

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in mourning the loss of one of the Commonwealth of Virginia's finest public servants, Congresswoman *Jo Ann Davis*. She was a good friend and a tireless advocate for America's First District, as both she and the late Congressman Herb Bateman referred to the First Congressional District of Virginia.

Jo Ann was a self-made woman who came from modest roots. Born in North Carolina, she grew up in Hampton, Virginia, where her father was a city bus driver. She graduated from Hampton Roads Business College in 1971, received her real estate license in 1984, and received her real estate broker's license 4 years later. She was a successful business woman, having opened Davis Management Company in 1988 and Jo Ann Davis Realty in 1990.

Mr. Speaker, *Jo Ann* was not a career politician and probably never imagined that she would run for office and end up serving in the United States Congress for over 6 years. In 1997 she was reluctantly convinced by her friends to run for a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates. When our late colleague Herb Bateman announced his retirement from the House, *Jo Ann* mounted an underdog campaign. Notwithstanding the fact that she was outspent by a margin of 40 to one in the primary, she prevailed; and in November, 2000, she became the first Republican woman from Virginia elected to Congress.

While we had different political loyalties, we had no differences in our efforts to work together for the citizens of Hampton Roads. *Jo Ann's* service on the Armed Services Committee directly mirrored her commitment to the thousands of military personnel in her district. One of her first pieces of legislation that she introduced passed in 2001. It increased the amount of life insurance benefits for survivors of members of the U.S. Armed Forces killed in active duty.

Jo Ann was also a tireless advocate for the thousands of shipbuilders in her district that worked at Northrop Grumman Newport News, and she cofounded the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus with Congressman *Gene Taylor* of Mississippi. That caucus has made a compelling case to the Department of Defense that it is pivotal for our national defense that the Navy spend more money on shipbuilding. In the last Congress, she was instrumental in efforts to secure funding for the refueling of the USS *Carl Vinson*.

Without

Jo Ann

's hard work, the Hampton Roads area might have lost billions of dollars in economic revenue tied directly to that aircraft carrier.

Jo Ann placed a high priority on the removal of ships in the so-called James River "Ghost Fleet," which posed a major environmental threat to the James River and the Chesapeake Bay; and as a result of her leadership, many of those ships have been removed. Together, we have worked to secure Federal funding for the Achievable Dream education program in Newport News to ensure that at-risk children have the best opportunity to succeed in school.

Mr. Speaker, every Member of this body was saddened to learn that *Jo Ann* developed breast cancer in 2005 and even more so when the cancer returned this year. The sadness is especially felt by members of the weekly Congressional Prayer Breakfast, which

Jo Ann

and I regularly attended. Despite her personal battle with cancer,

Jo Ann

did not retire from Congress. She stayed and fought her cancer and continued to represent the people of the First District to the best of her ability until the very end. Learning from her own experience with cancer, she has encouraged her colleagues and her constituents to get screened regularly for all types of cancer.

Mr. Speaker, the Hampton Roads delegation has lost a tremendous advocate for the interests of our region. I want to extend my deepest sympathies to her husband of 33 years, Chuck Davis; their two grown sons, Charlie and Christopher; their granddaughter; and her wonderful staff with whom my staff has worked so well over the years. America's First District and the U.S. House of Representatives have lost a true friend and advocate with the passing of Congresswoman *Jo Ann Davis*.