

MOURNING THE LOSS OF COMMUNITY LEADER AND FORMER TEMPLE MAYOR WILLIAM R. "BILL" COURTNEY

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 17, 1998

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with members my memories of William R. "Bill" Courtney, a community leader in my 11th Texas Congressional District who recently passed away.

William Courtney, a former mayor of Temple and a special friend of mine, died July 3 at his home following a brief illness. Bill Courtney was a highly esteemed citizen, a man who earned the respect and admiration of those in political, civic, and religious circles. I want to share with the Members his many accomplishments and invaluable service to his community.

Bill Courtney was descended from a pioneer Central Texas family. He never forgot his Central Texas roots and his family and community always came first.

He served as mayor of Temple from 1976 to 1980. During those two terms as mayor he implemented a single-member district election system in Temple. He served as a member of the State Democratic Executive Committee and his political and legal counsel were much sought after.

Bill Courtney was a leading attorney in Bell County for 48 years. He was a senior partner in the law firm of Naman, Howell, Smith & Lee. He was an expert on real estate financing and belonged to many professional organizations including the American College of Mortgage Attorneys where he served as board member and president. In addition, he was a member of the State Bar of Texas, the American Bar Association, the Texas Bar Foundation, and the Bell-Lampasas-Mills Counties Bar Association.

He attended Temple public schools and Temple Junior College. He earned his B.B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin in 1948 and his law degree from the University of Texas Law School in 1950. Bill Courtney was a World War II veteran and served as a 10th Mountain Division infantry officer fighting in Italy.

He was a member of the Episcopal Church of Temple and served three terms as Vestryman and two terms as Senior Warden.

Bill Courtney viewed his community involvement as a sacred duty and a cherished honor. He served as a trustee of the Scott and White Memorial Hospital, president of the Temple Industrial Foundation, and chairman of the Temple Economic Development Corporation. He was a past vice president and director of the Temple Chamber of Commerce, and past president of the Central Texas Council of Governments, and the Cultural Activities Center.

He and his wife, Shirley, donated land for the Temple Ronald McDonald House. Recently, they donated more land to expand the house to provide more space for families to stay while loved ones are treated at the nearby hospital.

Up until the time that he passed away, Bill Courtney continued to work for his community.

Last year he used the skill and expertise accumulated during three-quarters of a century to help bring a new Texas Veterans Nursing Home to Temple.

Within days of his death, Bill and I were actively working together to try to keep the state USDA offices in Temple. It does not surprise me that even in his last days on this earth, Bill Courtney was doing what he did his entire life—helping others.

Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Judged by that high standard, my dear friend, Bill Courtney lived life to its fullest.

His family and many friends will dearly miss Bill Courtney, but his spirit of caring for others will live on in all of us who were touched by his extraordinary life of service.

I ask Members to join with me in honoring the memory of Bill Courtney. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Shirley, his three sons, John Patrick, Joseph Sayles and David William and the rest of his family and friends.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 4143, THE GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT ACT

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 17, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) is a true national treasure. It provides open space and recreation in the midst of a densely populated urban area, and it is one of our Nation's most used national parks. I rise today to urge my colleagues to support legislation which would expand the boundaries of the GGNRA to include an additional 1,300 acres of land adjacent to existing GGNRA parkland.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation has bipartisan support and the support of the entire Bay Area Congressional Delegation. Joining me as co-sponsors of this legislation are Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, Congressman TOM CAMPBELL, Congressman GEORGE MILLER, Congresswoman LYNN WOOLSEY, Congressman PETE STARK, Congresswoman ELLEN TAUSCHER, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, and Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN.

H.R. 4143, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area Boundary Adjustment Act, will permit the National Park Service to acquire carefully selected natural areas in San Mateo County, primarily in the area in and around the City of Pacifica. National Park Service officials in the Bay Area conducted a boundary study to evaluate the desirability of including additional lands in and around Pacifica within the GGNRA. During the preparation of the Park Service study, a public forum was held to gather comments from area residents, and local input was reflected in the final study. The Pacifica City Council adopted a resolution endorsing the addition of these areas to the GGNRA. The GGNRA and the Point Reyes National Seashore Advisory Commission also urged the addition of these new areas to the park.

H.R. 4143 expands the boundary of GGNRA to permit the inclusion of lands directly adjacent to existing parkland as well as nearby lands along the Pacific Ocean. The upper parcels of land offer beautiful vistas, sweeping coastal views, and spectacular headland scenery. Inclusion of these lands would also protect the important habitats of several species of rare or endangered plants and animals. The legislation would also offer improved access to existing trails and beach paths and would protect important ecosystems from encroaching development.

The GGNRA Boundary Adjustment Act would also permit the inclusion of beautiful headlands along the coast into GGNRA. The coastal headlands of San Pedro Point, the Rockaway Headland, Northern Coastal Bluffs, and the Bowl & the Fish would be included in the GGNRA under this legislation. These parcels would offer park visitors scenic panoramas up and down the coast, views of tide pools and offshore rocks, sweeping views of GGNRA ridges to the east, as well as additional access to the Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Speaker, throughout my service in Congress, I have had a strong interest in preserving the unique natural areas of the Peninsula. In the early 1980's, I fought for the inclusion in GGNRA of Sweeney Ridge, which includes the site from which Spanish explorers first sighted the San Francisco Bay in the 18th century. The ridge affords a unique panorama of the entire Bay. The Interior Secretary at that time, James Watt, refused to include Sweeney Ridge in the GGNRA. In 1984, in the face of a long and hard battle waged by myself and former Congressmen Leo Ryan and Phil Burton, the Reagan Administration acquiesced, and Sweeney Ridge became a part of our protected natural heritage.

In the early 1990's, I authored and secured passage of legislation to add the Phleger Estate to the GGNRA. The Phleger Estate includes over a thousand acres of pristine second-growth redwoods and evergreen forests adjacent to the Crystal Springs watershed in the mid-Peninsula. The Federal Government paid one-half of the cost of acquiring the Phleger Estate. The other half of the cost was paid for through private contributions raised by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). My distinguished colleague, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, played a key role in winning congressional approval of the Federal Government's share of the purchase. The Phleger Estate is now part of the GGNRA and it has become an important hiking and recreation area on the Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, preserving our country's unique natural areas must be one of our highest national priorities, and it is one of my highest priorities as a Member of Congress. We must preserve and protect these areas for our children and our grandchildren today or they will be lost forever. Adding these new lands in and around Pacifica to the GGNRA will allow us to protect these fragile areas from development or other inappropriate uses which would destroy the scenic beauty and natural character of this key part of the Bay Area. I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 4143, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area Boundary Adjustment Act.