

From 2007 to 2011 Leader PELOSI served as Speaker of the House and under her leadership the 111th Congress was hailed as “one of the most productive Congresses in history.”

Among her many accomplishments, Leader PELOSI shepherded passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to create and save millions of American jobs; historic health care reform to expand coverage and lower health care costs for millions of Americans; and strong Wall Street reforms to protect consumers and rein in the big banks. She has also fought discrimination in the workplace and passed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and stands for progressive policies that support child nutrition, energy efficiency, transparency in government, affordable housing and veterans.

Leader PELOSI is an extraordinary public servant and tested leader. I am proud to support her as leader of the Democratic Caucus and look forward to serving the American people alongside her in the 114th Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I attended the funeral of the former Governor of New York, Mario Cuomo, in New York City. Consequently I missed several votes in the House of Representatives.

I would like to submit how I intended to vote on these roll call votes had I been present:

On Roll Call 1, the Quorum Call of the House, I would have voted PRESENT.

On Roll Call 2, the Election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, I would have voted for Representative NANCY PELOSI of California.

On Roll Call 3, to Table the Motion to Refer H. Res. 5, Adopting rules for the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, I would have voted NAY.

On Roll Call 4, Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 5, I would have voted NAY.

On Roll Call 5, the Motion to Recommit H. Res. 5 with Instructions, I would have voted YEA.

On Roll Call 6, Agreeing to H. Res. 5, I would have voted NAY.

On Roll Call 7, the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 22, I would have voted YEA.

RECOGNIZING GWEN BENSON-WALKER

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in recognizing Gwen Benson-Walker, who has served as my Chief of Staff for three years and has been a valuable member of my staff for most of my service in Congress. On December 31, 2014, Gwen transitioned from my office to a well-deserved retirement. Gwen's strong work ethic, intelligence, and enthusiastic personality will surely

be missed by her colleagues in the House, the residents of the District of Columbia, and especially my office.

Gwen was not born into the advantages offered to many in our society. Instead, she has always worked her way to success. Aside from her work in my office, Gwen has owned and operated several business ventures. She is a highly-regarded public speaker and a published author.

Gwen Benson-Walker performed with excellence and energy whatever work she was asked to do in my office. She served as a caseworker, and her capacity for hard work and her wise head, led her to roles as scheduler/executive assistant and finally as chief of staff. Even when Gwen moved away from the District of Columbia, she has always returned to our staff upon her return. When not on staff, Gwen was the enthusiastic volunteer coordinator for the annual Children's Christmas Party in the Capitol, lavishing love on the city's low-income children. Most recently, Gwen served as my Chief of Staff, a position in which she flourished, skillfully organizing and running a busy congressional office.

Gwen was a confidant to whom I turned to for advice and a friend and a mentor to staff. She led by example in her professionalism and insistence on excellence, her dedication, generosity, collegiality and good humor. Gwen is off to retirement in Spain, but she leaves too many family members and friends not to return often to her native land. Gwen now becomes a treasured life member of Team Norton.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Gwen Benson-Walker for outstanding service to the House of Representatives and my office, and to the residents of the District of Columbia.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 6, I was absent while attending the funeral of Governor Mario M. Cuomo in New York.

Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

RECOGNIZING THE JAMESTOWN HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Jamestown High School varsity football team on winning the 2014 New York State Public High School Athletic Association championship.

Led by head coach Tom Langworthy, Jamestown claimed the Class AA title by defeating Newburgh Free Academy 41–20 in front of a raucous crowd at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse, New York. This marks the fourth time since 1994 that Jamestown High School has captured the state football championship.

The Red Raiders put on an impressive performance and excelled in all facets of the game. Quarterback Nikkolas Holland led the offense by accounting for four touchdowns. Running back Devan Jackson contributed on both sides of the ball, by rushing for a touchdown and returning a fumble for a touchdown. Senior captain Zack Panebianco was named Most Valuable Player after scoring a touchdown, kicking five extra-points, and making several outstanding defensive plays. Jamestown's defense continued its season-long run of dominance by forcing turnovers and containing Newburgh's high-powered offense.

Although football is a team game, I would like to recognize a few notable awards received by individual Jamestown players. Stephen Carlson was named the 2014 Connolly Cup winner, awarded to Western New York's top scholastic football player. Stephen was also named the Section 6 Class AA Defensive Player of the Year. Zack Panebianco was named Offensive Player of the year. Joe Mistretta was named winner of the Trench Trophy, awarded annually to the top lineman in Western New York. Tom Langworthy was named Buffalo Bills/NFL Coach of the Year after guiding his team to an outstanding regular season, winning 12 games and finishing undefeated in their division.

The hard work and dedication displayed by these young men is truly inspiring. The team is a source of pride within Chautauqua County and across New York's 23rd Congressional District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 5, I was absent while attending the funeral of Governor Mario M. Cuomo in New York.

Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF FORMER NEW YORK GOV. MARIO CUOMO

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Governor Mario Cuomo, who passed away on January 1, 2015 at the age of 82. A highly respected public servant and brilliant orator, Mario Cuomo served as Governor of New York State for three terms, from 1983 to 1994.

Governor Cuomo was born on June 15, 1932, in his beloved Borough of Queens. Hailing from a family of Italian immigrants, he worked in the family's grocery store in South Jamaica growing up. The governor graduated from St. John's Preparatory School, and went on to play baseball on the freshman team at St. John's University. An aggressive player, he showed great talent and promise. Indeed, he was signed as a prospect in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization, earning a signing bonus