

A week later, Senator DOLE described those common parts—provisions to help Americans who cannot afford insurance, who cannot get insurance because of preexisting conditions, or who cannot keep insurance due to a job change.

The bill that Senator KASSEBAUM and I introduced in 1995 followed that suggestion. It included only those reforms that had broad bipartisan support in the last Congress. We agreed to oppose all controversial provisions—even provisions we would support under other circumstances.

With Senator KASSEBAUM's leadership, the legislation was approved by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee by a unanimous vote. By the time it was debated on the Senate floor, it had 66 cosponsors—28 Republicans and 38 Democrats—ranging from the most conservative Members of the Senate to the most liberal.

When the bill was taken up by the full Senate, Senator DOLE and Senator ROTH offered an amendment that had many constructive, noncontroversial provisions which strengthened the bill—fairer tax treatment for small businesses, deductibility for long term care expenses, tax relief for the terminally ill, and provisions to crack down on fraud in Medicare and Medicaid. Senator KASSEBAUM and I welcomed these provisions and accepted them.

But their amendment also included medical savings accounts, a proposal that would kill the bill. Fortunately, the Senate decisively rejected that proposal, and the amended bill, without medical savings accounts, passed the Senate unanimously.

Since then, unfortunately, a major impasse has developed over this issue. If the impasse can be resolved, the bill will pass. If not, the bill will die. Our best chance to resolve the impasse is now—this week. Senator DOLE wants the bill to pass before he leaves the Senate, and other Republicans are unlikely to reject a genuine request for action from their party's leader. Once Senator DOLE is gone, the prospects of ending the impasse are much more bleak.

Reasonable compromises are easily within our grasp on medical savings accounts. It is irresponsible for Republicans to hold the other bipartisan reforms in this bill hostage, if they can't get their way on medical savings accounts.

What happens to this bill is not going to make a difference in the outcome of the 1996 Presidential election. But it will make a difference, a very large difference, to the 25 million Americans who will benefit immensely from these needed health reforms. If we keep our eyes on them—if we keep those deserving families in communities across America uppermost in our minds, this bill will pass.

It is also clear who will get the blame if this bill dies. To kill this entire bill because they can't get all they want on medical savings accounts would be a

flagrant and despicable abuse of power by the Republican Party—and the American people should vote accordingly in the elections in November.

SEBASTIAN J. "BUSTER" RUGGERI

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I welcome this opportunity to pay tribute to a remarkable man, a brilliant trial attorney, and a dear friend, Sebastian J. "Buster" Ruggeri.

Buster is a legend in Greenfield, MA. He was born in 1914, 4 years after his parents arrived in Greenfield from Sicily, and grew up delivering groceries for his family's business. He went on to graduate from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1936, and Boston University Law School in 1939.

In 1942, after practicing law for several years, Buster joined the Air Force. He spent 3 years as a lawyer in the service, working his way up from private to lieutenant colonel and retiring as head judge advocate for a base of 40,000 service members in India.

After the war, Buster joined the Air Force Reserve Squadron based in Greenfield. He became commander of 85 men, retiring as lieutenant colonel after 22 years.

After this outstanding service to the Nation, Buster focused his attentions once again on the private practice of law. He quickly became known as the dean of the county's legal community. He is one of the brightest, most dedicated, and effective trial lawyers in western Massachusetts. His passion and knowledge of the law and his commitment to justice led to a remarkably successful legal career.

Buster's interests extend to many other areas. He is a leading member of the Greenfield and Franklin County Democratic Committees. No Kennedy has ever gone to Franklin County without Buster's advice, assistance, and friendship. He used to hold strategy sessions for my brother during his campaign for President in 1960, and he's been a valuable friend and adviser to me throughout my years in the Senate.

In addition to these commitments, Buster always made time for community service. He is a longtime member of the Lions Club and the Elks Club, and served as deputy director for the Elks. Buster is also a distinguished member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. His professional achievements also include serving as president of the Massachusetts Trial Lawyers Association and the Franklin County Bar Association.

I congratulate Buster on his remarkable career, and I wish him well as he continues his unique leadership for his profession, his community, and his country. I ask unanimous consent that a recent article on Buster's extraordinary life be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

A "COLORFUL PISAN" IN THE COURTHOUSE

(By Russell G. Haddad)

GREENFIELD.—By all accounts over the past half century observers could usually tell when attorney Sebastian J. "Buster" Ruggeri didn't have a strong case.

The demonstrative and gregarious Ruggeri never flinched from a weak hand. He would create a diversion from the facts of a case by waving his hands about and performing some theatrics.

"If he didn't have a strong case he would about at the jury," recalled former District Court Judge Allan McGuane could hear him from two floors away.

John A. Barrett, Franklin County's register of probate, recalls a time when Ruggeri had a 2 p.m. appointment in probate court, but called to say he would be late. He showed up 15 minutes late but has spent the previous hours appearing in courts in Boston, Worcester and Springfield before arriving in Franklin County.

It's just this kind of drive that over the years has earned Ruggeri, still practicing full time at 82, a reputation as an energetic trial lawyer who would take cases nobody else wanted.

Ruggeri—considered the dean of the county's legal community—still seems tireless. The self-described "colorful pisan" began practicing law in 1939, and seemed to thrive on crisis and providing that he could win despite the odds, his long-time associates say.

"In the courtroom you could feel his presence," Barrett said. "He commanded the attention of everybody."

Ruggeri, meanwhile, looks back on his legal career and takes pride in never doing anything halfway. He was a general practitioner, researching while, handling divorces, doing worker compensation cases, but also handled criminal cases, as serious as murder, and civil actions.

"I was always intense in my practice and tried to treat everyone fairly," said Ruggeri.

He said his family nickname—first was used by his parents when they called him for dinner—was always "Busty" but became "Buster" when Sen. Edward Kennedy call him that years ago.

In his heyday, Ruggeri was known as one of the most imaginative and hardworking trial lawyers in western Massachusetts.

"I could always express myself," he said smiling. "I'm at home being up front."

His style worked in what Ruggeri describes as his most memorable trial—a 1975 murder case in which he defended Ernest W. Morran. Ruggeri in his closing statement hammered away at the prosecution's case slamming his fist on the jury box.

He ended his remarks reciting a Robert Frost poem to reinforce his argument that police had ignored Morann's version of what happened and arrested the wrong man in Ashfield woods on a snowy night in November 1974.

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood And sorry I could not travel both And be one traveler, long I stood And looked down one as far as I could Two where it bent in the undergrowth."

As if he were there today, Ruggeri finished: "Two roads diverged into a wood and I . . . " ". . . took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference."

Ruggeri explained that he learned early on in his career that he could sway juries by performing an impassioned plea. He had to convince the jurors that he believed in his client.

"You have become a part of it," Ruggeri said. "I just about live it."

Attorney John Callahan, who was a North-west District Attorney from 1970 to 1978 and

faced off against Ruggeri on many occasions, said he was impressed with Ruggeri many, many times.

"He was bright. He was tenacious. He was very effective," Callahan said.

He recalled the Morran case, for which he was the prosecuting attorney. He said it stands out as a prime example of Ruggeri's skills and tenacity. Callahan said Ruggeri did an "unbelievable job" in cross-examining a pathologist testifying for the prosecutors.

The key to Ruggeri's success was preparation by hiring a pathologist of his own to inspect the evidence and guide him, according to Callahan.

"As far as I'm concerned it was one of the best jobs that Sebastian ever did," he said. "Sebastian could try a case off the top of his head but seldom did when it was a serious matter. As he always did, he gave his heart and soul to the trial as he did with many others."

Ruggeri was born in 1914, about four years after his parents, Anthony and Rose, moved here from Sicily. His mother and father, who worked for the Boston & Maine railroad in the East Deerfield yards never had any formal education but went on to build a successful grocery business, A. Ruggeri & Sons.

The oldest of four cones—he also has an older sister—Ruggeri later helped in this business delivering groceries. He has fond memories of those times when his mother would give cookies to neighborhood children and the market was a meeting place to talk about politics and the various happenings in town.

"People used to come in and chew the fat for an hour," Ruggeri said with a sparkle in his eye.

But above all else, his greatest impression of those days was his father, who opened the store in the 1920's in the basement of their house Deerfield Street house. Ruggeri said his father would work practically all day, yet, have time to instill morals and values in his children.

"I think the world of my Daddy," Ruggeri said affectionately. "Me parents were next to God."

However, he didn't always move in the direction his father and mother wanted. On graduating from Greenfield High School, Ruggeri attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1936, earning a civil engineering degree. While his parents wanted him to become an engineer, he has designs on a legal career and eventually went to Boston University Law School and graduated in 1939.

"I thought engineering would be too quiet," the fragile-looking, but strong-willed Ruggeri recalled.

After three years of practicing law, Ruggeri joined the Air Corp in 1942. He spent the subsequent three years in the service, quickly working his way up from private to lieutenant colonel, retiring as head judge advocate for a base of 10,000 men in India.

After the war, he joined the 9286th Air Force Reserve Squadron, based in Greenfield. He later became commander of 85 men, retiring as a lieutenant colonel after 22 years.

A conversation about Ruggeri's military experience tends to get a bit dangerous. He becomes animated, excitedly pacing back and forth and swinging his arms as he tells stories of being in officer cadet school and his travels in India in the shadow of the Himalayan Mountains on the Chinese border.

Reared on local political gossip at the family store, Ruggeri eventually became a leader in the local and state Democratic Party, befriendng the Kennedys and on numerous occasions hosting them at this 13-room James Street home.

In his Bank Row offices, photographs of John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy hang on the walls. A commemorative poster

from the 25th anniversary of JFK's assassination is prominently placed in the waiting area just outside Ruggeri's office.

U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy personally signed the poster with a message.

"To Buster—who started with Jack and has stood shoulder to shoulder with all the Kennedy brothers—Ted," the proclamation reads.

Kennedy, in a prepared statement, recently called Ruggeri "great friend and key supporter" for more than 40 years going back to JFK's first campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1952.

"Ever since, no Kennedy has gone into Franklin County without Buster's advice, assistance and friendship," Kennedy said. "He's made an enormous difference, and I know that Jack and Bob felt the same way."

Ruggeri, who was one of the guests invited to Rose Kennedy's funeral last year, boasts that JFK's run for the presidency began in his office as strategy sessions to take control of the state Democratic Committee were held there. He said he only asked for one job through his ties with Sen. Kennedy—U.S. ambassador to Italy.

"I speak Italian fluently and everything," said Ruggeri, who in recent years has been invited to join the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle. "I could have fun in Italy."

Over the years, Ruggeri acquired much downtown property in Greenfield, becoming the largest single landlord in town. His 37 properties include a sizable chunk of Bank Row, part of which is the former First National Bank building. He also owns an empty Federal Street office building as well as several residential properties, the Silver Arrow liquor store on French King Highway and the Ruggeri Shopping Center on Federal Street. He also owns 52 acres on Shelburne Road, which he hopes to sell for possible use as a shopping center.

Ruggeri, who started buying real estate soon after he began practicing law, said at one time the properties were considered a badge of honor. Now many of them are vacant and falling into disrepair and he owes more than \$130,000 in back taxes.

At one time the commercial properties downtown, "had a certain amount of honor to them," he said. "I've got some temporary burden. I'm hoping 1996 will be better for me."

The life of Franklin County's oldest lawyer has been full of community service. He is a longtime member of the Lions Club and Elks Club, having served as past district deputy for the Elks. He also is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion organizations. His professional affiliations included being a past president of the Massachusetts Trial Lawyers Association and Franklin County Bar Association. Politically, he is a member of the Greenfield and Franklin County Democratic Committees.

Ruggeri and his wife, Margaret, were married 33 years before she died in 1974. They had five children together—Avis, Margaret, Phyllis, Christine and Paul, who died in a 1982 car crash.

Paul's death still appears to affect Ruggeri as he fondly remembers what his son, and paw partner, meant to him and the firm.

"He was bringing in young clients," Ruggeri said. "My whole plans to turn the office over to him were shot to hell. He had a great future."

Ruggeri's plans to retire and hand the firm to his son had been dashed, and made him push his career forward.

McGuane, a former state representative, thinks of Ruggeri as a "remarkable man." He said Ruggeri belongs to the old school of being polite and courteous.

"He's honest. A man of his word," McGuane said. "He always gave his client a

full day's work for his pay whether win, or lose or draw."

Over his legal career, Ruggeri said he has had no regrets despite having chances to become a federal judge on several occasions through his association with the Kennedys.

"I always wanted to be a small town lawyer," Ruggeri said. "I had the freedom here."

Hard work has become his trademark. And Ruggeri is still going strong. He received a degree in patent law last summer from Franklin Pierce Law Center in Concord, N.H.

EXCELLENCE: A BOYD FAMILY TRADITION

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I consider myself to be extremely fortunate to have a staff made up of people who are not only excellent at what they do, but are bright, interesting, and a pleasure to be around. Among them is a young man by the name of Moses Boyd, whose intelligence, determination and inimitable style have been a longtime asset to my office. Apparently, being hardworking and capable are traits that run in his family. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a column that Moses wrote as a tribute to a role model of his. She sounds like an incredible woman.

There being no objection, the column was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the State, Columbia, SC, Mar. 29, 1996]
MIDLANDS VOTING RIGHTS ADVOCATE SALUTED
(By Moses Boyd)

As part of last month's Black History celebrations, we would like to honor a living inspiration who made a significant contribution to the voting rights of many Richland County citizens.

She is Elsie Boyd, my mother.

She was born in 1924 in Fairfield County, where she attended public schools. Married at 15, she gave birth to 14 children and enjoyed a loving marriage of more than 55 years until the passing of her husband last year.

While young, she became a Sunday school teacher at Zion Pilgrim Baptist Church. In that position, she instructed church members in reading and writing as well as Bible lessons.

Her interest in voting rights began in the 1950s. She regularly encouraged church members and community residents to register to vote, holding sessions on how to do it.

She persistently communicated her interest to organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She once accompanied a group to one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s seminars on voting rights.

As a result of her interest, she was appointed in 1967 to the Richland County Board of Voter Registration.

She became the first African-American woman to serve as a registrar in South Carolina. In that role, she worked tirelessly to increase voter registration, particularly among low-income and African-American citizens.

Her service led to appointment as chairman of the board in 1980, making her the first African-American woman to serve in this capacity in South Carolina. She retired as board chairman in 1988.

Colleagues, associates, friends and observers have noted the vital role she played in ensuring voting rights.

She made an enormous contribution to residents of Richland County and South Carolina.