praise in recognition of his tremendous efforts to use his status as a federal legislator to bring a

voice to the voiceless and to defend such interests as environmental protection, human rights, working families and community building.

Congressman Vento's career was a truly a remarkable one. He and I shared a profound affection for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, a place special to so many Wisconsinites and Minnesotans. Congressman Vento bravely agreed to chair the Ely field hearings on the creation of the Boundary Waters wilderness in 1977, a courageous decision for someone who was a Freshman member of the House at the time, and was a vocal champion of that wilderness throughout his career. As I work on wilderness issues, I am often reminded of Congressman Vento's comments on the House floor during consideration of the Boundary Waters bill. He said, "there ought to be an opportunity where someone can go and have some solitude, where someone can go and have an experience that is different."

Congressman Vento used his career to work to protect that "different" opportunity for all Americans in the Boundary Waters, the Arctic Refuge, Southern Utah and many other special wilderness areas. These places and the people who cherish them, myself included, owe him a great debt.

I also had the privilege of working closely with Congressman Vento in this session of Congress on the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act which is now federal law. Congressman Vento was actively involved in getting that legislation through the House.

I join with the Senate in letting Congressman Vento's family know how grateful we are for having known him, and how committed we are to ensuring that the causes to which he gave his heart and his career remain protected.

SUBMITTING CHANGES TO THE BUDGETARY AGGREGATES AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ALLOCATION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, section 314 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended, requires the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to adjust the appropriate budgetary aggregates and the allocation for the Appropriations Committee to reflect amounts provided for emergency requirements.

I hereby submit revisions to the 2001 Senate Appropriations Committee allocations, pursuant to section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act, in the following amounts:

(Dollars in millions)

	Budget authority	Outlays
Current Allocation:		
General purpose discretionary .....	\$602,307	\$593,714
Highways .....		26,920
Mass transit .....		4,639
Mandatory .....	327,787	310,215
Total .....	930,094	935,488
Adjustments:		
General purpose discretionary .....	+4,367	+3,384
Highways .....		