

TRIBUTE TO THE JOLIET
AMERICAN LEGION BAND

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Joliet American Legion Band for winning its 36th national title at the American Legion Senior Band Contest in Orlando, FL.

The Joliet American Legion Band was formed 51 years ago. Since that time, it has grown to 85 members from Joliet and the surrounding areas. The band boasts a wide variety of musicians, ranging in age from 16 to 60 and older. Directed by Tom Drake, the Joliet American Legion Band is proudly sponsored by American Legion Post No. 1284.

All members of the band are volunteers who donate significant practice and performance time for the benefit of the community. Band members delight listeners by marching in parades and playing for a variety of community events. The Joliet American Legion Band also offers several free public concerts throughout the year for the enjoyment of all persons in the community.

Since its formation, the Joliet American Legion Band has merited many accolades and awards. It has won 36 national titles, along with 41 State crowns. Their latest victory is a great source of pride for the Joliet community. Not only has the Joliet American Legion Band been recognized for its excellence by other American Legions across the Nation, but also received a gold medal in 1985 at the International Music Festival in Toronto, Canada.

I urge this body to identify and recognize other volunteer organizations in their communities whose actions have so greatly benefited and enlightened America's citizens.

RECOGNIZING CABRINI COLLEGE
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Cabrini College in Radnor, PA which has the distinguished honor of being named today to the John Templeton Foundation's 1997-98 Honor Roll for Character-Building Colleges.

One of only 134 colleges nationwide selected for this honor, Cabrini deserves recognition for its dedication to emphasizing character building as an integral part of student life. Cabrini College's commitment to character building is reflected by the school's inclusion of community service in its student curriculum.

Other aspects of Cabrini College that contributed to its being named to the John Templeton Foundation's Honor Roll include the school's emphasis on developing and strengthening of its students moral reasoning skills, its encouragement of spiritual growth and moral values, and its promotion of character-building programs and activities.

A private, Catholic college located in the suburbs of Philadelphia, Cabrini College's faculty-student interaction, beautiful campus, and excellent curriculum make it one of the most

respected institutions in the region. I am pleased that Cabrini College is receiving the national recognition and respect that it has earned many times over.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing this significant accomplishment of Cabrini College and thanking the John Templeton Foundation for its promotion of character-building colleges like Cabrini.

DURYEA FARM IN MONSEY, NY TO
CONTINUE SERVING COMMUNITY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I am able to report the preservation of a much needed and valued property in my congressional district in Monsey, NY. Earlier this year the Duryea Farm was purchased by the Rudolf Steiner Fellowship Foundation, Inc., which has announced that the farm will retain its agricultural character. This is truly an event to be lauded.

On September 28, 1997, the Duryea Farm will be rededicated to the service of the people of Rockland County. One of the few remaining farms in Rockland, it will become the county's only organic farm. This step is noteworthy, marking the heritage of Rockland County, a place where orchards and barns were once the norm and not the exception.

In addition to reclaiming this fading period of history, the Duryea Farm will house the Jessup Learning Center, named in honor of two longtime area educators. The learning center will focus on farm life through storytelling, photographs, and equipment owned by the Duryea family. Educational programs through the Cooperative Extension will also be offered. The combination of education and farming represents an admirable and worthwhile venture on the behalf of the Rudolf Steiner Fellowship Foundation, Inc., and the people of Rockland County.

Saving this valuable parcel of land from the bulldozers of developers and giving it back to the community is a worthy gesture of goodwill. I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming a bright future for the Duryea Farm.

ON TRACK WITH OUR NATION'S
INTERESTS

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, recently, several Members of Congress, including myself, met with the administration to discuss fast-track trading authority soon to be offered in the House for consideration. This legislation grants the administration authority to negotiate and implement trade agreements with other nations, which Congress would either support or vote down unamended. It is my opinion that this authority is a necessary step toward the President's goal of having hemispheric free trade by the year 2005. More importantly, fast track is a necessary step to strengthen the U.S. economy at home—helping producers,

workers, and consumers. The agreements made as a result of fast track will expand our markets far beyond our shorelines to other nations who desire high quality, American-made products. Exporting companies offer workers jobs, which provide better pay and better benefits. Consumers have a larger variety of products to choose from at more competitive costs.

In the past, fast track has been derailed by special interests, who lack the foresight to see that the general interest of our Nation will benefit from free and open trade—a status that can be greatly assisted by extending traditional trading authority to this administration. The following article, which was printed in the Wall Street Journal, on September 12, 1997, highlights the need to pass fast track to maintain our Nation's role in the international marketplace. If it is not passed, special interests will in the end realize that their selfish motivations cause more harm than good. I hope my colleagues consider the points made in this article and support legislation to extend fast-track trading authority to the administration.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 12, 1997]

U.S. EXPORTERS TO LATIN AMERICA NEED
FAST-TRACK

(By Robert Mosbacher)

When President George Bush unveiled his Enterprise of the Americas Initiative in the early 1990s, many thought the emergent free trade bloc would develop according to a "hub-and-spoke" model. As the "hub" of hemispheric trade, the U.S. would form a series of inter-locking bilateral free trade agreements with the "spoke" nations of Latin America and the Caribbean until these agreements could be melded into a single free trade accord. That vision is slipping away.

President Clinton promised Wednesday to put trade expansion back on the front-burner. He plans to ask Congress to renew fast-track legislation, which would authorize the president to negotiate international trade agreements on which Congress would vote up or down. If he fails to secure fast-track authority, however, the U.S. will be relegated to "spoke" status in the emerging hemispheric trading order, leaving many U.S. businesses at a disadvantage. Furthermore, fast-track authority should be clean—that is, it must not be weighted down with requirements that trade agreements also mandate environmental and labor regulations.

Since the promising 1994 Miami summit, when the proposed trade initiative was renamed the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the U.S. has withdrawn from its leadership role on liberalized trade. Instead, inter-locking trade relationships have been forming around the southern cone customs union—Mercosur—comprising Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.

Last year, while Washington dithered, Mercosur took decisive action, offering Chile and Bolivia associate membership. This created a market of 220 million potential consumers with a combined gross domestic product of about \$1 trillion—more than twice the economic output of Asean, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

This year, while still waiting for the president to lead on fast-track, Mercosur is planning free trade talks with Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru. Mercosur might soon realize its goal of establishing a South America Free Trade Area, which could serve as a counterweight to Nafta, the North American Free Trade Agreement, in hemispheric free trade talks. Mercosur has already been approached by the European

Union about a free trade alliance and will also soon begin free trade talks with Mexico, Canada and the Central American Common Market.

One of the consequences of Mercosur's expansion and the American retrenchment is that the U.S. is losing leverage in hemispheric free trade talks. While official negotiations are not scheduled to begin until 1998, the failure of the U.S. to secure fast-track leaves open the distinct possibility that the agenda and timetable for these talks will be dominated by other countries.

Lack of fast-track is also hurting U.S. companies seeking access to the region's dynamic consumer markets. American wine producers are losing market share in Venezuela to Chilean producers, not because Venezuelans prefer Chilean Merlot to Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, but because Chile has a free trade agreement with Venezuela that allows its wines to enter the country tariff free. American wines, by contrast, carry a hefty 20% duty. If the duty were to be eliminated, industry experts believe that U.S. wine producers could see their share of the Venezuelan market jump from the current 5% to well over 30%.

While California wine producers cannot pull up their vines and move to more hospitable commercial climates, other industries are less restricted. Caterpillar Inc., based in Peoria, Ill., recently announced plans to produce bulldozers, excavators and off-road trucks in Brazil for export to Chile. The decision to build the equipment on foreign rather than U.S. soil was based on tariff considerations. U.S. exports to Chile face an average 11% tariff, while tariffs on Brazilian exports are being phased out under Mercosur. Other companies that may follow Caterpillar's lead include General Electric and Eastman Kodak.

Several major U.S.-based multinationals with joint ventures in Chile—including IBM, Southwestern Bell and McDonald's—have announced plans to source millions of dollars in equipment in Canada and Mexico rather than in the U.S. The reason, again, is that Canada and Mexico have bilateral free trade accords with Chile that permit their goods to enter the South American country tariff-free, while U.S. goods face prohibitive duties. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the loss of opportunity for U.S. exports to Chile is \$480 million a year and climbing.

Those who question the need for deeper economic integration should consider the benefits of Nafta. Notwithstanding the 1994 peso devaluation—which halved the price of Mexico's exports to the U.S.—U.S. exports to Mexico and Canada have grown 34% since the pact took effect in 1994. They now outstrip total U.S. exports to either the Pacific Rim or Europe.

According to a Council of the Americas study of 21 U.S. states, nine states have witnessed 40% plus growth in exports to Mexico and Canada since 1993 and another seven have seen those export markets grow by more than 30% during that time. In 1996, California exported to Mexico more than \$9 billion in goods and services. The California World Trade Commission estimates that exports to Mexico support more than 125,000 jobs in the Golden State, with almost 25,000 of these jobs resulting from export growth in 1995 alone.

Nafta has also helped promote U.S. interests in Mexico by helping stabilize the country in the aftermath of the peso crisis. After Mexico's 1982 peso devaluation, it took seven years before the country showed signs of recovery. By contrast, Mexico's economy touched bottom and began to turn around less than 12 months after the December 1994 devaluation. There is also little doubt that the climate of openness fostered by Nafta

raised political consciousness and contributed to the July 6 electoral shakeup that ended 70 years of political dominance by the Institutional Revolutionary Party.

An activist American trade policy made possible by fast-track negotiating authority will keep the U.S. economy strong and guarantee that future generations enjoy rising living standards. That said, the importance of fast-track transcends economic issues. As Rep. Lee Hamilton (D., Ind.) recently said, "Fast-track is not just about trade, it is about U.S. leadership and influence in the world. And a president without fast-track is a president without power to promote U.S. interests abroad." We ignore this reality at our own peril.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PORTER J. GOSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 402–415, I was unable to record my votes because I was called away on a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall Nos. 415, 413, 411, 410, 409, 408, 407, and 406, and "nay" on rollcall Nos. 414, 412, and 405.

IN HONOR OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EAST SIDE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a respectful tribute to the East Side Chamber of Commerce on the 70th anniversary of its founding. The chamber has had a remarkable and honorable history of serving the residents and businesses of the East Side of Manhattan for most of this century.

The chamber was born in 1927 when it fought, almost single-handedly, to have a suspended trolley service reinstated to the Upper East Side. The chamber's successful 2-year battle to save the trolley service was only the beginning of a long history of service for the East Side.

The chamber also encouraged and took an active role in the development of housing projects like the Peter Stuyvesant Apartments, Ageloff Towers, and the Nation's first public housing venture, the First Houses at Avenue A and 3d Street.

East Side businesses benefited from the chamber's efforts as well. One successful campaign the chamber waged was the battle against push-cart markets which were rapidly congesting the Lower East Side and posing a threat to the area's businesses. The chamber's proposed alternative, the Essex Street Retail Market, was an indoor market that successfully kept push-cart vendors in business, but off the streets.

Over the past 70 years, the chamber made numerous transportation improvements to the East Side to facilitate access. The chamber played an active role in widening East Side streets, providing adequate subways, such as

campaigning to have the IND routed through the East Side, and initiating discussions for an East River Drive.

The East Side Chamber of Commerce in 1997, under the leadership of president Joseph Greene and chairman of the board of directors, Sidney Baumgarten, is involved in many of the issues that affect East Siders: sanitation, rent control, bridge reconstruction, housing, crime prevention, education, and much more.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues rise with me in this tribute to the East Side Chamber of Commerce as it celebrates its 70th anniversary. Their formidable record of achievement in bettering the East Side has made it a better place to live and work. I am proud to have an important and respected organization in my district.

INTRODUCING THE EMERGENCY STUDENT LOAN CONSOLIDATION ACT OF 1997

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Emergency Student Loan Consolidation Act of 1997.

Let me begin by saying that we must remember that everything we do in higher education has an impact on students, and the Department of Education's management problems are no different. It is no secret that I have had serious doubts about the long-term viability of the Direct Student Loan Program. Today we face a crisis in direct loan consolidation which only serves to heighten those concerns.

However, this is not about direct loans or guaranteed loans or which program is better. This is about students. This is about students who are currently unable to consolidate their direct loans. This is about student loan borrowers who may pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars in additional interest costs, who may have serious difficulty in securing other credit such as a mortgage, and who may even default on the student loans if we do not act now to fix this problem.

At this very moment, the contractor hired by the Department of Education to perform direct student loan consolidations is facing a backlog of 84,000 applications. This is clearly unacceptable. The number of students affected is actually much higher than this, since the Department of Education has now stopped accepting new applications for direct consolidation loans until this backlog is cleared. The Department hopes to accomplish this feat by December 1. However, to do that the contractor will have to quadruple the rate at which it is processing applications, and I have serious doubts as to whether this can be accomplished.

The legislation we are introducing today will fix this problem for students now, in the short term, rather than making borrowers wait months for the Department and its contractor to straighten things out. Currently, the Higher Education Act of 1965 prohibits direct student loan borrowers from consolidating their direct student loans into FFEL loans through private lenders and servicers. Even if borrowers could