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## *House of Representatives*

### VISCLOSKY PAYS TRIBUTE TO KATIE HALL

**Mr. Speaker:** It is with deep sadness and great respect that I take this time to remember one of Northwest Indiana's most valued citizens and my predecessor, former Congresswoman Katie Beatrice Hall. Throughout her prestigious career, Katie's contributions to the people of Northwest Indiana and across the nation are exemplary, and she is worthy of the highest praise. Mrs. Hall passed away on Monday, February 20, 2012, but her legacy will live on forever in the hearts and minds of those she served.

Congresswoman Hall grew up in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, during the pre-civil rights era. Segregation laws were strict in the South during that time, and she learned early in life how to succeed despite great opposition. In 1960, Katie earned a bachelor's degree from Mississippi Valley State University. Later, she moved to Indiana and continued her education, earning a master's degree from Indiana University, Bloomington, in 1968.

The Congresswoman's involvement in politics began when she campaigned for former Mayor of Gary Richard Hatcher. Her work on the campaign further fueled her desire to serve others and inspired her to run for elected office. Prior to becoming a Member of Congress, she served in the Indiana House of Representatives from 1974 to 1976 and was then elected to the Indiana Senate, serving from 1976 to 1982. As a member of the Indiana General Assembly, Mrs. Hall was influential in establishing the Genesis Center, Hudson-Campbell Fitness Center, and the Adam Benjamin Metro Center, in Gary. Katie also served as the Chair for the Lake County Democratic Committee from 1978 to 1980 and for the Indiana Democratic Convention in 1980. In 1982, following the untimely passing of United States Congressman Adam Benjamin, Jr., Katie won the special election to complete his term in office and to represent the First Congressional District of Indiana in the 98<sup>th</sup> Congress, becoming the first African American from Indiana elected to serve in the United States House of Representatives. While in office, Katie served as Chairwoman of the Post Office and Civil Services Subcommittee on Census and Population. During her time in Congress, Representative Hall made a truly historic contribution through her sponsorship of the bill that made Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a national holiday. This bill had been stalled in the House for fourteen years, and through her passion and persistence, Katie was successful in establishing this recognition of Dr. King. Mrs. Hall was a trailblazer for the Civil Rights Movement and a devoted public servant to her community, state, and nation. In the years following her term, Katie continued her life of public service as City Clerk for Gary, Indiana from 1988 to 2003.

Katie Hall leaves behind a loving family. She is survived by her cherished husband, John Henry Hall, as well as her adoring daughters, Jacqueline and Junifer, and her beloved granddaughter, Kristina. She also leaves behind many other dear friends and family members, as well as a saddened community and a grateful nation.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in remembering the Honorable Katie Hall for her tremendous contributions to the people of her community, the State of Indiana, and the United States of America. Her life of public service is to be admired. Her legacy will serve as an inspiration to us all.