her political career was just changing direction; she then successfully ran for Congress.

Congresswoman FOWLER returned to Washington with an ambitious agenda. She had vowed to make Mayport Naval Station a top priority and she succeeded. Through her position on the Armed Services Committee, she has built a reputation as an advocate of a strong national defense. She has improved the nation's commitment to military personnel and facilities in her district, throughout the nation, and around the world.

Her tenure on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has also resulted in major improvements for Florida. Florida is a rapidly growing state and deserves a greater share of transportation funding. Through Mrs. FOWLER's efforts, Florida is receiving an additional $440 million annually for its transportation needs. Due to her experience with the Transportation Committee, Congressman FOWLER was named Chairman of the newly created Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations and Emergency Management.

While making her first run for Congress in 1992, Mrs. FOWLER offered to limit herself to four terms. Although she was asked by her leadership and her colleagues to reconsider, TILLIE is stepping down after four terms. After all, she has accomplished the goals she set out to achieve eight years ago.

We are losing more than an experienced lawmaker, we are losing a good friend. In fact, Mrs. FOWLER has been a good friend to the people of Florida, and perhaps more importantly, the men and women of our armed services. It has been an honor to serve and work with TILLIE and we will miss her.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

## TRIBUTE TO HON. TILLIE K. FOWLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to join the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) to honor the remarkable career of my friend and colleague, TILLIE FOWLER.

TILLIE has served the Fourth District of Florida, this body, and her country with integrity and loyalty. She has been a role model and a friend to me during my freshman term here in Congress, and I will miss her greatly.

When I first met TILLIE, I knew we would get along well because of our similar background. TILLIE and I are two of only three Republican women attorneys in the House, and both of us have been very active in our home communities before coming to Washington.

At the time when TILLIE and I graduated from our law schools, there were very few women going into the legal profession and even fewer options for women attorneys. We had to create our own options, and TILLIE certainly did so by deciding to move to Washington and begin a career in public service.

She worked first as a congressional staffer, then as counsel in the Nixon administration before moving to Jacksonville, Florida, with her husband, Buck, to raise their daughters, Tillie and Elizabeth. TILLIE established a solid reputation in Jacksonville as a local leader long before running for Congress. She was president of the Junior League, chairman of the Florida Humanities Council, and president of the City Council.

Because of this background, TILLIE is dedicated to maintaining excellent relations with her constituents. TILLIE serves her district with pride, which you can tell just by walking into her office. In addition to the Jacksonville Jaguars football helmet proudly displayed in her office, artwork from her district lines the walls, and books around her district decorate the reception area.

From the beginning, TILLIE made strong national defense one of her top priorities. When bases around the country were being closed in the early 1990's, TILLIE fought to ensure that two of the bases in Jacksonville were kept open. Because of such dedication, she is known and admired by the military community.

Our Tuesday Lunch Bunch relies heavily on her expertise in military affairs. As such an effective leader, TILLIE has been the true role model, not only for those of us who follow her in Congress but for people everywhere.

An even greater testament to her character and leadership is that not only do so many Members respect and admire her but that her own staff does as well. Her staff is extremely loyal to her and most of them have been with her for many years.

TILLIE established herself as the leader from her first day in Congress. As a freshman, she was elected co-chair of the Freshmen Republican Task Force; and in her second term, she became a deputy whip. She is currently the chairman of the Committee on Transportation Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Emergency Management and is the senior Republican woman on the Committee on Armed Services.

As Vice Chair of the Republican Conference, she is not only the highest ranking woman in Congress but the first Floridian to hold the position. With such a record of leadership, it is no wonder she was elected unopposed in 1994, 1996, and 1998.

A few weeks ago, I heard a fellow Member on the floor affectionately refer to TILLIE as a real-life Steel Magnolia. I could not agree more. In fact, TILLIE takes great pride in being referred to by Working Women Magazine as a drill sergeant disguised as a Southern belle.

Throughout her career, TILLIE has always been dedicated to standing up for what is right. The strength of character has made her a great asset to this body.

TILLIE has been a true friend, and we will all miss her leadership. However, I am very confident to say that this is not, as they say, farewell and not goodbye. I know this will not be the last time that we will hear from TILLIE FOWLER. I look forward to seeing what she will do next because I know that, in whatever capacity she chooses to serve, she will serve her country and the good people of Florida with integrity, courage, and unending enthusiasm.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. BIGGERT. I yield to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with those of us who are praising TILLIE FOWLER to tell them that I had the opportunity to be in Jacksonville and give the commencement address to the Jacksonville University senior class; and while there, I had the opportunity to meet with most all of the leaders of Jacksonville.

Up here it is easy almost to be a hero amongst ourselves. But we are seldom a hero in our own hometown. And the respect that TILLIE FOWLER has in her hometown is something that is almost astonishing. Every business leader there praised her. They were so happy to have her here. And they knew that she was term-limiting herself and they knew that she was not coming back, and they were remorseful of that.

I think it is a great compliment that we also recognize that not only is she a hero to us, but TILLIE FOWLER is a hero in her own hometown.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. ROUKEMA addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

## TRIBUTE TO HON. TILLIE K. FOWLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. THURMAN. Madam Speaker, I too rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman and someone I call a friend, the Honorable TILLIE K. FOWLER.

Representative FOWLER is a dynamic and compassionate leader, who I am