IN REMEMBRANCE OF J.J. JAKE PICKLE

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, my dear friend, Jake Pickle, has left us but he will be remembered for both his accomplishments as a great Congressman and his ability to make everyone laugh.

He was a special man—a man who prided himself in his sense of justice and a man who could tell a ''hell of a good story.''

Jake Pickle and I joined the Ways and Means Committee together in the 94th Congress. It was after Rep. Helstoski was defeated in the next election, that I got the privilege of sitting next to Jake for the remainder of his career in the House of Representatives. What an experience it was.

He squeaked green plastic pickles at me (from deep in his pocket) and taught me how to de-shell two pecans with one hand and a single squeeze (and then eat them and throw the hulls under our desks with no one knowing). Over time, we became a team and sent juicy pecans to Members sitting down the row from us. Jake always thought that ''everyone should have a little something in their tummies to do good work.''

Jake Pickle and I became close personal friends over the years (as did our wives, Beryl and Alma). We could not have come from more different backgrounds—the inner-city of New York and the rolling hills of Texas. Yet, he became one of the Members I respected most for his sheer determination, unending zeal, and ability to truly develop bipartisan relationships.

J.J. Pickle served in the Congress for 31 years representing the Texas 10th Congressional District—from December 1963–January 1995. All agree that Jake was a class act, a star, and someone to love because he loved back.

I am one of the special few who signed his red pump organ—a treasure of his that he took home with him to Austin upon retirement and kept in his house. Signing the organ meant that you meant something to him.

J.J. Pickle was very, very proud of his Congressional record. He would be the first to tell you that he did not seek to be famous, to be a Senator, to be Governor, or to be President. What Jake Pickle wanted to be was ''The Darn Best Congressman'' for his Congressional District and even a better one for his country. That he was, and more.

Jake became Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee's Social Security Subcommittee in the early 1980s and led the charge for solving the system's financial problems. (It is too bad he is not with us now to do it again—on a bipartisan basis and in a prudent way.) The picture of Pickle standing next to President Reagan signing the ''Social Security Amendments of 1983'' is a classic of the decade.

Jake moved on and became Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee's Oversight Subcommittee for 10 years. One of his proudest accomplishments was reforming the tax code penalties so that they were fair to taxpayers. His face adorned the cover of a major tax publication titled, ''Congress At Its Best.''

Pickle was relentless in many ways. Once he drafted a ''Taxpayer Bill of Rights;'' it was his personal goal to see it enacted into law—and it was.

Once he learned that some TV evangelists were stealing from the public, it was his personal goal that they visit the Committee and change—and they did.

Once he learned that tax-exempt organizations were being used as fronts for illegal activities; it was his goal that the Justice Department intervene—and they did.

Once he learned that workers' pension plans were not funded properly; it was his goal to change the law to protect retirees—and he succeeded.

Even to the end, he was counseling us (Members and staff) about the issues Congress needed to ''get a rope around and move it.''

So I will close with the following: I missed Jake when he retired from Congress in 1995. But now I miss him more. He was a good man and he will not be forgotten.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF J.J. JAKE PICKLE

SPEECH OF

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I did not just like Jake Pickle; I loved Jake Pickle. Congressman Pickle was one of the finest public servants to have ever served in this House, and he was a true Texas treasure. He was a kind, decent, caring human being who spent his entire life making life better for others. Whether it was helping a veteran receive health care, bringing research dollars, and he brought many of them, to his beloved University of Texas or saving the Social Security system in 1983, Jake was always dedicated to helping others.

Jake Pickle's faith was shown time and time again as he lived the commandment to love thy neighbor. Jake Pickle lived every day with another biblical verse, ''This is the day the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.'' Jake lived every day joyfully. He lit up a room when he walked into it because of his joyful, positive approach to life. His positive approach has enlightened the lives of all of us blessed to have known him.

Jake Pickle exemplified courage when he voted as a freshman Congressman from I Texas to pass the Civil Rights Act which brought to reality the promise of equal opportunity to millions of African-Americans. He did it because it was the right thing to do, even though it could have ended his political career.

I want to tell one story about my friend Jake Pickle. In June of 1994, he and I were part of a U.S. congressional delegation on the 50th anniversary of D-Day. After the ceremony on June 4 of 1994, our bus was about to leave to go back to a hotel an hour to 2 hours away. I noticed Jake getting off the bus by himself. I stopped, walked up to him and said, ''Jake, what are you doing? And he said, Why don't you come with me, Chet?''

So I followed Jake Pickle off that bus. We walked several hundred yards. We went to Point du Hoc, that monument to American GI courage on D-Day when Colonel Earl Rudder led Rudder's Army Rangers up that stiff cliff against murderous fire by the Germans above them. It turned out that Jake Pickle and Earl Rudder roomed together after the death of Jake's first wife when then General Rudder was serving as land commissioner in Austin, Texas.

So that June day in 1994, Jake Pickle got off the bus, not knowing how he would get back to his hotel in France, to go pay his respects to his personal friend and fellow Texan and American, Earl Rudder, the hero along with America's Rangers at Point du Hoc. That was the character of Jake Pickle. Our Nation will miss Jake Pickle, but the world is a better place today because of his life of dedicated public service.

Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill once said that we make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give. By that high standard, Jake Pickle led a rich life, a life that enriched everyone of us blessed to have known him.

Goodbye, my friend, until we meet another day. Thank you for the memories. Thank you for your friendship. Thank you for making America and the world a better place.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF J.J. JAKE PICKLE

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Texas and our Nation has lost one of its most genuine and gracious public servants. Last Saturday morning, James Jarell Pickle, ''Jake,'' passed away on Saturday, with his wife by his side. For 31 years, Congressman Jake Pickle represented my hometown in this esteemed body as a Representative to the 10th Congressional District of Texas. And he did so with integrity, humility, honor, and a sense of humor that we should all attempt to mirror.

As a current holder of Congressman Pickle's seat, I work hard every day to provide the same kind of service to my constituents that Jake Pickle did to those he served. He was not just good at what he did, he was the best.

His family talks about the proudest vote he ever cast was in 1964 when he voted for the Civil Rights Act. He was one of only six southern Representatives to vote for that important piece of legislation. In the 1980s, he worked hours on end to protect Social Security and keep it solvent. He worked even harder in the 1990s to turn Austin into the high-tech society that it is today.

It is because of Jake Pickle that Austin continues to see new high-tech businesses locate to Texas's capital city. The University of Texas has also benefited greatly because of Jake Pickle. UT would not be churning out the latest in technology and new patents, as it now does every year, without the help that Congressman Pickle provided. It is also my honor to represent the research arm of the University of Texas which bears the name J.J. Pickle Research Campus.

But even as good and as smart a politician as he was, he is known today not for his ability to influence legislation or to help bring new