

EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTA-
TIVES ON THE DEATH OF THE
HONORABLE STEPHANIE TUBBS
JONES, A REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE STATE OF OHIO

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 2008

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our departed colleague the Honorable STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES.

Many have attested to STEPHANIE's contagious smile and fierce loyalty to her friends. I always respected and admired her. I can honestly say that she was a nice and professional colleague. We spoke for the last time a couple of weeks ago at the Congressional Black Caucus's Annual Retreat in Tunica, Mississippi. I feel a sense of gratitude for our meeting. We talked. We embraced. STEPHANIE expressed her congratulations for my success as a freshman legislator. She spoke fondly of her time in Memphis as she visited her family there.

Over the past decade, STEPHANIE was an undeniable force in Congress. She broke barriers in 1998 by being elected the first African American woman in Congress from Ohio. She persisted over the years and was appointed to the powerful Ways and Means Committee. She served with a sense of pride as the chairwoman of the House Ethics Committee.

STEPHANIE and I co-sponsored a great deal of legislation together. On July 29, 2008, we unified as Members of Congress and passed H. Res. 194: the formal apology for government's involvement in slavery and Jim Crow. STEPHANIE was one of my earliest co-sponsors. She was a community conscious legislator. She fought for the people and sponsored legislation on issue areas ranging from community economic development to enfranchisement and retirement security.

I am forever grateful that my last interaction with STEPHANIE concluded with a deep and meaningful hug. My only regret is that STEPHANIE and I will not have the opportunity to work together in the future.

HONORING NATIONAL
GRANDPARENTS DAY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2008

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, we celebrate National Grandparents Day on the first Sunday after Labor Day every September. In honor of the 2008 National Grandparents Day, I wish to recognize the contribution of the millions of grandparent caregivers who raise their young relatives. In the United States, more than four and one half million grandparents are raising over six million children. These grandparents have embraced the role of full-time caregivers—juggling car seats, monitoring homework, and stretching fixed-incomes—to protect young children whose parents cannot provide them safe, permanent homes. This is not the vision of retirement that

most of us hold, but it is a reality for millions of Americans.

In Illinois, approximately 80,000 grandparents head households that include young children. Indeed, my Congressional District has the highest percentage of children living with kinship caregivers in the Nation, followed by the First District of Illinois with the second highest percentage and the Second District with the tenth highest percentage in the nation. I know the sacrifice and dedication of these grandparents. I know the lengths they go to identify the resources and obtain supports for these youth, foregoing their own needs to provide for their grandchildren.

I am pleased that Congress is advancing legislation to support these grandparent caregivers. In June, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6307, the Fostering Connections to Success Act. This bill includes important provisions that I have championed for 4 years that will support kinship caregivers. Specifically, the bill includes the three core elements of my bill, H.R. 2188, the Kinship Caregiver Support Act, which I introduced with Representative TIM JOHNSON: It allows states to use Federal funds to support family caregivers' raising relatives who were in the foster care system; it provides funding to establish kinship navigator programs; and it requires notification of relatives when a child enters the foster care system. The Senate Committee on Finance is advancing related legislation this week. It is important that Congress acts quickly to support grandparent-headed families. Research clearly shows that kinship foster care families are safer, more stable placements that are more likely to keep children connected with their siblings and communities than non-relative placements. Further, these placements are cost effective. In Illinois, cost studies found a projected savings of approximately \$48 million over 10 years. We know that millions of grandparents care for grandchildren who never entered the foster care system, and we need to include supports—such as kinship navigator programs—to help these families identify and access services as well.

National Grandparents Day reminds us to care for our seniors. It is a fact of nature that all of us will turn grayer. I hope that Congress will succeed in implementing key supports for kinship caregivers who have done so much to protect and care for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE
HOSPICE PROTECTION ACT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2008

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Medicare Hospice Protection Act to help preserve Medicare beneficiaries' access to hospice services. I am pleased to be introducing this legislation with my colleagues JIM RAMSTAD and MAURICE HINCHEY.

Established as a Medicare benefit in 1983 to ensure that all beneficiaries could access high quality end-of-life care, hospice is a comprehensive model of care that encompasses the physical, spiritual, emotional, and practical

needs of the patient. Considered to be the model for quality, compassionate care at the end of life, hospice care involves a team-oriented approach of expert medical care, pain management, and emotional and spiritual support expressly tailored to the patient's wishes. Hospices around the country provide invaluable services and care by enhancing the quality of life for the terminally ill.

The Medicare hospice benefit has significant cost savings. A Duke University study showed that patients receiving hospice care cost the Medicare program about \$2,300 less than those who did not.

Unfortunately, the Bush Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently issued a final rule that would eliminate the budget neutrality factor in the Medicare hospice wage index. This will result in a \$2.18 billion reduction in Medicare hospice reimbursement over 5 years and threatens the ability of hospice providers to care for the terminally ill. This legislation seeks to prevent CMS from implementing this shortsighted rule until October 2009.

I initiated a letter in April 2008, signed by 49 House members, to Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt urging him to reconsider issuing this rule that phases out the current budget neutrality factor in the Medicare hospice wage index. That letter was ignored as the Administration has moved forward and issued this misguided regulation.

Madam Speaker, as our nation faces the continuing challenges of meeting the health care needs of an aging population, now is not the time to cut back on Medicare reimbursement for hospice services, which is cost effective and saves Medicare money. I invite my colleagues to join us to pass the Medicare Hospice Protection Act to ensure access to hospice services for the patients and families who need it.

HONORING SGT RYAN BAUMANN

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 11, 2008

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise in memory of a Maryland native who died last month in our country's service: SGT Ryan Baumann of Great Mills. I know how small a difference any words of mine can make for those who loved and lost him; but still, he deserves all the honor we can give.

Ryan Baumann grew up in Great Mills, Maryland, where he excelled in sports and was an award-winning photographer. He met his fiancée, Lauren Smith, soon after graduating from high school; tragically, he was killed in action before they could marry.

Sergeant Baumann was a veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, a highly decorated soldier. His awards included the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, two awards, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Overseas Ribbon. He was also posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

Sergeant Baumann's death typified his outstanding service. Traveling on Route Alaska in