

May God continue to Bless the United States of America.

FREEDOM IS NOT FOR FREE

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 2004*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues the following prayer written by Rabbi Reuven Mann from Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Plainview, New York.

Almighty G-d, we have gathered here today at a crucial moment in our history to honor the memory of all those who fought and made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our Nation and its ideals of freedom, compassion and the highest cultivation of the human spirit. We came not only to honor but also to affirm the lesson of their sacrifice: Freedom is not an entitlement; it does not come for free, it is something which has to be fought for. With humbleness and gratitude let us acknowledge a simple truth: We owe these heroes everything. Without them, we would have lost our freedom long ago.

Yet, many people do not feel this way and take what we have here for granted believing that the American way of life is somehow "coming" to them. 9/11 was a wake up call—which happened, to a large extent because nobody believed it could happen. Let us admit it: We were afflicted with the cancer of complacency and blinded by the illusion of invincibility. Suddenly our country was under attack by a merciless, barbaric enemy who wanted us destroyed. 9/11 was a wake up call, but all too many decided to push the snooze button and go back to sleep.

The enemy does not sleep. He continues to remind us of his barbarism and cruelty by beheading innocent Americans and proudly recording his sadism on camera. 9/11 was a wake up call and the message is: If we do not appreciate our freedom and are not willing to fight for it, there is no guarantee that we will always have it. Therefore, I call on all of you to renew your appreciation for our country and its values for we are at war and every war requires the full support of the home front.

We have gathered here today to honor the heroes past and present whose valiant dedication makes our freedom possible. I would be remiss if I did not include among them the civilian heroes of 9/11, the firefighters, police and first responders, who charged into the line of fire to save thousands on that dark day. They wrote a new chapter in the history of bravery and self-sacrifice, and they will never be forgotten.

Almighty G-d, Creator of the Universe, may their selfless service inspire us to appreciate all the blessings that You have bestowed on this Nation. Let their memory be for a blessing—motivating us to become better people: more productive, compassionate, and respectful of the dignity of all men and women who were created in Your Image. And may Your Guidance and Protection be with our men and women who are right now in harms way, to give them the strength, courage and dedication to complete the mission in which they have performed so magnificently. May they speedily return in good health to their country, their homes and loved ones. And let us say: Amen.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF  
PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

SPEECH OF

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 9, 2004*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a great leader, a great man, and a great American. When President Ronald Wilson Reagan passed away on June 5, 2004, his death brought more than an end to his valiant ten-year struggle against Alzheimer's disease. It brought an end to one of the brightest and most optimistic periods in American history.

While President Reagan had been out of the public eye and under the loving care of his beloved wife, Nancy, for over a decade, he was never far from our minds or our hearts. During these past ten years, while he was traveling down the road into the sunset of his life, we have all had the opportunity to consider his true greatness and his many achievements. We have all come to understand that he was more than just our president and the most powerful man in the world; he was, instead, the personification of—and the symbol for—the boundless potential possible in this country.

From Dixon, Illinois, to Detroit, Michigan, from Washington, D.C., to Los Angeles, California, and at all points in between, men and women everywhere recognize President Reagan for what he truly was: a gifted leader and a compassionate American with a vision for our future and an unwavering belief in the spirit and goodness of mankind.

To say that Ronald Reagan was an example of the American dream would be an understatement. Ronald Reagan was the American dream, the product of a poor middle class family who, as the result of his own intelligence, determination and strong personality, was able to attend college, enjoy a successful career in broadcasting and motion pictures, and eventually rise to the position of governor of California.

For most, that in and of itself would be a remarkable career. But President Reagan did not stop there. Rather, he continued to focus on what he saw as a need for a strong leader in the White House, someone who could work with a divided Congress and an American public still reeling from the political and economic crises of the 1970s to restore this Nation to its position as the "shining city on the hill."

During his eight years in office, he did just that. The "Reagan Revolution," as it came to be known, provided the impetus for significant changes here at home and around the world. The economy in this country which had been in steep decline for a number of years righted itself and enjoyed a strong period of growth for the next nine years. The Cold War was brought to an end, communism in many countries ultimately collapsed, and a whole new generation of men, women, and children around the world were able to enjoy a new, life free from the fear of oppression.

Perhaps his greatest accomplishment, however, was in giving Americans a new sense of hope and pride. President Reagan restored a strong sense of optimism and hopefulness to this country, and made everyone feel proud

that they could once again say with assurance and determination, "I am an American."

Mr. Speaker, just as our nation paused last week to remember and reflect on this good man and great leader, let us, as a nation, remember President Ronald Reagan in the same way that he is remembered by his family: a man full of love, laughter, and life, someone full of boundless optimism and faith, and someone who always believed that America's best days are indeed ahead.

Our country—indeed, our world—has been blessed that we were able to share in a small way in the tremendous life he led. May we never forget the lessons he taught us or the leadership he displayed, and may we continue to keep Mrs. Reagan and the entire Reagan family foremost in our thoughts and prayers.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF  
PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

SPEECH OF

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 19, 2004*

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to President Ronald Reagan. We all join together this week to mourn his passage, but more importantly to celebrate his life. President Reagan meant many things to many people in the United States and throughout the world. Put simply, the world is a better place because Ronald Reagan lived. From his days as an actor and motivational speaker to his time as Governor and President to his final days on his California ranch, Ronald Reagan was a true gentleman who impacted the lives of those around him.

Ronald Reagan was sworn in as the 40th President of the United States the day American hostages were released from Iran—a poignant beginning to the challenges, which would lie ahead. As President, he survived an attack on his life and a battle with colon cancer; he fought communism; he guided the American people through rough economic times and uncertain international struggles; he made history in nominating the first woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court; and lead Americans through the tragedy of the Space Shuttle Challenger.

But to limit our descriptions of President Reagan to the milestones in his Presidency would be incomplete. His most impressive qualities are the intangibles that are felt but hard to describe.

So many Americans connected with President Reagan on a personal level. His ability to communicate with was unparalleled. "Larger than life" was never a phrase used to describe Ronald Reagan—not because he couldn't have been, but because he didn't want to be. He truly operated as a man of the people.

My first term as Governor of Delaware overlapped with his second term as President of the United States. I had the honor and privilege of working with President Reagan on what I see as one of his greatest landmark accomplishments—welfare reform. The empathy he felt for the American people and the challenges they faced in trying to make ends meet were represented in this landmark legislation. He epitomized a leader who didn't give hand-outs—but a hand up.