

I came back here 40 years later and who is still here proving his point but JOHN DINGELL.

As I said, 11 Presidents have come and gone, but he is still here. I believe he has served longer than any other Member of the Congress in the history of the country; perhaps, most importantly, he is maybe the greatest Member to ever serve in the Congress.

There are so many good things that have happened in this country over the better part of a half a century that we can attribute to the good work of the honorable Representative, the great Representative JOHN DINGELL.

JOHN, we are all so grateful for your incredible service. I am thrilled and honored to be able to be here to join my many other colleagues in saluting you for your great service to the people that you have represented so ably from your own district, but your larger vision as well of what has been so important for the progress of the people here in America.

Thank you for your wisdom. Thank you for sharing that with so many of us who benefited from having sought your wisdom. Thank you for your effectiveness and all the great things you have done for this country. We salute you, Mr. DINGELL.

We love you, and we will miss you, but we will be forever grateful. This country will always be a better place for you having served in this Chamber.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

A PRIVILEGE TO SERVE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I now have the opportunity to offer remarks concerning my six terms of service in the House of Representatives. What a distinct honor and privilege it has been to serve 700,000 fellow citizens from southeastern Pennsylvania in these hallowed halls.

From the moment I stepped foot in this building during freshman orientation back in 2002, I knew I was joining an institution that has been at the epicenter of landmark legislative decisions during the course of our Republic's history, and I knew that I would put up scores of historically important votes on behalf of my constituents.

From sitting in Statuary Hall during our freshman orientation dinner, where the likes of Abraham Lincoln and John Quincy Adams served, to sitting in this Hall during my first State of the Union address, to meeting with the President in the White House or on Air Force One, I have had more than my fair share of "pinch me" moments in this job.

However, the essence of the service that we all provide to our constituents is not the number of special moments

interacting with a President or sitting through a historic speech. It is the honor and the privilege to serve every single day and in working to meet the needs, aspirations, and expectations of one's constituents.

We introduce legislation, we vote on bills that come before us, and we undertake day-to-day constituent services that hopefully improve the quality of life of our fellow citizens and move our great Nation forward.

The majority of this work is done outside of the political limelight and is rarely reported on by the media, but the real, important work that all House Members do every day boils down to being the strong and passionate voice for the 700,000 citizens we serve, both in this legislative Hall, as well through the constituent services we provide.

I have had the great fortune of having some bills passed in both the House and Senate and then signed into law. Those experiences were very heartwarming and satisfying, but I also assisted in having constituents get veterans benefits or Social Security checks sent to them or their son or daughter receiving an appointment to one of our fine military academies.

Each and every one of those legislative and constituent experiences has added to the richness and fulfillment I have received from my experience here, and so I must express my gratitude and my appreciation to the numerous people who have assisted in supporting me along the way.

I have been blessed with wonderful supporters back home who have helped me through some very tough and competitive campaigns. They were always there to lend their energy and commitment, and I especially thank them for the faith they placed in me.

I have had a terrific staff, both in my D.C. and district offices, who have tirelessly worked on behalf of my constituents and supported me in my efforts. I would particularly like to recognize the various chiefs of staffs I had over the years: Linda Pedigo, Guy Ciarrocchi, Bill Tighe, Annie Fultz Dutton, and Lauryn Schothorst. They have been incredibly helpful and responsible for allowing us to accomplish all that we have.

On a more personal note, I would also like to thank my mother for the unbelievable inspiration and example she was for me over the years through her work ethic, her honesty and integrity, and her passion for civic responsibility.

I also want to thank my two sisters, Hedy and Eve, for always supporting me in my decisions to run for public office and in helping me any way they could.

□ 1830

A special thank you to my children—Katie, Jimmy, and Robby—and my stepchildren—Joel, Jay, and Katelyn—for their unwavering support for my public life.

Finally, I want to thank my great partner in life, my wife, Karen, who

has unfailingly helped me and supported me in whatever public service decisions I have made.

As we close out the 113th Congress, amid cantankerous partisan relations both here in Congress as well as in our country generally, I would be remiss if I did not call on all of my colleagues here to renew their commitment to work together across ideological and partisan lines to find the best public policy that will move our country forward.

We share a common purpose as Members: to represent and advocate on behalf of our respective districts and reflect the will of the voters who have sent us here.

But the American people want something more. They have a burning hope that Members, regardless of party affiliation, will work through their political differences and find the common ground that is the bedrock of our country. So now, more than ever, public service must be infused with the commitment to achieve and not just to argue.

I wish all of those being sworn into office at the start of the 114th Congress in a few weeks the best of success as they work towards historic achievements in the next 2 years.

Leaving Congress gives one time to pause and think and ask a simple question: Why did I come here in the first place?

Well, the answer to that question is pretty clear to me and pretty simple: to provide my constituents with a strong and passionate voice in the legislative process, to provide a level of constituent service that is second to none, and to serve with honesty and integrity in all actions.

As I look back, I hope and believe I have accomplished these goals, and I am most appreciative of all the great friends that I have met in my time here. But above all, I thank all of those who voted me into public office over the past six terms for their confidence and for their trust. It has been an incredible honor and a privilege to serve.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills and a Joint Resolution of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 78. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4110 Alameda Road in Houston, Texas, as the "George Thomas 'Mickey' Leland Post Office Building".

H.R. 1707. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, as the "James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building".

H.R. 2112. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 787 State Route 17M in Monroe, New York, as the "National Clandestine Service of the