

[As you now know](#) , Representative [Tom Lantos](#) passed away this morning. Lantos' website had this to say:

*Congressman Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo, San Francisco), 80, passed away this morning due to complications from cancer at Bethesda Naval Medical Center.*

*Elected to office in 1980, Lantos was Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and one of the country's leading champions of human rights. His commitment to this issue was forged when, as a young man, he lost nearly his entire family in the Holocaust.*

*Today he was surrounded by his wife, two daughters, and many of his 18 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.*

*After being diagnosed with esophageal cancer in late December, Lantos announced on January 2 that he would not seek reelection. He said at the time, "It is only in the United States that a penniless survivor of the Holocaust and a fighter in the anti-Nazi underground could have received an education, raised a family, and had the privilege of serving the last three decades of his life as a Member of Congress. I will never be able to express fully my profoundly felt gratitude to this great country."*

*The only survivor of the Shoah ever elected to Congress, Tom Lantos was in his 14th term. His Democratic colleagues elected him chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in January 2007. He was also a senior member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.*

*Throughout his adult life Lantos sought to be a voice for human rights and civil liberties. He and Annette Lantos, his childhood sweetheart and wife of nearly 58 years were, as Lantos put it, "full partners both in Congress and in life," and they continued their work right up to his final days. Tom Lantos was the founding co-chairman of the 24-year-old Congressional Human Rights Caucus, which Annette directed as a volunteer since its inception. He also founded the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus.*

*Annette said that her husband's life was "defined by courage, optimism, and unwavering dedication to his principles and to his family."*

*The date for a public memorial service has not yet been set.*

There has been, not suprisingly, a [great deal](#) of [coverage](#) of who Tom Lantos was. One which mentioned Congressman Pence included

[United Press International](#)

:

*Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., ranking member of the Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee of*

the [House Foreign Affairs Committee](#) , said Lantos will be "sorely missed" in Congress."

Tom Lantos was my [sometime](#) opponent but was, at all times, an inspiring [friend](#) ," Pence said.

**\*\*UPDATE\*\***

There is a rather lengthy [story](#) in the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) paying a well-deserved tribute to Congressman Lantos.

*Rep. Tom Lantos, the only Holocaust survivor elected to Congress and for 27 years a champion of human rights as representative for a district stretching from San Francisco's west side to San Carlos, died today of complications from esophageal cancer, his office said. He was 80.*

*Rep. Mike Pence, a socially conservative Indiana Republican, called Lantos "a giant in Congress ... who stood on the world stage with moral clarity and courage."*