

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CONGRESS-
MAN ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 21, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congressman HORSFORD of Nevada for anchoring this Special Order in remembrance of Chairman Elijah Cummings, the indefatigable champion of justice and equality, the Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight, the Member of Congress from the Seventh Congressional District of Maryland since April 16, 1996, and above all, the devoted and beloved son of Baltimore.

Chairman Elijah Cummings died Thursday, October 17, 2019 at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland; he was 68 years old.

Mr. Speaker, our friend Elijah Cummings was in every sense of the word a statesman and a gentleman who believed in bipartisanship and treated everyone equally and respectfully.

Born January 18, 1951 in Baltimore, Maryland, to Robert and Ruth Cummings, South Carolina sharecroppers, who followed the Great Migration north to factory jobs in Baltimore, Elijah Eugene Cummings was the third of seven children.

After graduating from Baltimore City College High School in 1969, Elijah Cummings attended Howard University in Washington, D.C., where he was elected President of the student government and graduated in 1973 with a degree in political science, earning honors as Phi Beta Kappa.

Mr. Speaker, you may be interested to know that Elijah Cummings went on to earn a law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law.

Elijah Cummings' matriculation and graduation from the University of Maryland School of Law was poetic justice because a generation before it had denied admission to another son of Baltimore, the legendary Thurgood Marshall, who then went to the Howard University School of Law and later became the greatest social engineer and the architect and instrument of the strategy that defeated Jim Crow and toppled de jure segregation at the University of Maryland School of Law.

Elijah Cummings practiced law for 14 years in Baltimore and in 1982 he was elected to the House of Delegates of the Maryland General Assembly where he served for 14 years.

In the Maryland General Assembly, he served as Chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland and was the first African American in Maryland history to be named Speaker Pro Tempore, the second highest position in the House of Delegates, earning a reputation as a champion of progressive and liberal causes and constituencies and as a skilled census-builder.

Mr. Speaker, in 1996 when Congressman Kweisi Mfume resigned to assume the presidency of the United Negro College Fund, Elijah Cummings ran in and easily won the special election created by the vacancy with 80 percent of the popular vote.

Elijah Cummings was re-elected to the 105th Congress and each of the succeeding Congresses until his untimely death, never winning with less than 70 percent of the vote.

In Elijah Cummings' maiden address as a member of Congress he vowed that he would make use of his limited time in Congress:

I only have a minute.
Sixty seconds in it.
Forced upon me, I did not choose it,
But I know that I must use it.
Give account if I abuse it.
Suffer, if I lose it.
Only a tiny little minute,
But eternity is in it.

Mr. Speaker, Elijah Cummings made good on that prophetic promise from the start.

As a Member of Congress, Elijah Cummings served on the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and on Oversight and Government Reform.

As a freshman member, Elijah Cummings championed and supported health care and labor legislation.

In 2003, Elijah Cummings was elected as Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

In the 112th Congress, Elijah Cummings was elected by his colleagues to be Ranking Member of what is now known as the Committee on Oversight and Reform and in the 115th Congress was appointed by the Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI to the Benghazi Committee.

One of my proudest moments was working with Elijah Cummings to secure passage of H.R. 1076, the Fair Chance Act, which would "ban the box" in federal hiring by restricting federal employers and contractors from asking about the criminal histories of applicants until the conditional offer stage.

The Fair Chance Act would give formerly incarcerated people a fair chance at a job and a piece of the American dream.

I was proud to have been able to work with Chairman Elijah Cummings in support of this legislation and other legislative goals of mutual interest and concern like reducing gun violence and eliminating unfair policing in communities of color.

Mr. Speaker, Elijah Cummings dedicated his life to serving and uplifting others and empowering the people he was sworn to represent; he was a man for and of the people, going to the streets and ensuring that their voices were heard.

Elijah Cummings received national attention in 2015 when he walked the streets of Baltimore, his notable bullhorn in hand, and pleaded for calm after riots erupted in his neighborhood after the funeral of Freddie Gray, a young black man who died in police custody.

Elijah Cummings took the issues of his constituents to heart; many of us recall how he

fought for meaning in the death of young Deamonte Driver, a 12-year-old Maryland boy who died from an untreated tooth infection.

Elijah Cummings often said that "our children are the living messages that we send to a future we will never see" and was committed to ensuring that the next generation had access to quality healthcare and education, clean air and water, and a strong economy defined by fiscal responsibility.

Elijah Cummings had a servant's heart and was imbued with an ethic of service and inspired countless numbers of persons fight for their beliefs.

Unsurpassed was this native of Baltimore's love for his hometown.

That could also be seen by his response to the current President's belittling Baltimore and his congressional district as a "disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess" to which Elijah Cummings invited the President to join him in the important work of ensuring that all Americans had accessible, affordable, high quality health care.

Elijah Cummings' passion was not reserved for his district and the city of Baltimore; he also deeply loved his country.

As Ranking Member and the Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Elijah Cummings brought his intellect to what he called "the fight for the soul of our democracy."

Elijah Cummings deeply believed in our democratic system and values and worked tirelessly to preserve them and exhorted everyone to the same:

When we're dancing with the angels, the question will be asked, in 2019, what did we do to make sure we kept our democracy intact? Did we stand on the sidelines and say nothing?"

In the words of his widow, Dr. Maya Rockey Moore Cummings, Elijah Cummings "worked until his last breath because he believed our democracy was the highest and best expression of our collective humanity and that our nation's diversity was our promise, not our problem."

Mr. Speaker, the life of Elijah Cummings is a testament to what a person of goodwill can accomplish with a servant's heart and the understanding that in the passion play of life you only have a minute, but all eternity is in it.

Elijah Cummings did not waste his minute of eternity.

Elijah Cummings will live forever in the hearts of the people of his hometown Baltimore, his state of Maryland, and the United States.

To his widow Maya, his children, and family and friends he loved and who loved him so dearly, my deepest sympathies go out to them, and I hope they find consolation in the certain knowledge that our beloved Elijah is now dancing with the angels.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CONGRESS-
MAN ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 21, 2019

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened by the passing of Representative Elijah Cummings—my colleague, friend, and a true fighter for social justice. While Representative Cummings may no longer be with us, he leaves behind a remarkable legacy of service, leadership and humility. Notably, he served Maryland's 7th Congressional District for 23 years and was a strong force in his role as Chairman of the Oversight Committee.

He is the realization of the American Dream. Born to sharecroppers, young Elijah Cummings declared he would become a lawyer at 11-years old. Despite social and economic challenges before him, he would go on to achieve that dream and more. Representative Cummings became the first African-American Speaker Pro Tempore of the Maryland State House of Delegates and then continued his work in this House. He was a dedicated public servant, devoted husband, and loving father.

Representative Cummings was a maverick among us all, and I will deeply miss his wise counsel and presence. May we all aspire to be a portion of the leader he was for America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on October 17, 2019 during roll call No. 561, On Agreeing to the Amendment, H.R. 1815, Huizenga of Michigan Part B Amendment No. 1. Had I been present, I would have voted "No." I was also unavoidably detained during roll call No. 562, On Agreeing to the Amendment, H.R. 1815, Gottheimer of New Jersey Part B Amendment No. 2. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye." I was also unavoidably detained during roll call No. 563, On Agreeing to the Amendment, H.R. 1815, Wagner of Missouri Part B Amendment No. 3. Had I been present, I would have voted "no." I was also unavoidably detained during roll call No. 564, On Passage, H.R. 1815, SEC Disclosure Effectiveness Testing Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING GEORGE FORMAN

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize George Forman, who has been a champion for tribes and tribal sovereignty for more than 50 years.

I am honored to represent eleven federally recognized tribes in my district. Each of the

eleven tribes has had to fight for their rights and their sovereignty at every turn.

Standing with tribes in that fight and leading with them are the attorneys who represent them in the court of law.

George was instrumental in securing victory for tribes in the Cabazon case that set the groundwork for tribes to transform their on-reservation economies and conduct gaming operations, which has empowered tribes' self-sufficiency to provide adequate housing, schools, and other needed social services for tribal members.

He has successfully helped several tribes fight their unjust termination and achieve recognition as federally recognized tribes.

And over the decades, George has served my constituents, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, providing advice and counsel with the highest of integrity.

I want to thank George for his work and wish him a long, happy retirement filled with well-earned family time.

HONORING TALLWOOD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. ELAINE G. LURIA

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor Tallwood Elementary School on earning the U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon award.

Tallwood Elementary's performance certainly merits this well-earned recognition. Because of so much hard work, Tallwood Elementary is now placed in the Exemplary High Performing Schools Category. I would like to thank the faculty and staff for providing exceptional services to our community as educators, administrators, and specialists in their field.

Our public school system is an integral part of preparing the 2nd Congressional District's next generation of well-informed critical thinkers. I thank them for all the valuable work they do to engage and enrich these young minds.

It is my honor and privilege to recognize Tallwood Elementary for this achievement. I am extremely proud to be their representative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRED KELLER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I had a commitment in Pennsylvania preventing me from returning in time for votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 568 on Motion To Table H. Res. 630; "yea" on rollcall No. 569, H.R. 4406; and "yea" on rollcall No. 570, H.R. 4407.

IN HONOR OF 81 AIRBORNE SOLDIERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 81 Airborne Soldiers of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, whose remains will finally be laid to rest on Saturday, October 26th, in Little Saigon, Orange County, California, part of my 47th Congressional District.

In 1965, an American C-123 carrying four American crew members and 81 South Vietnamese Airborne soldiers was shot down in a remote and contested area during the Vietnam War, killing all those onboard. In 1974, the crash site was visited, and the remains were recovered, however, they were commingled together. The American crew members were later identified and were given a proper burial.

The remains of South Vietnamese soldiers were never identified, and they were believed to have been members of the 72 Company of the elite 7 Airborne Battalion of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. These unknown heroes are now "Men Without a Country," for that the Republic to which they gave their lives on behalf of no longer exist. Their remains have been sitting at the U.S. military's POW/MIA lab in Hawaii since 1986 and the current regime in Vietnam has twice declined to accept their return.

It was unclear how these 81 unknown soldiers could receive proper honor and burial until the efforts of former Navy Secretary and Senator Jim Webb, who served as a Marine infantry officer in Vietnam. Senator Webb has spent the last two years working intricately with both diplomatic and legal fronts to successfully arranged for the proper honoring and interment of these heroes. Finally, these Airborne soldiers will be laid to rest with full military honor and proper protocols of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. They will be remembered and honored with a ceremony at the Vietnam War Memorial, also known as Freedom Park in the City of Westminster, California and interned at the Vietnamese Boat People Cemetery inside the Westminster Memorial Park, one of the largest Vietnamese American cemeteries in our nation. This marks an end to an epic journey of soldiers who fought and died for the ideals of freedom and democracy to be rested with the people whom they defended.

I thank Senator Jim Webb, the Lost Soldiers Foundation, the Republic of Vietnam Airborne Association's National and Local Chapter, and everyone involved for working together to finally honor these 81 soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam after 54 years of their sacrifices. The United States honor the sacrifices of our ally, the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.

KASHMIRI PANDITS BRIEFING

HON. RO KHANNA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Mr. KHANNA. Madam Speaker, I was moved by the stories of loss, displacement,