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JACK BUECHNER

Jack Buechner, former U.S. House member from Kirkwood, dies at 79

Mark Schlinkmann
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Jack Buechner, a former Republican U.S. House member from suburban St. Louis’ 2nd District, died Friday (March 6, 2020) at a hospital in Washington, D.C. He was 79.

Mr. Buechner, who was from Kirkwood, was elected to the House in 1986, defeating Democratic incumbent Robert Young. Four years later, he lost the seat by just 54 votes to Democrat Joan Kelly Horn in a major upset.

In his years in Congress, he amassed a conservative voting record and was an outspoken budget-cutter.

Before that, he served from 1973 through 1982 in the Missouri House. There he was regarded as a political moderate, mixing pro-business views with support for the Equal Rights Amendment, tougher campaign disclosure requirements and legislation to help rape victims.

Throughout his career he was known for his humor and gregarious nature. While in Congress, for example, he delivered a witty speech when he heard that British officials — fearing damage to local wildlife — were sending back bullfrog tadpoles imported from Missouri.

“Sounds like a horror film: ‘The Bullfrogs That Ate Britain,’” he said.

After being defeated in this race, he was a presidential candidate for the federal government. Disable any ad or script blocking software, then reload this page. funded International Republican Institute.

In that role, he crisscrossed the globe to promote democracy and help nations set up free elections, political parties and legislative bodies.

From 2004 to 2006 he was president of FMC, an organization of former members of Congress, and later oversaw the group's program that sends ex-lawmakers to speak on college campuses.

He worked as an attorney in private practice in the St. Louis and Washington areas. He had a law degree from St. Louis University and bachelor's degree from St. Benedict's College in Kansas.

Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., said in a statement Tuesday that Mr. Buechner knew how to get things done in Jefferson City and Washington and was a good friend.

"I called him a few weeks ago and, as always, the conversation was filled with laughter," Blunt said.

Among the survivors are his wife, Andrea Dravo, three sons and four grandchildren. Dravo said a memorial service for Mr. Buechner will be held in June in Washington, but details have yet to be released.

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