

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

"Never lose track of what really matters. It does not matter how many points you earn, medals you win or trophies you take home. What really matters is what kind of competitor you are, what kind of son or daughter you are, what kind of student you are, and what kind of adult you will become!"

Mr. Speaker, my wife, Laurie, and I know many of these championship football players and recognize that each of them is a champion in our community. Menominee and the people of the Upper Peninsula know that when we proudly chant "U.P. Power", it is a reflection of our pride in our Menominee Marathon football tradition and the fine young men who brought home another football championship to our fine community. It is with great pride that I ask the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating and honoring these football champions.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately as the result of a death in the family and my need to return to Illinois by Saturday morning for the funeral services, I was unable to cast my votes on the following pieces of legislation. I request that the RECORD state my intentions on these votes had I been present to vote.

I would have voted "aye" for H. Res. 1100, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 6406, to modify temporarily certain rates of duty and make other technical amendments to the trade laws, to extend certain trade preference programs, and for other purposes.

I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 5948, the Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act of 2006. Passage of the Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act supports Belarus as an emerging democracy with U.S. assistance by strengthening democratic institutions and processes within the country. Our country has a long history of promoting democracy worldwide and this bill will assist the people of Belarus with foreign aid and the risk of U.S. sanctions should the recent political upheavals and the repression of democratic groups in the country continue.

I would have voted "present" in response to the Call of the House. I am sorry to have missed Speaker J. DENNIS HASTERT's farewell speech. I respect and admire him, and am proud to serve with him in the Illinois congressional delegation. His long tenure as the Speaker of the House is historic, and he will be celebrated as an esteemed statesman.

I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 6406, to modify temporarily certain rates of duty and make other technical amendments to the trade laws, to extend certain trade preference programs, and for other purposes. This package contains trade provisions I have supported in the past and will continue to do so in the future. These provisions will help expand the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers and exporters within the global marketplace.

I would have voted "aye" on the Conference Report on H.R. 5682, the Henry J. Hyde U.S.-

India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006. India has been a longtime and important ally to the U.S. and U.S. assistance in the development of a civilian nuclear energy program will only cement the strategic partnership between our two countries. With the passage of the cooperation agreement with India the U.S. can be assured the peaceful sharing of nuclear energy technologies under international safeguards while preventing the spread of nuclear weapon information to rogue countries, such as North Korea and Iran.

I would have voted "aye" on H.J. Res. 102, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2007. While I am disappointed that we were not able to pass the remaining appropriations bills under regular order, I feel that it is important that we continue to fund our government program at adequate levels until we can address the appropriations bills in the next session of Congress.

Finally, I would have voted "aye" on the following bills, considered under suspension of the rules:

1. H.R. 6407—Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act

2. H. Res. 1104—Providing for a severance payment for employees of leadership offices and committees of the House of Representatives who are separated from employment solely and directly as a result of a change in the party holding the majority of the membership in the House

3. H.R. 6060—Department of State Authorities Act of 2006

4. S. 4050—Sergeant First Class Robert Lee 'Bobby' Hollar, Jr. Post Office Building Designation Act

5. S. 4093—A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to extend a suspension of limitation on the period for which certain borrowers are eligible for guaranteed assistance

6. H.R. 5304—Preventing Harassment through Outbound Number Enforcement Act

7. S. 3821—COMPETE Act of 2006

8. S. 4042—A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit disruptions of funerals of members or former members of the Armed Forces

9. H.R. 6427—To increase the amount in certain funding agreements relating to patents and nonprofit organizations to be used for scientific research, development, and education, and for other purposes

10. H.R. 6428—To authorize the Secretary of the Army to carry out certain elements of the project for hurricane and storm damage reduction, Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico, Louisiana

11. S. 2735—Dam Safety Act of 2006

12. S. Con. Res. 123—A concurrent resolution providing for correction to the enrollment of the bill H.R. 5946

13. H.R. 5946—Stevens-Inouye International Fisheries Monitoring and Compliance Legacy Act of 2006

14. H.R. 4075—Marine Mammal Protection Act Amendments of 2006

TRIBUTE TO MR. BRIAN J. HARD

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight, our final night of the 109th Congress,

to express my gratitude to and appreciation for a very good friend of mine, Mr. Brian J. Hard. I've had the honor of counting on Brian's exemplary service to my office and the people of Oregon's Second Congressional District for the past 8 years, and at the end of this month Brian will conclude his service in the United States House of Representatives as he returns home to the great State of Oregon with his lovely bride, Laura. This occasion will cap 12 years of outstanding public service by Brian in the Congress, and this distinguished institution will be losing one of its finest staff members.

I first got to know Brian when I was the Majority Leader of the Oregon House of Representatives and he was fresh out of Oregon State University and had begun his service to our state in the Oregon Capitol. He succeeded in numerous professional capacities in Oregon and eventually accepted a key staff position in 1995 with one of my predecessors in the Oregon congressional delegation in Washington, DC. Brian and I renewed our ties in 1998 when I first ran for election to Congress and he was working for the honorable Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Bob Smith, whom I succeeded. I was very fortunate when Brian accepted my offer to work in my office upon my election, thus beginning a harmonious and successful relationship.

As my Legislative Director for the vast majority of my service in the House, Brian has played a pivotal role in so many accomplishments we've worked hard to achieve for the people of Oregon. He has been a highly effective point person for numerous key issues over the years, from commerce, telecommunications and health care, to transportation, agriculture, trade matters and many other issues that have arisen and quickly needed a steady hand to manage. In addition to the legislative issues that consume much of our focus in the Congress, Brian has recruited and led a strong team of legislative staff in my office. He's also fostered extensive relationships with a great number of citizens, leaders and public officials in the Pacific Northwest and Washington, DC. And when the sheer overload of activity has heightened stress levels, we've always been able to count on Brian's fantastic sense of humor to bring a much-needed dose of comic relief.

Brian's professional attributes have been a tremendous resource for me and those I represent. For his public service and dedication, I'm grateful. As important to me as the constant hard work Brian has exerted in our effort to deliver to Oregonians is the strong friendship I share with him. Brian is simply one of the most sincere and likable persons one can have the good fortune of knowing well. This goes for Laura Hard too. They're a wonderful couple, and I'm very proud to count them as close friends.

As Brian and Laura begin their journey homeward bound, I ask my colleagues to join me in bidding them a heartfelt official farewell, with significant thanks to Brian for 12 years of outstanding service to Oregon and our Nation. You will be sorely missed.

Go Ducks!