

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HONORING ROGER ANDAL

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to my very close friend, Roger Andal. Last month, Roger died following a long battle with Crohn's disease. His passing is a tremendous loss to our veterans, as well as a personal loss for my family and me. His friendship will be terribly missed.

Roger began his extraordinary service to our country as a combat medic with the Army's Fourth Infantry Division during the war in Vietnam. It was Roger's duty to help his fallen comrades and tend to their wounds, and it was a responsibility that came naturally to him.

He braved enemy fire to ensure the injured were safely evacuated from the battlefield. Roger often did so with little regard to his own personal safety and was ultimately wounded in battle.

He received the Purple Heart, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Campaign Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal for his service to his country. But for Roger what mattered most were not the commendations, but the knowledge that he had helped his fellow soldiers.

After returning stateside, Roger dedicated himself to working on behalf of our Nation's veterans. For the next 30 years, he was active in various veterans' causes, and at the time of his death he was completing his service as the South Dakota commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

The creed of the Disabled American Veterans is "building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families." I think it's profoundly true to say Roger personified these words and made them his life's mission.

As a former Army medic, Roger understood both the physical and emotional wounds of war. Some soldiers survive the harrows of battle, only to suffer severe injuries including brain trauma and amputated limbs. These veterans required lifelong medical treatment, and Roger was adamant that they receive it.

Roger also recognized that some wounds heal long after the battle is over, if at all. That is why he consistently called upon his congressional Representatives to increase funding for posttraumatic stress disorder initiatives.

Roger fought to make sure homeless veterans were sheltered. He worked to make sure that soldiers returning from war were transitioned back to society with as much ease as possible. But the issue most identified with Roger was mandatory funding.

I have introduced mandatory funding legislation in each of the past three Congresses, and Roger was the bill's most tireless and dedicated champion. If it were possible to pass mandatory funding based on Roger's passion and

commitment, enacting this legislation into law would have happened long ago.

Mandatory funding is long overdue, and in honor of Roger, I believe we must redouble our efforts to ensure the VA health care program has guaranteed funding adequate to provide veterans' health care each and every year.

For over three decades Roger never shied away from a fight. He was motivated by his sincere belief that if you make a promise to the men and women placed in harm's way, then you have a responsibility to honor those commitments when they return.

But what Roger valued most was honesty. He was a straight-shooter, and it was one of his most endearing personality traits. If you asked Roger a question, he would give you a straight answer—and he expected one in return.

It speaks volumes about Roger's character that his peers continually elected him to leadership positions within the Disabled American Veterans. In addition to holding every elected position in the Sioux Falls chapter of the DAV, Roger served twice as the State commander, and represented South Dakota on the executive national committee.

On a personal note, Roger had a close working relationship with my staff and in particular with my Chief of Staff, Drey Samuelson. He was an invaluable resource and often provided insight on legislation and veterans' benefits programs. Despite occasional legislative setbacks, Roger always kept a positive outlook on the process.

In the days following Roger's death some veterans have expressed how much more difficult the fight will be without Roger to lead the charge. Without question, Roger's voice will be missed. But we should remember that the best way to honor Roger's life is to fight wholeheartedly for the causes he championed.

Mr. President, my thoughts are with Roger's wife Peggy and their two children during this difficult time. Roger left us much too soon, but his commitment to our veterans and his service to the public and to our Nation will continue to inspire us all.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I rise to speak on S. 3711. My understanding is, through a unanimous consent agreement, I am permitted to speak for 10 minutes on the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GULF OF MEXICO ENERGY SECURITY ACT

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, over the last several days we have been discussing the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act. Today, in an hour or so from now, we will have a cloture vote on this very important legislation. For my part, I have tried to make it clear how important this legislation is to my State of Florida, how important the protection of our fragile environment in our State is to our people. As a young 15-year-old, I came to Florida as many people who have been transplanted from elsewhere, to enjoy a Florida lifestyle. Since that time I have been in love with this wonderful State, what it has to offer to people, to families, and the great traditions Florida has had as a place to enjoy the outdoors. I have on countless occasions enjoyed Florida's beaches, fishing, enjoyed other outdoor pursuits which are such a natural part of what Florida is about.

As the years have gone by, I have passed that on and instilled that in my children, as I did a little bit yesterday, passing it on to my grandchildren when we were enjoying New Smyrna beach yesterday, under that hot Florida sun, but also the beautiful sandy beaches. Part of what this bill is about for Floridians is protecting the future, passing that love on to other generations by ensuring that Florida remains pristine, that it remains the kind of place a visitor from all over the country would choose to come to enjoy year after year and where other Florida families might begin to develop and enjoy their own family traditions, enjoying the great outdoors Florida has to offer, our sandy beaches, the fishing, and other recreational opportunities that come about as a result of this wonderful natural habitat we have.

But also protecting it is important as an economic consideration. It is part of what makes Florida's economy so thriving and important—the tourism. Before there was Disney and Universal Studios, and those types of attractions, it was the beaches and the climate that brought folks to Florida to come and enjoy. At the end of the day, that is our calling card.

Protecting Florida's environment is not something we take lightly. Protecting the environment in Florida is not something that is a Republican or a Democratic issue. That is why Senator NELSON, my colleague from Florida, and I have worked so closely together over the last year or so as this great debate has raged on about what to do to protect Florida, while at the same time yielding ever more increasing pressures to drill and explore in the Outer Continental Shelf.

In the Senate, I maintain another tradition—the tradition of other Florida Senators, Connie Mack, Bob Graham, others who have fought over time to protect Florida's treasures from those who don't share our values. I am proud to be part of that tradition.