

to fully exercise its jurisdiction over future consideration of such matters, including involvement with the National Academy of Sciences study authorized under H.R. 3494. The Committee intends to monitor the implementation of section 401 by the Attorney General particularly as it relates to section 223(a) of the Communications Act. Support for H.R. 3494 passage this Congress should not be read as a lack of interest in the relevant jurisdictional matters.

THANK YOU, MRS. ROBIN MOLL
MEAGHER

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I want to give thanks to Robin Moll Meagher, my legislative director, who will be leaving Capitol Hill after six years of dedicated service.

Robin has become my right hand on telecommunications and healthcare policy.

This session, she helped me pioneer legislative action on telecommunications fraud called Cramming, by developing Congressional Hearings, drafting groundbreaking legislation, and working with industry leaders to resolve this problem.

Whether confronting complicated federal bureaucracies, or helping a constituent solve a difficult problem, Robin has never forgotten the peoples' priorities.

On a daily basis, I have been able to count on Robin to manage policy issues in my office, coordinate the legislative staff that help me do my job, and keep the overwhelming amount of information coming in organized and manageable.

I owe her a debt of gratitude, and I am not the only one.

Like the Oilers from her hometown of Houston, Robin came to serve the people of Tennessee after a long period of service with some of my former colleagues from Texas.

Working for Congressman Pete Geren and Jake Pickle, Robin's diverse skills helped her achieve important successes in trade policy, by amending NAFTA implementation language; transportation policy, by helping secure important aviation routes for her state, and by assisting her state in a number of other ways that benefited her bosses' constituents; and her alma mater, the University of Texas.

Like many bright young Americans, after Robin graduated college—from a school in Austin we in Tennessee call "the Other UT"—she came to Washington to serve her country, its elected representatives, and its people.

We are grateful for her help. As Robin opens a new chapter in her life, I would like to say good luck and thank you.

IN MEMORY OF THE POLKA KING

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Frank Yankovic, America's Polka King. The story of Yankovic's rise from a hard

scrabble youth on the streets of Cleveland, Ohio to the country's best selling Polka music artist deserves recognition.

In a recording career that spanned 60 years, two gold single records, thirty million records sold, and the first Grammy Award in the category of Polka music, Frank Yankovic's "Cleveland-Style Polka" has been widely credited with catapulting an Eastern European art form into a mainstay of American music culture. Tinkering with orchestrations and translating lyrics into English, Yankovic proved that Polka music could appeal to millions of Americans and become a vehicle for mass entertainment. His millions of record sales are a testament to this vision.

An inductee of Chicago's International Polka Association Hall of Fame and the "Cleveland-Style" Polka Hall of Fame, in addition to the Wisconsin and Michigan Polka Halls of Fame, Yankovic collaborated with an eclectic group of artists, ranging from Duke Ellington to Doris Day to Chet Atkins to Drew Carey. Yankovic was featured with his own float in the 1996 Presidential Inaugural Parade. The "Frank Yankovic Band" has performed to enthusiastic crowds across the country and around the world and made its Kennedy Center debut in 1998.

My fellow colleagues, Frank Yankovic was indeed an inspiration. He will be greatly missed, but his enormous contribution to American music culture will never be forgotten.

FINAL GOODBYE POLKA

(By William F. Miller)

They had come to mourn his death, but the Polka King's rollicking music worked its magic one more time.

As faint strains of Frankie Yankovic's "Blue Skirt Waltz" and "Just Because" drifted through St. Mary Church yesterday from accordionists warming up outside, people at the solemn funeral Mass looked up in recognition.

Then they began to smile.

A few minutes later, they stood outside and sang along.

"The music seemed like it was coming from heaven," remarked a woman wearing a babushka.

"It looked like rain, but did you notice the skies turned to blue when the accordionists played the 'Blue Skirt Waltz?'" said August Pust, special assistant for multicultural affairs to Gov. George V. Voinovich.

"I'm speechless and so happy for the music they are playing for my father," Yankovic's daughter, Andrea McKinnie, said through her tears. "That is exactly—yes, exactly—the way he would have wanted it, and thankfully they knew to do it. God bless them all."

An estimated 800 people attended the church service for Yankovic, a Cleveland native who won the first Grammy ever given for polka music and whose tireless touring brought Cleveland Slovenian-style polka to the top of the music charts. Yankovic, 83, died last Wednesday in New Port Richey, Fla.

Police officers blocked traffic along the route from St. Mary to Calvary Cemetery as the funeral cortege passed.

A delay in the hearse's departure from the church created the opportunity for a miniconcert outside. Eight of Yankovic's musician friends had brought their accordions, planning to play as Yankovic's casket was taken to the hearse.

They ended up repeatedly playing "Blue Skirt Waltz" and "Just Because,"

Yankovic's biggest hits from the 1940s, the only two polka songs ever to sell more than a million copies each.

Many of the mourners, especially older ones, began singing along when the impromptu band broke out some old-fashioned folk Slovenian songs. The musical scene was repeated at Calvary Cemetery, where an estimated 250 people bid their polka hero farewell.

During the funeral Mass, members of Yankovic's family went to the altar to express their love for him, calling him a loving and caring husband, father and grandfather. The Rev. John Kumse, pastor of St. Mary, said everyone benefited from and can be thankful for Yankovic's gifts as an entertainer.

Yankovic's loyal followers, many in their 70s and 80s, attended the service.

Emma Yudovich, 70, traveled from El Paso, Texas.

"He would tour in those early days and we would travel hours to see him to concert or at a dance, wherever he was, because we loved his polka music," she said. "We are sad, of course, but we cannot be too sad for him because he lived one of the fullest lives one could live."

Cleveland Councilman Michael D. Polensek, who grew up in Collinwood, Yankovic's old neighborhood, said the Polka King "was a hero in the neighborhood."

He said that as a councilman he was constantly asked to get a council resolution honoring Yankovic on his retirement. "I think I must have produced 10 of them over the years, and then Yankovic would change his mind and continue playing," Polensek said.

TRIBUTE TO HMONG AND LAO
VETERANS

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Hmong and Lao Veterans and their supporters from St. Paul and across the United States. Working together as patriotic and civic-minded citizens, they have successfully pressed H.R. 371, the Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act, forward through the House Judiciary Committee with 77 bi-partisan co-sponsors. More importantly, they have helped to bring overdue national recognition to the Hmong and Lao people and the noble cause that they served during the Vietnam War.

I would like to salute and bring to the attention of my colleagues a number of those individuals who worked tirelessly during this 105th Congress, spearheading efforts to help educate the public and Members of Congress about the plight of the Hmong Veterans and promoting the importance of H.R. 371, a bill which I was again proud to introduce. I would like to thank the Lao Veterans of America, the nation's largest Hmong and Lao non-profit organization, for its leadership role on these crucial matters; Colonel Wangyee Vang, the National President; Chertzong Vang, Chairman of the Minnesota State Chapter; Philip Smith, who serves as the Washington, D.C. director; Angela McCaffrey, Attorney at law; and Chris Johnson, a Hamline University law school student. I would also like to thank the Lao Family Community in Minnesota, Inc., whose headquarters are in St. Paul, for their special efforts, specifically: Chong Bee Vang, President;