

PELOSI, Democratic Leader, U.S. House of Representatives, and the Honorable HARRY REID, Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, December 7, 2006.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 109-236, we hereby appoint the following individual to serve as a member of the MINER Act Technical Study Panel: Dr. James L. Weeks of Maryland.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,  
Democratic Leader,  
House of Representatives

HARRY REID,  
Democratic Leader,  
U.S. Senate.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

□ 2230

#### FAREWELL STATEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, 14 years ago I began my fight for social and economic justice in the House of Representatives on behalf of middle-class families in my State of Ohio. During those years, this Chamber saw at times heated, even acrimonious debate that often divided this room. At other times, the Nation, through C-SPAN, bore witness to bipartisan teamwork on behalf of families across our country. I treasure every moment as I prepare to leave the House and join the Senate.

I will be forever grateful to my House colleagues of both parties with whom I worked side by side on issues of great importance to middle-class families, to working families, on health care and trade and education. You are all too many in number to name, but so many played a significant role in making my time here in the House one of which I will be exceptionally proud.

I thank you all for that.

It was an arduous year for the country and an inspiring one. It served as a reminder that those of us blessed with the privilege of serving in this great institution do so always at the pleasure of the people in our great country.

This year showed something equally important: The time has come to put the fight for social and economic justice and progressive values into action on behalf of middle-class families and working families. It is time for Democrats and Republicans to work together to deliver upon promises made during stump speeches. It is time for the House and Senate to work together to

raise the minimum wage, to build an alternative energy industry, to expand access to affordable health care, to lower the cost of tuition, to revamp our trade policy so we again create good-paying jobs in our communities.

It is time to unabashedly take up the fight for social and economic justice at every level of government and at every corner of our free market system. We are the world's leading superpower, and with that comes the responsibility to lead by example. It is time for Congress to lead by example and fight for justice for all Americans.

In a few short weeks, I will take that fight to the United States Senate. I will take with me the values that served me well during these past 14 years, values shared by so many of my colleagues in Washington, by families across Ohio, and by one very special friend.

It is often at the hardest times that the greatest truths are confirmed. Such was the case this week for my family and me.

We lost a dear friend, my best friend of 30 years, John Kleshinski, last Wednesday. He was only 55. John was not just a champion of social and economic justice, he was a hero to so many. A successful businessman, John was also a man of great faith, who felt his formidable professional accomplishments bestowed upon him a responsibility to give back to his community, to fight for justice for the weakest among us. A man who took up piano in his late forties, he had his first recital at 50 and became the board chairman of the local community organization and established scholarships for underprivileged children. He gave back in more ways than I can mention in 5 minutes.

But more important than the generosity of his time and money was his generosity of spirit. He was a man who found joy in the triumph of others, and in doing so he led by example showing us all the best we can be when we commit ourselves, neighbor to neighbor, Democrat to Republican. John left a legacy that will now be emulated by the thousands of lives he touched. We will all, in effect, pay it forward. Thank you, John, for that.

We are the legacy we create, each of us as husbands and fathers, as wives and mothers, as employees and workers, and, yes, as elected officials. It is the mission of the 110th Congress to create a legacy in which families thrive and our Nation is strengthened, social and economic justice, fair trade, affordable health care for all, quality education. They sound like campaign slogans, and for the last year across this country they were, but they are now our tasks at hand.

We have much work to do, the House and the Senate, Democrats and Republicans. It is our time to lead by example to chart a path that establishes a legacy of unparalleled productivity on behalf of middle-class families. It is time that social and economic justice takes its rightful place in the halls of Congress. It is time to get to work.

I wish the families of Ohio and this country a safe holiday season and a blessed 2007. I especially thank my family, my mother Emily, who has led the fight and education in our family for social and economic justice; my brother, Bob, and his wife, Catherine Scalon; and my brother Charlie, and his wife Anne Swanson; my daughter Emily and her husband Mike; my daughter Elizabeth; my daughter Caitlin; my son Andy and his fiancée, Stina; and, more than anybody, my dear wife, Connie Schultz, who has stood and led and done so much to make the lives of our family so much better and the lives of people around my State better.

God bless you, John. We will all miss you.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOX). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REGULA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to submit statements for the RECORD on the retirement of MICHAEL G. OXLEY, a Member from Ohio.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE MICHAEL G. OXLEY UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. REGULA. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to my friend and colleague of the Ohio delegation, MIKE OXLEY, as he concludes 25 years of service to the constituents of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District, this House and the people of this Nation. Many of MIKE's colleagues will be submitting statements today or tomorrow to pay tribute to MIKE, or during the week. So I will limit my remarks in order to allow each of them the opportunity to speak if they should so desire.

MIKE has been a member of our Ohio delegation in this House since 1981. He has served with distinction for these past 25 years. He has put in the hard work required to learn the issues that have come before him within the committee jurisdictions of both the House Energy and Commerce Committee and, most recently, the House Financial Services Committee. As chairman of the Financial Services Committee, he is the author of the Sarbanes-Oxley

Act, a historic corporate accountability bill.

In addition to his commitment to the serious work of this body, MIKE's friendly, outgoing personality and his love of sports, particularly baseball, helped to bring a positive atmosphere both in his committee and here in the House. We will miss MIKE very much and wish him and his wonderful wife, Pat, well in their future pursuits.

Mike Oxley is completing a twenty-five-year career in the U.S. Congress and a career in public life of over thirty years.

Mike was born in Findlay, Ohio, on February 11, 1944, to Maxine and Garver Oxley. He attended public schools there through his graduation from Findlay High School. Mike earned his B.A. from Miami University (Oxford, Ohio) in 1966, where he was student body president, and his law degree from The Ohio State University College of Law in 1969. He worked on the staffs of U.S. Representative Jackson Betts, Attorney General William B. Saxbe, Lieutenant Governor John W. Brown, and Cleveland Mayor Ralph Perk. After law school graduation, he became a special agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation based in Boston and New York, where he met Patricia Pluguez. Mike and Pat were married in November 1971, and are the parents of a son, Chadd. The Oxleys moved to Findlay, where Mike joined his father's law firm: Oxley, Malone, Fitzgerald, and Hollister. He was elected to the Ohio General Assembly in 1972. He represented the 82nd Ohio District until he won a special election in July of 1981 that sent him to Washington to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In a lifetime of representing his districts in rural and small-town Ohio, Oxley has dedicated himself to promoting the values and policy goals he shares with his constituents: economic prosperity, family, lean government, low taxes, a strong defense and intelligence capability, free trade, competition, and the U.S. as the leader of the free world.

District Accomplishments:

Transportation and Economic Development  
 Joint Systems Manufacturing Center-Lima  
 Ohio Air National Guard 179th Airlift Wing  
 Marathon Oil  
 University of Findlay Center for Terrorism Preparedness  
 River Valley Schools  
 Public Safety  
 Agriculture  
 Health and Environment  
 Housing  
 Reagan-Bush I Era:  
 Economic Recovery Tax Act (1981)  
 Tax Reform Act (1986)  
 Rebuilding the U.S. Military  
 MX Missiles and the Nuclear Freeze  
 A Strong Foreign Policy  
 Gulf War Resolution (1990)  
 Improving Economic Competitiveness  
 Curbing Entitlements and Wasteful Government Spending  
 Energy and Environment  
 Social Security Reform (1983)  
 The Republican Majority Era:  
 Contract with America  
 Protecting America's National Security  
 Restoring the National Defense  
 Tax Relief and Economic Growth  
 Fiscal Responsibility  
 Regulatory and Tort Reform  
 Open Markets and International Trade  
 Welfare Reform  
 Health Care  
 Moral Values  
 Personal Legislative Achievements:  
 Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002)

PATRIOT Act (2001)  
 Financial Services Modernization  
 Telecommunications Reform  
 Trade and Economic Opportunity  
 Energy and Environment  
 Decency in the Internet Age  
 Muhammad Ali Boxing Safety Act  
 Public Safety  
 Defending American Values  
 A Legacy of Leadership Financial Services:  
 Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002)  
 The Common Cents Stock Pricing Act (1999)

The Investor and Capital Markets Fee Relief Act (2001)

PATRIOT Act (2001)  
 Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (2002)  
 Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (1999)  
 Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (2003)

Check 21 Act (2002)  
 Deposit Insurance Modernization (2006)  
 American Dream Downpayment Act (2003)  
 Mike Oxley's credo has always been "play hard, but play fair." He was guided by that philosophy both in the halls of Congress and on the athletic field. Oxley played in the Congressional Baseball Game for Charity for 16 years, manning every position except pitcher and catcher. He managed the Republican team for the last eight years, compiling a 7-1 managerial record and raising more than a half million dollars for charitable causes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration that I rise today to recognize the 25 years of public service that Chairman OXLEY has bestowed upon this body. He is a dedicated and hard-working public servant whose leadership as Chairman of the Financial Services Committee has been exemplary. Under Chairman OXLEY's leadership, the Financial Services Committee enjoyed an unprecedented level of collegiality and comity that permitted us all to work together and get things done.

Chairman OXLEY has a series of legislative successes few others can rival. When investor confidence was at a low, Chairman OXLEY restored confidence in our financial markets by authoring the landmark Sarbanes-Oxley Act. This legislation established tough new standards to ensure corporate accountability to all American shareholders. In addition Chairman OXLEY was responsible for the passage of The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, or FACT Act, which gave consumers new identity theft protections and also improved credit report accuracy. Chairman OXLEY also spearheaded efforts to reform our nation's deposit insurance system and modernize our check clearing process which brought our antiquated systems into the 21st century. These achievements will have a positive impact on our financial services system for generations to come.

Aside from his leadership in the House, MIKE OXLEY has been a true mentor and friend. Fortunately, this is not a retirement for MIKE OXLEY but a beginning of a new chapter in his career. I look forward to working with him in whatever his future endeavors may be. Although I am losing a colleague and fellow Member, Linda and I look forward to many years of continued friendship with MIKE and his wife Pat.

Mr. REGULA. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### WAR AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the President has repeatedly said that he is not interested in engaging in Iran in an effort to stabilize Iraq. There is a tragic irony in the President's intransigence. While the President is unwilling to talk to Iran, his policies in Iraq, in reality, are allowing Iran to take over Iraq. But if we don't recognize and act on this soon, Iran will succeed.

This is real, it is not rhetorical. Actions by the President, through his appointed surrogate to run Iraq, Paul Bremer, that date back to the first days of the U.S. invasion, have created a situation today that makes Iraq a prime candidate for what Iran could never accomplish on its own militarily; that is, taking over Iraq, its oil, its infrastructure, even its existence as a separate Nation. Iran couldn't successfully invade Iraq, but we did, and now we are playing right into the hands of the Iranians by not acting on what Iraqis see happening.

The media portrays an overly simplistic picture of sectarian struggle. We hear a lot about Shi'a and Sunni Iraqis, but we don't hear about Persians; that is, Iran and the Persian versus Arab is where the real battle for Iraq will be won or lost. Every time the President meets with Iranian Shi'a clerics, or those connected or controlled by them, he confirms in the Iraqi-Arab minds, both Shi'a and Sunni, that he is ceding control to the Iranians.

It began with Bremer's decision to give the Shi'a control of the governing council. Then his decision to disband the Iraqi Army and the Baathist technocrat government further confirmed to the Arabs the feeling that the United States, despite its protests to the contrary, was opening up Iraq to an Iranian takeover. The borders were open.

This is not my speculation, this is what moderate leaders in the Middle East told me in face-to-face meetings I attended in Amman, Jordan recently. Moderate leaders desperately want the American people to understand what is really going on, because they see that as perhaps their last hope of getting our President to see.

To the Iraqi Arabs, there are only two explanations to account for Paul Bremer's actions: a blunder based upon ignorance of the history of the region, or a deliberate decision to neutralize Iraq as a strong Arab secular nation, thereby making it more susceptible to U.S. influence in the future.

Moderates in the region see it this way. The President, and therefore