

well liked on Capitol Hill, and no one on either side of the aisle ever questioned his sincerity, his integrity, or his independence. Sonny believed that partisanship should never get in the way of what he saw was good for the nation.

His philosophy for life and leadership focused on faith, patriotism, relationships and perseverance. This is what Sonny Montgomery called “staying the course.”

After graduating from Mississippi State University in 1943, Sonny Montgomery was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He served with the 12th Armored Division in Europe during World War II and earned the Bronze Star Medal with “V” for Valor device for capturing a German machine gun nest.

After World War II, he joined the Mississippi Army National Guard. In 1951, he served on active duty again during the Korean War as a member of the 31st Infantry Division. In May 1961, as a Lieutenant Colonel, Sonny escorted a group of Freedom Riders from the Alabama border to Jackson. Our late colleague John Lewis was on that bus. Sonny retired as a major general in 1980 after 35 years of military service.

On January 3, 1967, Sonny Montgomery was sworn in as a Congressman from the district I represent today. Sonny's greatest legislative victory is the enactment of the bill which bears his name—the Montgomery GI Bill. As a World War II Veteran, he believed the country should provide educational benefits to its service members, and the combination of military service and a college degree would make these individuals valuable assets to the country. Sonny Montgomery saw the educational shortfall as a direct threat to America's military readiness and national security and used the GI Bill to reinvigorate the volunteer base of America's military.

In October 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Montgomery GI Bill. Under the new education benefits, Veterans with two years of active service who contributed \$1,200 of their own money were eligible to receive tuition payments of \$300 a month for 36 months. The new GI Bill was also the first to offer education benefits to National Guard and Reserve personnel.

Another of Sonny Montgomery's achievements was the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs. His bipartisan efforts elevated the Veterans Administration into an official cabinet department in March 1989. President George H. W. Bush offered Montgomery the position of secretary of the new department, but he decided to continue to serve the people of Mississippi in Congress.

As freshman members of the 90th Congress, Sonny Montgomery and George H. W. Bush began a friendship that lasted until the Congressman passed away. It is said this bipartisan coalition was only challenged during their “do or die” dollar a game paddleball matches in the House gym with more bragging rights on the line. President Bush wrote, “While I served in Congress and after that in the Executive Branch of government, Sonny remained a close confidant, a man whose judgement I always trusted, a man whose friendship gave me comfort when the going got tough.” Sonny was a frequent visitor to the White House and often spent holidays with the Bush family.

Sonny Montgomery served along with the administrations of seven presidents during his

three decades in the House chamber. His legacy of public service stretches across generations and party lines and is a testament to America's strong national defense. Sonny retired from Congress in 1997 and returned to Meridian. Sonny was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush in 2005.

Sonny Montgomery was a loyal son to Mississippi, from his birth to his passing, he was one of ours. But his work and legacy belong to America. We are all indebted to Sonny for making our great nation what it is today.

Sonny Montgomery said, “Patriotism is a pretty simple word, but also a beautiful word to most Americans.” Sonny Montgomery exemplified patriotism. The gentleman from Mississippi is recognized and remembered on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL MITCHELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, on Roll Call No. 178, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 178.

IN HONOR OF PASTOR JOHN POWELL

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of an incredible servant, John Powell, Senior Pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church of New Caney, Texas.

After stopping on the roadside to help someone in distress, Pastor Powell was tragically killed when he was struck by a passing truck. Robert Downen, a reporter with the Houston Chronicle, wrote a very touching article about Pastor Powell's life and the example he set for others—one of selfless service. According to Robert Downen's account, Pastor Powell and a friend were driving in Sherman, Texas, when they spotted a car catch fire on the side of the road. Pastor Powell immediately stopped, grabbed his emergency kit bag and rushed to help. Just as he and his friend arrived at the scene, the brakes failed on an approaching semi-truck and it veered toward the group. Pastor Powell took decisive action and was able to push one individual out of the way, saving their life. Unfortunately, the young pastor was unable to get out of the way himself, and was killed.

Pastor Powell grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, where he knew from a young age that he wanted to pursue ministry. That desire led him to enroll in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky where he earned his Master of Divinity degree. While at the seminary, he showed his care and concern for those less fortunate and began leading worship services at local homeless shelters.

After graduation, Powell took on a challenging assignment and became the pastor of

a small Baptist church in the West Texas town of Hamlin. When later reflecting on the lessons he learned during that time, Powell said, “Success is faithfulness, even when it's hard, even when you want to give up.”

In 2016, Powell and his family moved to the Eighth Congressional District of Texas, where he established the Emmanuel Baptist Church in New Caney. Over the years, Powell grew this small church into a pillar of the community and guided his 140 members to walk in the light of the Lord, and in fellowship with one another.

Those who knew Pastor Powell remember him as bright, passionate, and warm-hearted. Many spoke of him as, “the best man [they've] ever known.” Andrew Walker, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said of Powell, “In every sphere of life where he had influence, he always wielded it for the betterment of others.”

The Houston Chronicle reported that in Pastor Powell's final sermon before his death, he preached from Psalm 72, saying that, “in the poor man's distress, Christians might be there” and asked his congregation, “How could we pray that God would have compassion on those that need it while not having that compassion on them ourselves?” To those who knew him, it was no surprise that Pastor John Powell stopped on the side of a road to help someone in distress. He died as he lived—helping others. He was a man of faith and faithfulness who had compassion for others, and who willingly risked and ultimately sacrificed his own life so that others might live. He was a hero. He leaves a legacy of selfless service and compassion. His life was a true example of Christian love and sacrifice, values that we would all do well to reflect on and try to emulate.

Pastor Powell is survived by his wife, Katherine, and their four beautiful children. I join the Powell family, the Emmanuel Baptist Church, and the entire community of New Caney in mourning this tragic loss. May God bless Pastor John Powell.

HONORING THE PRINCETON ROTARY CLUB FOR THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Mr. Kinzinger. Madam Speaker, I include the text of the following resolution in the RECORD:

Whereas, the Princeton Rotary Club was founded on April 30, 1920, in Princeton, Illinois and 2020 marks its 100th year of continual operation and service to the community; and

Whereas, Rotary International is a worldwide service organization founded in Chicago in 1905 and currently consisting of 1.2 million professional and business leaders in 33,000 clubs around the world; and

Whereas, the Rotary motto “Service Above Self” inspires members to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards, and promote good will and peace in the world; and

Whereas, Rotary in 1985 launched PolioPlus and spearheaded the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which today includes the World Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,