

TRIBUTE TO FORMER
CONGRESSMAN PHILIP RUPPE

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former Congressman Mr. Philip Ruppe. I would also like to thank my colleague from Michigan for offering this resolution to pay tribute to a great man.

Philip Ruppe is a prime example of the outcome of hard-work and determination. Before serving his constituents for twelve years as their Representative to Congress, he was a successful banker. Before that, he defended our great nation and served in the Navy during the Korean War.

I have known Philip Ruppe for over twenty years and was active in supporting his campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1982. His passion for politics was only trumped by his loyalty to his constituents. He was the first Congressman representing the district to have district offices, no easy task considering the size of his district.

Because of his dedication and hard work, I wish to congratulate Phil on his lifelong achievements and wish nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

UNITED STATES TEXTILE
INDUSTRY

HON. CASS BALLENGER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced four measures which will help the United States textile industry in its efforts to compete on the global playing field.

Many American textile companies are fighting for their survival due to unfairly undervalued imports produced by low-wage foreign manufacturers. One competitive advantage that the U.S. industry still has is its productivity. The American textile industry is one of the most productive in the world, but American companies must constantly modernize to retain that edge.

Unfortunately, much of the machinery the American textile industry needs to compete is no longer produced here in the United States, so the industry must seek such equipment from foreign sources. However, they must still pay duties on those machines. At a time when our domestic industry is suffering its most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression, with hundreds of closed mills and nearly 70,000 jobs lost in the past year, it makes no sense to require companies to pay duties on equipment that is not produced domestically.

Some of our leading American textile companies have entered Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code, others are experiencing substantial losses, and even some of those who are profitable are barely so. For these companies, if we suspend the duties, the money they could save when purchasing new equipment can be put to better use, and we could save more American textile jobs from being lost.

Congress has acted previously to suspend the duties on these particular machines, but

that suspension has now expired. Accordingly, I am introducing legislation to temporarily suspend the collection of duties on these four types of machines that are no longer produced in the U.S.

The machines in question include certain ink jet and other textile printing machines, certain shuttle type power looms, and certain shuttleless power looms. The detailed description of these machines, including their Harmonized Tariff Schedule numbers, are found in the bills themselves. All four types of equipment are essential to various textile producers, large and small, throughout the United States.

I urge the Ways and Means Committee to act swiftly to approve these bills.

THE AMERICAN DREAM
DOWNPAYMENT ACT

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, turning the key in the door of your very own home for the first time is a thrill that few families ever forget. For generations, the ability to purchase your own home has symbolized the hard work, thrift and personal responsibility that embodies the American Dream.

For some, the idea of owning their own home is but a dream, an unattainable dream. Across our nation, families get up, go to work every day, and play by the rules; but, they find that the downpayment on a home is a hurdle that keeps them from making that important investment in themselves and their community. These are families who, after paying the rent, buying groceries, and meeting their children's needs, have a tough time saving enough money to get past the first step of home ownership—the downpayment and closing costs.

To help first-time, low-income families overcome those highest barriers to home ownership, I am introducing the American Dream Downpayment Act. This legislation will give effect to President Bush's proposal to help 200,000 low-income families achieve the dream of home ownership over five years.

The President's Fiscal Year 2003 budget request included \$200 million in grants to assist first-time, low-income home buyers. As part of his call to expand home ownership opportunity, the Fiscal Year 2003 budget quadruples the President's Down Payment Assistance Initiative from its 2002 level.

In announcing the funds provided in the budget, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Mel Martinez said it best: "Opening the doors to home ownership to more and more Americans is one of this Administration's goals. The American Dream Downpayment fund will accomplish much more than that. By giving as many Americans as possible an opportunity to become stakeholders in their communities, we believe it will help to stabilize some neighborhoods and completely revitalize others."

When I reviewed the President's budget, I knew this would be important for all Americans, especially families in Michigan's metropolitan areas such as Lansing, Flint and Detroit. In giving the President's proposal legislative effect, the American Dream Downpayment

Act will provide communities throughout America with \$200 million in annual grants in Fiscal Year 2003 thru Fiscal Year 2006 to help home buyers with the downpayment and closing costs, the biggest hurdles to home ownership.

Upon enactment, the American Dream Downpayment Act will be administered as part of HUD's existing HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME). HOME is a successful program that helps communities expand the supply of standard, affordable housing for low-income and very low income families by providing grants to states and local governments.

The flexible program will enable more than 400 local and state governments to help communities provide low-income families with rate reductions, closings costs and downpayment assistance. Specifically, the focus of the proposal is on low-income families who are also first-time home buyers. To participate, recipients must have annual incomes that do not exceed 80% of the area median income.

I believe that the American Dream Downpayment Act will help increase the overall home ownership rate in the United States, especially among minority groups who have lower rates of home ownership compared to the national average. For example, more than two-thirds of all Americans own their own home, while fewer than half of African-Americans and Hispanic families are homeowners.

I look forward to working with my House colleagues on a simple, but powerful, proposal to move more American families into their own homes—and making their American Dream a reality.

EQUAL PAY DAY—APRIL 16, 2002

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I don't need to tell you how far women have come in the workplace. Women now make up roughly half of all workers. They're breaking into traditionally male fields, from medicine to law enforcement. Women are attending professional and graduate schools at ever increasing rates. Yet, one thing holds women back—unequal pay.

Despite the fact that women's earnings have been growing faster than men's since 1975, women still make only 74 cents for every dollar men earn. More women than ever are participating in the workforce, yet minority women earn only 64% of what men earn. Despite all of these accomplishments, studies show that the pay gap in management positions is actually increasing. It is long past time to stop this wage discrimination.

Unequal pay hurts not just women, but entire families. Tragically, single mothers and their families have a poverty rate of roughly 28%. The number is as high as 40% for African-American single mothers and their families. We cannot sit idly by while families such as these fall deeper and deeper into poverty. These women and children all deserve an equal chance to be financially secure.

Income lost to the pay gap represents lost opportunities for these families. If women in my home state of Michigan earned as much as men, each family would see an income increase of \$5000 per year—income that could

offset some of the costs of child care, provide after-school music or athletic lessons, and could be put away to provide for education.

Pay Equity is something we need to work on everyday, not just on Equal Pay Day. We need to enact the Paycheck Fairness Act to provide solutions for women who are not earning equal wages for equal work. It's been 30 years since the passage of the Equal Pay Act, yet working women still suffer. I am committed to continuing the fight for equal pay until the gap no longer exists. This is an issue of equality, economic security and civil rights. We cannot rest until women are being paid what they deserve.

THE ALAMEDA CORRIDOR: A MODEL FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to pay tribute to one of the most successful public works projects in our nation's recent history. A \$2.4 billion engineering masterpiece that will greatly bolster U.S. trade with Asia and Latin America and benefit our economy well into the future. The project, which covers a large portion of my district in Long Beach, California, is a 33-foot deep, 50-foot wide trench that allows freight trains to travel underground to and from the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles to downtown Los Angeles.

The 20-mile long corridor eliminated more than 200 railroad crossings and erected 30 new bridges. It will provide residents and travelers throughout southern California with much needed relief from traffic congestion and air and noise pollution. The corridor also reduces travel time for trains by more than half—allowing for increased trade goods to flow in and out of the ports.

The Alameda Corridor celebrated its grand opening on April 12th. I joined with my congressional colleagues, Reps. DAVID DREIER and JUANITA MILLENDER McDONALD, as well as my good friend Secretary Norman Mineta and many other public officials who contributed significantly to the project's completion on schedule and within budget.

Since planning for this project began in the eighties and continued throughout the early nineties, many hands contributed to its progress. But few were as instrumental in giving this project its wings. One of them was my predecessor, former congressman Glenn Anderson. He was chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Public Works. He gave excellent support to the Alameda Corridor when he was in good health. Former Congressman, and now Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta followed him as chairman and continued with strong support. And Gil Hicks, without question, is the visionary who started the ball rolling with the planning group.

I also want to mention another one of Norm Mineta's colleagues . . . Federico Pena, the former Secretary of Transportation. Without his judgement on putting up the money, nothing would have happened throughout the nineties. Other strong supporters were then Speaker Newt Gingrich, then Senate Majority

Leader Bob Dole, and then Governor Pete Wilson. Every one of them was very helpful. And particularly the Congressional delegation from Los Angeles County. We had all sorts of things going at that time. The County was experiencing deep unemployment at the time. With the end of the Cold War, the major airplane manufacturing firms, and hundreds of suppliers closing their doors. The C-17 was the only airplane under production. But Mayor Riordan of Los Angeles and Mayor O'Neill of Long Beach persevered. They both came to Washington on numerous occasions. They were always successful in garnering support from the White House. With these people oiling the wheels, a lot was accomplished by a lot of people. And the winds of trade from Asia and Latin America are moving up that corridor and democracy is thriving. I want to thank all these fine people for what they have done. This project would not have happened without their hard work. The Alameda Corridor will serve as a model for congested cities across the country for years to come.

BUSINESS INTEREST CHECKING FREEDOM ACT OF 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2002

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1009 contains a provision, Section 7, entitled Rule of Construction, regarding certain real estate escrow accounts. This provision is substantially the same as Section 7 of H.R. 974, the Small Business Interest Checking Act of 2001, which passed the House last year. The provision makes clear that the current treatment of certain services and benefits provided by banks in lieu of interest in connection with escrow accounts for real estate closing transactions remains the same. There are some minor technical changes to this section from H.R. 974. These changes make the provision more straightforward, and clarify the specific banking statutes to which this provision applies. This provision does not alter the current legal definition of interest or the legal treatment of real estate closing escrow transactions. It is my understanding that current Federal legal standards, including regulatory interpretations, regarding the definition of interest on deposits will continue to stand.

Currently, the Federal Reserve's Regulation Q provides that services and benefits can be given by banks in lieu of interest to depositors. The Regulation also specifically provides that the provision or the receipt of such services and benefits does not constitute interest. Such services and benefits include for example, free printed checks, safe deposit and night depository facilities, low-interest loans, and armored car services. In Texas, numerous small title agencies, underwriters, and attorneys benefit from these services. The average title agency in Texas is a small, locally based family businesses, usually employing no more than six or seven employees. These agencies are mainstays within their communities and provide service to individual customers who are purchasing homes. Maintaining the current regulatory interpretation of interest is important to the health of many of these businesses. In our

nation's highly developed financial system, Federal banking law and regulations have operated to facilitate the smooth and efficient flow of real estate transactions and promoted American homeownership. I am optimistic that these services will continue to be provided in the current efficient manner when H.R. 1009 becomes law.

REGARDING THE INTRODUCTION OF DUTY SUSPENSION BILLS

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce 13 bills to suspend the duty on the importation of products used by a manufacturer in my home state of Rhode Island. Several of these products are organic colorants used in manufacturing processes requiring unique characteristics beyond the mere addition of color. For example, some of the products are used in the manufacture of plastics; they combine the characteristics of stability in high heat as well as maintaining the color of the plastic for long periods of time. Others are used for automotive coatings, and they replace older colorants based on metals such as lead, chromium, molybdenum, cadmium and mercury.

Also among the products for which I am seeking temporary duty relief are colorants that can maintain their exact shade even when used in manufacturing processes exceeding 200 degrees centigrade. Other products are intermediate chemicals used in the manufacture of pigments.

The temporary suspension of duty on products imported into the United States is sound public policy so long as there is no domestic producer of the same products or directly competitive products. I have been assured there are no domestic producers of the 13 products for which I am seeking duty relief. Eliminating the duty on these products will allow the Rhode Island manufacturer to maintain its competitiveness in the international market. The products for which I am seeking duty suspension are manufactured overseas by the sister companies of the Rhode Island manufacturer. In addition, I was pleased to learn that the Rhode Island company invested several million dollars to expand domestic manufacturing capacity in Rhode Island for a product that formerly received a suspension of duty.

IN TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW AND MICHAEL FLOCCO

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a son and his father who exemplify what is best about the United States of America. Matthew Flocco who died on September 11, 2001 in service to his country at the Pentagon, and his father, Michael Flocco, who has set an example for all Americans who love their family and their country.