

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE PETER W. RODINO, JR.

*Congressman William J. Hughes**

Mr. Speaker, I rise to lead the chorus of praise for the distinguished and beloved dean of the New Jersey delegation and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Peter Rodino.

It has been my personal privilege to serve on the Judiciary Committee with Peter Rodino for the past 14 years, and during that time I have come to know him as a man of wisdom, compassion and courage. His exemplary leadership as chairman of that committee is well known to Members of this House, and the Nation.

For two-score years, Peter Rodino has made his presence known in this body; the major legislation that bears his imprint is too extensive to detail here. But undoubtedly his greatest contributions have been in protecting our constitutional liberties and advancing the civil rights of all Americans. Peter Rodino's role in the passage of major civil rights legislation—including the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the open housing law of 1966, to name just two—was instrumental in making ours a more just society.

All of America had the opportunity to observe Peter Rodino's praiseworthy character during the televised hearings of the Judiciary Committee on the impeachment of President Nixon. His fairness and deliberation were manifest during that time of high emotion and partisan tension. He presided over those historic proceedings in a manner that brought legitimacy to the impeachment process, and credit to this body. By resolutely insisting on the supremacy of the Constitution in our system of government, Peter Rodino has rightfully secured for himself a place of honor in the history of this great country.

Surely, a void will be felt next January when Congress convenes, for the first time in four decades, without the wisdom and

* D-N.J. Congressman Hughes, who represents the second congressional district, delivered these remarks on the floor of the House of Representatives on October 21, 1988. 134 CONG. REC. H11, 093-94 (daily ed. Oct. 21, 1988) (statement of Cong. Hughes).

leadership of Peter Rodino. The Judiciary Committee will be deprived of a most able helmsman, while the Constitution and Bill of Rights will lose one of their most steadfast guardians in this institution.

Peter Rodino's record of service over the past 40 years, however, is a legacy that will continue to inspire and guide this body in its deliberations. His courtesy and kindness will certainly never be forgotten by anyone who has had the pleasure of knowing him. We will miss him, not only as one of the truly outstanding Members in the long history of the House of Representatives, but, just as importantly, as a good and trusted friend.

As Peter Rodino leaves this great American institution, I want to wish him and his beautiful family God's richest blessings in the years ahead.