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The Honorable Jeff Miller of the First District of Florida

Washington, Wednesday, July 31, 2013

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF DR. REED BELL

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and dedicated service of Northwest Florida's Dr. Reed Bell, who passed away on July 28, 2013. Dr. Bell's mission was to better the lives children, and still today, his name is synonymous with pediatric health. The entire Northwest Florida community mourns the loss of this talented, kind-hearted man.

Dr. Bell was born on December 24, 1926 at Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola, Florida. Growing up, he attended Pensacola High School, where he was a model scholar-athlete. He was the captain of both the football and basketball teams, elected king of the high school's coronation, and graduated as Salutatorian. Dr. Bell then took his athletic talents to the University of Florida, where he was awarded a football scholarship. However, shortly thereafter, he answered the call of his Nation by serving in World War II. When he returned home, Dr. Bell opted to attend the University of the South, where he further applied his natural leadership abilities by again captaining both the basketball and football teams.

Despite his athletic successes, Dr. Bell was destined to serve his community through his knowledge of medicine and his love of children. He graduated from Duke's College of Medicine in 1953 and performed his residency in pediatrics and fellowship in endocrinology at Baylor University in 1957. Returning to his native Pensacola, Dr. Bell began practicing as a board-certified pediatrician and pediatric endocrinologist. In 1969, however, Dr. Bell founded the Sacred Heart Children's Hospital, the only facility of its kind in the

area. To support this great endeavor, founded at the hospital where he himself was born over forty years prior, he served as the Medical Director, formed a pediatric residency program, and established a neonatal intensive care unit to better serve the children of our community. In a further testament to his strength as a leader and his humanitarian nature, Dr. Bell also co-founded the Ronald McDonald House of Northwest Florida.

Dr. Bell's exceptional abilities were not localized to Northwest Florida alone. In 1986, then-President Ronald Reagan appointed him as the founding Director of the National Institute of Health Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, the federal government's first substance abuse prevention program. This appointment marked another example of Dr. Bell's exceptional ability to lead and help his fellow man. It would be exhausting to list the many awards and accolades he received throughout his career, which further represents his tremendous strength of character. However, these pale in comparison to his sheer love of family, service, and community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the life of Dr. Reed Bell. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers and sincerest condolences to his wife, Nell; six children, Rev. William R. Bell, Jr.; Mitzi Peters; Terry Bush; Former Florida Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Bell; Lance Bell; and Brian Bell; 20 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren. He will truly be missed by all who were fortunate enough to know him.