

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT W. WALSH

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert W. Walsh, the executive director of the 14th Street, Union Square Business Improvement District [BID/LDC], and the man responsible for the renaissance of a New York neighborhood desperately in need of amelioration. Robert will be leaving New York for Charlotte, NC, where he has been named president of the Charlotte, NC, Uptown Development Corp.

During his 8 year tenure at BID/LDC, Robert initiated and oversaw a revitalization of the Union Square community that has transformed the neighborhood into one that is immeasurably better for residents, businesses, and visitors. In fact, improvement in the neighborhood has been so vast, Mayor Rudolph Guliani recently singled out the 14th Street, Union Square organizations as models for community development.

Robert has been responsible for many notable projects in the community, including the rezoning of the East 14th Street corridor which has stimulated recent developments such as an NYU student residence, many new retailers, restaurants, and other businesses; and the establishment of an award winning public/private partnership with Washington Irving High School. One of Robert's most indelible marks on the neighborhood is the completion of the Genesis apartments, a 94-unit building for formerly homeless families.

During Mr. Walsh's tenure, the 14th Street, Union Square neighborhood has become one of the most attractive and exciting areas of New York City.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to rise in honor of Robert Walsh, a man who has served the New York community throughout his career at a variety of city agencies—the New York City Departments of General Services, Personnel, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and the major's Office of Operations. I ask my colleagues to join with me today in this well-deserved tribute to Mr. Walsh for his commitment to New York City and to the outstanding work he has done for the 14th Street, Union Square community.

TRIBUTE TO VENA G. EDWARDS

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, after 32 years of civilian service in the Department of the Army, Vena G. Edwards is being honored by her friends and peers.

Vena began her long and distinguished career in 1965 in the Officer Personnel Management Directorate at the U.S. Army Personnel Command, then known as the Military Personnel Command. Once she had established herself through other assignments, she advanced to the office of the assistant deputy chief of staff for Personnel in February 1977. A professional in every sense of the word, she was the mainstay and guiding force for the entire

agency. She has trained many other agency members and has successfully managed the careers of the many general officers for whom she worked.

She always took a genuine interest in people and often went out of her way to help. You could say that she was truly one of those people who always walked the extra mile. She has been a lifesaver for many a general officer and hapless newcomer who found out they could always depend on Vena for the right answer or the right place. As the institutional memory for the organization, she will be sorely missed as it will take all of us much longer to look up what she already knows.

A master of efficiency, she has worked tirelessly to ensure the agency goals are met and that a quality of life is maintained for all members of the U.S. Army.

Vena has earned the admiration and respect from those in the highest levels of the Army, of the Department of Defense, Congress, and for the genuine caring for the well being of those who make soldiering their career.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt congratulations upon the retirement of Vena Edwards. I know Vena will be just as successful in her future endeavors as she was at the Department of the Army.

BART EXTENSION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS ESSENTIAL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act [ISTEA]. Bipartisan passage of ISTEA in 1991 unveiled a new era in transportation funding by establishing a critical balance between meeting national policy objectives and providing flexibility to States and local governments. ISTEA works well and major changes to this important law are not necessary.

Mr. Speaker, last week, I testified before the House Subcommittee on Surface Transportation in support of ISTEA reauthorization. ISTEA must maintain its focus on national priorities, intermodalism, local and public involvement, and consideration of environmental concerns. It must also be adequately funded.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my thoughts with my colleagues here in the House of Representatives on the effectiveness of ISTEA programs in my region and in support of the reauthorization of the BART Extension to San Francisco International Airport. I respectfully request that my statement be included in the RECORD.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN TOM LANTOS BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on what is one of the most significant issues before the 105th Congress: the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Passage of ISTEA by a large bipartisan majority of the Congress in 1991 was a watershed event for federal trans-

portation policy. As you know, the new law was designed to make federal programs in the post-interstate era better, not bigger, by emphasizing system preservation, the efficient operation of existing networks, improved intermodal integration, and increased state and local control over investment decisions. ISTEA has been a visionary document, fostering a more diversified and strengthened transportation infrastructure to enable Americans to meet future challenges and opportunities.

A key ISTEA provision for the San Francisco Bay Area is the Section 3 New Rail Starts authorization for the BART Extension to the San Francisco International Airport. As you know, the BART Extension was authorized in the last authorization of ISTEA and I strongly urge its reauthorization. The project, which is located in my Congressional district, will dramatically improve mobility and alleviate traffic congestion by creating a state-of-the-art connection between the 81-mile BART system and the bustling San Francisco International Airport (SFO). The SFO Extension enjoys the unanimous support of the entire Bay Area Congressional delegation and I am wholeheartedly committed to ensuring that we build this long-awaited, national-significant transit project. In a few minutes, BART Board Director Dan Richard will elaborate on the region's reauthorization request for the SFO Extension.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, I am happy to report, that the overall implementation of ISTEA has had a profound and decidedly beneficial impact on transportation planning and project selection. Thanks to the superb guidance and leadership of our nine-county Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which has overseen implementation of the program, our region has been able to seize upon the new opportunities provided by ISTEA and immediately put our federal dollars to work.

Barely one month after the passage of ISTEA, MTC formed the Bay Area Partnership—a consortium of local, state and federal agencies—to collaborate on the optimum use of ISTEA dollars. The Partnership quickly initiated a process to screen and rank project proposals based on ISTEA goals for efficiency, equity and multi-modalism. Working by consensus engendered strong local support, which enabled the Bay Area to obligate nearly 200 of its first round of Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program projects years ahead of official obligation deadlines.

In terms of the MTC region, ISTEA's flexible funding provisions have been pivotal to the program's success. ISTEA has literally revolutionized the way transportation priorities are set and how projects are selected for funding in the Bay Area. Instead of the rigid funding categories of the past, Bay Area communities have the latitude to invest in smaller, more cost-effective projects that deliver more immediate results.

Local flexibility has also enabled many worthy projects to advance—everything from a joint intermodal terminal at the Port of Oakland to BART rail rehabilitations to expansion of MIC's popular roving Freeway Service Patrol tow trucks and various highway and local street improvements throughout the region. In all, MTC, with the Partnership's help, has approved 432 projects worth more than \$460 million in STP and CMAQ funds. Along the way, the process continues to be refined and improved to elevate only the most efficient, effective transportation projects for funding. The success of each of these transportation projects is an extraordinary testament to the value of local decision-making coupled with the inherent flexibility of ISTEA.

Mr. Chairman, as your Subcommittee prepares to mark up a surface transportation reauthorization measure, I urge you to retain ISTEA's basic program structure, which has proven so successful in the San Francisco Bay Area and in other parts of the country. I also encourage you to oppose efforts to repeal or reduce the federal gas tax. These ill-advised policies would wreak havoc on the federal Treasury, weaken our economic competitiveness, and could undermine national security interests. Finally, I urge members of the Subcommittee to consider the financial burdens that transit operators must bear in meeting the paratransit requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Transit operators are already reeling from steep reductions in Section 9 operating assistance and can ill-afford to absorb these new costs without federal assistance.

Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to introduce Dan Richard, a member of the BART Board of Directors, who is here to address the BART Extension to the San Francisco International Airport, our region's number one priority for federal New Rail Starts. I look forward to the day in the not too distant future when BART initiates service to the airport. With your Subcommittee's continued support, Mr. Chairman, I am confident that we will reach that goal, and when we do, it will be a proud achievement for all Americans.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to continuing to work with you and in supporting your efforts to enact a strong surface transportation bill which will meet our nation's transportation infrastructure needs in the next century.

IN SUPPORT OF THE CREDIT UNION MEMBERSHIP ACCESS ACT

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my distinguished colleagues on the House Banking Committee, Mr. LATOURETTE and Mr. KANJORSKI, and 15 other bipartisan colleagues, in introducing the Credit Union Membership Access Act. The bill will preserve the rights of millions of Americans to join and continue their access to credit unions.

In a ruling against the AT&T Family Federal Credit Union, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, ruled on July 30, 1996, that a credit union cannot have among its members more than one group having a common bond of occupation. That appeals court decision, as a result of a full court lobbying by large banks, casts in doubt the ability of a credit union to serve multiple groups of employees by overturning 15 years of established National Credit Union Administration [NCUA] policy as it relates to who is eligible to join a credit union.

If fast action is not taken, millions of Americans will be forced to give up their access to the financial services they otherwise would receive through a credit union. The Credit Union Membership Access Act is a bipartisan effort to bring a legislative remedy as quickly as possible to the common bond issue. The bill would preserve the longstanding policy of the NCUA with regard to field of membership in Federal credit unions. It would also clarify that it is the intent of Congress that the NCUA has

authority to determine occupational, associational, and community charters for Federal credit unions.

The measure, which I had been helping develop for the past several months, was carefully drafted in close consultation with local and national leaders of the credit union community. As a longtime supporter of the credit union movement in the United States, I am honored to be part of this effort and to be included on the ground floor of the bipartisan congressional group submitting this important measure to the House of Representatives. To reaffirm my continued support for our Nation's credit unions, I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to support the passage of the Credit Union Membership Access Act.

TRIBUTE TO HELEN HORRAL

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Helen Horral of Duluth, MN.

Helen Horral has rendered long and distinguished, dedicated service to the people and city of Duluth. She served on the Housing Redevelopment Authority [HRA] from 1985–1995, acting as president of the authority for 1 year. The HRA sets policy for Duluth's low-income housing and creates solutions to the city's low-income housing needs.

Helen has also served on the Single Room Occupancy Commission [SRO]. The SRO advises the city of Duluth on homelessness and the use of shelters and food banks, and it oversees grants and loans to SRO building owners to improve living standards and make housing more affordable. While serving on the SRO, Helen was a staunch advocate for the residents, making sure that the tenants were treated with respect. She was known as the resident caretaker of the SRO Commission.

The motivation for Helen's laudable efforts on behalf of the HRA and SRO is that she wants to help people less fortunate than herself. Many years ago, she saw that numerous Duluthians, especially senior citizens, had financial difficulties and could not afford decent housing. Helen decided to attack the problem head-on and take an active role in finding solutions. As a result of Helen's hard work, there has been real improvement in Duluth's low-income housing; there are now more low-income, high-quality units in Duluth, and low-income senior citizens can live in dignity. Even though she is now 82 years old, Helen continues to help others by planning meals and serving as a volunteer cook at senior citizens' centers around the city, which she has done for many years.

In addition to actively helping senior citizens, Helen has been involved in politics in Duluth for more than 25 years. She works as a volunteer for candidates in Minnesota during election years and is involved in grassroots politics all year long. Helen also provides transportation to seniors who do not drive, and she hosts political dinners and meetings on numerous occasions each year.

The 1996 election provided a good example of Helen's devotion to the political process. At one point near the end of the election, Helen worked at a campaign office in Duluth for 24

hours in a 2-day period. She did this not because she was asked to, but because she wanted to help. On many cold Minnesota winter days, when the next election may be more than a year away, Helen is still the first person at political meetings. And she rarely shows up for meetings or at the campaign headquarters alone—she is the best volunteer recruiter in the district and frequently encourages senior citizens to become involved in the political process.

Helen says, with very simple, honest modesty that she has been blessed in her life and wants to share that blessing by working to assist those less fortunate. Helen truly understands the value of life and the worth of helping others. I am proud and honored to share with my colleagues this brief, but deserved tribute to Helen Horral, who has given so much of herself to enrich the lives of others and to serve her community. She is both a role model and an inspiration.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANGELO "SKIP" SAVIANO HONORED AS MAROONS SOCCER CLUB "MAN OF THE YEAR"

HON. ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, this weekend in Elmwood Park, IL, the Maroons Soccer Club, organizer of the first Italo-American soccer team in Chicago, will hold its 68th annual banquet. The Maroons are the proud sponsors of both soccer teams for the young and soccer teams for the "ageless" of the Chicagoland area. The purpose of the banquet is to honor two individuals who have actively contributed to the club in the same spirit that the club actively contributes to the community as whole. We join the Maroons in proudly honoring their Man and Lady of the Year for 1996–1997, Mr. Angelo "Skip" Saviano and Ann Mele. This is such a great honor. I am grateful to have the opportunity to recognize them in this way.

But I would like to take this special opportunity today to rise in the U.S. House of Representatives and publicly congratulate my long-time friend and colleague in the Illinois State House of Delegates, Skip Saviano.

Skip has been involved with youth soccer in our district for many years. He actively contributes to the well-being of our children and our community in many ways. In the most traditional sense, Skip Saviano is a role model. He is a strong legislator, and a champion of communities throughout Chicago and its suburbs. And his accomplishments are a direct result of his success as a community leader and as a good citizen.

I hope that my distinguished colleagues will join me in recognizing Skip Saviano for this much deserved honor. Further, I hope that they will join me in applauding his continued dedication to our communities and to the lives of the young people growing up in Chicago.