

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
JAMIE L. WHITTEN

SPEECH OF

HON. ROMANO L. MAZZOLI

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 19, 1994

Mr. MAZZOLI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I pay tribute to my esteemed colleague, and dear friend, Representative JAMIE WHITTEN of Mississippi.

While JAMIE has set records for length of service in the House and for other legislative accomplishments, and I have few such distinctions to my name, we share one very important status: We are both retiring from Congress at the end of this term.

For his almost 53 years of service to the great people of Mississippi's First Congressional District, JAMIE WHITTEN has placed principle before politics, people before power, and integrity before self-gratification. In his 13 years as chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, 171 out of 183 appropriations bills were signed by the President. JAMIE also established himself as an expert on agricultural issues.

Believing that the real wealth of our Nation is our people and our physical resources, JAMIE WHITTEN not only helped to better the environment in which the residents of Mississippi's First District live, but, through his service, he also improved the lives of all Americans. His support of the Mount St. Helens volcano disaster cleanup efforts, the San Francisco earthquake development, the Bonneville Power Project, the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and the Natchez Trace Parkway all will serve as lasting reminders of JAMIE WHITTEN's work far beyond the borders of Mississippi's First District.

An unassuming man, JAMIE WHITTEN has never been one to seek the spotlight. From the time he was 23 years old and a district attorney, although State law required that district attorneys be 25 years of age, his work has been carried on behind the scenes, where he knows he can be most effective.

I believe that JAMIE WHITTEN's political philosophy can best be stated in his own words: "We can leave our children all the money in the world, let our health go down, let our education slide, let our highways and bridges deteriorate, let our rivers and harbors silt in, and all the paper money we can print would not give us a strong country. It's what we do for our land and our people that make our real wealth."

I deem it an honor to have served with JAMIE for the past 24 years. And, I wish him and all of my fellow 103d Congress "retirees", the very best of health and happiness in the years ahead.

CONGRESSIONAL AGENDA

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 21, 1994

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, September 21, 1994 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

CONGRESSIONAL AGENDA

The 103rd Congress faces a crowded legislative agenda before its scheduled adjournment in mid-October. This Congress has had several accomplishments to date, including passage of a \$430 billion deficit reduction measure; the North American Free Trade Agreement; and the most comprehensive crime bill in six years. Health care reform has preoccupied this Congress, pushing aside many other bills, especially welfare reform.

The overall legislative record for the 103rd Congress still hangs in the balance. The unfinished business is staggering. I do not agree with those who argue that this Congress should close down and get out of town. There is still important work to do. What follows is my "wish list" for the remainder of the session. If Congress can enact these measures, or even most of them, the 103rd Congress would post a solid record of achievement.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The health care debate has shifted in the last month away from the idea of comprehensive reform (which would involve widespread changes to the health care system) towards incremental reform (which would make fewer changes). I have consistently supported such an incremental approach. An incremental bill might include some of the following elements: requiring insurers to take all comers; limiting insurance exclusions based on pre-existing conditions; allowing workers to take insurance with them when they change jobs; providing some subsidies to lower-income working families to help them buy insurance; and instituting malpractice reforms.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Political campaigns cost too much, and allow special interest groups to exert too much influence. The House and Senate have each passed bills to overhaul the campaign finance laws. The House bill provides for voluntary spending caps and a reduction in how much Political Action Committees (PACs) and individual contributors can give to a candidate. The Senate bill contains different expenditure controls, and would ban PAC contributions outright. A House-Senate conference committee is working to reconcile the differences in the two measures.

LOBBYING REFORM

People have a right to know who lobbies, and for what. We should sharply curb, if not eliminate, all gifts from lobbyists to members of Congress, including free golf, tennis and skiing weekends. The House and Senate have passed bills that would tighten the laws on registration and disclosure by lobbyists and restrict the gifts and meals members of Congress can accept from lobbyists. The Senate bill would ban gifts from almost everyone but family members and close friends. The House bill would abolish all gifts costing more than \$20 from lobbyists, but meals and entertainment would be allowed if unsolicited and provided by a non-lobbyist. This measure is in a House-Senate conference committee.

CONGRESSIONAL REFORM

The House has begun consideration of reform recommendations of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, which I co-chaired. Earlier this summer, the House approved a bill to apply to itself the health, safety and labor requirements imposed on other employers. The Senate is expected to take up a similar measure shortly. The House will also consider a reform bill that would include private citizens in the House ethics process, make floor procedures fairer, cut congressional staff, streamline the committee system and budget process, and open Congress up to more public scrutiny.

PROCUREMENT REFORM

Congress will soon complete action on a bill to streamline federal procurement. A bill, recently approved by the Senate and soon to be considered by the House, would encourage federal agencies, including the Defense Department, to buy more items off the shelf in routine, commercial transactions. The reforms, which I support, would make government acquisition simpler, less costly, and more efficient.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS REFORM

The House, with my support, approved a bill in June that would spur more competition in the communications field. The measure would allow cable television and telephone companies to enter each other's markets and make it easier for the regional Bell companies to compete in the long-distance telephone business. The Senate is expected to consider a similar bill later this month.

TRADE

A House-Senate conference committee will soon complete action on a measure to implement last year's GATT agreement. The trade agreement, negotiated by more than 100 countries, would cut tariffs around the world by a third and expand the free-trade rules of the GATT to cover new industries ranging from farming to accounting. Congress may take up the bill before adjournment. I see no reason to delay action on trade. We should approve the implementing legislation as quickly as possible so that U.S. companies can take advantage of new market opportunities overseas.

SUPERFUND

The Superfund law, which requires polluters to pay to clean up toxic waste, expires at the end of this month. The House will soon consider a measure that would extend and improve the program to avoid the protracted litigation that has limited the number of cleanups. A similar bill is under review in the Senate. I support an overhaul of the Superfund law that results in more cleanups and fewer lawsuits and administrative delays.

INTERSTATE BANKING

Congress has approved a final version of a bill that would permit banks to open branches across state lines. This measure will make the banking industry more efficient and more competitive, and better able to meet the needs of our people and our economy.

OTHER MEASURES

Congress may take up bills to impose fees for mining hardrock minerals like gold and cooper on federal land; allow state and local governments to ban or restrict interstate shipment of municipal solid waste; and give state and local governments more flexibility in meeting safe drinking water standards. In addition, a House-Senate conference committee will meet this month on a bill to reauthorize elementary and secondary education programs.

CONCLUSION

This list leaves many important bills unaddressed, including an overhaul of the nation's welfare system. But with only a short time remaining in the session, only measures far along in the pipeline stand a chance of enactment. If the 103rd Congress is to be successful, it must move quickly and effectively on its agenda.