

recognized way, but as he “realized that their union would not be treated the same way under the law” as opposite-sex couples, he “began to see that civil unions fell short of the equality I believe that same-sex couples deserved.”

JIM LANGEVIN has long been an articulate advocate for equality under the law for all citizens, and his urging “all Rhode Islanders to honor our State’s founding principles of tolerance and freedom” is an example of his courageous commitment to that principle for all people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that JIM LANGEVIN’s compelling argument on behalf of the legalization of same-sex marriage be printed here.

[From the Providence Journal, Mar. 5, 2011]

JIM LANGEVIN: NOW IS THE TIME TO REDEFINE MARRIAGE IN R.I.

(By Jim Langevin)

Throughout my career in public service, I have strongly opposed discrimination based on sexual orientation at both the state and federal level, co-sponsoring the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and hate crimes legislation, and supporting efforts to repeal the military’s “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy.

While those topics have been controversial, they never elicited the intensely passionate and emotional debate that occurred as our nation began struggling with the question of same-sex marriage. For many years, I supported civil unions as a reasonable way to achieve consensus on a divisive issue, providing rights and protections to same-sex couples while respecting the deeply held beliefs of those not comfortable with the idea of marriage rights.

Then, three years ago, I attended the commitment ceremony of a longtime staff member and his partner of nine years. Before their friends and family, they professed their love, commitment and respect for each other. Their sentiments were just as moving, heartfelt and sincere as any of the vows I had heard at other weddings, yet I realized that their union would not be treated the same under the law. That difference struck me as fundamentally unjust, and I began to challenge the wisdom of creating separate categories of rights for certain groups of citizens. I began to see that civil unions fell short of the equality I believed that same-sex couples deserved.

As the debate about same-sex marriage continues in Rhode Island and in Washington, I have taken time to reflect carefully on my own position. Based on my own experiences and my firm belief that all Americans should be treated equally under the law, I am now convinced that affording full marriage equality rights to same-sex couples is the only fair and responsible approach for both Rhode Island and the nation. If our nation expects to provide equal protection to all, then our civic institutions must reflect that noble goal.

As a U.S. representative, I take seriously my constitutional responsibility to protect the rights and liberties of our citizens. Marriage equality is consistent with that view because it safeguards basic civil rights and provides appropriate legal protections so that all loving and committed couples may care for each other. At the same time, our nation’s fundamental freedom of religion dictates that religious institutions should be allowed to define marriage as they deem appropriate. The marriage-equality legislation before the General Assembly respects the important separation of church and state by not requiring religious institutions to change any of their practices or standards relating to marriage.

The members of the General Assembly now have a historic opportunity. As a former

member of that body, I understand the challenges they face, but this is a time for leadership.

During my time as a state representative, I remember talking with my father about pending legislation to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation, which was highly controversial at the time. While I greatly valued his thoughtful and balanced perspective, my father was certainly no social activist. He was just an ordinary man who had grown up through the civil-rights movement and always believed it was fundamentally unjust to treat people differently because of their race. When I told him I had decided to support the non-discrimination legislation, he expressed his pride in my decision because it showed that I viewed issues of fairness and justice as he did. And he was convinced that, in the same way racial discrimination became a shameful part of our history, one day our nation would look back in disbelief at a time when we denied our fellow citizens basic civil rights based on their sexual orientation. I now believe that day is within our reach.

As the General Assembly considers this important topic, I ask lawmakers and all Rhode Islanders to honor our state’s founding principles of tolerance and freedom and to support marriage equality in our state. It’s time to do the right thing.

TED STRICKLAND TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ted Strickland, one of Colorado’s most prominent statesmen. Mr. Strickland, originally of Austin, Texas, was a Colorado state Representative, Senator and Lieutenant Governor in a political career that lasted for well over two decades. His lengthy tenure in public office is a testament to his adoration for Colorado and desire to make it the wonderful state that it is today.

Though Mr. Strickland did not grow up in Colorado, it did not take long for him to make it his permanent home. After working for an oil well information firm following college in Oklahoma, he decided to run for a position in the state legislature. He was a popular candidate and rose quickly within the Republican Party. He held numerous leadership positions, including his service as Senate President for nine years.

While in office his priority was to strengthen the state economy by advancing conservative economic principles. He fought for lower taxes, a balanced budget, and less government spending.

His popularity as a state senator led to his nomination as Lieutenant Governor under John David Vanderhoof. As the state’s 39th Lieutenant Governor, he was instrumental in the success of Governor Vanderhoof’s administration.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Ted Strickland today. His impact can still be felt in Colorado and his devotion to the state is truly exemplary.

IN TRIBUTE TO FALLEN POLICE OFFICER ANDREW S. DUNN

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of heroic Sandusky, Ohio police officer Andrew Dunn. This past Friday, March 25, Officer Dunn, age 30, Badge #2083, was laid to rest in his hometown. His beloved wife Julie and young children Caleb, 2, and infant Conner, his parents, friends and neighbors were joined by thousands of citizens of all ages, hundreds of police officers from near and far, and the Sandusky police force to honor his last call.

Citizens who gathered formed a vanguard for America as their hearts united in deep gratitude as well as deep mourning. No words would capture the solemnity of the occasion nor the weight of loss all who knew Officer Dunn carry.

Praised as a loving husband, father, son, and friend, officer Dunn represented the very finest of citizens in our nation. He laid down his life for us, said those who spoke at the service, negotiating the thin blue line of freedom.

His comrades offered tributes and prayed in one voice the Policeman’s Prayer:

Lord I ask you for courage
 Courage to face and conquer my own fears
 Courage to take me where others will not go
 I ask for strength
 Strength of body to protect others
 And strength of spirit to lead others
 I ask for dedication
 Dedication to my job to do it well
 Dedication to my family to love them well
 Dedication to my community to serve it well
 and keep it safe
 Give me Lord, concern for others who trust me
 And compassion for those who need me
 And Lord through it all, Be beside me

In honored memory of Andrew S. Dunn, March 11, 1981—March 19, 2011. Rest in Peace, good and faithful public servant.

HONORING SFC TAMMY AMARO FOR THIRTY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my most sincere congratulations and thanks to SFC Tammy Amaro, a constituent of mine, who retired on January 1, 2011 after thirty years of service in the United States Army. On behalf of the residents of Illinois’ 3rd District, I am grateful to have the opportunity to thank her for devoting her career to the U.S. Army and the defense of our nation.

Recruited at the age of 17 by her future husband, then-PFC Frank Amaro, on December 10, 1980, she immediately demonstrated her potential and quickly advanced. Her two promotions during her first assignment in the Adjutant General’s office demonstrated her outstanding leadership abilities. When she