

## Connecticut Congresswomen: A Legacy of Leadership and Public Service

Six women have shared the distinction of representing the people of Connecticut in the United States Congress. These outstanding women—Clare Boothe Luce, Chase Going Woodhouse, Ella Tambussi Grasso, Barbara Bailey Kennelly, Nancy Lee Johnson, and Rosa L. DeLauro—not only served in the United States House of Representatives but also distinguished themselves as mothers and successful career women. Three of them—Woodhouse, Grasso, and Kennelly—gained political experience by holding the constitutional office of the Secretary of the State of Connecticut. Through their dedication to public service and the struggle for equal rights for all they have left an indelible mark in the history of our state and our country.



**Clare Boothe Luce**—Clare Boothe Luce was Connecticut’s first woman in Congress and one of the Republican Party’s leading spokespersons during World War II and the immediate post-war years. Born in New York City on April 10, 1903, Boothe Luce was a successful magazine writer, managing editor and playwright before entering politics in 1942. In Congress, where she served from 1943 until 1947, she stood against isolationism by calling for a strong, post-war international organization. She would later support American participation in and oversight of the United Nations Refugee Relief Agency’s post-war programs. On the domestic front, she endorsed the development of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps, called for heavy taxation of the rich to finance the war, supported the Equal Rights Amendment in 1943, and championed the creation of a bureau in the Labor Department to ensure equal pay for equal work for women and minority workers. She became the first woman keynote speaker at a national party convention, addressing the Republican Party delegates at the 1944 National Convention in Chicago, Illinois. In 1953 President Eisenhower appointed her as United States Ambassador to Italy, the first American woman diplomat posted to a major European nation. In 1983 President Ronald Reagan awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom for being “a persistent and effective advocate of freedom, both at home and abroad.” Clare Boothe Luce died on October 9, 1987 in Washington, D.C. She and her husband Henry raised three children.



**Chase Going Woodhouse**—Chase Going Woodhouse’s calling as a public servant was strongly influenced by her maternal grandmother, who took her as a child to polling places on Election Day to protest disenfranchisement of women. Born to American parents on March 3, 1890 in Victoria, British Columbia, Woodhouse came to Connecticut in 1934 to teach at Connecticut College. She soon entered politics, becoming Connecticut’s 56th Secretary of the State in 1941. Elected to the United States Congress in 1944, Woodhouse, like Clare Boothe Luce, advocated for a strong post-war international organization. But her focus after the war was for peacetime employment, price controls, greater funding for education, tax reform, affordable housing for returning veterans, and rural infrastructure development and electrification. In her second term, her work on the influential House Committee on Banking and Currency would prove highly definitive, as it promoted the creation of both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. She supported the Marshall Plan for European Economic

Recovery and economic cooperation and integration. A highly-respected Democrat, Woodhouse served in the 1965 Connecticut Constitutional Convention. From 1953 until 1980 she headed the Connecticut Service Bureau for Women's Organizations in Hartford. In 1966 she became the first Chair of the Governor's Committee on the Status of Women and was later appointed a charter commissioner of the state's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. Chase Going Woodhouse died on December 12, 1984 in New Canaan, Connecticut. She and her husband Edward raised two children.



**Ella Tambussi Grasso**—Born on May 10, 1919 in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, Ella Tambussi Grasso was the only child of Italian immigrants. Her involvement in politics began as a member of the League of Women Voters. She was elected to the State House of Representatives in 1952, in her second term becoming assistant Democratic Party leader, and later, in 1955, the first woman chosen as floor leader in the State House Chamber. In 1958 she became the 64th Secretary of the State of Connecticut, serving until 1971. Elected to the 92nd Congress in 1971 to fill a vacated seat, she served on the Education and Labor Committee, where she pushed for minimum wage increase, employment opportunities, job security, and increased Social Security payments legislation. On the Veterans' Affairs Committee, she pushed for education benefits legislation for returning Vietnam veterans. Grasso worked hard to improve educational opportunities for women and supported the Equal Rights Amendment in 1971. She was re-elected in 1972. A champion of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Emergency Employment Act, she was successful in bringing six million new workers under benefit coverage and 600 new jobs to her district. Her greatest accomplishment was perhaps her part in drafting the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) enacted in 1973. Upon finishing her second term, she turned her attention to Connecticut politics, and in 1975 became Connecticut's first woman Governor. She was re-elected to a second term in 1978 but retired from public service in December 1980 due to illness. Ella Tambussi Grasso died in Hartford, Connecticut on February 5, 1981. Grasso and her husband Thomas raised two children. In 1991 she was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and, in 1993, inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. Few in public life have accomplished as much. But arguably her greatest legacy was inspiring many young women to follow in her footsteps in public service.



**Barbara Bailey Kennelly**—Barbara Bailey Kennelly was born in Hartford, Connecticut on July 10, 1936. She began her career in politics in 1975 in the Hartford Court of Common Council serving a four-year term. In 1979 she became Connecticut's 67th Secretary of the State, an office she resigned from on January 25, 1982 to join the 97th United States Congress. On the powerful House Ways and Means Committee and the influential Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, she oversaw committee appointments and legislative agenda. In 1987 she became the first woman to serve on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and was later appointed Chief Deputy Majority Whip, also a first for a Congresswoman. Within seven years she would become vice chair of the Democratic Caucus, making her the highest ranking woman in the Democratic Party at the time. During the 105th Congress, she was the Ranking Member of the subcommittee on Social Security. Kennelly pushed for welfare and tax reform, low-

income housing credits, child support, minimum wage legislation, and granting public education to children of illegal immigrants. In the Women's Caucus, she advocated for women's rights issues, including reproductive rights and the Child Support Enforcement Amendments passed in 1984 which strengthened "deadbeat" parent laws. A supporter of the 1996 Welfare Reform Bill and the childcare federal tax deduction, Kennelly expanded work opportunities for female heads of households. In 1998, after nine terms in Congress, she ran unsuccessfully for the governorship in Connecticut. In 2002 she became President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, a post she still holds. She has also served as Counselor to the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration and, since 2006, on the Social Security Advisory Board. Kennelly and her late husband James raised three daughters and a son.



**Nancy Lee Johnson**—Nancy Lee Johnson was born on January 5, 1935 in Chicago, Illinois. Settling in New Britain, Connecticut, in the 1960s, she and her husband Theodore have raised three daughters. A former teacher, Nancy Johnson ran as a Republican and won a state senate seat in 1976 which she occupied until 1983. She was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1982 as a pro-choice social liberal and pro-Ronald Reagan fiscal conservative. In her first two terms she served on the Public Works and Transportation and Veterans' Affairs Committees, and on the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families. In 1988 she became the first Republican woman appointed to the powerful Ways and Means Committee, where she eventually served as chair to three subcommittees. During the 104th Congress she chaired the House Ethics Committee, one of only a few women to hold that distinction. Her many accomplishments include spearheading the Taxpayer Bill of Rights II, sponsoring the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and pushing for long-term care and Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage for senior citizens. She also led efforts to moderate Republican Party welfare reform legislation by calling for eligibility for mothers with children below age ten and exempting them from the proposed five-year cut-off limit. Re-elected in 2002, Johnson became the fourth-ranking Republican on the Ways and Means Committee. She won re-election to a 12th term in 2004, making her the longest-serving U.S. Representative in Connecticut history and the dean among women in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 2006 Johnson lost her re-election bid, and in January 2007 joined Baker-Donelson's Washington D.C. law firm office. She is also a Resident Fellow at Harvard University's Institute of Politics.



**Rosa L. DeLauro**—Born in New Haven, Connecticut, on March 2, 1943, Rosa L. DeLauro was destined for politics, as both of her parents became New Haven Aldermen. As a community organizer in New Haven, she advocated on issues affecting women and minorities. Between 1981 and 1987 she worked as Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd's Chief of Staff. DeLauro was elected to the United States Congress in 1990 campaigning for universal health care. She has served on some of the most powerful congressional committees, including Appropriations, National Security, and Budget. In the 109th Congress, she became Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture. Rosa DeLauro has distinguished herself as a Democratic Party leader, serving as Chief Deputy Whip in the mid-1990s and, in 1999, as the

first Assistant to the Democratic Leader, making her the second highest-ranking Democratic woman in the House. She pushed for health care legislation such as cervical and ovarian cancer research, reduced prescription drug costs, and health maintenance organization coverage of mastectomy post-operative hospital stays. A co-founder of the Congressional Food Safety Caucus, she has advocated for stronger food safety regulations and reforming the Food and Drug Administration. DeLauro has always supported minimum wage increase and equal pay for equal work for women. In January 2008, DeLauro, along with Senator Hillary Clinton, introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that would strengthen the 1963 Equal Pay Act and help close earning disparity between men and women. DeLauro is also a co-sponsor of the Women's Equality Amendment. Rosa DeLauro and her husband Stanley Greenberg have raised three children.

In recognition of their vision, leadership, and public service, I am honored to dedicate the 2008 edition of the *Connecticut State Register and Manual* to Clare Boothe Luce, Chase Going Woodhouse, Ella Tambussi Grasso, Barbara Bailey Kennelly, Nancy Lee Johnson, and Rosa L. DeLauro.


  
Susan Bysiewicz  
Secretary of the State

Image credits:

**Clare Boothe Luce**, from the 1945-1946 edition of the *Connecticut State Register and Manual*, published by the Office of the Secretary of the State; **Chase Going Woodhouse**, from Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Harris & Ewing, Inc. Collection, LC-USZ62-54071; **Ella Tambussi Grasso**, from photo by Jack Stock Studio, Derby, Conn., published in the 1971 edition of the *Connecticut State Register and Manual*; **Barbara Bailey Kennelly**, from 1991 *Connecticut State Register and Manual*; **Nancy Lee Johnson** and **Rosa L. DeLauro**, from 2002 *Connecticut State Register and Manual*.

***In Memory of***

Andre Craig, Jr.

Jason D. Lewis

Jason Lantieri

*Service members from Connecticut lost in  
Afghanistan and Iraq,  
June 2007 – April 2008*



### **Army Private First Class Andre Craig, Jr.**

Army Pfc. Andre Craig Jr. of New Haven died June 25, 2007 from wounds inflicted when a bomb exploded near the convoy on which he was serving as a gunner in Baghdad, Iraq. He was 24 years old and left a wife and an infant daughter.

“Dre,” as Craig was known, had long dreamed of joining the Army and hoped to become a state trooper after his service, relatives and friends said. He was a Wilbur Cross High School graduate and had plans to pursue a college education.

One of six siblings in a close-knit family, Craig served as a big brother figure to many children in the Hill neighborhood where his family lived, urging young people to stay out of trouble, residents there said.

He joined the Army in October 2005 and served with the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, based in Fort Riley, Kansas.

Craig had served about six months in Iraq. During phone calls home, he would report on terrible conditions faced by Iraqi citizens. Craig was happy to work to improve conditions, his godfather Erik Brown said.

“Andre was a soldier,” said Brown. “He felt that he was doing the right thing.”

Craig had returned home on leave in May 2007, meeting his daughter Taylor for the first time and visiting with neighbors. Jonathan Craig recited his brother’s last words to him: “Take care of my daughter as if you were the father, until I come back.”

Andre Craig Jr. was the first New Haven resident service member to die in the Iraq war.

*By Arielle Levin Becker, Courant Staff Writer*

*Excerpted from The Hartford Courant, Copyright 2007. Reprinted with Permission.*

*Photograph courtesy of U.S. Army, Fort Riley Public Affairs*



### **Navy Special Warfare Operator First Class Jason D. Lewis**

Navy SEAL Jason D. Lewis, a Brookfield native and special warfare operator first class, (petty officer first class), was killed by an improvised explosive device during a combat mission on July 6, 2007 in Baghdad, Iraq. He was 30 years old, and left a wife and three children in Virginia.

Lewis was the 40th active duty service member with ties to Connecticut to have been killed in Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001, and the second from Brookfield.

Two other sailors were killed on the mission with Lewis; Steven P. Daugherty, 28, of California and Robert R. McRill, 42, of Florida.

“Petty Officers Lewis, Daugherty and McRill were patriots in the truest sense,” said Capt. Chaz Heron, commander, Naval Special Warfare Group Two. “These sailors embodied the Navy core values of honor, courage, and commitment, time and again in training and on the battlefield. The Naval Special Warfare family will miss them and will ensure they are never forgotten.”

Lewis enlisted in the Navy July 22, 1996, and graduated from Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois. In February 1997, he entered Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training in Coronado, California.

Lewis completed advanced SEAL training courses including parachute training at Basic Airborne School, Fort Benning, Ga., before being assigned to a West Coast-based SEAL team in October 1997. He reported to the Naval Special Warfare Center, Coronado, Calif., in March 2004, and transferred to an East Coast-based SEAL team in January 2006.

Lewis’ awards included the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Navy “E” ribbon, Good Conduct Medal (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service ribbon, Expert Rifleman Medal and Expert Pistol Shot Medal.

*By Dave Altimari, Courant Staff Writer*

*Excerpted from The Hartford Courant, Copyright 2007. Reprinted with Permission.*

*Photograph courtesy of U.S. Navy, Naval Special Warfare Group Two, Public Affairs Office*



### **Army Sergeant Jason Lantieri**

Army Sgt. Jason Lantieri of Killingworth, died Oct. 10, 2007, from injuries suffered during vehicle maneuvers while serving as part of a transportation unit working south of the Iraqi capital of Bagdad. He was 25.

A native of Waterbury, Lantieri was the foster son of Jon and Kathy Miller of Killingworth.

Sgt. Lantieri graduated from Haddam-Killingworth High School in 2000, where he was on the student council and played soccer, basketball and baseball.

His high school basketball coach and English teacher, Paul McCormick, said of Lantieri, “He was a hard-nosed competitor in athletics. He was a tough kid who would get in the middle of things.”

David Miller, Lantieri’s older brother who helped McCormick coach the team, used the same words about him: tough, hard-nosed, and added “mischievous.” But in his off-the-court life, Miller said, his brother wasn’t somebody who judged people. He “gave everybody a chance.”

Lantieri’s life story was about growth and progress, Jon Miller said. The military chapter was only one segment, coming just after his college business degree.

Though he didn’t come from a military family, Lantieri joined the Army in 2004, stationed in the Alaska-based 725th Brigade Support Battalion of the 25th Infantry Division.

“It was a way to go on an adventure and see the world,” Kathy Miller said. “Jason lived life in the moment.”

When he had a break from the war, Lantieri went to Europe. He hit several of the big sites. The Louvre in Paris. The Colosseum in Rome. But what he wrote about was hanging out with the people: “Europe is a great place to just live for the day and for the moment.”

*By Jesse Hamilton, Courant Staff Writer*

*Excerpted from The Hartford Courant, Copyright 2007. Reprinted with Permission.*

*Photograph courtesy of U.S. Army, Fort Richardson Public Affairs Office*



*In Memory of*

John A. Chapman

Phillip A. Jordan

Kemaphoom Ahn Chanawongse

Wilfredo Perez, Jr.

Richard Selden Eaton, Jr.

David Travis Friedrich

Anthony D'Agostino

Phillip R. Albert

Jeffrey Braun

Eric Thomas Paliwoda

Benjamin Gilman

Tyanna Avery-Felder

Felix Delgreco

Nathan B. Bruckenthal

Melissa Hobart

Jacob D. Martir

*Service members from Connecticut lost in  
Afghanistan and Iraq,  
March 2002 – September 2004<sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> *Biographical sketches for the service members listed above were published in the 2004 Edition of the Connecticut State Register and Manual.*

***In Memory of***

William Brennan

Kevin J. Dempsey

Joseph Michael Nolan

Michael J. McMahon

Henry E. Irizarry

Robert Hoyt

Thomas E. Vitagliano

Lawrence R. Philippon

John T. Schmidt, III

Christopher Hoskins

Steve Reich

David Coullard

*Service members from Connecticut lost in  
Afghanistan and Iraq,  
October 2004 – October 2005<sup>2</sup>*

---

<sup>2</sup> *Biographical sketches for the service members listed above were published in the 2005 Edition of the Connecticut State Register and Manual.*

***In Memory of***

Brian S. Letendre

Stephen Bixler

Jordan C. Pierson

Philip A. Johnson

Nicholas A. Madaras

*Service members from Connecticut lost in  
Afghanistan and Iraq,  
November 2005 – September 2006<sup>3</sup>*

---

<sup>3</sup> *Biographical sketches for the service members listed above were published in the 2006 Edition of the Connecticut State Register and Manual.*

***In Memory of***

Jason Hamill

Joseph E. Phaneuf, II

Richard L. Ford

Stephen K. Richardson

Keith Heidtman

*Service members from Connecticut lost in  
Afghanistan and Iraq,  
November 2006 – May 2007<sup>4</sup>*

---

<sup>4</sup> *Biographical sketches for the service members listed above were published in the 2007 Edition of the Connecticut State Register and Manual.*