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Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
1200 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005-4026

Statement on the death of PBGC Executive Director Martin Slate

Throughout a long career with the Internal Revenue Service and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, Mr. Slate was committed to protecting the pensions of the American worker. Under his leadership, the pension insurance program experienced a dramatic turnaround. In 1996, PBGC reached a milestone sought since its creation in 1974, a financial surplus. The agency had a deficit that had reached a high of nearly \$3 billion four years ago. He led the administration's development of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994, landmark legislation giving the agency the tools necessary to address pension underfunding. He brought state of the art technology to the agency's financial programs and systems and the agency was removed from government high risk lists. He strengthened the agency proactive enforcement program that resulted in \$15 billion in additional pension funding and protection for more than 1 million workers. He will be sorely missed by his colleagues and many friends.

2/24/97

3/12/97

Congressional Record entry 1 of 26

TRIBUTE TO MARTY SLATE (Senate - March 11, 1997)

[Page: S2125]

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, all of us who knew **Marty Slate** and who worked with him over the years were saddened to learn of his recent, untimely death.

Marty was an exceptionally dedicated public servant. He worked effectively throughout his extraordinary career to improve the quality of life for working men and women. He served well in many capacities, directing the field operations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, leading the ERISA Division of the Internal Revenue Service, and as Executive Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. **Marty** also worked hard, on a daily basis, to improve the quality of life of those around him, particularly his staff and coworkers.

Marty was a brilliant lawyer and a gifted manager who knew how to get things done. He inspired the people who worked for him and helped make them some of the most effective and productive public servants in the Nation. Everywhere he went, his ability and dedication brought out the very best in his colleagues and his staff.

Marty was a superb legislative strategist who understood the role of Government and the impact that Government could have on working Americans. He was the moving force behind the Retirement Protection Act, the pension funding legislation that Congress approved in 1994.

Early in the Clinton administration, **Marty** brought together representatives of the PBGC, Treasury, IRS, Labor, Commerce, OMB, and other Federal agencies as part of an impressive task force. The task force worked effectively under **Marty**'s leadership to identify the problems that caused pension underfunding, and the best solutions to those problems. As chairman of the task force, **Marty**'s door was always open. No person or group was ever shut out of the process. Needless to say, the task force issued its findings and recommendations in a timely manner.

After the task force report was issued, **Marty** looked to the future, and worked closely with Congress on legislation to address the problem of pension underfunding. As my Senate colleagues will recall, we approved the funding reforms in the Retirement Protection Act, the most significant pension legislation since the enactment of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act in 1974. It was an extraordinary bipartisan accomplishment, and it was **Marty**'s accomplishment, too. Millions of working men and women have pensions that are more secure today because of **Marty Slate**.

In his years at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, **Marty** worked hard to assure that workers did not suffer from discrimination.

Under his leadership, the EEOC wiped out case backlogs and vigorously prosecuted discrimination complaints. As director of field operations for the agency, he was responsible for the day-to-day activities of 46 field offices. The large numbers of working men and women who were protected from discrimination because of **Marty**'s efforts owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.

When **Marty** left the EEOC to work for the Internal Revenue Service, he established the 'Georgetown-IRS Masters of Taxation Fellowship Program.' This program was designed to help those who were not historically represented in the fields of taxation and pensions because of discrimination and lack of opportunity. Under this program, students applied for admission to Georgetown's Masters of Taxation Program, while simultaneously applying for a job at the IRS. The IRS, the university, and the student-fellow would share the costs of tuition.

Tribute to Marty Slate (cont'd)

When Marty left the IRS in 1993, he created a similar fellowship program at the PBGC. The fellowship programs that Marty created have been extremely successful, and have enabled many African-Americans and other minority students to break through long-standing barriers and find jobs in the fields of taxation and pensions. One graduate of this program is now a professor at Catholic University.

In ways like these, Marty Slate didn't just talk about fair play and equal opportunity. He helped to assure that new opportunities for African-Americans and other minorities actually existed, and the graduates of these fellowship programs will carry on Marty's fine work.

Marty is warmly remembered by those who worked with him as a person who took genuine personal interest in helping them to advance their careers. With all his myriad of responsibilities, he was never too busy to write a letter or place a phone call to help someone develop their career. He was never too busy to reach out. He was there for the people he led and managed because he cared deeply about them.

Marty also loved sports. He was a true Boston Red Sox fan and he had a great love for sports trivia. A local radio station in this area has a call-in trivia contest for sports fans, which takes place in the middle of the night. Marty would regularly set his alarm for 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock in the morning and get up and call into the talk show. He called so often that he was known on the show as 'Marty from Bethesda.' Marty almost always knew the answer and would win Baltimore Orioles tickets. He would then share the tickets he won with his friends.

As a Boston Red Sox fan myself, I am particularly fond of a story from Marty's childhood. One day, when he was about 6 years old, he wanted to go to Fenway Park to watch the Red Sox play. His parents were concerned, because they couldn't go that day, and they didn't want him to go alone.

Marty found a way to heed his parents' advice. The Red Sox won and he had a wonderful time. But when he came back, police and emergency vehicles were parked on his street. They were there because 6-year old Marty had, in fact, listened to his parents. He did take someone to the game. The problem was that it was the 3-year-old child of a neighbor. And the police were looking for the missing child in the neighborhood. Even at that young age, Marty was demonstrating his extraordinary sense of responsibility.

Now that he has left us, all of us who were touched by Marty's brilliance and compassion will work harder to carry on his work. That's the way Marty would have wanted it.

My heartfelt condolences go to the Slate family, to Marty's wife, Dr. Caroline Poplin, to his parents, Albert and Selma Slate, to his brother, Dr. Jerome Slate, to his sister, Emily Slate, and to all of Marty's friends and coworkers. He touched all our lives, and we will never forget him.

Martin Slate, 51, Director of Federal Pension Benefit Agency

By DAVID CAY JOHNSTON

Martin Slate, the executive director of the Government corporation that insures the pensions of 41 million Americans and a civil servant repeatedly honored for innovative solutions to regulatory problems, died on Sunday night, the White House announced yesterday. He was 51.

His wife, Dr. Caroline Poplin, an internist, said her husband had died of cardiac arrest at their home in Bethesda, Md.

Mr. Slate marched in Selma, Ala., during the height of the civil rights movement, created a scholarship program to help minority lawyers at the Internal Revenue Service earn advanced degrees in taxation and last fall started an effort over the Internet to find people who were due pension benefits but had not collected them.

President Clinton yesterday called Mr. Slate "the quintessential public servant" and said, "Marty spent his entire life working to make sure our laws were fair and applied justly."

Hillary Rodham Clinton and Mr.

Slate were classmates at Yale Law School and they worked together on Senator Eugene McCarthy's 1968 campaign for the Democratic Party nomination for President.

For the last four years, Mr. Slate was executive director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, where his efforts won the agency an Innovations in Government Award from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, for devising a program to alert the Government to early signs that a pension plan might be headed for financial trouble.

Kathleen P. Utgoff, who ran the pension agency during the Bush Administration, said that Mr. Slate "behaved not as a bureaucrat but as a public servant." She added: "He worried not about his turf or whether something had never been done before, but about what needed to be done to get the best result. He was all too unusual as a Government official."

Two years ago, Mr. Slate displayed the same kind of willingness to try new ideas in negotiations with Gen-

eral Motors, which had an \$18.2 billion gap between the money it had in its pension plan for hourly workers and their promised retirement benefits.

General Motors proposed to reduce the shortfall with \$6 billion of G.M. stock, a proposal that exceeded the limits on how much of its own stock a company pension plan could own.

"Marty was willing to consider doing things that were creative, innovative, and hadn't been done before," said Gary M. Ford, a partner at Groom and Nordberg, the Washington law firm that represented General Motors in the negotiations.

Mr. Ford, who was general counsel of the pension corporation in the Reagan Administration, said that once the deal was struck, Mr. Slate worked effectively to persuade the Labor Department and the I.R.S., which both regulate pension plans, that the deal was the best solution.

Eleanor Holmes Norton, the District of Columbia delegate to Congress, said that when she headed the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission from 1977 through 1980, Mr. Slate was a major figure in reducing a backlog of cases.

Mr. Slate was director of the Chicago regional office for three years and during that time he reduced the backlog of complaints from 4,000 to 1,500 while increasing the number of lawsuits contending job discrimination to 65 from 2.

"I was struck by his brilliance and versatility," Mrs. Norton said. "Lawyers often get pigeonholed in due process and don't know how to make things work, but here was a man deeply imbued with due process and yet who knew how to make the law work for people."

Mr. Slate graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1967 and earned his law degree at Yale in 1973. In 1988 he earned a master's degree in laws in taxation at Georgetown University.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Slate is survived by his parents, Albert and Selma Slate of Quincy, Mass.; a brother, Dr. Jerome Slate, of Lexington, Mass., and a sister, Emily Slate, of Munich, Germany.



White House Briefing Room

February 24, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 24, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Marty Slate. Marty has been a dear friend since our years at Yale Law School and was the quintessential public servant.

From his days as a Freedom Rider in Mississippi to his years as a senior civil servant at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Internal Revenue Service, Marty spent his entire life working to make sure our laws were fair and applied justly.

Four years ago, I was delighted when Marty answered my call to return to public service. As Executive Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, he brought a new standard of excellence to that agency. He improved the PBGC's level of customer service and its financial management, winning a Innovation in American Government Award from the John F. Kennedy School and several Vice Presidential Hammer Awards for Excellence in Government. Marty fought successfully for important new legislation that brought renewed financial stability to the Corporation, expanded pension coverage, and ensured that millions of Americans' pensions were more secure.

Hillary and I will miss him greatly. Our thoughts and prayers are with Cookie and his family on this sad day.

Congressional Record entry 2 of 26

IN MEMORY OF MARTIN SLATE

[Page: E427]

HON. EARL POMEROY

in the House of Representatives

TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 1997

- Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to take a few moments to express my sadness at the passing of a truly dedicated public servant. His name was **Martin Slate**. Since 1993, Mr. Slate had served as executive director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation [PBGC]. In this capacity, he was charged with safeguarding the hard-earned pension benefits of millions of working Americans. It was a job he did brilliantly. He arrived at the PBGC at a time when the agency was in danger of failing in its mission to guarantee the pension benefits of American workers. He developed a plan to set things right and went about doing so. Director Slate led the effort to make needed reforms in the pension laws, he restored the PBGC to a level of solvency it had not seen in decades, and he spearheaded a new initiative to track down missing pension participants and provide them with the benefits they had earned but not received.
- While at PBGC, Director **Slate** worked closely with leaders from Capitol Hill, particularly with former Congressman J.J. 'Jake' Pickle. Writing to Director **Slate**'s spouse last week, Congressman Pickle remarked:

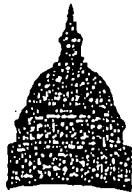
We should give eternal thanks for **Marty**'s leadership in the Pension Benefit Guaranty Program. For years neither the Administration nor Congress could remove road blocks that kept badly-needed pension reform from enactment. **Marty Slate** knew the problem, and knew how to chart a course of action. As Chairman of the Congressional Subcommittee that had jurisdiction over pension reform, I can vouch that **Marty**, more than anyone, led the fight that resulted in the passage of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994. Countless millions of American workers, now and in the future, owe a deep debt of gratitude to this great man.

- Having worked closely with Director **Slate** on pension policy over the past several years, I share Congressman Pickle's enormous gratitude for the leadership and vision he provided in advancing the retirement security of the American people. Our Nation has lost a valuable ally in the critical struggle to achieve economic security for our Nation's retirees.
- Fortunately for our Nation, however, Director **Slate**'s 4 years of success at the PBGC were not a temporary foray into government service but the capstone of a lifelong career of service to the public. Prior to coming to the PBGC, Mr. **Slate** oversaw employee benefit plans for the Internal Revenue Service and served in a variety of capacities at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. **Marty**'s lifelong dedication to ensuring equal opportunity and preserving workplace benefit security brought tangible results to millions of working Americans. His life stands as a testament to the fact that one can achieve great good in service to one's country.

In Memory of Martin Slate (cont'd)

- Mr. Speaker, this past Thursday I attended a memorial service for Director Slate . While this required me to miss several recorded votes here in the House, I was proud to count myself among the hundreds of colleagues and friends who gathered to pay tribute to this exceptional man. Speaker after speaker rose to celebrate the life and mourn the passing of this quintessential public servant and vibrant friend. For those of us who had known him only professionally, we learned in moving terms that Marty 's dedication to his country was matched by dedication to his friends and family. Country, colleagues, family, friends--all will miss him terribly.
- Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in this Chamber to join me in sending heartfelt condolences to Marty 's wife, Dr. Caroline Poplin, and to the other members of Marty 's family. At this difficult time, I know that we all join in expressing our sincere gratitude for Marty 's many years of dedicated service to this Nation and his fellow citizens.

[Page: E428]



J. J. "JAKE" PICKLE

March 3, 1997

Dr. Caroline Poplin
6113 Wynnwood
Bethesda, Maryland 20816

Dear Cookie,

One of my most rewarding legislative activities was the privilege of working with Marty Slate. I remember our dinner in Washington one evening, and enjoyed that session very much; as a result, I have thought of the both of you many times.

We should give eternal thanks for Marty's leadership in the Pension Benefit Guaranty Program. For years neither the Administration nor the Congress could remove road blocks that kept badly-needed pension reform from enactment. Marty Slate knew the problem, and knew how to chart a course of action. As Chairman of the Congressional Subcommittee that had jurisdiction over pension reform, I can vouch that Marty, more than anyone, led the fight that resulted in the passage of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994. Countless millions of American workers, now and in the future, owe a debt of gratitude to this great man.

Congressional leaders also give Marty credit for the success of this immensely important program. It was most satisfying to me, and I know that Marty felt enormous pride in taking an agency that was "at risk" and making it into one of the most solvent programs in our government. What a tremendous tribute to Marty's leadership and foresight! I send you my deepest regrets knowing that we have lost such a strong citizen and leader, and that you have lost a life's partner. Marty was one of the best!

With sincere personal regards,


Jake Pickle

JJP:jh