

this issue and who have pushed for the exemption in the past.

I am proud to offer this legislation along with Ranking Member LANE EVANS of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. EVANS and his staff have been seeking a remedy for this inequity for several years.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to offer legislation benefiting America's military service members and helping them to attend college or receive job training.

TRIBUTE ON THE RETIREMENT OF ED PEREZ

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I wish to honor the 30 years of service that Ed Perez, Esq. has given to the City of Los Angeles. Although his retirement from the City Attorney's Office on February 17th marks the end of his City employment, it does not end a notable career in the practice of law. Indeed, his contributions to the City's telecommunications policies have been so great that several members of the City Council hope he will return as an advisor.

As the City continues to negotiate franchise agreements and shape important telecommunication policies that impact the everyday lives of all Angelinos, we understand the value and depth of expertise that a faithful employee brings to the table at this critical time.

Mr. Perez began his initial employment with the Office of the City Attorney in the Criminal Division and switched to the Civil Division 3 years later. In that position he provided legal advice regarding public utilities such as telecommunications and energy, and transactional matters for the City's Information Technology Agency.

Mr. Perez was the City's legal advisor for cable television franchising and regulation from 1981–2003, beginning with the initial wiring of the city in 1981 and culminating in the citywide franchising agreements in 1987. During this period, Mr. Perez had the distinguished honor of presenting an oral argument before the United States Supreme Court in 1986, in the *Preferred Communications v. City of Los Angeles*, 476 U.S. 488. For this, we offer our sincere appreciation to Ed Perez for both his commitment to and invaluable understanding of these issues on behalf of the citizens of Los Angeles.

When Mr. Perez transferred to the Department of Water and Power in June 2003, he continued to be one of the principal attorneys monitoring complex utility regulations for the City.

He looks forward to more time with his wife Patricia, and their children, Christine and David, upon his retirement. I wish him all the best as he plans for an active retirement and sincerely thank him for his noteworthy accomplishments on behalf of the citizens of Los Angeles.

RECOGNIZING THE LAUNCH OF U.S.-KOREA FTA NEGOTIATIONS

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, in a ceremony held February 2, 2006, in the Mansfield Room of the U.S. Capitol and attended by many Members of Congress, U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman and South Korean Minister of Trade Hyun-Chong Kim announced the commencement of negotiations toward a U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement and signaled their commitment to conclude the talks by March 2007. The U.S. and Korea plan to implement the agreement by September 2007. In light of the fact that the FTA negotiations will officially begin next week, I rise to recognize the significance of this undertaking.

Launching the United States-South Korea FTA talks is a critical step in the relationship with an important U.S. strategic ally and economic partner. I strongly believe that as we pursue market access for U.S. exporters, it is to our advantage to strengthen already constructive relationships with our allies. South Korea is our seventh largest trading partner and a friend in a challenging region of the world. Advancing the economic relationship makes sense and will be an important benefit to two great nations.

Close engagement between the U.S. and South Korea has paved the way for FTA negotiations. Even before the official announcement, the South Korean Government demonstrated how important it considers improved trade relations with the United States. South Korea took the concrete step of reducing the long-standing quotas that limited the screening of films by the American entertainment industry. I am encouraged by the progress that has been made so far on addressing several trade concerns. I am confident that South Korea will continue to work closely with the USTR Rob Portman toward making this endeavor a success.

The FTA negotiations will officially begin on May 3, following the expiration of the statutory 90-day consultative period. In the interim, our two governments have agreed to hold preliminary discussions. According to reports, once the FTA takes full effect, over 90 percent of traded goods between the U.S. and Korea will be phased out over 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, in the interest of underscoring the importance of these talks, permit me to list a few salient facts about the U.S.-Korean economic relationship.

South Korea is a stable, democratic country with a free-enterprise economy and a gross domestic product of \$726.5 billion in 2005, making it the world's 11th largest economy.

The per capita income of South Koreans in 2004 is an impressive \$14,162.

As noted by the Los Angeles Times, South Korea is now the seventh largest trading partner of the United States, with over \$72 billion in trade volume each year. Moreover, South Korea is the fifth largest market for U.S. agricultural products.

U.S. exports into South Korea totaled \$25.1 billion through November of 2005, up 4.6 percent from the same period in 2004, with the biggest U.S. sales coming in computer chips, \$4.2 billion; industrial machinery, \$1.4 billion,

organic chemicals, \$1.3 billion, and civilian aircraft at \$953 million.

At the same time, South Korean exports to the United States totaled \$40.1 billion through November 2005, down 5.4 percent from the same period in 2004, with the biggest South Korean sales coming in passenger cars, \$7.2 billion; household goods, including cell phones, at \$5.7 billion; computer chips, \$2.8 billion; and computer accessories, televisions, and VCRs at \$3.9 billion.

According to a study done in 2001 by the U.S. International Trade Commission, a U.S.-Korea free-trade agreement could increase U.S. exports to South Korea by \$19 billion and U.S. imports from South Korea by \$10 billion.

Finally, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, during the 2004 calendar year, 627,000 South Koreans visited the United States for tourism and business travel, representing the fifth largest foreign market of tourists, excluding Canada and Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I wish to recognize the launch of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement negotiations and I encourage my colleagues to offer their own expressions of support. South Korea is a long-standing and trustworthy ally of the United States and a mutual FTA would only further solidify and reinforce our alliance partnership.

TRIBUTE TO 2005 NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate and honor Drs. Roy J. Glauber, John L. Hall, and Theodor Hänsch for being awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for 2005, and Drs. Yves Chauvin, Robert H. Grubbs, and Richard R. Schrock for being awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for 2005.

The 2005 Nobel Prize in Physics encompasses the field of optics and its applications. The three gentlemen celebrated today are laser pioneers. Lasers have numerous practical applications, including in products such as CD players and grocery store scanners, for computer manufacturing, and in surgery.

Roy Glauber gave a detailed, quantum mechanical description of the interaction of light and matter, thus creating the foundation for the field of quantum optics. Glauber's work also created the groundwork on the quantum theory of lasers.

In addition, John Hall and Theodor Hänsch received the prize for their contributions to the development of laser-based precision spectroscopy. This technique allows scientists to probe the atom with ever-increasing accuracy, explore the subtle intricacies of gravity, and lead to a better understanding of the pressing question of imbalance between the amounts of matter and antimatter in the universe.

The work of the three in concert will lead, for instance, to the next generation satellite navigation systems, improving on GPS, which is widely used in both military and civilian transportation systems. Another major potential application of this research, quantum cryptography, which could impenetrably secure data transmission, is of interest to financial institutions and governments as the emerging

knowledge economy requires the protection of information and ideas.

I would also like to recognize Dr. Yves Chauvin, Professor Robert H. Grubbs, and Professor Richard R. Schrock who were awarded the 2005 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for development of the metathesis method in organic synthesis. From the Greek words meaning to change position, metathesis methodology, and its variety of enabling catalysts, have become invaluable in the development and industrial scale production of polymers, fuel additives, biologically active compounds, and drugs.

The formation and reorganization of carbon-carbon bonds is the heart of synthetic organic chemistry. Developing new techniques and methods for controlling carbon connectivity is critical to advancing an enormous range of scientific advancement and technological development.

Methods like metathesis represent the very tools used by chemists around the world to build better drugs, better fuels, and better materials in ways that are cheaper, faster, and cleaner. Chemists around the world have incorporated metathesis reactions into production schemes for novel medicines and even materials used in bullet-proof vests; and the increased efficiency realized by metathesis reactions leads to less waste generated in the process.

The work of these Noble laureates reverberates through technological developments and innovative engineering, resulting in the strengthening of our economy. The basic research which brought about the Nobel Prizes in 2005 was funded by agencies like the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which are funded by the Federal Government.

While much of the fundamental research performed or funded through these agencies may not immediately appear to have practical applications, we must recognize that today's chemical oddity or strange physical principle could be tomorrow's Nobel Prize. Yet, the total Federal research and development portfolio is taking a cut for the first time since 1996 in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request.

Mr. Speaker, the world is in transition right now. We, and the other industrialized nations of the world, are accelerating into a knowledge-based global economy. We can make no assumptions that the United States will remain the dominant factor in this economy. Complacency will be our downfall.

As we celebrate Nobel Prize winners and honor their work, we are slipping behind in the scramble for the top of the globalization mountain. Other nations are acting as we sit thinking of actions to take. The cultural shift required for our Nation to move forward and maintain a competitive edge over other nations begins with how the Federal Government spends its money. We must increase the funding for research and development to maintain our competitiveness.

We must come together as one Congress, united across party lines, choosing to act for our future.

RECOGNIZING BILL SERGEANT

HON. WILLIAM L. JENKINS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the outstanding humanitarian service and contribution made by Rotarian William T. ("Bill") Sergeant on the occasion of his retirement from his position as Chairman of the International PolioPlus Committee of The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International—a committee that develops Rotary's policies and strategies to achieve polio eradication. Since the inception of Rotary's International PolioPlus Committee in 1994, Bill Sergeant, a retired Colonel, has served tirelessly as the General leading the efforts of Rotary's army of 1.2 million volunteers in the war against polio.

A member of the Rotary club of Oak Ridge, Tennessee for more than 50 years, Bill Sergeant held many leadership positions in Rotary, including Rotary International Vice-president, Director, and Foundation Trustee, before assuming leadership of PolioPlus, Rotary's flagship program. Bill Sergeant has traveled to countries on 6 continents to participate in polio eradication activities, represented Rotary International at strategic meetings, and promoted the cause of global polio eradication and ensured its prominence among the Rotary world as Rotary's highest priority.

Through his integrity, acumen and keen observation, Bill Sergeant quickly earned the respect of peers in the other three spearheading organizations: the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; thereby strengthening the efficacy of this unique public/private collaborative effort for the ultimate benefit of the children of the world. Under Bill Sergeant's leadership, Rotary established criteria for the strategic use of PolioPlus grant funds, launched the PolioPlus Partners program to provide supplemental support for critical polio eradication activities, and established international advocacy to ensure sufficient political and financial public sector support for global polio eradication efforts.

During his tenure as Chairman of Rotary's International PolioPlus Committee, three regions of the world have been certified polio-free and only four countries remain with endemic transmission of polio. Bill Sergeant has demonstrated, through his exemplary, single-minded dedication to the goal of a polio-free world, that one man can make the world a better place through commitment, determination, and a great deal of heart.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our fellow representatives to join me in recognizing Bill Sergeant for his outstanding leadership and service in support of the goal of a polio-free world—a goal which the United States Government shares.

TRIBUTE TO MR. MAI TRAN AND MR. BRUCE HOTTMAN

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Mai Tran

and Mr. Bruce Hottman of Information Technology Experts in Fort Collins, Colorado on being named Small Business Persons of the Year by the Small Business Administration.

Over the course of its 10-year history, ITX has consistently been recognized as one of Colorado's foremost small businesses. As a leading provider of full-service Information Technology support in Northern Colorado, ITX has earned the confidence of numerous corporate, non-profit, and governmental organizations. The leadership and expertise demonstrated by Mr. Tran and Mr. Hottman have resulted in the tremendous expansion and growth of ITX. In only 6 years, ITX has more than tripled the size of its workforce to 95 individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the remarkable economic success realized by ITX pales in comparison to the extraordinary generosity and commitment to the community embodied by members of the ITX family. Following the 2004 Asian tsunami disaster, ITX generously contributed funds to aid Chennai victims and was subsequently honored by the City of Fort Collins with a key to the city. Additionally, ITX has been lauded for providing much-needed computer equipment to the Asian Chamber of Commerce and discounted IT services to over a dozen Northern Colorado non-profit organizations.

As a member of the Governor's Minority Business Advisory Council, Mai Tran is a recognized leader in the small business community and is active in addressing issues that affect minority businesses across the State. He personifies his own belief that through skill, hard work, and determination, minority businesses strengthen Colorado's economy.

At the age of 16, Mr. Tran fled to the United States after South Vietnam fell to communism. Through a great deal of determination and hard work, Mr. Tran overcame his lack of English skills and went on to earn a degree in Computer Science and Mathematics from Colorado State University. Today, as President and CEO of ITX, Mr. Tran's dedication and commitment to others serves as an inspiration to his employees and his community.

As co-founder and Executive Vice President of ITX, Mr. Hottman's wealth of experience and expertise in the field of information technology have ensured the success of ITX and its continued contributions to the community. After graduating from Colorado State University with a degree in computer information systems, Mr. Hottman worked at United Banks and the United States Department of Agriculture before joining the Western Area Power Administration as Project Leader. While at WAPA, Mr. Hottman and Mr. Tran worked together as a high performing team of IT professionals, and in 1996 they decided to form their own IT services provider. Like Mr. Tran, Mr. Hottman's involvement in the Fort Collins Foothills Rotary Club and other community organizations has inspired and encouraged the employees of ITX to become active members of their community.

I am proud to represent individuals with such a remarkable entrepreneurial and compassionate spirit. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the many accomplishments and selfless dedication of Mr. Mai Tran and Mr. Bruce Hottman.