

was remembered by her friends Friday as a quick-witted, energetic leader and unwavering advocate for the homeless.

Walter, 53, died Thursday after a short battle with lung cancer, friends said.

When Walter became executive director in 2006, friends said, she had landed her dream job. Walter was passionate about creating long-term solutions to homelessness, including permanent housing and supportive services.

"Beyond shelters and short-gap solutions, she was very interested in finding longer-term solutions, particularly in reducing chronic homelessness," said Mercedes Soto, who served on CCEH's board of directors from 2009 to 2012. "She was able to rally an entire spectrum of people to work toward these goals, and worked to get people housed as quickly as possible.

"She was a dynamo. She made a big impact on me and everyone who knew her."

Colleagues at CCEH said Walter presided over "a sea change" in the organization's approach to homelessness, including greater coordination of services among other non-profits and oversight of the coalition's state-wide "point in time" homeless consensus. She also led efforts in rapid re-housing and shelter diversion strategies, they said.

"People often tell me how energetic I am," said Shawn Lang, a longtime friend of Walter. "I tell them, 'go hang around with Carol for a while, she'll make me look like a slug.' She had great passion for her work. Her enthusiasm and her energy and smarts opened a lot of doors."

Prior to her position at CCEH, Walter worked at homeless shelters in New Haven, Hartford and Stamford, friends said. She also worked at the Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition as a membership services coordinator, where she helped people with AIDS find employment.

Walter was active in her work, sometimes to the point that she couldn't sit still.

"She had more energy than 10 of us," said Dave Martineau, vice president of CCEH's board of directors and a friend of Walter. "She always used to say, 'I have no time. I'm trying to end homelessness.' She gave her whole life to it."

"She was a woman who could never stand still," added Jose Vega, program manager for the McKinney homeless shelter in Hartford, who had worked with Walter. "She was a fighter, and such a strong advocate for this community. She touched so many lives."

Howard Rifkin, executive director of Partnership for Strong Communities, an organization that seeks to end homelessness and create affordable housing opportunities, recalled Walter as "maddening and endearing at the same time." Rifkin collaborated with Walter on several initiatives, including a plan to end chronic homelessness and homelessness among veterans and families with children in Connecticut.

"We're both opinionated people," he said. "She and I would sometimes go at it, but we would always end our meetings with a hug and a laugh."

Rifkin said Walter had "a sense of urgency" about her work.

"She had a deep, deep commitment to [creating] a more equitable and socially just society, and I'm sure that her passion for this work was informed by that," he said.

Outside of work, Walter was an avid theater-goer, friends said. She loved the outdoors, traveling and being near the ocean.

She was also a devoted Mets fan.

"Carol would put a Yankees cap in her freezer to give the Mets good luck," Lang

said. "If that didn't work, we'd change the places we were sitting. There were a lot of crazy rituals around baseball games."

Lang said Walter's friends and colleagues would miss the woman who had "a real zest for life."

"Connecticut is a little smaller and a little darker today," she said.

Walter is survived by her wife, Debra Walsh, of West Hartford.

## TRIBUTE TO THOMAS OPITZ

### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 4, 2013*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Thomas Opitz. Tom passed away on Saturday, December 29, 2012. A long time resident of Corona, he was a pillar of the community and he will be deeply missed.

Tom was born November 21, 1922, in La Crosse, Wisconsin, the son of Raymond J. and Susan (Singer) Opitz. He served his country honorably in World War II in the United States Army Air Corps from 1944–1946 and received several medals in recognition of his military achievements. He was a member of the Navy League, the Elks and the Confederate Air Force.

Tom worked as a self employed contractor, interior designer and artist of restaurants. Over the years, the Opitz family and the Calvert family have had a close relationship, both personal and professional, and Tom was a great partner and friend. He and his family helped our family build the Corona Bowl, the Encore, Lord Calvert's Jolly Fox and the Jolly Fox Pub & Grille. Millions of Californians have enjoyed a family dinner in restaurants designed by Tom, as he built, designed, and painted over 400.

Tom was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He is survived by his sons Craig, Thomas, Mark and daughter Christal Trusty; 11 grandchildren; and 6 great-grandchildren. On Monday, January 7, 2013, a memorial service honoring Tom's extraordinary life will be held at Thomas Miller Mortuary in Corona. He will be interred at the Riverside National Cemetery, where he will be laid to rest with his wife of 58 years, Ruth Opitz.

Tom will always be remembered for his devotion to family, caring nature and selfless giving. Tom demonstrated an incredible work ethic, generosity, contributions to the community and love of family. These achievements and qualities are a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Tom's family and friends. Although Tom may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

## THE JOB PROTECTION AND RECESSION PREVENTION ACT

### HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 4, 2013*

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, it is New Years 2013. The Nation now finds itself at an urgent crossroads.

America has fallen over the fiscal cliff. Many of our fellow and most economically vulnerable Americans are now in a free fall. How far they fall and for how long will be up to Congress.

The House of Representatives should be deciding now, and by that I mean today, whether to pass the Job Protection and Recession Prevention Act of 2012, which was passed in the Senate by an overwhelming bipartisan 89–8 vote.

If the House of Representatives fumbles this opportunity, it won't matter to these Americans which political party tells them that they did or did not cut taxes, or which party held more closely to its campaign promises.

What matters to the 2 million Americans who are currently unemployed is why are their unemployment benefits being held hostage to provide tax cuts for employed and more well-off Americans?

The deal agreed to in the Senate provides a strong enough platform for our country's continued progress and economic recovery. That package will generate a good deal of the increased tax revenues that our U.S. Treasury needs to operate the government.

The Senate's package assures millions of students and unemployed and poor Americans that they will have the basics to carry out their daily lives and to advance their educational and career goals. Among other things, the Senate deal would also authorize the Farm Bill through September of this year.

Extending earned income and child care tax credits and benefits, as the Senate deal would do, may not mean much for middle class families and individuals. But guess what? Those credits and benefits are hugely important, for example, to a family of four under the poverty level, which on average makes only \$21,000 per year.

The Senate's proposal, which the Majority should bring up immediately for a vote is a good compromise. It won't give Republicans everything that they want. Similarly, Democrats are not getting all of what they want in this package.

And rightly so—neither party has all the answers to the plethora of very complex fiscal problems we are facing. Compromise is the solution, just as compromise will be the solution when we come up against sequestration, the debt ceiling, and passing a continuing budget resolution.

I strongly urged you, Mr. Speaker, to call up H.R. 8, the Job Protection and Recession Prevention Act, as amended and passed by the Senate for a vote in this House. Let's stop dangling innocent and vulnerable Americans over the fiscal cliff; they've waited too long for us to act as it is.