

the First National Bank of Andalusia, was first elected to the Alabama State House of Representatives in 1978.

Since that time, the speaker has been regarded as truly one of the most effective leaders ever to serve in the Alabama House of Representatives. Not only has he earned bipartisan respect from his colleagues in the Alabama House, but organizations such as the Business Council of Alabama and the Alabama Rural Electric Cooperatives, to name just a few, have time and again called upon Seth for his calm leadership and sound judgment.

During his time in office, Speaker Hammett has become a fierce proponent of higher education. For over a decade, he served Lurleen B. Wallace Community College as its president. Additionally, his efforts have earned him many awards, including the Courage of Conviction Award given by the Higher Education Partnership, The Legislative Leadership Award given by the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools and the Legislative Award given by the Alabama Association of School Boards.

Due to his strong convictions and commitment to serving the State of Alabama, Speaker Hammett has also been the recipient of the Children's Hero Award given by the Alabama Department of Human Resources and the Meritorious Service Award given by the Montgomery Advertiser. In addition to these honors, Seth was named Citizen of the Year for the city of Andalusia and a Guardian of Small Business by the National Federation of Independent Businesses.

Speaker Hammett also had the honor of serving as chairman of the 16-State Southern Legislative Conference as well as president of the National Speakers Conference. He is currently a member of the Executive Committee for both conferences.

In his business life, he also serves the vice president of business development for PowerSouth Energy Cooperative and as president emeritus of Lurleen B. Wallace Community College.

Madam Speaker, in addition to his undying commitment to his community, Speaker Hammett is an equally devoted father and husband. He and his lovely wife, Nancy, have been blessed with a wonderful family that includes adult children and grandchildren. He is also an active member of the First United Methodist Church of Andalusia.

Speaker Hammett has been the epitome of a servant leader and has represented the great State of Alabama with unprecedented devotion. Over the years, he and I have had several occasions to work on economic development projects that have proven important to the State of Alabama and while it is with genuine sadness that I watch my good friend leave office, it is also with great gratitude that I thank him for his incredible life of service to our beloved Alabama.

HONORING THE LATE LORRAINE BERRY, FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the late Lorraine L. Berry,

who made her final transition on July 19th. She was born on St. Thomas on November 15, 1949, the eldest of nine children. Her mother, Emelda, and father, Joseph, provided their children with a sense of responsibility and commitment to their community.

Lorraine developed an interest in politics as a teenager, inspired by the riveting and profound words of Dr. Martin Luther King in his "I Have a Dream" speech during the August 8, 1963 march on Washington, DC. His remarks made an indelible mark on Lorraine and she never wavered in her zeal to someday make that dream a reality.

Lorraine got her feet wet as the president of the PTA of Joseph Sibilly Elementary School (formerly known as the Robert Herrick School). Her aggressive agenda and her assertive and dedicated commitment to the improvement of the school so impressed the late Governor, Cyril Emanuel King, that he encouraged her to get involved in politics and join his party, the Independent Citizens Movement. She took his advice to become politically active, but because of the strong impression she had established in the community, she was drafted by then Senator Earle B. Ottley and political activist, Roy Gottlieb to serve on the Democratic Party Territorial Committee.

During her political career, she founded Virgin Islanders for Democratic Action Club (VIDAC) to raise the community's consciousness and provide the basis for political and legislative initiatives and promoted responsible and responsive political leadership. Her most recent symposium was on the "Responsibilities of Political Leadership" and she encouraged women to become involved in the process and run for public office.

Virtually from the time she entered the labor force, Lorraine has been a dedicated public servant. She served in several governmental posts including Manager of the St. Thomas District Office the Virgin Islands Delegate to Congress, Ron de Lugo. In 1982, she successfully ran for a seat in the St. Thomas District of the Virgin Islands Legislature.

Senator Berry gained vast experience in her service as the Chair of the Committee of Government Operations in the 15th Legislature; Chair of the Committee on Finance in the 17th, 18th and 23rd Legislature; Majority Leader of the 18th Legislature; Chair of the Committee on Health in the 19th and 20th Legislatures; President of the 22nd and 26th Legislatures; and Vice-President and Chair of the Committee on Public Safety, the Judiciary, Homeland Security and Justice in the 25th Legislature

In her twenty-four years as a lawmaker, Senator Berry's courageous leadership shepherded passage of landmark legislation that critically impacted on the political, economic and social fabric of our society. The initiatives she enacted provided much needed support for families, economic development incentives for investors, public safety of the community, business opportunities for residents, employment opportunities and public sector employment for Virgin Islanders.

Over the years, one of the most challenging issues was the state of the health care system. Senator Berry supported the establishment of semi-autonomy for our hospitals, and the use of Tobacco Settlement funds for a cancer center on St. Thomas and the cardiac center on St. Croix, both of which are fully operational and successful facilities today pro-

viding services that Virgin Islanders would have to go off island to receive.

In 1986, Senator Berry sought the Democratic Party primary bid for Governor of the Virgin Islands, along with her running mate for Lt. Governor, Senator St. Clair Williams. She fostered a progressive platform that included mandatory education for the children of the Virgin Islands as a birthright. She waged war against the "four horsemen of the apocalypse"—fiscal irresponsibility, corruption, cronyism and rampant waste. Although, she did not prevail, she remained committed to establishing a government that provided services to its citizens, while remaining fiscally viable.

Because of her strong advocacy for women and the obstacles in sexism she had endured over her lifetime, she agreed to join gubernatorial candidate Judge Edgar Ross to run in the 2006 Democratic primary. She wanted to raise the political bar for women in the Virgin Islands. She felt that the Executive Branch had eluded women for far too long, and it was her obligation to enter the race to stimulate women's interest in running for higher office. Although the Ross-Berry team was defeated, their message was positively received by the public and to this day, have a core group of loyal supporters that remain committed to the principles that they ran on.

As she battled with her illness, Senator Berry was unwavering in her concern for the lack of women in the political process and the welfare of our young people. She believed that no future Legislature should be without women. Women make up more than 55% of the population, but over the past 10 years, there has been only one woman in the Senate. She felt that women must encourage and support women in and out of public office if the issues of women, children, and families are to be adequately addressed.

Lorraine leaves behind a legacy that will be difficult to match. The entire Virgin Islands community owes a debt of gratitude to her.

To her husband, Richard, and her children, Roxanne and Curt, thank you for giving her the support as she fought for the Virgin Islands. As you struggle to adjust to Lorraine's passing, please find comfort in knowing that many of us remain dedicated to ensuring that she will never be forgotten.

On behalf of the 111th Congress, my staff and my family we offer our heartfelt sympathy. May her soul forever rest in eternal peace.

RECOGNITION OF THE MUSICAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF LYNRYD SKYNYRD

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Speaker, in the music world, it is challenging enough for a band to record one hit song, much less become a voice for an entire region and a true icon. That is why Congressman CONNIE MACK and I are pleased to jointly recognize the accomplishments and patriotic spirit of the legendary Lynryd Skynyrd.

From humble beginnings, Lynryd Skynyrd has become one of the most revered and accomplished bands in the history of music, having sold nearly 30 million records worldwide in