

## IN MEMORIAM

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# Walter Jones: A Most Unusual Congressman— For the Common Good

by Debra Hanania-Freeman and Paul Gallagher

Feb. 11—Representative Walter Jones of North Carolina died yesterday at 76, after an illness complicated by a recent fall. He was a Member of Congress always driven to think of attempts he could pursue to get that body—or even a few of its Members—to assert its constitutional duty against U.S. regime-change wars and the devastation they cause to American service personnel, to their families, and to foreign populations.

The most truthful of his many truthful acts was his reversal of his initial support for the Iraq War, when he found that President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney had lied to Congress and the people to start the war, and that it was a deadly fraud, killing thousands of American soldiers and tens of thousands of Iraqis. Congressman Jones said, “I will go to my grave regretting” that vote, and he constantly sought to awaken conscience in colleagues.

Days before his death, on Feb. 6, Rep. John Garamendi of California, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, honored Representative Jones by introducing H.R. 966, the Walter B. Jones Restoring Power to Congress Act. It would repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF).

Congressman Jones, himself, had been stripped of committee positions by leadership, despite 25 years’ seniority, because of his independence of thinking and voting. He was a truly non-partisan legislator who did not vote for fakery by either party. He was a prime

sponsor, and for a time the only Republican sponsor in the House, of the vital “Return to Prudent Banking Act” to restore Glass-Steagall bank regulation, and argued strongly for it in press conferences with Democratic Reps. Marcy Kaptur, Tim Ryan, Tulsi Gabbard, and others. It appears that no press obituary has mentioned his Glass-Steagall advocacy—yet when Wall Street candidates were being recruited to try to unseat him, the reporting of it was quite prominent.

Walter Jones twice sent videotaped messages to conferences of the Schiller Institute, and went beyond discussing a conference subject, endorsing the work of the Schiller Institute generally. He said at one meeting, “I feel more at home talking with you people than with my own party.”

Representative Garamendi’s statement said, “Congress has a Constitutional responsibility to debate and declare war, and we have abdicated that responsibility for far too long. That is why I am introducing this legislation to repeal the 2001 AUMF within one year of enactment. . . . I am also grateful to recognize the leadership of my dear friend, Walter Jones, who is currently in hospice care. Walter has championed this cause for years; I have worked with him closely on this issue in Congress. I am grateful for his wisdom, passion, and advocacy.”

Hopefully, in death Walter Jones’ name can win the constitutional check on war, for which he strove so hard in life.