

and then the American public, each constituency, each constituent voter in the district can then see very clearly how their Congressman feels about term limits by looking at how they vote tomorrow.

With the difficulty of defending such a vote I would ask all of my colleagues to consider if they have any doubt about this amendment, consider voting for it. This is what the public wants, this is what is best for this country, and I urge my colleagues to vote for term limits tomorrow when they cast their vote for the first time ever on this House floor.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN SCHLIENTZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ZIMMER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. STUPAK] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. Last Saturday my Upper Peninsula representative, Brian Schlientz, died. Brian was 27 years old. He had courageously battled a rare form of brain cancer. His life was brief, but it was filled with church and social activities, academic and athletic achievements, and community involvement.

Some would say success always came easy for Brian. But his greatest success was Brian's love of God, his family, and his country.

It is difficult to articulate success as it applies to faith in God. It is difficult to describe love of family when cancer denied Brian his wedding day 3 weeks ago on March 4.

For some people, it is hard to envision one's love for their country when Brian never served in the armed services; still Brian left his college studies to help me get elected to Congress in 1992. Just to help me? No, but to help his country, for Brian believed with all his heart in life.

He worked so long, so hard, just so a right-to-life Democrat could be elected to the U.S. Congress.

It was Brian's love of God, his family, and his country that propelled him to become an extraordinary person.

Brian is survived by his parents Don and Dorothy, his twin brother Matt and Matt's wife, Tiffany, Brian's sister, Heidi, his brother-in-law, Chad, and his devoted fiancée, Kristy, many relatives and all of his many, many friends.

To his family and to each of us, Brian has his own special significance. He had his own personal impact on all of us. When we gather at Northern Michigan University this Thursday for a memorial service for Brian, a university where he starred in academics and on the football field, we will all have our own personal songs, thoughts, and prayers for Brian and his family. While there is certainly sadness in our hearts, it is quickly being replaced by joy, much like this holy season of Lent in which we sacrifice and we try to cleanse our spiritual life just to experi-

ence the joy and the holy significance of Easter Sunday. So too should we all bask in the joy of Brian's life, the joy of knowing him, the joy of his love for each of us.

Just think of the joy that Brian brought to each of us.

As my Upper Peninsula congressional representative, Brian and I traveled together, we worked together and we prayed together. Brian was a joy to be around. You wanted to be with Brian. He brought out the best in everyone.

As Brian and I would drive the vast distances between the small towns that comprise the Upper Peninsula of Michigan our discussions always seemed to turn to his love for God and the difficulty, yet the strength and the joy he found in being, and working with and for a right-to-life Democrat.

Brian excelled in his position as my Upper Peninsula representative because of his love, joy that he had in God, his family, and this great country.

Although he already had one bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry, Brian went back to his studies so he could become a teacher. But, Brian, you are a teacher. Brian, you have been a great teacher and for all of us, Brian, you will continue to be a great teacher. As you look down upon all of us with that huge smile upon your face, I know that you will grade us not in the classroom, not in our academic and athletic achievements, but in the joy, strength, and love that we bring to each other. For you taught us, teacher, that the joy, success, and accomplishment in life is found in one's love of God, family, and country.

Thank you, Brian, for teaching us and reminding us of the secret: the success and the joy of your life.

SUPPORT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO LIMIT CONGRESSIONAL TERMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LATHAM] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for adding a term limitation amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

At virtually every opportunity, American voters have demonstrated their preference for term limitation for their elected officials. They have seen too often how entrenchment of political power yields a political culture that is less responsive and less responsible.

The Washington political and media culture has uniformly lined up in opposition to the term limits movement. That should be our first sign that the American people are on to something positive.

The most frustrating aspect of listening to term limit opponents and most of the media has been their refusal to discuss this issue intelligently, but

rather reject it out of hand. Much like the situation with the balanced budget amendment, opponents of term limits have relied on knee-jerk reactions against term limits rather than thoughtful discussion of the problems in the system and the need for systemic reform.

So, I'd like to address some of the arguments against term limits individually:

One, term limits would deprive the American people of experienced elected officials to address the Nation's problems.

Of all the arguments against term limits, this is the one most often cited by thoughtful term limits opponents. What I would point out, however, is that Congress is enriched when it is filled by persons with experience in all walks of life—not just legislating.

For too long, the way to real power inside Congress has been to come to Washington young and spend decades building up seniority.

Too many districts have been represented by men or women who've spent more of their adult lives in Washington than in the district they are supposed to represent.

By adopting term limits, a person who had worked successfully as a small business person, or a school teacher, or a homemaker could come to Washington later in life and still have the opportunity to play a major role in the process based on merit.

Two, term limits opponents also argue that term limits restrict the choices of the voters, giving us less freedom.

I think anyone who has ever looked at the reelection rates of Members of Congress immediately understands the weakness of this argument. Even in this last election more than 90 percent of the incumbent House Members who stood for reelection were returned to office.

The fact of the matter is that it is extremely difficult to beat an incumbent except in extraordinary years. By placing a limit on length of service, virtually every congressional district in this country would become competitive because local political organizations would not wither away waiting for a 20-term Congressman to finally move along.

Instead, Members would likely continue to face very competitive elections in their first few years after their election.

However, instead of becoming isolated and entrenched, even the most popular incumbent would likely face challenges during his or her later terms by those interested running in the future.

I believe that would drastically reduce the number of uncontested seats and contribute to a substantial increase in competitive races. That, not theoretical arguments about limiting choices, would be the real world impact of term limits.