

his tremendous efforts throughout the years, and I am so honored to call Ira Leesfield my amigo.

#### EMANCIPATION NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, the Nation loves its history. We in Texas love our history. Today, I rise to encourage and to announce the legislation that reflects history.

H.R. 4745, to designate the Emancipation National Historic Trail, is a wonderful legislative initiative that reflects history in the State of Texas and throughout the Nation.

We are all reminded of the Emancipation Proclamation that was issued in 1863. We know that there were areas of the South that did not get the word that the slaves were free for 2 years.

Earlier this week, I celebrated the commemoration of the birthday of the Honorable Mickey Leland, who died some years ago alongside an Ethiopian mountain while attempting to feed those struggling. But he believed in stopping food insecurity.

In honor of him, reflecting on the history of our community, I ask my colleagues to sign on to H.R. 4745 because it recounts the announcement by Captain Granger that the slaves were finally free in Texas and throughout the Southwest, and creates a wonderful trail that all of us can enjoy that chronicles the story from Galveston to Houston.

Mr. Speaker, this is legislation that says that America can accept all of our history, and I ask you to join H.R. 4745.

□ 1215

#### THANKING THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN'S FIRST DISTRICT

(Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express profound gratitude to the people of the First District of Wisconsin.

Any time I get to swear in a new Member as we just did, it brings me back to the time when I was first sworn in here in 1998. I remember just being awestruck the first time I walked down that center aisle. That feeling just never goes away. I still feel it when I walk onto the floor each and every time.

I am immensely grateful to the people of southern Wisconsin for their trust and their confidence. I have always had this thing about calling the people I represent not my constituents but my employers. It is the way I have always thought of this, and I think it is important that we as Members understand that we work for the people and not the other way around, and that we

are in this to make a difference for them.

We work every day to keep that obligation, especially, actually, when it comes to constituent service. It is the lifeblood of the work we do here as Representatives. It is something that goes unreported, but it is extremely important, extremely valuable, and very gratifying.

Any success that we have had is really, in my case, due to our humble and our hardworking staff. I have had the chance to work for and to work with the very best people. I really have.

Before I was a Member, I was part of a legion of Hill staffers. I was a staffer here before I got elected as a Member. I started as an intern in the mailroom, and I worked my way on up: legislative correspondent, legislative assistant, legislative director, and chief of staff, all of those things.

I figured I knew everything about these jobs, all long hours and all sacrifices, but nothing can truly prepare you for having people willing to help you in such a big undertaking on the front lines. So I am profoundly grateful for the dedicated public servants who have helped us serve the people—my employers—of the First Congressional District.

I want to thank the members of our team who have stayed with us to the very end: Rebekah Cullum, Jordan Dunn, Brandon Farnsworth, Megan Wagner, and Laura Wiley.

I want to thank Allison Steil, our deputy chief of staff, who has been with us for 10 years.

I want to thank Tricia Stoneking, our director of scheduling and office operations, who has been with us for 15 years.

I want to especially thank the members of our team who have been with us from the very beginning, from the start. We call them the lifers: Danyell Tremmel, my chief of staff; Chad Herbert, director of military and veterans services; and Susie Liston, district director.

Chad is a hunter. He is a veteran. Danyell came from my predecessor. She knows every nook and cranny in the Federal Government and how to help constituents navigate their problems. Chad has helped countless veterans. He knows the veterans system so well, and he has done so much good for the veterans of southern Wisconsin.

Susie Liston, our district director, has one of the most pleasant and happy demeanors. You can get a lot of angry constituents walking into a district office. She handles them better than anyone I have ever known.

Teresa Mora, director of outreach, has run my bilingual services. She has helped me with all my bilingual Hispanic townhall meetings. She has done a spectacular job of doing constituent outreach throughout my district.

Many of you know Joyce Meyer. Joyce was my first legislative director.

Andy Speth started off as my district director then my longtime chief of

staff. He is my silent partner. Andy and I met in sixth grade basketball camp at St. Paul Lutheran School where he went and where his kids go. We have been friends ever since we went to high school together. When I moved home to run for Congress, he was the guy who helped me. He has been my partner in this venture all along, and I am so grateful for his friendship. I am so grateful for his partnership.

I also am just grateful for the people of Janesville, Racine, Kenosha, Oak Creek, Elkhorn, Lake Geneva, Walworth County, Racine County, Kenosha County, Rock County, Waukesha County, and everyone in between.

Since becoming Speaker of the House—which is not something that we are used to in Wisconsin; I am the only one who has done that—I appreciate the indulgence of the people I work for who indulge the fact that I had other responsibilities in addition. When I took on these additional responsibilities, the people of our staff really stepped up and really helped serve our constituents so that they continue to enjoy those flawless constituent services.

I am just so grateful for these people in my life. I am so grateful that they were able to serve the people of southern Wisconsin so well, and I am absolutely grateful to the people of southern Wisconsin for entrusting me as their Representative.

#### LAFAYETTE, WE ARE HERE: THE AMERICAN LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we remember the 100th anniversary of the great World War I, it is vital to honor American pilots who fought for freedom in Europe before the United States officially entered the war.

Under the French Air Service, the Lafayette Escadrille was formed. It was an all-American, all-volunteer squadron.

In 1916, 224 Americans formed the unit. They wore French uniforms, and assembled on their biplanes was a courageous Native American chief.

Being a pilot in World War I was deadly dangerous. The life expectancy of an Allied pilot was 11 days. Daily combat operations saw casualty rates of 400 percent. Fifty-one Americans were killed in combat, and the Americans downed 199 enemy planes. They flew in all the major battles over the Western Front's bloody trenches of no man's land.

In 1918, when the United States entered the war, these men of the Lafayette Escadrille were incorporated into the United States Air Service. These young flyboys of World War I were some of America's best. They went over there and flew the skies fighting