

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO COUNCILMAN GARY M. KELLY

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Councilman Gary M. Kelly, an American hero—a soldier, a leader, a father, a husband, and city councilman in the city of Cibolo, who recently passed away on October 15, 2006. Councilman Kelly was recently named mayor pro tem by the city of Cibolo before his death in honor of his lifetime commitment to the city and to the community.

Gary M. Kelly was born on October 1, 1948, in the city of Utica in the State of New York to his parents, Raymond and Arlene Kelly. He graduated from high school in Whitesboro, New York, and then attended the Syracuse University College of Forestry in 1970 with a bachelor of science. He earned a master's degree in business administration from the University of Alaska in Fairbanks in 1975. Shortly after graduate school, Gary joined the Squadron Officer School in 1976, thus beginning nearly 30 years of service in the United States Air Force.

Councilman Kelly served his country with great honor in the United States Air Force and received numerous military awards and accolades such as the Legion of Merit, Joint Service Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, to name just a few. He also rose quickly within the military ranks from Second Lieutenant to Colonel. His military career was focused on program management and logistics support of weapon systems for the United States Air Force at Kelly Air Force Base. It was just not his country he served with great passion, it was the city of Cibolo in the State of Texas as city councilman. He was sworn into office on May 25th, 2005, and made numerous accomplishments such as writing the charter for the city, overseeing the creation of two fiscal budgets, establishing the Streets and Drainage Committee, the Public Safety Committee, and the Business Development Committee. He worked as the liaison to the Capital Improvements Committee, and Planning and Zoning Commission. He also was known for being a great mentor to new members of the city council and to commission chairs.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia C. Kelly, his two sons, Allen Dearborn and Scott Kelly, his mother, Arlene, his two sisters and their spouses, Cindy and Gregory Hobbs, Karen and Raymond Jankowski, his brother, Chris Kelly and his wife, Kathleen, and numerous aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews, and friends of the family. He truly led by example and inspired his children to be the best they could be in achieving their dreams and goals. He will be missed by us all and especially by the city of Cibolo in the State of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize Councilman Gary M. Kelly.

A TRIBUTE TO CARMEN S. COMAS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the jazz musician, Carmen S. Comas, distinguished musician. It behooves us to pay tribute to this outstanding artist and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

With a smile of grace that can light up a room, Carmen S. Comas was born on November 9, 1939 in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico to Arthur Comas and Patricia America Justiniano. At the young age of eighteen, Mrs. Comas was voted "Misses Smile of Mayaguez." This was just a reminder that her smile had an impact on her neighbors and her community.

At the age of twenty-one, Mrs. Comas was married with two daughters, when she decided to move to New York City. Mrs. Comas is a woman of many talents and was unsure which she would use to become the entrepreneur that she was determined to be. While attending secretary school she changed gears to open a clothing factory. She became a mentor to people in the community, showing them that opportunity does exist with guidance and determination.

Mrs. Comas' drive and expectations allowed her to continue to pursue the land of opportunity. After thirty wonderful years of learning and growing, she pursued her second passion—cooking.

After working for Heart Share Human Services of New York for ten years as a resident cook she changed gears to Cypress Hills Child Care Corporation. This experience allowed her to do her best work of nurturing children.

Loved and adored by many, Mrs. Comas acknowledges the support of her growing family. Aside from her four beautiful daughters, she has her life partner Luis who has provided her with support and empowerment throughout their lives together. She has three granddaughters: Christina, Alisson and Javalia and six grandsons: Hector, Nelson, Javier, Thomas, John and Anthony. Mrs. Comas is also a part of the extended family at the Democratic Club of North Brooklyn, the Brooklyn Highland Park Lions club.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Carmen S. Comas. Her willingness to get involved and the smile she brings makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate November as National Adoption Month. Originating in Massachusetts in 1976 as National Adoption Week under Governor Michael Dukakis, the honor was celebrated nationally by President Ford in 1976 and then extended to the month of November in 1990. It is a time during which we celebrate the families who have shown their commitment to children in need by opening their homes and a time to promote awareness of the need to find permanent homes for our most vulnerable children.

Permanency is important in the life of a child; with over 523,000 children in foster care, we must focus our attention on finding permanent, stable, and caring relationships for these children. Approximately 20 percent of the children in foster care have the ultimate end goal of adoption. This equals around 104,600 who are awaiting or working toward adoption. The need for quality, loving and permanent homes for these children is great. Children who age out of the foster care system are more likely to be homeless and more likely to end up in jail than their counterparts.

The issue of safe and permanent homes is of particular concern to my district, the Seventh Congressional District of Illinois. The Seventh District has the highest percentage of kinship care providers in the entire United States. I hope that our efforts in the 110th Congress will promote permanency for these children and support them and their families.

I urge organizations to continue their hard work advocating for adoption and permanency. Organizations such as the National Council for Adoption, Voice for Adoption, the Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Defense Fund, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, and the North American Council on Adoptable Children, just to name a few. Parents who adopt face many challenges and deserve our recognition and thanks. These families commit themselves to a child, emotionally, financially and mentally. The bonds they form are lifelong, and, most importantly, they positively affect the life of a child.

Mr. Speaker, as John F. Kennedy once said, "Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future." We must make sure that all of our Nation's children have hope for their future. To do this, we must ensure them loving, stable, and caring environments. Adoptive parents provide this for thousands of children every year. I thank adoptive parents as well as the numerous organizations dedicated to helping promote permanency for their commitment and sacrifice.

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