

(December 7, 2006) Floor Transcript: Recognizing the Career of Retiring Congressman Henry Hyde

Mr. LIPINSKI. Thank you, Congressman Kirk, for the opportunity to come today to speak about Henry Hyde, who has been a great statesman, who has served his district from Illinois and the Nation in such a great manner for so many years. It is a great honor to rise to recognize his dedication as a public servant and as a skilled legislator, and a real pillar, especially in the foreign policy community.

Since 1975, Congressman Hyde has faithfully served his constituency in the Chicagoland area. And all Americans, now, on his retirement, we take this opportunity to thank Henry for his outstanding contributions and influence on our country.

Before entering the U.S. House, Representative Hyde served in the Illinois General Assembly, beginning in 1966, which I note is the year that I was born. So I don't quite remember that, when Henry first started serving the State legislature. But he rose in the State legislature to the position of majority leader, and he earned a reputation as an articulate debater.

When he was then elected to Congress, he brought his knowledge, his skills and his passion to the House to serve our country. In the House he has served on the Select Committee on Intelligence, he has chaired the Committee on the Judiciary, and currently chairs the Committee on International Relations.

Because of his work, his tenure and his record, the Chicago Tribune has called HYDE one of the most respected Members of Congress, and an eloquent and intellectual powerhouse.

Now, I remember back in 1983, my father had first been elected to the House. I remember coming here and how thrilled I was to have the opportunity to meet Henry Hyde. He was so well known. Everyone knew what an articulate man he was and how much passion he had, how much knowledge he had; and he was a true statesman. And I really respected his position that he took in his fight against the Soviet Union in the Cold War. That is something I really respected. And because everybody, no matter where they stood on any issue, had so much respect for Henry Hyde, it was a thrill back then to meet HENRY.

Now I have had the privilege of serving for 2 years with Henry in the House; and I know I have heard, through my 2 years, stories from Members and their experiences with Henry over the years. And I have talked with Jim Oberstar about the Hyde amendment and how JIM would talk with HENRY about this and how they worked together to bring forth the Hyde amendment.

Henry is willing to work together to reach consensus and to reach important goals for our country. No matter what you thought about where he stood on issues, you listened to Henry Hyde because you knew when he spoke he would be eloquent, he would have good arguments, and you should listen to him.

Now, I am very happy that I had this opportunity to serve with Henry. He has served our Nation so well. He has served the State of Illinois so well, and I know that his legacy will certainly reflect his commitment to Illinois, to his district, and to

our Nation. His insights, his passion, and his presence will deeply be missed.

He truly was also a man of faith, which he brought here and always used that; it was always important to what he did in the House. We wish Henry all the best in his retirement. And we are all truly grateful for his service.