

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

reached boot camp in the summer of 1981, she served as Platoon Guide and was nominated and competed for Trainee of the Cycle, a highly competitive title.

During SFC Amaro's career, she has collected many honors for exceptional service. She received her first medal while serving at Fort Benjamin Harrison; this honor was followed by ten other awards. Her decorations, including the National Defense Service Ribbon and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, show a rare level of dedication to our nation.

Shortly after returning from Advanced Individual Training at Fort Benjamin Harrison, SFC Amaro was promoted to the rank of Sergeant on November 1, 1982. She dedicated 13 years of service, eight active, in the 86th ARCOM before being promoted to Staff Sergeant and transferring to the 85th Training Division in Arlington Heights in 1993.

Not only has SFC Amaro been selfless in her service to this country, she simultaneously managed the competing demands of motherhood. In 1996, she transferred away from active duty to the Individual Ready Reserve so she could be home full time to care for her daughters Christina, Catherine, and Jacqueline. She then returned to the Army Reserves four years later to serve another ten years before retirement.

In that time, she served as the Senior Human Resource NCO for the 1st Brigade, 85th Division at Fort Sheridan, and as the Operations NCO for the Emergency Operations Center for the 416th Theater Engineer Command in Darien, Illinois. On December 10, 2010, exactly thirty years from her recruitment date, SFC Amaro completed her last day of service, marking twenty years of active duty and ten years in the reserves.

If SFC Amaro's military career were not enough of an achievement on its own, she has been a devoted mother of three, engaged in her community and children's schools, and remained an active parishioner at St. Leonard's church in Berwyn, Illinois.

Please join me in thanking SFC Amaro for a career of service to the United States and wishing her a long and happy retirement. She is truly an inspiration and a great American. I am proud to have SFC Amaro as a constituent and a fellow resident of the 3rd District.

IN HONOR OF JOHN M. GILLIS OF QUINCY, MA

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of John M. Gillis, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to his hometown of Quincy, Massachusetts, and to commend him for over fifty years of dedicated service to his community.

John was born on May 16, 1925, in Quincy, Massachusetts. He graduated from Quincy High School in 1942, where he served as captain of his football team. Subsequent to his graduation, John enlisted in the United States Marine Corp. He served with distinction in the South Pacific during World War II from 1943–1946. Upon completion of his service, John enrolled at Northeastern University, graduating

in 1951. He served as captain of the 1950 Northeastern Football Team.

Upon graduation, John served as a Quincy firefighter, and then worked in the office of the state auditor. He was appointed Assistant Quincy City Clerk in 1957, and served until 1959. Additionally, John was the Chairman of the Registrar of Voters in 1959. He then served as Quincy City Clerk from 1959–1992. John was elected Norfolk County Commissioner in 1992, a position he holds to this day.

John is also an active member of his community. He served as Clerk of the Quincy City Council from 1959–1992; Chairman of the Licensing Board from 1963–1992, and currently serves as Trustee at the Norfolk Agricultural School, a position he has held since 1992. He is a member of the Quincy High School Athletic Hall of Fame, and is Grand Knight at the Ave Maria Knights of Columbus.

Known for his quick sense of humor and for his loyalty to his friends, John has had the good fortune to be married to his wife, Violet, for fifty-nine years. They are the proud parents of two children and three grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with the family, friends, and contemporaries of John M. Gillis to thank him for his remarkable service to his hometown of Quincy, Massachusetts, and to the United States of America.

HONORING POLTV, A NEW CHICAGO-BASED TELEVISION SERVICE FOR POLISH-AMERICANS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of PolTV, a new television service that will broadcast live news, entertainment, and sports programming straight from Poland into the homes of Poles living in America and abroad. The service, provided by Chicago-based Intercom Ventures LLC, will help connect Polish emigrant communities throughout the world with their native Poland.

PolTV will be the first platform to feature programming from both major Polish networks, TVN and TVP. The service will initially broadcast 15 Polish channels, including TVN International, and will offer over 20 channels within the first 60 days of launch. TVN International provides news and entertainment designed for Poles living abroad and features popular Polish films, TV shows, and documentaries. As Intercom Ventures' third ethnic television product, PolTV follows ShiqpTV, which provides programming for Albanians living abroad, and BosnaTV, which provides the same service for Bosnian emigrants. PolTV's innovative platform offers high definition television, video on demand, and various internet applications.

Founders Drilon Qehaja and Tony Hoti are two American immigrants from Kosovo who embody the American entrepreneurial spirit. Following the Kosovo War, Qehaja started a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) long distance phone company that enabled subscribers to connect with family and friends, providing a much needed sense of normalcy in the war-torn nation. At age 20, Hoti became the youngest financial advisor at the firm AG

Edwards in San Diego and, after graduating from Roosevelt College in Chicago, opened a day spa in Chicago's Gold Coast at age 26. The two teamed up to found Intercom Ventures in 2006.

I have faith that the smart, consumer-driven PolTV service will have a unifying effect for the Polish-American community. By providing daily news from news channels operating in Poland, PolTV will increase Polish-Americans' access to personally relevant international news, thereby helping them to cultivate strong cultural, familial and community relationships. As a Polish-American and Co-Chair of the Polish-American Caucus, I am very excited about the possibilities for PolTV in the future.

Please join me in honoring Intercom Ventures for creating PolTV, a responsible community-driven company for the Polish-American population. I am confident that it will successfully provide excellent services for immigrants for many years to come.

HAMMOND SPORTS HALL OF FAME 2011 INDUCTION BANQUET

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sincerity and admiration that I offer congratulations to several of Hammond's most noteworthy athletes, as well as to others who have contributed to the legacy of Hammond's athletic programs. On Tuesday, March 8, 2011, the Hammond Sports Hall of Fame honored eight new inductees at its annual Induction Banquet, which was held at the Hammond Civic Center in Hammond, Indiana. The Hammond Sports Hall of Fame was established in 1987 to recognize and honor individuals for their significant contributions to Hammond's distinguished sports legacy. These eight individuals are an admirable group, composed of former athletes, coaches, and elected officials who have excelled in their athletic pursuits or supported Hammond sports and athletics in an extraordinary manner.

At this year's induction ceremony, the Hammond Sports Hall of Fame recognized and honored the 2011 inductees. The individuals who have so deservedly earned this high honor are: Thomas McDermott, Sr., Marty Jakubowski, Frank Carroll, Tom Burns, Jeff Yelton, Carla Eskridge Rogers, David M. Wilhelm, and Bill Atkins.

Hammond is very fortunate to have produced such a rich tradition of excellence among its athletes, coaches, and supporters. In unique ways, the Class of 2011 inductees have made extraordinary contributions and have added to Hammond's rich sports heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating these outstanding individuals. Along with the current members of the Hammond Sports Hall of Fame, these new inductees have made a significant contribution to the continued excellence of Hammond athletics, and I am very proud to represent them in Washington, DC.