

chairman of the Department of Veterans Service Committee. Most recently, he continued his leadership role as a delegate of the Joint Veterans Committee of Maryland.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me in celebrating the outstanding commitment Lieutenant Colonel Gaunt has made to the United States of America. Lieutenant Gaunt used his leadership skills and the vast knowledge gained from active duty to continue serving his county. LTC Harry Gaunt is truly deserving of our thanks and appreciation for the contributions he has made throughout his career.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
OF MAYOR JOHN THOMAS

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise today to recognize the retirement of John Thomas from the office of mayor of the city of Mary Esther, FL.

Throughout his entire career, John has been unquestionably devoted to serving his country. In 1952, he joined the United States Air Force and began a career that would extend over 40 years. Through Air Force bases across the Nation and around the world, he was in charge of coordinating essential services for our soldiers, especially in the area of transportation. As the chief of services for a United States Air Force Base in Spain from 1989 to 1994, John aided his country in time of war as his base provided support to Operation Desert Storm 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

After retiring from the Air Force in 1994, John and his wife returned to the United States and decided to take up residence in Mary Esther, a city in my district in Northwest Florida. Never tiring, John became involved with the City Council within 2 years, and shortly thereafter took over a vacated seat on the council. After an unsuccessful run for mayor of Mary Esther, John persisted and was elected to the mayor's office in 2000.

For three terms, John Thomas served as the mayor of Mary Esther. He dedicated his energy, as he had before, toward making his city the best place to live. John is well-known for the efforts he put forth toward that goal. From 2003 to 2004, he also served as president of the Northwest Florida League of Cities, where he shared his insights with others and looked at ways he could better aid and lead the city of Mary Esther.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I commend Mayor John Thomas for his excellent leadership in Northwest Florida and for his selfless service to our Nation. The city of Mary Esther has benefited greatly from his service, and I wish him well in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO MR. DON DILEO

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the life and work of an

outstanding individual whom I feel fortunate to call my friend, Mr. Don DiLeo. He was honored on Tuesday, March 7, 2006, by the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ, at the 13th Annual Archbishop's Business and Labor Recognition ceremony.

Don DiLeo is president of Teamsters Local Union Number 408, which represents members in the building materials, heavy highway and construction industries. He was appointed as a business agent in 1969 and has served as president of the Local Union since 1980. In 1984, Don was appointed to the Executive Board of Teamsters Joint Council Number 73, which represents 60,000 members affiliated with 20 local unions in the State of New Jersey. Over the course of his tenure, he has served as both president and chairman of the Joint Council Number 73 Pension Fund, chairman of the North Jersey Construction Negotiations Committee for Teamsters, and contributing member of the New Jersey State Board of Mediation.

In 2005, the New Jersey Industrial Union Council honored Mr. DiLeo for a lifetime of distinguished service and significant contributions to the trade union movement. The following year, he was named as a vice president to the New Jersey State Building Construction Trades Council.

Under Mr. DiLeo's leadership, New Jersey Teamsters have become very active in many charities. He began an annual golf tournament to raise money for the Joint Council Number 73 Scholarship Fund, which awards grants to the children of council members for their college education. He formed the Joint Council Number 73 Food Bank Corporation, which provides food for striking or locked out union members. The Joint Council also works closely with the Community Food Bank of New Jersey on its Thanksgiving Turkey Drive and other projects. Additionally, in 2004, the council was awarded the Community Food Bank Distinguished Partner Award. Also, the Joint Council participates in the Ocean County Saint Patrick's Day Parade and annually donates a beach wheelchair to a shore town that contributes to the noteworthy event. The Joint Council sponsors the Australian Challenge "Trip of a Lifetime" group. Over the past 12 years, Challenge has arranged overseas trips to the United States for children who are seriously ill. The Joint Council and its affiliated locals have provided accommodations and transportation for the children to events, while they are visiting the metropolitan area. In addition, the Joint Council and its locals have remained prime supporters of Camp Fatima, advancing the interests of handicapped children.

Don remains happily married to Jacqueline, his wife, with whom he has four children, Joseph, Donald, Jessica and Ralph. He is the proud grandfather of two.

Mr. Speaker, the job of a United States Congressman involves so much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing the efforts of committed citizens like Mr. Don DiLeo. I ask that you join residents of the Eighth Congressional District, the Borough of Flemington, members of the Teamsters Local Union Number 408, Mr. DiLeo's family and friends and me, in recognizing Don DiLeo for his years of distinguished service in representing the trade union movement.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF RAY MEYER

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with sadness to offer my condolences to the family and friends of Ray Meyer, who passed away recently at the age of 92. Ray Meyer was a loving husband and father, as well as the face of college basketball in Chicago since 1942.

Best known as the legendary head coach of the DePaul University Blue Demons basketball team from 1942 until his retirement in 1984, Coach Meyer's success while roaming the sidelines rates him among the greatest coaches college basketball has ever seen.

Meyer led the Blue Demons to 37 winning seasons and 724 overall victories, and his teams played in postseason tournaments 21 times. He mentored legendary players like George Mikan, Mark Aguirre and Terry Cummings. The entire country was captivated by Coach Meyer's team and his personality as the Blue Demons made a historic run to the Final Four in 1979. He subsequently led a series of number one ranked teams in the early 1980s and was enshrined in basketball's Hall of Fame before he even finished his coaching career.

Although these feats are impressive, he made an even bigger impact on the hearts and minds of his players, colleagues and fans. His grin and compassionate personality were among his most memorable traits. He taught his players important lessons about life as well as basketball.

In addition to being a dedicated coach, Ray Meyer was also a loving family man. His late wife had such a large impact on his life and DePaul University that the Blue Demons now play on Ray & Marge Meyer Court. His sons Tom and Bob played under his tutelage, and he groomed his son Joey to be his successor in 1984, where he would remain head coach until 1997. In the 55 years from Ray Meyer's first game as coach through the last Blue Demons game with Joey Meyer at the helm, Ray Meyer attended each of the 1,467 games they played.

Mr. Speaker, Coach Meyer left an indelible mark on everyone he touched. His oversized personality captivated generations of Chicagoans. The DePaul community, the city of Chicago, and all of basketball will always remember him.

RECOGNIZING PETTY OFFICER TERESA
RESA PADILLA AS THE BALTIMORE
AREA COAST GUARD PERSON
YEAR 2006

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise before you today to recognize Petty Officer Teresa Padilla as the Baltimore Area Coast Guard Person of the Year 2006.

Petty Officer Padilla is well known among her peers as being highly dedicated and loyal

to her post. Recently, she took on many more roles within the United States Coast Guard due to a shortage of staff. Under her leadership, the Outpatient Department of the Coast Guard was handled exceptionally well. She also supervised five corpsmen, assisted in the treating of 5,236 patients, assumed responsibility of the Leading Petty Officer, as well as excelled in her position as the Clinic's Supply Petty Officer.

Petty Officer Padilla has done exceptional work in the Baltimore Area Coast Guard. She accepted each new challenge with poise and dignity. According to her superiors, her positive outlook was infectious. The individuals under her management also kept an optimistic attitude in their daily routines. Petty Officer Padilla thrived in the new responsibilities she received.

Along with her work in the Coast Guard Yard Clinic, Petty Officer Padilla took an active role in setting up Nate's Open Door Baby Pantry. This organization supplies families with a wide range of materials including car seats and baby bottles. Petty Officer Padilla not only donated her personal time to assist this organization, but she also donated clean used clothes from her own children to provide assistance to families in need. Being a member of the Yard Morale Committee, Petty Officer Padilla graciously volunteered to assist at the Yard Christmas Children's Party as one of Santa's helpers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to recognize the outstanding devotion and faithfulness Petty Officer Teresa Padilla has shown to the United States Coast Guard. Her loyalty and commitment to this country and its citizens deserves our unwavering gratitude.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I would like to offer a personal explanation of the reason I missed rollcall vote No. 56 on March 16, 2006. It was a Sabo amendment vote on H.R. 4939, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006. I was detained and could not make it to the floor for this vote.

I respectfully request that it be entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that if present, I would have voted rollcall vote No. 56, the amendment increasing spending by \$1.225 billion, increasing Customs and Border Protection by \$700 million, Coast Guard Operating Expenses by \$125 million, FEMA Regional Operations by \$300 million, and FEMA Preparedness funding by \$100 million, "nay."

MEMORIALIZING THE TWELVE MEMBERS OF B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL WHO PERISHED IN A TRAGIC BUS ACCIDENT

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago on March 22nd, 12 Americans—all from B'nai B'rith International—a Jewish organization committed to fighting human rights abuses—lost their lives in a tragic bus accident in the mountains of Chile. What should have been a relaxing day excursion for these 12 senior citizens to Chile's beautiful Lauca National Park instead became a horrible nightmare as their tour bus tumbled more than 300 feet down a cliff, killing all but four on board. The driver of the bus remains under investigation as Chilean authorities try to determine the exact cause of the wreck.

As Chairman of the House International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, I have visited Chile, and I know first hand its beautiful land and culture. I understand what drives Americans to visit this great country, and I am deeply saddened that this part of Chile will be forever marked by tragedy.

I know all the victims of this terrible tragedy will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved them. I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in sending the deepest sympathies and heartfelt prayers to their families. May God bless them and help them get through this very difficult time.

TRIBUTE TO TOM LAURIN FOR EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE AS SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to pay tribute to a longtime public servant, Thomas R. Laurin, who has played a key role in improving the economy and quality of life for San Bernardino County over the past three decades as community development agency director.

Although Tom Laurin is not a native of San Bernardino, he moved there at a young age when his Air Force father came to Norton Air Force Base. He graduated from San Geronio High School (a rival of my alma mater, San Bernardino High) and received a bachelor's degree from California State University, San Bernardino.

After receiving his master's degree in Urban Geography at the University of Northern Colorado, Tom Laurin returned in 1977 to join the San Bernardino County Office of Community Development. He eventually became the Director of Community Development and Housing.

When Tom joined local government, San Bernardino County had 746,000 people and only two cities had more than 50,000 residents. Today, nearly 2 million people live in

San Bernardino County, and 14 cities include a population of more than 50,000—four have more than 150,000.

As my colleagues know, this kind of explosive growth brings tremendous challenges to local government. Urban problems like crime, dilapidated housing, and a lack of local amenities have all been confronted by the Community Development Agency.

Under the leadership of director Laurin, I believe the agency has more than met those challenges, and made the county by far a better place to live even as it has been one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. He has helped the county utilize \$188 million in federal grants, and secured \$750 million in tax-exempt affordable housing loans.

I have had the pleasure of working closely with Tom on the county's Neighborhood Initiative Program, designed to improve entire neighborhoods of low-cost housing. Working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Fannie Mae, the county took a \$15 million grant and rehabilitated neighborhoods in Redlands, Highland, San Bernardino and adjacent unincorporated areas.

More than 550 homes, many of them shuttered HUD foreclosures, were fixed up and are now owned by proud low- and moderate-income families. The program generated an additional \$12 million, which was reinvested. It has won numerous national awards.

Tom Laurin created the county's first Enterprise Zone, which has helped hundreds of businesses and thousands of employees gain economic success. He created the county's Enterprise Funding Corporation, which after 20 years is still assisting local business. And he oversaw creation of innovative financing and development programs that helped create for-profit businesses to dispose of millions of trees that had been killed by bark beetles in the San Bernardino Mountains.

More than 20 of Tom's projects have received awards from state and national organizations, as well as HUD Best Practices awards. He has served on many state and national boards, and is a sought-after speaker on community development issues. For five years, he has been a CSU San Bernardino professor on urban issues.

Mr. Speaker, after nearly 30 years of top-level public service, Tom Laurin will retire as Community Development Director in April. I ask you and my colleagues to please join me in thanking him for his work on behalf of the people of San Bernardino County, and wishing him well on his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO KORYNE HORBAL, DEE LONG AND VIVIAN JENKINS NELSEN

HON. MARTIN OLAV SABO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to take part in the celebration of National Women's History Month by recognizing accomplished leaders from the State of Minnesota: Koryne Horbal, Dee Long and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen.

Koryne Horbal has blazed a trail for gender equality in Minnesota and much beyond. Her