That great Republican from my home state of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, would enjoy being here tonight.

He would be at home with the rugged, pioneer spirit that has sparked Alaska's progress from wilderness to territory to state.

He would be thrilled by the electric atmosphere of Americans adding richly to the Union for which he sacrificed so much to save.

He would be pleased by your achievements of yesterday. He would be reassured by your efforts of today. He would be inspired by your dreams of tomorrow. He would share with you your prayers that, for the good of America, they all come true.

Told that beneath your soil, and beneath your coastal waters lie rich resources needed desperately by America, Abraham Lincoln would recognize that here in Alaska lies, in great part, the key to our nation's future. Here, indeed, is America's last frontier; breath-taking in awesome beauty, staggering in natural resources, pregnant with potential.

He would surely caution prudence. He would caution that we use well these precious blessings; that we chart the course carefully. For the stakes could be our national survival.

Here, all about him, Abraham Lincoln would see that Alaska, so long so critical to our national defense, is now critical to our need for self-sufficiency in energy, in minerals, in protein from the sea.

Recognizing these things, Mr. Lincoln would find pleasure in this great state's election, last March, of my good friend, Don Young, as Congressman for all Alaska.
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It takes a big, hardy and vigorous man even to attempt to run for Congress in this big, hardy and vigorous state. Most Members of Congress represent one of several types of districts in their states.

Most of these districts are comprised of a few counties. There are nine counties in the Peoria-centered 18th District of Illinois which I am privileged to represent. Some districts in the sprawling metropolis that is Chicago are comprised of only four or five wards.

Each district poses its own problems of how to reach the constituency. None presents problems so formidable, even foreboding, as the District of Alaska. In his campaign, Don Young traveled 60,000 miles in three months. Last month, with Senator Ted Stevens, he traveled 25,000 miles in three weeks.

Don Young worked hard to earn the privilege of representing Alaska in the Congress. And he arrived in Washington with his sleeves rolled up, ready to go. He asked for, and received, assignment to two House committees of great importance to Alaska: the Committee on Interior, and the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

In these committees, Don has sought a balance between the needs of environment and the needs of natural resource development.

When hope for passage of the long-overdue Alaska Pipeline Bill seemed dimmest, Don's input, efforts, and close cooperation with more senior Members of the Congress contributed greatly to the turning of the tide for the Pipeline.

He worked hard in the Public Lands Subcommittee, in the Interior Committee, on the floor of the House, and in the House-Senate Conference in which the bill was polished for final passage.
In short, Don Young's efforts constituted a classic case of a freshman Congressman's cooperation for the general good.

His input and cooperation are helpful, now, in efforts to ease the impact of the Pipeline's construction; in efforts against invasion of our fisheries by foreign fishing fleets, and in efforts to protect Alaska's salmon.

In short, we are happy to have Don Young with us in the Congress. It is interesting to recall that, last March, our opponents and detractors were wishfully claiming that he could not even be elected.

But, then, our opponents and detractors had said the same thing, last August, about Bob Bauman in the 1st District of Maryland. But he, too, was elected, nonetheless.

Then, only last week, in that special election in the 12th District of Pennsylvania, our opponents and detractors were wishfully claiming that Harry Fox would be wiped out by a major landslide. They noted that registered Democrats there outnumbered registered Republicans by 8,000. They noted that big labor and other powerful, wealthy adjuncts to the Democrat Party were pouring in large sums of money and paid political activists in a determined effort to convince the American people that the Republican Party was dead.

The Democrat Party, itself, rushed in such big guns as Presidential hopefuls Jackson, Mondale and Muskie. Yet, when the ballots were counted, the Democrat nominee led by fewer than 200 votes of some 120,000 ballots cast.

Since that time, some errors in ballots and in arithmetic have been discovered. A recount is under way. So the hard, cold fact is that, Republicans have won at least two of three special Congressional elections.
Meanwhile:

Republicans have won five straight special Assembly elections in California; three out of four special Legislative elections in Maine; a special State Senate election in Connecticut, and another one in Massachusetts.

We have retained the Governorship of Virginia; and the offices of mayor in Cleveland, Ohio; Oakland, California; Columbus, Georgia, and Hagerstown, Maryland.

We have gained mayors in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Annapolis, Maryland.

Additionally, in the Deep South State of Mississippi, we have captured no less than 14 mayorships; three of them in major cities; six of them formerly held by Democrats.

So, thanks to great, attractive, dedicated Republican candidates such as Don Young -- and great, dedicated, hard-working Republican organizations such as yours, the Grand Old Party's pachyderm is not ailing; the stories of his demise are something more than premature.

The Democrats and their special interest followers will simply have to face it: The Republican Party is alive and well; winning more elections than it is losing -- and preparing to win a lot more next November.

In short: we've just begun to fight!

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