

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA A. FORD

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Patricia A. Ford, the 1998 recipient "Unionist of the Year" award bestowed by the Central Labor Council of Alameda County on May 8, 1998 in Oakland, CA. Raised and educated in Oakland, California, Patricia A. Ford began her career as a labor activist in the early 1970's when he helped to form an employee caucus at Alameda County's Highland Hospital. The group sought to reform its independent union, the Alameda County Employees Association, and Ford helped lead a successful effort to affiliate the union with SEI as Local 616.

Ford became one of the new local's first and most effective shop stewards, and Local 616 members quickly tapped her for leadership. In 1975, she was the first African-American woman elected Vice President of the Executive Board, and in 1978, the first African-American woman elected Local 616 President. Meanwhile, Ford made the union her career as she became the first rank-and-file member selected to work as a field representative. In 1989, the Local 616 Executive Board appointed Ford to the union's top position, Executive Director and a member of the Executive Committee of the Central Labor Council of Alameda County. She was the first African-American to serve in that capacity.

Under Ford's leadership, Local 616 made tremendous strides, successfully extending its organizing into the private sector, where it now represents employees of Prison Health Services and the AIDS Project of the East Bay. Ford also developed and hosted the first SEIU-sponsored Civil and Human Rights Conference, attended by leaders and members from throughout the SEIU western region. Since then, the International Union has expanded the Civil and Human Rights Conference to all regions.

In 1992, Ford was elected to the SEIU International Executive Board, and became President of SEIU Joint Council 2 in the Bay Area. In 1995, Ford was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Western Conference, a position she still holds. In April 1996, Ford made SEIU history when she was elected as the International Executive Vice President on a leadership slate headed by International President Andrew L. Stern. She, thus, became the first African-American, and only the second woman, elected to a top leadership post at SEIU.

Ford was a member of the Board of Directors of the Alameda Alliance for Health which manages the MediCal program for Alameda County and is a parishioner of the Williams Chapel Baptist Church in Oakland, California. She has a son, Andre, and two grandchildren, Ayauna Phajae and Christopher Erin.

Her life-long commitment to service for all working people has been a model for all of us. With heartfelt congratulations, I salute Patricia A. Ford as the Central Labor Council of Alameda County's 1998 "Unionist of the Year."

COMMEMORATING ALBANY,  
OREGON'S SESQUICENTENNIAL**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, May 17, 1998 marks the Sesquicentennial of the date that Walter and Thomas Montieth filed a land claim in what became known as Albany, Oregon.

Found in the heart of the Willamette Valley along the banks of the Willamette and Calapooia rivers, Albany, is renowned for its beautiful victorian homes, gracious downtown district, and diverse economy. Albany has flourished as a center of business activity for the region while preserving its roots as a pioneer settlement. Oregonians should take great pride in the foresight of Albany's community leaders who preserved its historic architecture and in those who make it available to all of us to enjoy today.

I'm proud to have the honor to represent the people of the Albany area in the United States Congress. I congratulate the City and its leaders on its 150th birthday.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "POISON  
CONTROL CENTER ENHANCE-  
MENT AND AWARENESS ACT OF  
1998"**HON. FRED UPTON**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation that I am introducing with my colleague and friend Rep. Ed Towns to provide a stable source of funding for our nation's poison control centers, create a national toll-free number to provide ready access to these centers, and increase public education about poison prevention and the availability of poison control resources.

Poison control centers provide vital, very cost-effective services to the American public. Each year, more than 2 million poisonings are reported to poison control centers throughout the United States. More than 90 percent of these poisonings occur in the home, and over 50 percent of poisoning victims are children under the age of 6. For every dollar spent on poison control center services, seven dollars in medical costs are saved.

In spite of their obvious value, poison control centers are in jeopardy. They are currently financed through unstable arrangements of various public and private sources. Over the last two decades, the number of centers has steadily declined, jeopardizing access to services.

The legislation I am introducing today will provide up to \$27.6 million per year over the next five years to provide a stable source of funding for these centers, establish a national toll-free poison control hotline, and improve public education on poisoning prevention and services. The legislation is designed to ensure that these funds supplement—not supplant—other funding that the centers may be receiving and provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the authority to impose a matching requirement.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of this very cost-effective investment in the safety and health of the American public, especially our children.

INTRODUCING H.R. 3845 TO CREATE  
A JOINT FORCES COMMAND**HON. WILLIAM M. "MAC" THORNBERRY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I believe that one of the most important, and in many ways most difficult, challenges facing our government and our Nation over the next few years is the transformation of our national security organizations to meet our security needs of the next century. Toward that end, I have introduced H.R. 3845, to create a Joint Forces Command in the U.S. military.

Inside and outside of government, there is widespread recognition that the world security environment has changed and that our security structures will have to change as well. Throughout history, nations that have prepared to fight the last war have paid the price. Nations that recognize changing conditions, develop new technologies and doctrines, and exert the institutional discipline to overcome the natural resistance to change have had the advantage.

The threats to our security are changing—which is not to say they are lessening. There is less risk of a nuclear war with Russia, but there continue to be many nations seeking nuclear weapons. The chemical and biological threat is growing. Conflicts in all parts of the world are more troubling as they are brought into our living rooms and as the world becomes more interdependent.

Meanwhile, technology is advancing at a dizzying pace, creating both new dangers and opportunities. Worldwide commerce is becoming dependent upon space, just as it was dependent on the oceans in the past. But limited budgets and uncertainty as to our role in the world, added to the institutional resistance to change, place doubt on our ability to adapt to meet future challenges.

One thing is certain: Change is happening all around us, and it will continue to happen. We will have to be prepared to deal with it; the only question is whether we will be prepared in time.

We must rethink all of our security structures, not just the military. Our diplomatic, nuclear energy, and international economic efforts must all be part of a new approach. But I fear that bureaucratic self-interests, fighting for scarce resources, focusing on day to day problems, and the lack of urgency will conspire to prevent the kind of timely transformation which is required.

This kind of transformation in the military requires changes in process, culture, organization, doctrine, as well as taking advantage of technology. The role for Congress in this transformation is obviously limited. But just as in the past with Goldwater-Nichols, the Congress's role is indispensable. H.R. 3845 would take one small, but significant step toward making sure we make the transformation which is required of us.

Since 1991, the Atlantic Command has responsibility for training, force integration and

force provider, in addition to having the geographic responsibility for the Atlantic Ocean and the Supreme Commander of NATO. Currently, there is no permanent joint experimentation process. Each of the services has its own.

My bill would create a Joint Forces Command, similar to the way Congress created the Special Operations command in 1991. The Joint Forces Command would be the force provider for the geographic CINC's, oversee joint training and experimentation, and coordinate and integrate the service battle labs.

Goldwater-Nichols pushed the military into jointness in carrying out military operations. We do not have the level of jointness needed to prepare for military operations. We also do not have a permanent joint experimentation process to help us make smart procurement decisions and to develop joint doctrine, both of which will be indispensable.

Since the QDR and NDP reports, virtually every witness before the National Security Committee, who has been asked, has acknowledged that this transformation process is one of the most important and one of the most difficult challenges our country faces over the next few years. DOD witnesses have testified that these issues are being considered and worked by each service. I do not want to replace that. I do want to bring the service's work together, and the Joint Forces Command will help to focus these variety of initiatives into an efficient, joint force.

I hope that this proposal will spawn others. I hope that Congress and the military and outside experts will engage in full and fruitful dialogue about where we need to go and how we can get there. My goal is to make sure that Congress fulfills its responsibilities to see that this transformation takes place so that we can continue to provide for the common defense into the next century.

#### TRIBUTE TO HERB WHEELER

### HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the community leadership of my constituent, Mr. Herb Wheeler of Athol, Massachusetts.

On May 20th, 1998, the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce will be honoring Mr. Wheeler as Citizen of the Year. Mr. Wheeler is the co-owner, with his wife Colleen, of Flowerland Florist, located in Athol. The prestigious Citizen of the Year award is given to the person who has most exemplified selfless dedication to the pursuit of economic prosperity for the North Quabbin region.

From the beginning of his career, Herb Wheeler understood how important a thriving retail climate was for Main Street, not only to his own success, but to that of the whole town. Herb has worked diligently to bring retail businesses into Athol's downtown. His interest and involvement led him to the Athol Merchant's Association, of which he eventually became president. Through Herb's leadership, this organization grew into a group who's proactive commitment to economic development is unsurpassed in the region.

Herb Wheeler has become even more involved in his community as the years have

progressed. In addition to his leadership role with the Athol Merchant's Association, Herb is an executive board member of the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce, a board member of Athol-Orange Public Access Television, and a member of the Athol/Royalston School District Building Committee.

I join the Chamber in saluting Herb Wheeler's contributions, and look forward to working with Herb and the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce on future economic development endeavors.

#### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN LEGION POST #1172

### HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 50th Anniversary of American Legion Post #1172 in Evansville, Illinois. On Memorial Day, the Post will hold a special program in honor of this milestone.

While celebrating its 50th anniversary, Post #1172 will also be honoring several members for fifty years of continuous membership. Members recognized at the ceremony will be: John H. Bauer, Herbert Diercks, Clarence Jany, Edgar Kisro, Ralph Moll, Michael R. Otten, Glen U. Simpson, and Charles Suhre. John H. Bauer and Edgar Kisro both have the additional distinction of being charter members of Post #1172.

It is fitting that the Post hold this celebration on Memorial Day. Memorial Day is traditionally a special day for the members of the American Legion, and for our nation. It is a day for people across the nation gather to honor brave men and women who gave their lives so that we may live in freedom. Members of Post #1172 are proud of that service. Today, we honor their sacrifice on our behalf as well as joining them in celebrating this special anniversary.

Southern Illinois has a strong tradition of honoring the soldiers who have defended our honor and our nation. At its earliest inception Memorial Day was known as Decoration Day. Major General John A. Logan, of Illinois, declared the first national Decoration Day in 1868 to honor the war dead. A stone in a cemetery in Carbondale, Illinois states that the first Decoration Day ceremony took place there in 1866.

General Logan ordered soldiers' graves to be decorated with these words: "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic."

General Logan's words are as true today as they were 130 years ago. As Southern Illinois continues this fine tradition of observing Memorial Day, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring American Legion Post #1172 and all of our nation's veterans.

HONORING VINCENT A. BERGAMO  
FOR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE AS A  
NEW YORK STATE RACING OFFICIAL

### HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize the retirement of Vincent A. Bergamo from the New York State Racing and Wagering Board. After forty years of service, Vince leaves behind a legacy in the sport of harness racing that will forever be a testament to his deep-rooted love of horses and racing. His enthusiasm and experience will surely be missed.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Vince for several years. He has impressed me as a man of great character and integrity and I am fortunate to call him a friend. His career as a racing judge was characterized by hard-work and dedication and his contributions have left a lasting effect on the industry.

Vincent Bergamo began his distinguished career in 1958 at the Monticello Raceway in Monticello, New York as an Assistant Race Secretary. Having grown up with a keen appreciation for horses, Vince immediately excelled around the track. He was quickly offered a position in Saratoga, New York as presiding judge. He was 24 at the time, the youngest presiding judge in the state.

Vince's love of harness racing and his enthusiasm for his job brought him to every track in New York as well as tracks in Florida, Maryland, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania. Throughout all of these locations, Vince set the standard for judging. He was honest, fair and demanded the highest degree of competitiveness from the participants of his races. He was also the recipient of numerous accolades recognizing his accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, aside from judging, Vince tackled several other tasks in harness racing. On a purely voluntary basis, he became actively involved in the Goshen Historic Track—realizing that the track as the oldest exiting sporting site in the nation at that time. He has been credited with leading the crusade that saved the track. His efforts directly led to the listing of the track on the National Register of Historic Sites. Vince remains actively involved in the operation of this track and continues to promote racing throughout New York, the United States, and even the world—Vince's creation, the popular Billings Amateur Series has lasted some 16 years and has attracted international attention.

Looking past Vince's professional awards and accomplishments, and there are many, it is clear that above all else, Vince is a family man. While maintaining an extraordinarily active career, Vince, along with his wonderful wife, raised 10 beautiful children. He was, and remains today, active in all aspects of their lives.

Mr. Speaker, it is not often that a man like Vince Bergamo comes along. He is the epitome of class and integrity and his accomplishments both professionally and personally are remarkable. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Vincent Bergamo for 40 years of dedicated service and in wishing Vince, his wife, and his entire family many more years of health and happiness.