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## **AMASH GIVES TRIBUTE TO BETTY FORD ON HOUSE FLOOR**

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Justin Amash (MI-03) gave a tribute to former first lady Betty Ford in a speech on the House floor this afternoon. Rep. Amash represents Grand Rapids and surrounding areas, which overlap with much of former President Ford's district when he was a U.S. Representative.

“Betty Ford honored West Michigan with her public service, humor, and grace,” said Amash. “We are proud to have called such a fine citizen one of our own.”

Due to House votes scheduled for Thursday, Rep. Amash will be unable to attend the first lady's memorial service in Grand Rapids. Rep. Amash's wife, Kara, will be in attendance.

Rep. Amash's floor speech can be viewed online at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xb1wy0VaHWU>

The speech is reprinted below:

It was with great sadness that West Michigan learned on Friday of the passing of our first lady, Betty Ford.

The first lady spent most of her life in Grand Rapids. A graduate of Central High School, she worked in a department store downtown and was a dance instructor. Early on, Mrs. Ford showed her heart for the disadvantaged in our community, teaching dance to children who were physically disabled, deaf, and blind.

A mutual friend introduced Mrs. Ford to Jerry in 1947. A successful lawyer and former star of the University of Michigan's football team, the future President was not quite in public life when they met.

No one could have foreseen the set of circumstances that thrust the Fords into the White House. But Mrs. Ford took the challenge with gusto.

And, as first lady, she revealed many of her struggles to the public, so that she could help others with similar difficulties. In the 1970s, she publicly spoke about her battle with breast cancer, which was not often discussed during that time. And in the 1980s, she took the lessons she learned battling alcoholism to found a number of foundations and institutes dedicated to helping others with the condition.

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We are proud to have called such a fine citizen one of our own.

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