

was always fighting for the underdog, constantly helping those who needed help the most, battling skillfully and tirelessly for better jobs, better education, better health care, better lives and better opportunities for the people he so proudly served. How fitting that it was our Joe Moakley who shined the light of truth and justice on the atrocities in El Salvador and changed our national policy to protect human rights and promote democracy in that country. Yes, Joe's life was a life of constant service.

When I think of all Joe has done for Boston and Massachusetts, I recall how brilliantly he fought for support to build the South Boston Piers Transitway, to clean up Boston Harbor, to modernize the Port of Boston, to preserve so many Massachusetts historic sites—the Old State House, the Old South Meeting house, the USS Constitution, Dorchester Heights, our world-renowned marketplace, Faneuil Hall—and, of course, the new federal courthouse that now proudly bears his name. Because of Joe Moakley's leadership in protecting and preserving and creating these extraordinary aspects of our heritage, they will always be part of our state's history and our nation's history too—and so will Joe.

Even in recent months, even in recent days, even while Joe struggled so bravely with the illness that finally took his life, he continued to do the work of the people he loved so dearly.

And at a stage when others might be winding down or turning inward, Joe continued to turn outward, establishing a charitable foundation to make the dream of education a reality for young people. The G.I. Bill had given Joe a chance to reach for the stars, and Joe's commitment, through his foundation, will give countless young people a chance to reach for the stars too. Joe never forgot where he came from, and he never stopped working to serve the people he loved so much.

He was elected to the Massachusetts House in 1952—the same year that a young Congressman named John F. Kennedy was first elected to the Senate. And now, the Moakley Public Speaking Institute—to be launched this summer at the Kennedy Library to teach public speaking skills and public service to local low-income high school students—will forever link Joe Moakley to President Kennedy.

As my brother said so eloquently on the eve of his inauguration, in his farewell address here to the State Legislature:

“When at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each of us, our success or failure will be measured by the answers to four questions:

- Were we truly men of courage?
- Were we truly men of judgment?
- Were we truly men of integrity?
- Were we truly men of dedication?

Measured by those four high standards, Joe Moakley was “four for four”—he battled a thousand in the annals of public life.

Service to his nation. Service to his State. Service to his District. Service to his people. Service. Service. Service.

It's no wonder that God chose to call him home on Memorial Day—the national day of honor for those who served the nation so well. We miss you, Joe, and we always will.

Near the end of Pilgrim's Progress, there is a passage that tells of the death of Valiant, and it could well have been written about Joe Moakley:

“Then, he said, I am going to my Father's; and though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not regret me of all the troubles I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought his battle who now will be my rewarder.

“When the day that must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the river-side, into which as he went he said, ‘Death, where is thy sting?’ and as he went down deeper, he said, ‘Grave, where is thy victory?’ So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

HONORING “THE GRAMMY MAN”,
JOHN BILLINGS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to stand before you today and pay tribute to the

shinning star of the Western Slope of Colorado. That's where John Billings the Grammy Man resides. He is only the second man ever to create, by hand, each gold gramophone statue that is presented at the GRAMMYS.

Every year since 1958, that gold gramophone has been handed to some of the biggest recording stars in the industry. John is the only person allowed by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences to make what is arguably the industry's highest honor—the Grammy statuette. When John started in 1977, there were only 51 categories, today there are 100. John spends five months a year casting about 300 awards. “Its kind of unique that in just 43 years, two of us have made them,” John said. “It's a dying art and a lost craft, and somebody's got to keep it alive.”

John grew up in Van Nuys, California during the 1960's, where he used to hang around the garage workshop of his neighbor Bob Graves, the original maker of the Grammy statuette. After Bob began to lose his eyesight making the creation of the statues difficult, he asked John if he would like to become the next craftsman. He would spend the next 7 years learning the craft. “One of the last things he said to me was ‘Don't ever let anyone get those Grammys away from you.’” When John cannot make the award any longer, he will pass the tradition to his son.

For the last 25 years John has perfected its design. “I have sat in the audience for so many years, and I sit there and cry. To see something that I have made to honor this person, and they're standing there holding it up in the air like it's an Olympic medal. There is really a lot of pride in that, and I think that's what keeps me going.”

Mr. Speaker, the statue is a labor of love and a matter of pride for John. Los Angeles may be the real home of the Grammy Awards, but Ridgeway, Colorado is much bigger in the eyes of the music industry. He is truly one of a kind.