EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMEMDING BEN AFFLECK

HON. TONY P. HALL
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 12, 2001

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special person, Ben Affleck, who came to town yesterday to host a fund-raiser on behalf of the A–T Children’s Project. A–T (Ataxia-Telangiectasia) is a genetic disease that attacks children. How Ben became involved is noteworthy.

Ben met Joe Kindregan, then 10, three years ago while Ben was filming a segment of his hit film, Forces of Nature, at Dulles Airport. Joe had just started using his power wheelchair and was given the opportunity to meet Ben on the set during filming. Ben and Joe immediately hit it off and their friendship has grown since then. Ben and Joe meet occasionally and keep in touch by e-mail. Recently, Ben invited Joe and his family to the premiere of his new movie, Pearl Harbor. Over the last few years, Ben has been able to witness first-hand the toll A–T has taken on Joe, and Joe’s increasing dependence on his family, just to get through the day. Ben’s devotion to Joe—and the Kindregan family’s work with the A–T Children’s Project and families—has made a tremendous difference in their lives and has given them additional hope that, with the help of people like Ben, a cure is possible.

Ben is a gifted young actor, popular, and hitting all the right high spots that a demanding career in Hollywood requires. He has gone beyond acting and has journeyed into the entrepreneurial world of producing shows as well. He has many developing interests in his life; takes the time to stay close to his mother; and seems to truly strive to make a real difference in this world.

Ben has taken the time to learn about the disease and the various research projects that are focusing on finding a cure. He appeared before the Senate yesterday as a compassionate and informed witness to talk about this dreadful disease, and the remarkable progress this small foundation has made in so short a period of time in its search for a cure. He requested that Congress provide increased funding to NIH for A–T research. He also joined many Members of Congress and friends last night to do push-ups and shoot hoops at an event to raise money and awareness about A–T.

I believe that Ben Affleck is an exceptional person. In his work with A–T, he has demonstrated a deep compassion and interest in his fellow man, which is particularly notable when coming from someone in the midst of achieving enormous fame and fortune. Ben has been a true hero to the A–T kids, and I extend my personal thanks to him.