

Speaker Ryan: Thanks Wisconsin's First District, staff in remarks on House floor

Posted on Thursday, Nov 29, 2018

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 29, 2018

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WASHINGTON—This afternoon, in remarks on the House floor, House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) thanked the people of Wisconsin's First District and paid tribute to members of his Wisconsin staff for their dedication.

His remarks are available in full here and below:

My colleagues, I rise today to express profound gratitude to the people of the First District of Wisconsin.

Any time I get to swear in a new member, like we just did, it brings me back to the time when I was first sworn in here in 1998.

I remember just being awestruck the first time I walked down that center aisle. That feeling just never goes away. I still feel it when I walk onto the floor, each and every time.

I am immensely grateful to the people of Southern Wisconsin for their trust and their confidence.

I have always had this thing about calling the people I represent not my constituents but my 'employers.'

It's the way I've always thought of this, and I think it's important that we as members understand that we work for the people and not the other way around, that we are in this to make a difference for them.

We work every day to keep that obligation, especially, actually, when it comes to constituent service. It is the lifeblood of the work we do here as representatives.

And it's something that goes unreported, but it is extremely important, extremely valuable, and very gratifying.

Any success that we have had is really, in my case, due to our humble and our hard-working staff.

I have had the chance to work for, and to work with, the very best people, I really have.

Before I was a member, I was a part of the legion of Hill staffers. I was a staffer here before I got elected as a member. I started as an intern in the mail room, and I worked my way on up: legislative correspondent, legislative assistant, legislative director, chief of staff—all of those things.

And I figured I knew everything about these jobs, all the long hours and all the sacrifices.

But nothing can truly prepare you for having people willing to help you in such a big undertaking on the front lines.

And so I am profoundly grateful for the dedicated public servants who have helped us serve the people, my employers, of the First Congressional District.

I want to thank the members of our team who have stayed with us to the very end.

I want to thank Rebekah Cullum, Jordan Dunn, Brandon Farnsworth, Megan Wagner, Laura Wiley.

I want to thank Allison Steil, our deputy chief of staff who's been with us for 10 years.

I want to thank Tricia Stoneking, our director of scheduling and office operations, who's been with us for 15 years.

I want to especially thank the members of our team who have been with us from the very beginning, from the start. We call 'em the 'lifers.'

Danyell Tremmel, my chief of staff. Chad Herbert, director of military and veterans services.

Chad—he's a hunter, he's a veteran. Danyell is just—she came from my predecessor, she knows every nook and cranny of the federal government, how to help constituents navigate their problems. Chad has helped countless veterans. He knows the veterans system so well, and he's done so much good for the veterans of Southern Wisconsin.

Susie Liston, our district director. She has one of the most pleasant and happy demeanors. You can get a lot of angry constituents walking into a district office. She handles them better than anyone I have ever known.

Teresa Mora, director of outreach. Teresa has run my bilingual services, she has helped me with all my Hispanic, bilingual town hall meetings, she has done a spectacular job of doing constituent outreach throughout my district.

Joyce Meyer—many of you know Joyce. She was my first legislative director.

Andy Speth. Started off as my district director, then my longtime chief of staff—my silent partner. Andy and I met in sixth-grade basketball camp at St. Paul Lutheran School, where he went, where his kids go, and we have been friends ever since. We went to high school together. When I moved home to run for Congress, he was the guy who helped me. He's been my partner in this venture all along, and I am so grateful for his friendship, I am so grateful for his partnership.

I also am just grateful for the people of Janesville, Racine, Kenosha, Oak Creek, Elkhorn, Lake Geneva, Walworth County, Racine County, Kenosha County, Rock County, Waukesha County, everyone in between.

Since becoming speaker of the House, which was not something that we're used to in Wisconsin—I'm the only one who's done that—I appreciate the indulgence of the people I work for who indulged the fact that I had other responsibilities in addition.

And when I took on these additional responsibilities, the people of our staff really stepped up. And really helped serve our constituents, so that they continued to enjoy those flawless constituent services.

I am just so grateful for these people in my life.

I am so grateful that they were able to serve the people of Southern Wisconsin so well.

And I am absolutely grateful to the people of Southern Wisconsin for entrusting me as their representative.

Thank you and I yield.