

both the human and economic impacts associated with the storm.”

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our highest praise and congratulations to Ms. Alice Lippert on being selected as a finalist for the 2014 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Homeland Security and Law Enforcement Medal. It has been my great privilege and honor to represent Ms. Lippert and the tens of thousands of exceptional Federal workers who hail from Virginia’s 11th Congressional District. They all deserve our deep gratitude and respect.

MARKING THE PASSING OF JAMES  
BRADY

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2014

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of James Scott Brady, a courageous champion in the fight against gun violence and the legacy of lifesaving leadership he leaves behind. Through triumph and tragedy, Jim Brady remained an insistent and impassioned voice of clarity and consequence in our national effort to strengthen our gun laws. His death at age 73 concludes a life defined by public service and personal bravery—and renews the call to action that he made so well for so long.

Jim Brady, a proud alumnus of the flagship institution in his home state, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, discovered a life-long passion for public policy after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in political science.

After graduating, Brady worked with some of the leading American political figures of the late 20th century. As an aide to then-State Senator Everett Dirksen—who would later serve in the U.S. House of Representatives and as the U.S. Senate Minority Leader—Brady deepened an abiding belief in the power of public service to build a better world.

As an advisor to top-level public officials at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Management and Budget, Department of Defense and the U.S. Senate, Brady became an indispensable counselor and trusted friend to many. He was tapped to serve as Director of Public Affairs and Research for the Reagan-Bush Committee and, following the election, as Spokesperson for the Office of the President-Elect and White House Press Secretary.

On a fateful March in 1981, Jim Brady suffered a gunshot wound to the head during the assassination attempt on President Reagan’s life. The road to recovery would be hard, but Jim and his wife, Sarah Brady, would inspire the nation with their resolve.

Strengthened by their own struggle, Jim and Sarah vowed to take a stand on behalf of all victims of gun violence. This couple’s heroic leadership challenged our nation to act, and because they did, millions of Americans are safer and many of our communities are more secure.

It took the Bradys six years, seven votes, three administrations, endless strength and boundless courage to enact the Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act. But, thanks to their dedication, the Brady bill became the law of the land.

By 2010, the Brady law had blocked felons trying to buy guns more than a million times—an average of 171 felons denied applications to buy firearms a day. Almost 300,000 domestic violence offenders were prevented from buying guns. Thanks to Jim and Sarah Brady, countless families have been spared the tragedy of gun violence.

In recognition of this leadership, Jim Brady was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Bill Clinton. Today, the White House press secretary addresses the media—and the nation—from the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room.

Every day, the Bradys’ legacy is felt in lives saved by the law that bears his name. Jim Brady’s perseverance challenges all of us to never stop fighting for the common sense gun violence reduction measures our nation needs. Jim Brady was a man of extraordinary wit, charm and courage, and he will be sorely missed by all who had the good fortune to know him.

I hope that it is a comfort to Jim’s wife, Sarah, his children and all of his loved ones that so many people across the country share their grief and mourn the loss of such a valiant and dedicated man.

IN RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION OF MR. KENT HILL, DIRECTOR OF THE KANSAS CITY VA MEDICAL CENTER FOR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY AND CONSUMMATE DEDICATION TO OUR VETERANS

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2014

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kansas City VA Director Kent Hill, a transformational leader with an open door policy that is known for the unselfish public service that he has provided to our veterans, their families, his staff, and to me in my capacity as United States Representative for the Fifth District of Missouri. I think it is important to recognize the accomplishments of those who professionally serve with distinction. Director Hill has done so modestly without bringing attention on himself.

The scope of his work since 2002 at the Kansas City VA Medical Center included an operating budget of approximately \$260,000,000, approximately 1,500 employees and providing healthcare services to more than 45,000 veterans. He had the added responsibility of opening and overseeing clinical programs, including five Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and the new Honor Annex. In addition, the Kansas City VA Medical Center has a vibrant research and outreach program.

When Kent Hill took over as Director for the Kansas City VA Medical Center, he came in as a veteran who had attended the Air Force Academy and has spent 40 years in Federal service. During his career, he cultivated a successful management style, centered on personal involvement and respect for his staff and the veterans and their families that he served. He was an advocate of the methodology outlined in the book, “The Servant Leader”. His staff worked within a management style that

delegates power, believes in a team approach, motivation, recognition, and at the core; an understanding for the veterans and their issues. He has been a strong advocate for continuing professional growth through education and initiated a mentoring program.

Under Kent Hill’s direction, the hospital has undergone a complete floor to floor update and expanded to include: new surgical suites, Women’s Clinic, Chiropractic care, state of the art Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, Hospice Unit, Blind Rehab Center, Cochlear implant program, Sleep Lab, New Ambulatory Surgery Unit, an OIF/OEF Case Management Program and a new Dialysis Unit.

Access to VA healthcare and services have long been a priority for Director Hill. His management and oversight of veteran access included weekly meetings with clinical leaders to review capacity for appointments and wait times as well as decisions on adding staff and new services. To facilitate easy access for veterans to the programs and services of the Kansas City VA Medical Center, Director Hill originated a Greeter program, a Vet 4 Vet navigator program and shuttle service to and from the parking lots; and a successful and long awaited Veterans Transportation Service became operational. He tackled telephone access and electronic messaging to providers. Director Hill did not stop with services and programs at the main hospital—but placed emphasis on taking VA healthcare outside the parent facility and into the surrounding communities. He activated a Mobile Medical Unit, opened Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and built a community-based Radiation Therapy Building. One of his more noteworthy achievements was the opening of a large outpatient building—the Honor Annex—that houses mental health services, primary care and a women’s clinic.

One of the compliments that I have heard often is regarding cleanliness and modernization of the hospital. An example of his receptiveness and desire for a more accessible environment can best be illustrated with the Director’s directive to remove glass partitions that had created barriers between staff and veterans. This important move coincided with many communication and outreach initiatives.

During my time in office, I have watched the Kansas City VA gear up for returning veterans from current conflicts while maintaining services to all of our existing veterans. An example of Director Hill’s proactive style became evident as the current conflicts brought new mental health problems and illnesses, he called for focused education for his staff on how to identify and help veterans coming home from combat. With the continual evolution of hidden wounds from war, he ensured the staff was trained to identify signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury and possible suicide. Expanding of mental health services included veterans having access to Veterans Court as well as a multitude of homeless programs and initiatives. An example of the influence and impact of Director Hill’s leadership is the widespread participation of the KCVA staff in the spring and fall community Heart of America Stand Down for homeless veterans. Director Hill can be seen every year personally distributing boots to homeless veterans. Since arriving in Kansas City, Director Hill has championed inner city and rural outreach programs to ensure veterans are aware of their many benefits. His