

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN MEMORIAM OF WAYNE A.
STEEN, SR.

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 2, 2003

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a leader in the volunteer fire services community, Wayne A. Steen, Sr., of Delaware. This Sunday, October 5, 2003, Mr. Steen will be honored as part of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Wayne passed away in September of 2001, due to complications from an aneurysm he suffered while responding to a fatal traffic accident in 1995. Along with his family, I am pleased that Wayne will now receive the national recognition that he deserves for his dedication to the fire services community and to public safety.

Wayne dedicated 34 years of public service to the Mill Creek Fire Company where he held numerous offices before becoming Deputy Chief. Wayne was also an officer of the Delaware State Fire Chiefs Association and a life member of New Castle County Fire Chiefs Association, the Eastern Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Delaware Valley Fire Chiefs Association. In 1996, Wayne was named Honorary Deputy Chief and given the President's Award by the Mill Creek Fire Company. Such honors serve as a testament to Wayne's selfless devotion to public safety, and it is fitting that the Nation now join his colleagues at the Mill Creek Fire Company in recognizing Wayne's exceptional leadership and service record.

This Sunday, Wayne Steen, Sr.'s contributions to the fire services, along with those of 104 additional fallen firefighters will be memorialized at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, and their names will be added to the roll of fallen heroes. His commitment to public service has earned him a place in our Nation's fire services' history. Wayne's selflessness and dedication to the safety of others will always remain in our memories.

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CUBS WIN!

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 2, 2003

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pride following last night's National League Central Division champion Chicago Cubs' first playoff victory on the road since 1945.

I am proud to represent tens of thousands of loyal and patient Cubs fans who have so patiently waited for this opportunity to compete for its first National League Pennant in almost 60 years and its first World Series title since 1908. I join the City of Chicago in cheering for

the Cubs to overcome history by this year's nearly 90 wins and first place in the Central division.

I think most long-time Cubs fans would agree that there could not have been a more exciting route to the playoffs than the 2003 season. All season long, Chicago traded first place back and forth with the Houston Astros in the major league's most competitive division. After this weekend's victory against Pittsburgh, jubilant fans remained celebrating in the stands an hour after the game as Cubs players jogged around the perimeter of the field to salute their fans and soak up the delirious atmosphere at Wrigley Field.

Those of us on Chicago's north side are especially grateful for the arrival of first-year manager Dusty Baker, his winning attitude and proven leadership on the field and in our community. Dusty and his outstanding coaching staff made believers out of the players and Cubs fans. He held our team together during some of the season's most difficult times.

We must attribute much of this year's success to Dusty's clever off season personnel moves and Sammy Sosa's great batting, including his towering 40th home run this past weekend that made him the first player in National League history to hit 40 home runs in six consecutive seasons. This historic feat was achieved on top of slamming his 500th home run earlier this season. Sammy has become as much a part of Chicago as the stuffed pizza and Navy Pier. His pride in his native Dominican Republic is but one example of the cultural diversity that makes Chicago the great city it is today, and how baseball has been woven into the fabric of our Nation's history.

When I attended one of the Cub's home victories earlier this year, I was joined by the Chaplain of the House of Representatives, The Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin, before the game to honor his 89-year-old mother, Louise Coughlin, as the Cub's Usher of the Year. Moments like these and the team's winning ways are what made 2003 such a special season and why I will always be proud to represent the Cubs in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the Cubs for their first-place finish, and I join with the entire City of Chicago and Cubs fans everywhere in wishing them continued success in the playoffs. I join Cubs fans in cheering that one of baseball's most storied franchises ends a nearly century long championship drought. Win or lose, Chicagoans will be always be proud of their Cubs.

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A JOB FOR THE JUDICIARY
COMMITTEE

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 2, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, a recent editorial in the Denver Post calls on the Judiciary Committee to perform the oversight

function of calling Attorney General John Ashcroft to account.

The editorial evidently was prompted by the Attorney General's recent move to restrict plea bargaining in federal criminal cases. I think the editorial has it just right, and I urge the Judiciary Committee to promptly begin hearings on this and other Justice Department policies under the current administration. For the information of our colleagues, I am attaching the full text of the Denver Post editorial.

ASHCROFT'S PLEA PLOY

Attorney General John Ashcroft's scheme to make it tougher for federal prosecutors to reach plea bargains with criminal defendants is an ill-considered proposal that bespeaks an unrealistic view of the capacity of the American court system. Some observers say Ashcroft's plan is merely a ploy to make his boss, President George W. Bush, look tough on crime for the 2004 election. But all this sound-bite buffoonery accomplishes is to make the Bush administration look patently stupid. Even the greenest cub reporter on the federal court beat learns quickly that more than 90 percent of federal criminal cases are settled with plea bargains. Defendants plead guilty, often to a lesser charge or fewer counts, and this is taken into account at sentencing.

Plea bargains avoid going to trial in federal courts where dockets already are critically crowded. In exchange for guilty pleas, defendants can get some reduction in sentences, although formulaic federal sentencing guidelines adopted in the 1980s give judges very little discretion. The U.S. Justice Department says the new policy is intended to counter dangerously lenient sentencing practices by some federal judges. Utter nonsense. It's no accident our federal prisons are jammed to the rafters. And Ashcroft's claim to be acting in the interest of fairness is beyond laughable.

We recall that when the late Dale Tooley ran for Denver district attorney in 1972, he excoriated his predecessor for plea bargaining. Once elected, though, Tooley quickly realized the deals were necessary to prevent hopeless logjams in court. Even former federal prosecutors told The New York Times that Ashcroft's approach was too rigid. "A check-the-box analysis really does mask differences," said a former top Manhattan fed. "Crimes are different, places are different, people are different." Beyond being unrealistic, at times it seems that Ashcroft is intent on dismantling most of the traditional safeguards and liberties so venerated by President Bush's conservative constituency. He is the chief architect of the USA Patriot Act, which has eroded basic constitutional freedoms.

He has secretly proposed being given sweeping, arbitrary powers in the name of national security while debasing constitutional guarantees against illegal search and seizure and seeking broad powers to tap phones and other communications without court supervision. He has asked Congress for greater latitude in seeking the death penalty and to expand the crimes for which it can be imposed. He has asked his minions in U.S. attorneys' offices to keep tabs on which federal district judges mete out sentences more lenient than sentencing guidelines. He has assailed the ancient common-law concept of

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