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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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HEARTFELT THANKS TO ANNE HOLCOMBE, CINDY SEBO, AND VICKY STALLSWORTH

(Mr. EHRLERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EHRLERS, Mr. Speaker, I hope you will be kind on the time allotted, because I want to take a few moments to recognize a very special person who has worked in this Chamber for some time, who has graced this Chamber and has helped us a great deal, and she will soon be leaving, and that is Ms. Anne Holcombe, who is seated at the front desk.

Mr. EHRLERS, Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHRLERS), my friend, for yielding to me. I join today in recognizing Anne Holcombe. This is her last day as the senior legislative clerk, so I, along with my colleagues, thought it appropriate that we take a 1 minute, since
you enjoy them so much, Anne, a special order.
I know that you enjoy sitting here through special orders. If you had a chance of a 1 minute or a special order, I suspect that you might prefer a 1 minute.
Anne is moving to Charlotte, North Carolina to be closer to her family and to start a new chapter in her life.
I want to wish her well. Our colleague, the former Mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina, a distinguished member of the Committee on Rules, Sue Myrick, will become your representative here in the House.
Anne’s professionalism on the dais has been a steady source of confidence that the records of the House will always be in order, that is why we are all very sad to see her leave.
I cannot think of why Anne would want to leave the House. I know that you greatly enjoy sitting here waiting until 3 o'clock in the morning until the committee that I am privileged to Chair reports a rule down here.
As I know how much you enjoy special orders that often extend up to, under our great reform process, midnight we know, but you do, obviously, grace the dais extraordinarily well.
You have worked here for many years. Anne started in September of 1996, Mr. Speaker, as a legislative information specialist and was responsible for researching, editing, and maintaining the legislative database that we, in the House, as well as the general public, depend on for information about what is happening here in the Congress.
In October of 1997, Anne was promoted to assistant chief floor clerk, where I think that the words we spoke on the House floor were transposed into marvelous eloquence, of course, while still complying with the rules of the House.
Then in January of 2000, Anne was promoted again to senior legislative floor clerk. She has done a terrific job in serving this institution and her country very well.
If Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I would also like to note that we also have two official reporters out of whom right here, who is actually finishing her last day, Cindy Sebo, who has worked long and hard, and also Vicky Stallsworth, who is also completing her last day here.
I guess the place is going to be empty when we come back. No one will be here to do any work. I hope very much that these positions are filled.
Let me say to all three that we wish them well in their future endeavors, and I thank my friend for yielding.
Mr. EHlers, Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I want to add my congratulations to all three of them and especially my heartfelt thanks. I have always made a point of trying to get to know the individuals who work in the front of this Chamber, who keep very long hours and transcribe everything we do and keep good order out of it.
I am delighted that both of the reporters who are leaving us are here present so we can thank both Cindy and Vicky as well. I hope you spell your names properly as you transcribe this.
They work tirelessly. They are going on to other things and other lands. I cannot imagine why Vicky, who is moving to Fort Collins, Colorado; and Anne, who is moving to North Carolina, if you are going to leave Washington to find a better place, I can understand that; but I would certainly recommend Grand Rapids, Michigan, especially this time of year. So come up there and stop in and see us.
Cindy will be leaving for the private sector. She will remain in this area, and we hope we see her around here occasionally.
So from the bottom of my heart, thank you to all of you. Congratulations. God bless you in your future endeavors and employment.
Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?
Mr. EHLERS. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.
Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.
I did not rise to defend the Washington metropolitan area as a place to live, notwithstanding his observations. But I did rise to say thank you on behalf of all of us, not on a partisan sense, although I am on this side of the aisle, and there are others on the other side of the aisle, but to, again, remind ourselves how important to the operations of the people’s House are those who never rise and speak.
They also serve who stand and record, the poet might have said.
To Anne and Cindy and Vicky, we appreciate very much, what you have done. You have at times been asked to do work that they have done. You have at times been asked to do work that they have done. You have at times been asked to spend long, long, long hours. You have fought fatigue; and I am sure, although you do not have to admit this, fought boredom as well in the operations that you have been responsible for.
You make it possible for the American public, even if they cannot see us on C-SPAN, even if they cannot be in the gallery, even if years later they are trying to find out what happened on the floor of the House, their House, doing their business, you make it possible for them to find out. You do so with incredible accuracy and efficiency. We thank you for that, and we acknowledge how critically important you are to the operations of this House.
I am not surprised that one of you is going into the private sector. Maybe both of you are going into the private sector. I am not sure, our two reporters, or Anne returning to North Carolina to be closer to her family, because there are, in my opinion, no more talented, no more highly motivated, no more productive than those who are hired by the private sector than those who work on this Hill and certainly, all those who work at the desk and who record our debates.
It is a hallmark of American democracy that we want to be open to the public. We want to have an accurate and accurate record of proceedings. You have enabled us to continue to do that.
We thank you. We wish you God-speed. We hope that you take with you very positive feelings about this House, that you know firsthand that, although there are flights and disagreements, and sometimes we are much smaller than we ought to be, that, at bottom, almost everybody, indeed everybody in this House, cares about their country and cares about their constituents. You have had the opportunity to see that firsthand. As I tell the pages, I hope you will tell that story wide and far.
We thank you, and we wish you the best of everything in the days ahead. Thank you for yielding.
Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?
Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Missouri.
Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to add my best wishes to Anne Holcombe as she leaves and also say farewell to Cindy and Vicky for the work that they have done.
Regarding Anne, I was sitting here thinking of the old Irish tune that has the melody of “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.” A phrase in there is “Johnny, we hardly got to know you.”
It seems like you came last week, and time flies so fast, and we hardly got to know you.
You have done so well. You have been very friendly. You have been very particularly kind to me in making sure the podium is at the right height. Your professionalism, your competency is beyond match. So we thank you for your efforts, your hard work. We wish you the very best in your next chapter of life, and do not forget us, God bless.
Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I want to thank all three of the speakers, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for their eloquent comments.
Frankly, they stole my speech, and there is not much I can add to it other than to say, on behalf of all of those who use this Chamber and rely on you as well as the broader American public who sees your work constantly on the news, as well as those who read the Journal, the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, I want to thank all of you for your hard service here. I wish you well. God bless you wherever you go.