

TRIBUTE TO THE SILICON VALLEY LEADERSHIP GROUP ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ANNA G. ESHOO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2008*

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, SVLG, and its contributions to Silicon Valley and the State of California with you.

On July 18, 1977, the exceptional innovator and pioneer, David Packard, gathered thirty of his CEO peers with a simple yet provocative idea. To build an organization that would create a proactive voice for Silicon Valley businesses to ensure the economic health and a high quality of life in Silicon Valley. The organization would be an advocate for affordable housing, comprehensive regional transportation, reliable energy, a quality K-12 and higher education system, a prepared workforce, a sustainable environment, and business and tax policies that would keep California and Silicon Valley competitive.

The idea led to the founding of the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group, now known as the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, in 1978 with 33 founding members. The first Chair of the Board was Bob Wilson of Memorex and the first Working Chair was Bob Kirkwood of Hewlett-Packard. David Packard accepted a seat on the Board and the position of Board Vice Chair. The first president was Bill June and Peter Giles was then hired as CEO. Over the course of the last thirty years David Packard's vision became a reality and there are many examples of success to highlight, including but not limited to the following:

In 1981, SVLG published its first housing study, emphasizing the need for a jobs-housing balance, and urges public officials to re-zone land from industrial and commercial to residential. The report also called for more compact development to help lower housing costs and make better use of the Valley's limited land resources, and to place housing more closely to jobs. Several cities agreed, and thousands of acres are re-zoned for residential development.

In 1982, the Board of Directors helped lead the effort to establish Santa Clara County's first carpool, or "high occupancy vehicle" lane on the San Tomas Expressway. Measure A becomes a statewide model of efficiency, with all three projects completed on time and on budget during the measure's 10-year life. Following the lead of Santa Clara County, 19 counties representing nearly 85 percent of all Californians have since passed similar measures. These measures now fund \$1 of every \$2 invested in the state's transportation system.

1988—Model Toxic Gas Ordinance—The ordinance was aimed at any gas user, private and public sector, to respond to increased concern about the potential release of toxic gases.

1989—Board Endorses Gas Tax Increase—The Board of Directors voted to support Proposition 111—a nine-cent increase in the state gas tax to fund transportation improvements.

1990—Chlorofluorocarbon Reduction—The Board of Directors voted to play a leadership

role in reducing CFC's. Silicon Valley high-tech firms became the national leaders in reducing this form of pollution.

1990—Open Space Initiative—Founder David Packard agrees to serve as Honorary Chair of the county's first Open Space Initiative. The measure receives a strong 64 percent support at the polls, but fails under the two-thirds vote requirement. However, it sets the stage for the successful measure 4 years later.

1993—Housing Action Coalition Formed—The purpose of the coalition was to advocate for homes that are "well built, relatively affordable, and appropriately located" so that Valley cities could service them. With a mission to "advocate, educate, and legislate," the coalition has had a tremendous impact. Today, the coalition consists of more than 200 organizations and individuals.

1993—Board Endorses County's "Technology Bond" Proposal—In partnership with the county member companies purchased approximately \$12 million in "technology bonds" to help the county improve and install technology systems throughout its departments.

1995—Vehicle Buy-Back Coalition Scraps Old Polluting Cars—This innovative demonstration project raises nearly half a million dollars to purchase and permanently retire more than 400 "gross polluters," with a reduction in pollution of more than 400 tons. The demonstration project was so successful that it becomes a model for the Air District's own Buy-Back program.

1997—Eco Pass Partnership Initiated—SVLG is principal business voice in encouraging employers to consider the "Eco Pass" Program. The Eco Pass is a transit pass that employers can purchase for their Silicon Valley employees, allowing them the use of buses, express buses, and light rail for the entire year. The first year demonstration program produced a doubling of transit use by employees at participating companies. SVLG also launched the Bay Area Clean Air Partnership—Partnership to engage employers and employees in voluntary programs to reduce pollution on hot, smoggy "Spare the Air" days. In its first year of operation, thousands of vehicle trips were avoided and the region did not violate a single day of the federal Clean Air Standards.

1998—Housing Trust Fund Business Plan Approved—The Board endorses the business plan officially launching the County's first Housing Trust Fund. With a goal of raising up to \$20 million over the next 24 months, the funds will leverage approximately \$200 million worth of housing, with funds equally divided into three categories. They include first-time homebuyers assistance, affordable rental housing, and homeless shelter and assistance. These funds will assist nearly 5,000 Silicon Valley families.

1999—San Jose Teacher Housing Initiative—SVMG partnered with San Jose to launch San Jose's Teacher Housing Initiative, a proposal to assist San Jose teachers to become homebuyers, as well as enhancing recruitment and retention of educators in the community. SVLG also began the Summer Fellowships for Teachers—SVMG partnered with the Industry Institute for Science and Math Education (IISME) on a Summer Fellowship for Teachers program. By partnering with SVMG, the number of teacher fellowships was increased 40 percent from the highest numbers achieved in IISME's 17-year history.

1999—Creating Quality Neighborhoods—SVMG completed a 21-month study to identify every vacant (and underutilized) parcel of land that is zoned commercial, industrial, or residential. The effort will now shift to working with cities to consider the report's findings to ensure there are enough homes for Silicon Valley workers. By following the report's recommendations, the Valley could meet 99 percent of home demand during the next 10 years, rather than the current 50 percent projected if current land use patterns are followed.

2000—Statewide Transportation Plan—More than \$1 billion is directed to improvements that benefit the Valley, even though Santa Clara County accounts for only 5 percent of the state population.

2002—Hetch Hetchy Legislation Passes—SVMG, in coordination with BAWUA, successfully advocated for three critical pieces of state legislation to ensure the Hetch Hetchy water system would be updated to withstand earthquakes. This vital system serves the water needs of 2.4 million Bay Area residents and employees.

2005—The Leadership Group's first Annual CEO Washington, D.C. Advocacy Trip, led by Soletron CEO Mike Cannon with 25 executive colleagues, met with 70 key members of Congress in the nation's Capitol. A new "Middle School Math Initiative" was reviewed by the Working Council with strong recommendation of the Education Committee. Also, the Leadership Group organized the first "Applied Materials Silicon Valley Turkey Trot," with 1,900 participants; 240 volunteers and more than \$132,000 raised for three local non-profits.

2006—The Board approved a 12-point "Clean and Green" Alternative Energy Action Plan to curb greenhouse gas emissions and impact climate change in the region.

2007—SolarTech Begins—Recognizing the growing importance of alternative energy the Leadership Group developed SolarTech. The purpose is to identify, prioritize, and resolve the technical and adoption barriers to solar technology by addressing issues of performance, standards, and workforce readiness.

Today, under the exceptional leadership of Carl Guardino, SVLG has more than 200 member companies and its members contribute more than \$1 trillion to the global economy, an amount equal to the gross national product of Italy. Members of the SVLG employ more than 250,000 people in the Valley who constitute one-fourth of the entire private sector workforce in the region. They generate more than \$1 trillion worth of business which is approximately eight times as large as California's entire state budget, and represents a significant contribution to the state and the national government treasuries, along with hefty property taxes for local governments.

Madam Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join us in honoring the Silicon Valley Leadership Group as it celebrates its 30 year anniversary marking its extraordinary contributions to the economic health and quality of life to the residents and businesses of Silicon Valley. We salute Carl Guardino, President and CEO, his staff and every member of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group.