

Washington, it is a pleasure to say farewell to Doc.

I hope I will see you again very, very soon. Thank you, Doc.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Thank you very much.

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

#### AN HONOR TO SERVE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise today for, perhaps, my last time speaking as a Member of this institution.

I rise this evening, first and foremost, to pay a debt of gratitude to Georgia's 11th Congressional District and to the people there, who have graciously allowed me the privilege of serving them for these past 12 years.

Growing up modestly in Augusta, Georgia, I would never have dreamed that, someday, I would be standing where I am today, and I would not have had this opportunity if it weren't for my wonderful constituents in north-west Georgia. I may be biased, Mr. Speaker, but I think the people in my district are the nicest and the most hospitable in this country.

So, to them, on behalf of myself, my family, and my staff, I extend my deepest thanks for allowing us to serve you in this House of Representatives.

To my wife, Billie; my three daughters, Gannon, Phyllis, and Laura-Neill; and my son, Billy, I am forever grateful that you all have stayed by my side and that you have supported me throughout my public service. I wouldn't be where I am today without your sacrifices. To my family, a huge, heartfelt thanks.

Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues, it has been the honor of a lifetime to serve with all of you. The respect I have for each and every one transcends ideology and party line. I have made some of the greatest memories of my life with you, and I hope to stay connected with all of you in the years to come.

Of course, in order to be successful in this body, one must have a great staff. Thank you to each and every one of the staffers who has shown such great devotion in serving the people and in helping me to serve them in the 11th District of Georgia.

Thank you all for joining in my fight to protect the freedoms of the Georgians we serve and for working tirelessly for me for a better America.

I entered into Congress during a time of great unrest, not even 2 years after the 9/11 attacks in New York City. Since then, I have been honored to have been a part of this body as it has faced some of the largest challenges of the new millennia: the global war on

terror, the Great Recession, Medicare part D back in 2003, the stimulus response to the financial collapse, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, fighting for fiscal solvency during the fiscal cliff, and a litany of new challenges facing the health care industry due to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

It is my hope that as history examines my actions as a part of this body that the record will show that I always acted and voted the way I thought was in the best interests of the Georgians I served and, of course, this great Nation.

Now, I can't claim to be perfect. Far from it. Not every piece of legislation I championed passed, but no matter the outcome, I take comfort in knowing that the work that I have offered this body has spurred important debate that betters this institution as a whole and, in turn, our country.

□ 2045

It is that very spirit that led me to cofound the House GOP Doctors Caucus, a group of physicians and health care providers, medical professionals in Congress, people who had served in the medical professions prior to coming here, who utilize our collective first-hand medical expertise to develop patient-centered health reforms for all Americans.

Since the group's founding, we have tackled ObamaCare's threat to the doctor-patient relationship head-on and have played a key role in the fight for SGR reform. That fight continues.

Though it would be hard to let the Doctors Caucus go, to give up that leadership, to say good-bye to my colleagues, I extend my thanks to them, who joined with me as Members of that caucus. And I am confident that the group will continue its valuable work for many, many years to come.

I would also like to take a moment to thank my Democratic colleagues, people like my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), who is sitting here in the Chamber. And I would also like to thank Representative GENE GREEN from Texas and many others for putting party lines aside and joining with me to lead on a number of fights, not the least of which is the threat of antibiotic-resistant "superbugs," a growing threat in hospitals all across the country. We worked so hard on that legislation, and we were so proud to see it pass—yes, in a bipartisan fashion—through the Energy and Commerce Committee under the leadership of Chairman UPTON; the vice chairman of the committee; the ranking member of the committee, HENRY WAXMAN; the chairman of the Health Subcommittee, JOE PITTS; and the ranking member of the Health Subcommittee and now ranking member of the overall committee, Mr. FRANK PALLONE. We worked together. And this is the way that exemplifies what public service should be all about, identifying a problem and then working together to solve it without regard to party lines.

But no matter how many problems we solve, there lay, of course, many hurdles ahead: immigration, continued reckless spending, these new, horrible threats in the Middle East, an ever-growing executive branch, and, of course, as I mentioned, health care.

As an OB/GYN physician, it truly worries me to be leaving Congress at a time when our health care industry has been tipped on its side—I think because of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. It is critical that this country find a more sustainable path to creating quality care and access to physicians. Government bureaucrats have no place between doctors and their patients.

But still, in light of these few frustrations, I have great confidence in this body. If history shows us anything, it is that despite the day-to-day angst of gridlock—and there is plenty of that to go around—this institution remains the greatest representative body the world has ever seen. The hurdles we face in this institution are always overcome, sometimes with more grace than others, and it will survive, as it always has. Our system of government is durable, it is resilient, and it is designed to withstand the test of time. It has been my greatest honor to have played even a small part in it.

But now it is time for my wife, Billie, and me to turn the page. We are looking forward to having the opportunity to check a few more boxes before we leave and then spend more time with all the grandchildren back home in Marietta.

So in short, Mr. Speaker, I guess you could say I am proud of the past, and I am excited for what the future may hold. But today, I am just happy to say that I am leaving. I feel confident that this body is better prepared for the future than it was when even I got here.

I want to thank, again, all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats, and, of course, last but not least, the people of Georgia's 11th Congressional District for giving me this opportunity, this honor, and this privilege.

And I would be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I closed without honoring our military heroes, the men and women and their families who have paid so much sacrifice for this great country.

I think over 40 have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan and have paid that last full measure.

I just want to say, I will never forget you, Patti and Jamie Saylor, and your great son, your hero Paul, who gave his life for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity and the time tonight, and I yield back the balance of my time.

#### REAPPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON VITAL AND HEALTH STATISTICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's reappointment, pursuant to section