

HONORING MATT WILLIAMS

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, October 12, 2013

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent Matt Williams of Gothenburg, Nebraska. Matt is the President of Gothenburg State Bank and has served as Chairman of the American Bankers Association for the last year.

Matt brought to the position the perspective of a rural banker serving farmers, ranchers, and small businesses in rural America. It was a point of pride for Nebraska and the Third District for one of our own to serve in this position.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Matt Williams and his service to his community, Nebraska, and the American Bankers Association.

IN HONOR OF THE HONORABLE
MARIE M. LAMBERT, LATE SURROGATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, October 12, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my good friend, the late Marie Lambert, who was elected as Surrogate Court Judge of New York County in 1977 and served until 1990 when she turned 70 years old. A passionate Surro-

gate, Lambert was an inspiration to me and to so many women who have chosen to pursue careers in public service. She ran for Surrogate at a time when few women held elected office and her success helped open doors for other women to follow. On Friday, October 4, 2013, a portrait honoring Marie M. Lambert, the first woman Surrogate of New York County, was dedicated in the Surrogate's Court in lower Manhattan where she served.

Surrogate Lambert was an outspoken fighter throughout her life. Her family immigrated to Brooklyn from Italy when she was an infant and she did not speak English until she started school. I am told that when she was about to graduate from elementary school, she wanted to speak at the commencement ceremony, but was told that the rules of selection for graduation speakers were changed and she would not be permitted to speak. Disappointed by this decision, Ms. Lambert appealed personally to Mayor LaGuardia and the decision was overturned. In her speech, she addressed the consequences of unfairness. Spurred on by her early success in advocacy, she became a student leader in Brooklyn College and graduated at the top of her class at New York University Law School.

Surrogate Lambert's distinguished career was marked by her signature audacity and passion for combating injustice. She was involved in a case early in her career in which she fought to permit the offloading and resettlement of Jewish survivors of German concentration camps. Surrogate Lambert spent the next 30 years of her career as a lawyer fighting for tenants and those injured due to the negligence of others. She felt justice was satisfied when the negligent driver, product producer or doctor took financial responsibility for his or her negligence. Recognized by her

peers for her effective advocacy, Surrogate Lambert served as an officer and director of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association, eventually being elected as the President, making her the first woman to serve in that role and the first woman to head any statewide bar association. A single mother following the untimely death of her husband, Surrogate Lambert raised her son, Greg, to honor public service and to embrace community involvement.

In 1977, Ms. Lambert was elected the Surrogate's Court of New York County, which hears estate matters, becoming one of two Surrogate Judges in the county. During her term as Surrogate, New York County became the epicenter of the AIDS crisis, a disease that for many years was not well understood and led to the deaths of numerous members of the LGBT community. Many cases came before Surrogate Lambert involving disputes between family members and significant others of the deceased, and she handled them with sensitivity and understanding. Surrogate Lambert also presided over many adoption cases. She firmly believed that, unlike marriages which can be dissolved, an adoption is forever. In all of her cases, she took very seriously her role as an arbiter of justice. Throughout her service, Surrogate Lambert met every challenge with a spirit of dauntless optimism and valor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the outstanding contributions Marie Lambert made to the court system of New York on behalf of the most vulnerable among us and celebrating the unveiling of her portrait. An ardent voice for social and legal justice, Marie M. Lambert left a legacy of determination, fairness and indomitability.