

HONORING ROBERT LARSON

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise today to honor my friend Robert Larson and pay tribute to his life and legacy.

Robert Larson was a real estate executive, philanthropist, community leader, and dear friend. His keen knowledge and distinguished career positioned him as one of the industry's most respected executives. He was chairman of the Larson Realty Group, a family-owned real estate investment company; chairman of Lazard Real Estate Partners LLC, a merchant banking business; and chairman of the board of UDR, Inc., one of the country's largest real estate companies. He spent 26 years with the prestigious Taubman Company, where he was elevated to chief operating officer, chief executive officer, vice chairman of Taubman Centers, Inc., and chairman of the Taubman Realty Group during the course of his tenure.

The knowledge and insight Mr. Larson provided the Federal Government in the wake of the Savings and Loan crisis of the 1980s were integral to successfully restructuring our savings institutions and recovering from the crisis. President Bush and President Clinton appointed Mr. Larson to the Thrift Depositor Protection Oversight Board, where he served from 1990 to 1995 and was made chairman of the Board's Audit Committee. The Board was established by Congress to provide direction, oversight, and funding to the Resolution Trust Corporation.

Throughout his life, Mr. Larson's commitment to southeast Michigan was unyielding and he worked to bring new investment and opportunity to Michigan's economy. His contributions to Michigan extended far beyond the real estate industry: he served as the director and chairman of the ULI Foundation, a trustee of the Children's Hospital of Michigan, director of the Detroit Zoological Society, chairman of the Cranbrook Educational Community, chairman of the Greening of Detroit, and trustee of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, among many other boards and causes.

Unquestionably, though, Mr. Larson's most durable impact was on his family, his colleagues, and those of us who knew him. We remember him for his profound intellect, his endless energy, and his tremendous warmth. He is survived by his beloved wife, Bonnie, their six children, and eleven grandchildren. I extend my deepest condolences to them on their loss.

HONORING DAVID THOMPSON

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Mr. David Thompson, recipient of the Harford County Land Preservationist of the Year award. Thompson is one of Harford County's strongest advocates for the preservation of farmland.

Thompson's interest in horticulture began with his family's vegetable and flower garden.

In 1978, he and his wife, Marilyn, founded a local nursery, which has since grown into one of the region's most respected nursery and landscaping enterprises.

Thompson's leadership in the horticulture community is unprecedented. He is a past president of the Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association, the American Conifer Society, and the Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show. Thompson recently stepped down from the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board, after many years of faithful service, including terms as Chairman. During his time on the Board, Thompson worked with the County Executive and the County Council to increase the property tax credit for preserved farmland. In 2009, Thompson was named a Master Farmer by the American Agriculturist magazine, becoming only the 48th Marylander to receive this honor.

Thompson strives to promote the green industry and horticulture education in Maryland. He has been an active leader in the development of the Agriculture and Natural Resources program at North Harford High and is a member of the University of Maryland Horticulture Advisory Board.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor Mr. David Thompson, Harford County Land Preservationist of the Year. His exceptional advocacy and endeavor to educate others on behalf of the horticulture community is unparalleled.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, despite the unquestionable need for health care reform, some have sought to dominate the health care reform discussion with fear mongering, misinterpretations and misinformation. They have stymied the progression of the reform process in the name of fiscal responsibility, bipartisanship, parliamentary procedure and patriotism.

These justifications are egregious. There is nothing bipartisan about continually opposing a bill that independent federal agencies have repeatedly recognized as a substantive and reasonable approach to reform. There is nothing fiscally responsible about allowing premiums, state and federal health expenditures to rise to unprecedented levels. There is nothing American about depriving men, women, and children of the guaranteed right to health care in the richest country on earth.

Today, when Americans across the country are losing their homes, jobs, health insurance and hope, we as elected officials have the opportunity and duty to deliver. We cannot afford to back down. We have come too far and have too much to lose. Extreme times require extreme measures to ensure that we pass a health care reform bill that America needs and deserves.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker, yesterday, I unfortunately was absent from a vote in the House.

Without question, in order to put our economy back on track, we must work aggressively to address and lower our national debt. H.R. 4825, introduced by Representatives KIRKPATRICK and PETERS, takes an important step in showing Congress' commitment to addressing the growing problem of our country's debt. By returning unused funds from our Member Representational Allowance to the U.S. Treasury, as many offices already do, we show the American people our willingness to tighten our belts, beginning with our office budgets.

I wish to voice my full support for this important legislation and regret that I was unable to cast my vote on the House floor.

RECOGNIZING NEW MOUNT MORIAH INTERNATIONAL CHURCH'S 21 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITIES OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the leadership and congregation of New Mount Moriah International Church for celebrating 21 years of fellowship. As a Member of Congress it is both my privilege and honor to recognize New Mount Moriah, its leader Bishop William Murphy and its congregants on this most joyous occasion.

New Mount Moriah, for the past 21 years, has been a fixture of spiritual communion in the Pontiac, Michigan community. The Church has had several homes in the Pontiac community since its formation in 1989. Since moving to its current location in 2003, New Mount Moriah has made great strides to expand its ministry across southeast Michigan, establishing satellite locations in Mount Clemens and Detroit. With these new locations New Mount Moriah has expanded its membership from the 100 founding members in 1989 to over 1,000 members across southeast Michigan today.

Over the past 20 years, New Mount Moriah has been served by Bishop William Murphy who serves with unwavering commitment and faith as Senior Pastor to its congregants. Bishop Murphy is joined in his ministry by his wife, Donna, who serves as Executive Director for New Mount Moriah's Women's Ministry program. Together they have developed countless programs which have reached beyond the walls of the Church and have touched the lives of so many in the communities the Church serves. These programs include skill-building and self-esteem training for women of all ages, helping them to develop leadership skills needed to serve their community.

For many years it has been my privilege to worship with Bishop and Donna Murphy and

the congregants of New Mount Moriah. It is with a great sense of pride I have watched as the Church has expanded its reach into our shared communities and enriched the lives of an increasing number of residents across southeast Michigan. This year I was particularly blessed to visit New Mount Moriah with the Majority Whip of the U.S. House of Representatives, JAMES CLYBURN, to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the one-year anniversary of the inauguration of Barack Obama as President of these United States.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing New Mount Moriah International Church's 21 years of service to Pontiac and countless other communities across southeast Michigan and wish Bishop Murphy, his wife and the Church's congregants many more years of happiness, health and service to our shared communities.

HONORING THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AND THE SHE SERVES INITIATIVE

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW, and the She Serves Initiative.

The mission of the VFW is to "honor the dead by helping the living" through veterans' service, community service, national security and a strong national defense.

For centuries, the VFW and its auxiliaries, including the She Serves Initiative, have been serving veterans by giving them a place to address their concerns and providing moral support. The She Serves Initiative works to empower, encourage, and appreciate all women who have served in the military.

Through outreach within the community, She Serves works to educate others about the sacrifices of female veterans who have served faithfully in conflict overseas. The She Serves Initiative acts as the connecting point for women of the VFW.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor the VFW and the She Serves Initiative for their outstanding presence within the community. The support these two organizations provide to our Nation's veterans is essential and greatly appreciated.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS J. CASSIDY, JR.

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. McKEON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who has given his life's work over in service to his country. A man who has honorably served the United States, both in uniform and out, in both the public and the private sectors, and who in my mind exemplifies duty and excellence. A man who is now taking a long deferred and well deserved retirement. Madam Speaker, Thomas J.

Cassidy, Jr. has come a long way from his days growing up in the Bronx. He served in the Navy, rising to the rank of Rear Admiral. During his career, he served 34 years, seeing action in the Vietnam War as the Commander of Fighter Squadron 161 aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Coral Sea*. He later took command of Miramar Naval Air Station, as well as command of the Pacific Fleet Fighter and Airborne Early Warning Wing.

During all this time, Admiral Tom Cassidy developed a reputation as a thorough and fully dedicated Naval Officer, that Bronx upbringing never being too far below the surface. He pushed himself to the limit, gaining extensive experience flying a wide variety of American and foreign aircraft. In fact, he developed air-to-air improved fighter tactics that the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force fighter pilots used to dramatically improve the kill ratio over the North Vietnamese Air Force MiGs. He did this by flying the MiG 21 and 17 to exploit their weaknesses. This in turn led to a number of staff jobs from a carrier group to a stint with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

With a reputation as a man with an eye for detail and a no nonsense approach to getting the job done, Admiral Cassidy was made the Chief of Naval Operations', CNO, liaison officer to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and was Director of the Tactical Readiness Division of the CNO's staff.

Madam Speaker, a resume like this speaks volumes, and would lead you to believe that Admiral Tom Cassidy had more than done his bit for "king and country." No one could dispute that Tom had served the American people well and that he had earned a place in the esteem of his countrymen. And so after a long and distinguished career, Tom retired from the Navy.

However, while Admiral Cassidy may have left the Navy, in a very real sense the Navy never left him. Devotion to duty and hard work. A commitment to excellence and a "can-do" spirit. Love of family, God and country. Valor in the face of danger and hardship, and most of all, a firm and unswerving loyalty to his men. All these qualities that we so instantly and rightly attribute to the men and women of the Navy, and not just the Navy but all the Armed Forces, were deeply engrained in Admiral Cassidy.

It was that Navy spirit that Tom took with him into the private sector, where he accepted a position as CEO of General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, and where he has become a pioneer in the development of some of the most important and revolutionary weapons in America's arsenal for the war on terrorism.

Madam Speaker, Admiral Tom Cassidy made the Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicle. Were it not for Tom, after September 11 the United States would not have had in its armory one of the key weapons with which we began the long hard fight to free Afghanistan, Iraq, the Swat valley and so many other parts of the Middle East and Central and South Asia.

At a time when there were grave doubts in the Armed Forces and the Department of Defense about the efficacy and necessity of UAVs like the Predator, Admiral Cassidy took a gamble. Operating by what Aviation Week magazine has rightly referred to as the "build it and they will come" strategy—Tom Cassidy pushed the development and building of Predators ahead of orders from the United States Government.

Consequently, Madam Speaker, when on that terrible day in September of 2001, Americans came face to face with the unrelenting hatred and resourcefulness of our radical Islamist opponents, we can thank Admiral Tom Cassidy that the United States was able to have at the ready one of the critical weapons systems with which we have been able to bring the war to our enemies and to drive them out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is a weapon that, Madam Speaker, continues to serve us well today. The Predator has gone through no less than three developmental iterations thanks to the hard work of Tom Cassidy. Each new evolution in the Predator has radically improved our ability to strike against the shadowy adversary that we now face.

The Predator, Madam Speaker, will soon have attained over a million cumulative flight hours. How many of the enemy has it taken out? How many lives of our service men and women have been saved by the use of the Predator? How many terrorist attacks against the United States and our allies have been averted thanks to the unique surveillance and offensive weapons capabilities of the Predator? How many people have a chance at freedom because the Predator was able to strike against those who preach a savage perversion of a religion?

There is probably no real way to count it accurately. Still, we know that lives have been saved and terrorist attacks have been averted and people who were once enslaved are now free because Predator was in America's arsenal. For that, Madam Speaker, this Congress and this country and people the world over owe Admiral Tom Cassidy a debt of gratitude of which they are scarcely aware. That is why I am privileged to be able to say these few words of thanks.

So Madam Speaker, Tom Cassidy will retire now. He will end the long days of hard work and get to spend time with the wife and family that he loves, secure in the knowledge that he has done all that could reasonably be asked of one man to protect his country from those who threaten it.

Madam Speaker, I am sure that nothing would please Tom Cassidy more than to know that his work has helped our nation face many of the most challenging threats to our security. I am convinced that the strength of character, dedication to duty and love of family and of country that are the hallmarks of Admiral Thomas J. Cassidy, Jr.'s life will long endure. I congratulate him on a job well done that has spanned both careers, the U.S. Navy and his tenure as the head of General Atomics Aeronautical Systems. On behalf of the American people I thank him, and I wish him many happy years ahead.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FRED E. ALLEN

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. HALL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of a man who has dedicated his life to service and a greater cause, Fred E. Allen of Mt. Pleasant, TX.