



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *112th* CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

House of Representatives

VISCLOSKY HONORS MAYOR RUDY CLAY

Mr. Speaker: It is with fond admiration and profound respect that I take this time to recognize a dear friend and one of Indiana's most distinguished citizens, the Honorable Mayor Rudolph Clay, of Gary, Indiana. For his many years of public service and his countless efforts toward improving the lives of Northwest Indiana residents, Rudy will be honored at a celebratory reception at the Genesis Convention Center, in Gary, Indiana, on Friday, October 28, 2011.

Rudolph Clay was born in Courtland, Alabama. Following the passing of his mother, Rudy and his brother, David, were raised by their aunts, Daisy Washington and Mary Lucy Hunter, in Gary, Indiana. After graduating from Roosevelt High School, Rudy continued his education, earning a track scholarship to Indiana University in Bloomington. He would later return to Gary, and it was during this time that he met and fell in love with his wonderful wife, Christine Swan. They were married on November 30, 1957. Mayor Clay then served in the United States Army from 1958 to 1960. Through the Vietnam era and the Civil Rights Movement, Rudy's unwavering passion to serve people, particularly those most in need, and his strong desire to be a catalyst for positive change propelled him on his remarkable journey.

In 1972, Rudy was elected to the Indiana State Senate in the third district. While in this position, the focus of his work included working for better treatment and training programs for prison inmates, creating a victim's compensation fund, and establishing a Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Subsequently, Rudy was elected to the Lake County Council in 1978 and then re-elected in 1982. During this time he fought against the unfairness in hiring practices at the Lake County Government Center and the raising of utility rates. In 1984, Rudy Clay was elected as Lake County Recorder. Three years later, he was elected Lake County Commissioner and served four elected terms in this capacity.

In 2005, Rudy became the first African American elected to serve as the Lake County Democratic Chairman, a position he held until 2009.

The Gary Precinct Organization appointed Rudy mayor of Gary in 2006, and he was elected mayor the following year. Mayor Clay's extraordinary energy, his profound empathy for people and his lifelong commitment to leave a better world for following generations have led to preeminent achievements. They have positively impacted the lives of countless individuals as well as the progress and future of Indiana.

Throughout his illustrious career, Mayor Clay has been recognized with many distinguished awards. Rudy was honored by Governor Evan Bayh with the Outstanding Hoosier Award in 1994, and in 2005, Governor Joseph Kernan honored the Mayor with the prestigious Sagamore of the Wabash Award, to name a few.

Although Rudy has received many esteemed honors for his commitment to the residents of Indiana, his greatest source of pride is his family. Rudy and his amazing wife, Christine, will have been married for 54 years this November. They have one beloved son, Rudy Clay, Jr.

On a more personal note, I also want to thank Rudy for his graciousness and warm friendship over the years. I also would be remiss if I did not thank him for the deep respect he has always shown to my father, John Visclosky.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Mayor Rudy Clay for his staunch devotion to the people of Gary as well as all of Northwest Indiana. Rudy's unselfish and lifelong dedication to serving the people of Northwest Indiana is worthy of the highest commendation, and he serves as an inspiration to us all. I am proud to call him my friend.