

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

HONORING JOSEPH FARINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, at a time of dysfunction and rancor, it is useful to remember a time when America led the world because of the heroism of everyday Americans. I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Sergeant Joseph Farina of New Windsor, New York.

Joe was a regular guy who ran a bowling alley in Newburgh, New York. He was a 20-year-old and a member of the National Guard when America was attacked at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. That very night, Joseph volunteered for service.

During war, he was deployed to the Philippines and New Guinea, where his service earned him four battle stars, numerous other medals, and two Presidential citations.

Joseph passed away at his home last month at the age of 97. Next to him was his wife of 76 years, Elizabeth, whom he had married in Brisbane, Australia, at the height of the war in 1942. Joseph would actually work in Australia for many years and pioneer the sport of bowling there.

But his legacy is far broader than that, not only to his country during his service in World War II, but also to the veterans community in the Hudson Valley and across America.

He was active in many veterans organizations, the Catholic War Veterans, and he helped to cofound the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York. The Hall of Honor is dedicated to collecting and sharing the stories of Purple Heart recipients. No comprehensive list of Purple Heart recipients exists, and the hall acts as an important archive and monument to their service.

Joseph, like so many in his generation, knew what it meant to serve others. Like so many in his generation, he worked in his community and was a person dedicated to something bigger than himself. What a powerful lesson for all of us to recall today. He was a model American citizen, and he will be missed.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR LARRY LANGFORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of late Mayor Larry Paul Langford. Mayor Langford was a beloved mayor of Birmingham and Fairfield, as well as serv-

ing Jefferson County as its first African American president of the Jefferson County Commission. He devoted much of his time to big ideas for the people whom he loved in the communities that he served.

Mayor Langford will be remembered as a larger-than-life personality who broke barriers as the first Black reporter for the region at WBRC; the first Black mayor of Fairfield, Alabama; the first Black president of the Jefferson County Commission; and as mayor of Birmingham. A Vietnam vet, Mayor Langford served in public office in multiple capacities for nearly 23 years, and he will be greatly missed by our community.

On March 17, 1946, Larry Langford was born to John Langford and to Lillian Nance Langford as the oldest of six children. He was a proud graduate of Parker High School in Birmingham, Alabama. After high school, he enlisted in the United States Air Force, serving for 5 years during the Vietnam war.

Langford returned home with a renewed sense of community and a renewed sense of service. He quickly completed his college degree at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and he became the first African American male to become a news reporter for WBRC 6 News in its region.

The importance of this role was never lost on Langford. He knew that, after the tumultuous decade before, to have an African American man reporting the news in this area was an important sign of progress in the city of Birmingham. Langford did well as a reporter, using his charisma and outgoing personality. He was able to speak with the people of Birmingham and tell their stories.

Langford decided to run for his first political office. He was elected to the Birmingham City Council in 1977, where he quickly became known as the liveliest and most outspoken of city council members, as well as the most media savvy.

During his time on the Birmingham City Council, he also worked as a radio news director and contributed to the Birmingham Times. After an unsuccessful run for mayor of the city of Birmingham against fellow Councilman Richard Arrington, Jr., in 1979, Langford temporarily retreated from public life. By 1982, Langford had moved to Fairfield, Alabama, a suburb of Birmingham, and married the love of his life, Miss Melva Ferguson. A few years later, he decided to return to public life and ran for mayor of Fairfield, handily defeating a crowded field of candidates.

Langford became the first African American mayor of the city of Fairfield in 1988, another first. After his election, he led an aggressive campaign to revitalize the city. Langford was granted more authority and helped to save the Fairfield City Schools from bankruptcy, and he pushed for regional cooperation in economic development that led to an agreement between 11

Jefferson County municipalities which joined forces in 1998 to finance and construct a \$90 million project called Visionland, an amusement park that he brought to the city of Birmingham. It was actually in Bessemer, and it was part of a regional cooperation.

During his four terms as Fairfield mayor, Langford set his eyes on the Jefferson County Commission, where he hoped to continue to develop more regional cooperation in economic development. Langford was elected to the Jefferson County Commission in 2002, defeating the incumbent.

After becoming elected to the commission, he was quickly elected by his peers to be its president, another first. During his tenure as president of the Jefferson County Commission, he proposed a 1 percent sales tax that helped build 30 new schools and generated over \$1 billion in revenue.

In 2006, Mayor Langford ran again for the mayor of Birmingham for a second run. This time, he was successful and won in a very crowded field without a runoff.

Mayor Langford was sworn into office on November 13, 2007, as mayor of Birmingham. He went on to strike an agreement with a foundation that provided computers to schoolchildren throughout the city of Birmingham. Nearly 17,000 elementary and middle school children received laptops that year.

While Mayor Langford's 23-year political career resulted in many successful public projects, his service was not without controversy. Mayor Langford's tenure as mayor of Birmingham was cut short when a jury found him guilty of public corruption on October 28, 2009, and he was sentenced to 15 years. After serving 8½ years, on December 28, 2018, due to his failing health, Mayor Langford's sentence was commuted by a Federal judge, giving him compassionate release. The next day, Mayor Langford was transferred from a Federal prison to Birmingham Hospital, where he remained until his death.

I want you to know, on a personal note, Mayor Langford was an outstanding mayor and his service will always be remembered and beloved by the community that loved him so much. I was honored to be a part of his funeral and to help him get his compassionate release. It is important that we remember the totality of his career.

I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering Mayor Larry Langford.

SENIORS HAVE EYES, EARS, AND TEETH ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, as we begin this new Congress, I am proud to introduce the Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act, with 78 of my colleagues. My bill would