

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO LIVIU LIBRESCU

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sorrow that I rise today to mourn the passing of Liviu Librescu, a world renowned professor of aeronautical engineering who was tragically gunned down while saving the lives of his students at Virginia Tech this week.

Madam Speaker, I am compelled to honor Mr. Librescu, not because he is a fellow Holocaust survivor and college professor who persevered and overcame so much, but because he was a human being so extraordinary that his life's journey embodies the word hero.

Liviu Librescu was born in 1930 to a Jewish family in Ploiesti, Romania. During World War II, when Romania joined forces with Nazi Germany, he was imprisoned in a forced labor camp. Subsequently he was sent, along with his family and thousands of others, to a ghetto in the city of Focsani about 100 miles from his home. Hundreds of thousands of Jews from across Romania died in the Focsani Ghetto and in Transnistria, a Romanian-run Nazi killing field where Librescu's father, a lawyer, perished.

Liviu survived the horrors of the Focsani Ghetto and the Holocaust and nobly committed his life to academia, studying aerospace engineering at the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, where he received both his undergraduate degree in 1952 and his Masters in 1953. In 1969 he received his Ph.D. in fluid Mechanics from Academia de Stiinte din Romania.

Madam Speaker, Liviu Librescu was a brilliant mind and quickly established himself as a top researcher at the Bucharest Institute of Applied Mechanics and the Academy of Science of Romania. But his refusal to swear allegiance to the destructive Communist regime in Romania ultimately left him jobless. Without means to support his wife, Marlene, and two sons, Joe and Arie, Librescu tried to leave Romania for Israel. But under the Romanian communist regime Jews were not allowed to emigrate. In 1978 the Romanian government finally permitted Liviu to leave, but only after a direct request was made by the Prime Minister of Israel—Menachem Begin—to Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu.

From 1979 to 1986 Librescu was a Professor of Aeronautical and Mechanical Engineering at Tel-Aviv University and Haifa's Technion. In 1985 he took sabbatical from Tel Aviv University to research and teach at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. He quickly became a vital part of the School of Engineering Science and Mechanics, and in 1986 decided to make Blacksburg and Virginia Tech his full-time home.

Professor Librescu had a distinguished career as one of Virginia Tech's premier lecturers; he published hundreds of prestigious

papers, received numerous awards and honorary degrees and did extensive research for NASA.

Madam Speaker, these extraordinary accomplishments in the face of such tribulations made Liviu Librescu a hero to those who knew him. But his actions on the morning of April 16, 2007 shine through as beacon of everything that embodies his heroic spirit. On that frightful morning when a deranged gunman chose Librescu's classroom as a target for his heinous, senseless murdering spree, Liviu Librescu barricaded himself against the classroom door in an attempt to lock the gunman out. He told his students to flee while he threw his body against the door. Librescu was fatally shot, but the gunman never managed to gain access and no student in the classroom was harmed.

Madam Speaker, I do not think the English language has words worthy enough to describe the selfless courage and boundless humanity of Liviu Librescu. The world has suffered a tragic loss with the end of this one life. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the legacy of Liviu Librescu, which lives on in the people that he saved and in the hearts he inspired worldwide.

IN RECOGNITION OF EARTH DAY 2007

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Earth Day, which we will celebrate April 22, 2007. On the very first Earth Day in 1970, 20 million Americans stood together for the environment. They filled our country's streets, parks, and auditoriums to announce their dedication to protecting the earth, and they asked their government to stand with them.

What began 37 years ago as a grassroots movement in the United States has now spread to 175 countries, and is observed each year by 500 million people worldwide. The importance of Earth Day is underscored by the threat of global climate change. As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded with near certainty this February, people are a large part of the problem, but we are also capable of coming up with solutions.

I am proud that the new House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming met this week for the first time. I commend the Speaker for making this issue a priority, and I commend the new panel's members for their efforts in moving us towards solutions to the problem of global climate change.

The City of Chicago is leading the way in transitioning to a "green-friendly" world and is now a model for other cities across the country. Chicago is among the largest users of green energy in the country, and the city has

set a goal of using renewable energy for roughly a quarter of city operations.

As part of the process, Chicago has attracted two solar panel manufacturers to the city. Additionally, Chicago has planted or negotiated the construction of over 2 million square feet of rooftop gardens, more than all other U.S. cities combined.

Madam Speaker, I recognize that as a member of Congress and a father, we have a duty to preserve our Nation's environmental treasures for generations to come. This Earth Day, I hope that we can build on the momentum of my hometown and work together to improve the outlook for our planet and make this a better place for our children. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this Earth Day, and many more to come.

HONORING MARINE CORPS FIRST LIEUTENANT SHAUN BLUE

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with great respect and deep sadness that I wish to commend United States Marine Corps 1LT Shaun Blue for his bravery in the field of battle and his willingness to fight for his country. First Lieutenant Blue was killed in action during combat operations near Iraq's Anbar province on April 16, 2007. His sacrifice will be remembered by a community that has been struck hard by the devastating loss of one of its own.

A lifelong resident of Munster, Indiana, Shaun is remembered by his community as an intelligent, determined, and trustworthy leader. As a young boy, Shaun was active in the Boy Scouts, and it was at this time that his commitment and leadership abilities began to emerge. At Munster High School, Shaun was an accomplished student, graduating in the top 10 in his class and named a National Merit Scholar. As an athlete, Shaun participated on the cross-country and track and field teams, where his drive and dedication served as an example to his teammates and a source of pride for his school.

Following his graduation from Munster High School in 2000, Shaun went on to attend the University of Southern California, where he majored in philosophy. Shaun completed the ROTC program at USC with the intention of going on to serve as a leader for yet another group of his peers as an officer in the United States Marine Corps.

Having been on his second tour in Iraq, Shaun was fully committed to serving his country, and those with whom he served had the utmost respect and unwavering faith in his abilities. This respect was also shared by his superiors, as is evidenced by the numerous medals he was awarded, including the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Shaun is remembered by friends as being a calm, thoughtful person, who was always willing to help others. An avid fisherman and hunter, Shaun was the type that loved to go camping, and he enjoyed all the wonders nature had to offer. Shaun's qualities demonstrated throughout his youth made him an ideal member of the United States Marine Corps. Shaun was a leader who consistently exemplified strength, not only physically, but mentally and morally as well, and he will continue to serve as an inspiration and example to those who knew him.

First Lieutenant Blue leaves behind a loving family. Shaun leaves to cherish his memory his adoring parents, Jim and Debbie Blue, and countless other friends and family members who will never forget the impact he had on their lives. Shaun will be greatly missed by a saddened but proud community and a grateful nation.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring a fallen hero, United States Marine Corps 1LT Shaun Blue. First Lieutenant Blue is an inspiration to us all for his patriotism and willingness to fight for his country. He paid the ultimate sacrifice for the betterment of his country and the world, and his passing comes as a setback to the northwest Indiana community, which has already been shaken by the realities of war. First Lieutenant Blue will forever remain a hero in the eyes of his family, his community, and his country. Thus, let us never forget the sacrifice he made to preserve the ideals of freedom and democracy.

TRIBUTE TO THE CASSADAGA
VALLEY GIRLS AND BOYS BASKETBALL TEAMS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of the Cassadaga Valley girls and boys basketball teams. Both teams played with distinction this season, meeting various challenges and contributing with their talents both as a team and individually.

I would like to acknowledge girl's team players Casey Mathers, most improved player; Kari Barmore, co-most valuable player and rebounding award and scholar-athlete award winner; Jenna Beichner, co-most valuable player; and Jennifer Zanghi, receiving the defensive award.

I must also acknowledge boy's team players Kevin Watson, earning the distinction of most valuable player and Bob Zanghi earning the most improved player and scholar-athlete awards.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in congratulating the great successes of both of these teams, both acknowledged by the NYSPHSAA as deserving of the Scholar-Athlete Team Award. It is a pleasure to honor this fine young athletes here today.

INTRODUCTION OF BRISTOL BAY
PROTECTION ACT

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge the Natural Resources Committee to take action on the bipartisan Bristol Bay Protection Act, which I introduced today with my colleagues, Congressman WAYNE GILCHREST and Congressman MAURICE HINCHEY.

The Bristol Bay Protection Act will renew long-standing, bipartisan protection for this economically, culturally, and ecologically important marine ecosystem through a Congressional prohibition on oil and gas development in the waters of Alaska's North Aleutian Basin.

When Congress returns from the district work period we plan to introduce the Bristol Bay Protection Act. The Exxon Valdez oil tanker spill, which fouled more than 1,200 miles of pristine Alaskan shoreline and caused billions of dollars in economic damage, moved the Congress and President George H. Bush to place the North Aleutian Basin Planning Area (which includes Bristol Bay) under moratoria from oil and gas development in 1990. In 1998, President Clinton later followed up with an extension of this moratorium on pre-leasing and leasing activities in the same waters until 2012.

This past January, President Bush removed the long-standing executive ban on offshore drilling in Bristol Bay, opening the way for leases the Federal Minerals Management Service (MMS) has proposed in 2010 and 2012.

Alaska's Bristol Bay and the southeastern Bering Sea encompass one of the most productive marine ecosystems in the world. These sub-arctic waters support important commercial fisheries, representing more than 40 percent of the Nation's annual seafood catch. The area targeted for oil and gas leasing overlaps with important habitat and fishing grounds for pollock, cod, red king crab, halibut and salmon—fisheries which generate more than \$2 billion dollars annually. These fisheries support fishermen and fishing families throughout Alaska and the Pacific northwest.

Bristol Bay sockeye salmon runs, the largest on earth, are the lifeblood of many remote, Native villages in southwestern Alaska. Subsistence and commercial harvest of salmon resources are the economic mainstay of these culturally-unique communities.

The region's coastal wetlands, lagoons and sheltered bays serve as migratory hubs, staging areas and wintering grounds for millions of waterfowl and shorebirds. The southeastern Bering Sea is also home to a number of marine mammal species—many of which are threatened or endangered—including sea otters, Steller sea lions, fur seals, humpback whales and the North Pacific right whale. As a testament to the region's ecological importance, five National Wildlife Refuges and eight Alaska state protected areas have been established here.

The U.S. cannot drill our way to energy security. The risks posed by offshore oil and gas development to the renewable resources of Bristol Bay and the thousands of people in Alaska and along the west coast whose livelihoods depend upon their continued health are simply too great.

The bipartisan Bristol Bay Protection Act restores protections to the people, wildlife and habitats in the North Aleutian Basin Planning Area. It is my hope that the Committee acts swiftly to protect this pristine area.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO GEORGE
FILIOS

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend George Filios for his personal and professional successes, he is truly the embodiment of the American Dream.

George came to the United States from Greece in December 1955 and began working in the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. In 1957, he began work in the construction industry as a painter and carpenter and attended school in the evening to learn English and the Principles of Construction. In 1958 George, in partnership with George Papageorge, founded G & G Construction Company. George took the Oath of Citizenship in May, 1961 and subsequently moved to California. George returned to his native Greece in 1966 where he met his lovely wife, Nitsa Statara.

George established the Filios Construction Company in 1967, specializing in the construction of apartment complexes and subsequently teamed up with Alex Spanos. Following the birth of his first child, Spiridon Filios in 1968, George was offered a management position within A.G. Spanos Companies, thus began a fruitful relationship spanning over thirty years. Soon thereafter, in 1970, George's daughter, Vayia Filios was born. The Filios family relocated to Southern Nevada in 1975 recognizing the booming economy of the region and opportunities it presented to the buildings and construction trades.

In addition to his professional success, George has also contributed greatly to his community. Following the family's move to southern Nevada, George became very much involved with the St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church. He was intimately involved in long range planning of building Church facilities and in 1978, during his Presidency of the Parish Council, they acquired the land necessary to construct a new Church and community center. George was also very involved with the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where he served as the Administrator of the A.G. Spanos Companies Faculty Award. Furthermore, George has served on the State Contractors Board, from 1981-1984, and as a member of the Clark County Commission Multifamily Council.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my good friend George Filios. His success in business and philanthropic pursuits is truly commendable and his dedication to the community should serve as an example to us all. Through hard work and determination he has succeeded, thereby truly personifying the American Dream. I thank him for his service to the community and wish him the best in his future endeavors.