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House of Representatives

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD "HAL"
BRUNO, JR.

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 30, 2011

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, a number of us have come to the floor today to remember a great American who passed away earlier this month. Hal Bruno made a real difference in people's lives, both by keeping them informed about our world and by serving as an advocate for firefighters and their families.

Hal was ABC News Political Director through the 1980's and 1990's, covering major national events and keeping Americans engaged with their government. He skillfully moderated the vice-presidential debate in 1992 after having covered presidential campaigns since Kennedy ran against Nixon. He had the respect and admiration of leaders from both parties.

As a journalist, Hal made a reputation for himself as a truth-teller, even when the truth was difficult. That began in Chicago, when as a young reporter he uncovered how poor safety standards in the building code had contributed to a fire that claimed 95 lives. He became a respected voice for fire safety, and that experience led him to become a volunteer firefighter himself, which he continued to do for decades.

After retiring from ABC News in 1999, Hal dedicated himself to serving our communities' firefighters and their families. He chaired the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation at a time when we lost so many brave first responders in the September 11 attacks. Hal was a champion for the families of firefighters who lost their lives in service to their communities, and he fought for and won the passage of legislation to provide them survivor benefits.

I know that Hal will be both dearly missed and dearly remembered by many in government, those who turned to him for their news for so many years, and by the families of firefighters on whose behalf he worked so tirelessly.

I join in remembering Hal and celebrating his life. I offer my condolences to his wife Meg and their children and grandchildren.

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 30, 2011

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor Hal Bruno, who recently passed on November 8th. Hal Bruno will be remembered as a man of service to his country. Having served as an Army intelligence officer, a volunteer firefighter and the director of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF), he put service to others first and foremost. For over 60 years Hal was an active member of the fire service community, whether it was on the ground as a first responder, in the halls of Congress working to improve resources for families of fallen firefighters, or on the public stage advocating for ways to improve fire safety to reduce line of duty deaths and injuries.

Appointed as chairman of the NFFF in

1999, he received numerous awards and recognition for his dedication and commitment. This fall, he was awarded the National Fire & Emergency Services Hall of Legends, Legacies and Leaders Award. In 2008, the Congressional Fire Services Institute selected him as the recipient of the CFSI / Motorola Mason Lankford Fire Service Leadership Award and in 1999 he received the "President's Award" from the International Association of Fire Chiefs. He was also named "Fire Service Person of the Year" by the Congressional Fire Services Institute in 1995.

Hal also had a prestigious career as the longtime ABC News Political Director. Known for his journalistic integrity and pioneering spirit, he represented the reason the news media is sometimes referred to as the 'fourth branch of government.'

As a Co-Chairman of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, I know Hal Bruno will be greatly missed by the fire service community and by the many others he touched.

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 30, 2011

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember Mr. Hal Bruno and his longtime dedication to political journalism and fire fighters across the nation. As a former Political Director and analyst for ABC News, Mr. Bruno's legacy is one that deserves to be recognized to the fullest degree.

Mr. Bruno's journalism career spanned five decades, and he was greatly involved in many high-profile cases including the Cuban Revolution, Watergate, Chappaquiddick, and 9/11. His breadth of knowledge and myriad of resources will remain as testaments to his tenacity as a political analyst.

Equally important in his life was the service he provided as a volunteer firefighter, and later as a Chairman Emeritus for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. In recognition of his service, the Congressional Fire Services Institute selected him as its "Fire Service Person of the Year" in 1995. His passion for fire fighting began in the 1940s, Mr. Bruno's dedication to fighting fires continued until his passing, as he always had an emergency scanner and a bunker gear, helmet, and boots in his car ready to assist in an emergency.

Commended not only for his analysis and service to his community, but also his moderation of the 1992 Vice Presidential debate, Mr. Bruno made certain to maintain a fair environment despite a highly political atmosphere. The debate only reiterated Mr. Bruno's determination to provide the people with fair and balanced information to decide for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, Hal Bruno's incessant dedication to provide assistance to members of the fire fighting community and their families in addition to informing the American public about events of import in Washington, DC is more than commendable. I take this time to remember the services this great man provided our nation. Hal Bruno will be greatly missed. He has left a legacy that will positively impact the fire service for generations in our country.

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 30, 2011

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life of a truly outstanding individual, Mr. Harold "Hal" Bruno, Jr., who passed away on November 8th, 2011 at the age of 83. A native of Chicago, Hal Bruno began his long career there as a reporter during the 1950s. From 1960 to 1978, Mr. Bruno worked for Newsweek magazine, and in 1978, he moved to ABC news where he remained until 1999. As Political Director and Director of Election Coverage at ABC News, Hal Bruno was widely known for his political savvy and his journalistic integrity. His career as a journalist spanned five decades and earned him many accolades. He was dedicated to politics and a pioneer in political journalism, so it is fitting that he passed away on an election night.

However, Hal Bruno had another passion in addition to journalism: to the brave men and women of our country's fire service. He was called to serve his neighbors as a volunteer firefighter for much of his career, and through that work as a firefighter, Mr. Bruno gained a keen interest in fire safety policies. He became a leading expert in the politics and policy of fire safety and for years contributed a column on the subject to Firehouse magazine. He also composed numerous articles on the subject in other publications and on the internet, and helped bring attention to these important issues to Americans across the country.

Hal's passion and tenaciousness made him a highly effective advocate for firefighters and fire safety. A charter member of the National Fallen Firefighter's Foundation, he served as the organization's Chairman from 1999 until his retirement in 2008. In this position, he helped to develop fire safety programs and to create a safer environment for firefighters. He was also the Director of the Chevy Chase Fire Department in Maryland. It was truly an honor for me to work closely with Hal as we sought ways that the federal government could assist our local fire departments even before the tragic events of September 11th, 2001. Together, we developed the Assistance To Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs to help these local departments buy the equipment and hire the personnel they needed to keep their communities safe and secure. Thanks in large part to Hal's insightful input and tireless advocacy, these programs have been wildly successful, and are crucial to ensuring that our communities have the resources they need.

Homeland security starts at home, so no matter what our budget environment is like, we must continue to support firefighters and other first responders, who sacrifice so much to keep us safe. This will undoubtedly be one of Hal's great legacies, and I will continue to fight to preserve it in the future.

With Hal Bruno's passing, our nation has lost a great hero. Mr. Bruno is survived by his wife Meg, his sister Barbara, his sons Harold and Dan, and his four grandchildren. The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to working with passionate individuals like Hal Bruno. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Hal's family and friends, our first responders, and me in commemorating and celebrating the life of Mr. Hal Bruno.