CONGRATULATING MARTHA HERNANDEZ FOR 45 YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO FIREMAN'S FUND

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, in an age in which the average job tenure is 5 years, it is increasingly rare fo someone to be with the same company for 20 years, and extraordinary that someone would be with one organization for 45 years and still engaging in the workplace with the same enthusiasm and professionalism that they had throughout their career.

Such is the case with Martha Hernandez, who joined the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company in San Francisco in May 1964 and continues to be with them today, moving with the company to Novato, California, in my Congressional District.

Martha came to Fireman's Fund as a 14-year-old girl having moved from Mexico City with her parents and brother Rubin to the United States where they settled in Pacifica, California. Her first job at the Fund was manually coding policies that would then go to a key punch operator, high tech for the time, but now the technological equivalent of the horse and buggy age. Over time, Martha's work continued to expand and she became an underwriting technician where she developed an excellent reputation for her attention to detail.

For Martha, the people at Fireman's Fund are a part of her family, and apparently it is a two way street. She left the company for a grand total of two weeks in 1984 when there was a reduction in force, but came back when her friends and colleagues helped find another job for her. As far as everyone is concerned, she never left Fireman's Fund just as no one can ever escape a loving home.

Martha is very involved in her church and is a devoted aunt to her four nephews and one niece and a two-year-old great niece. Over the years, she has made her own unique contributions to the Christmas holiday festivities at Fireman's Fund by bringing in her three types of homemade tamales that have reduced the enthusiasm her colleagues have for the ones they usually get in restaurants.

Martha continues to work at Fireman's Fund in their Resolution Services division, and commutes everyday from her home in San Francisco to Novato in her red and white Mini Cooper.

Madam Speaker, most of the news we read regarding work life is directed at people who are in top management who might be making the big decisions. However, our economy is really dependent upon the people who keep things going, processing the information, and making certain that goods and services are provided for. Martha Hernandez is a person who has helped our country to flourish, and it gives me tremendous pleasure to recognize her contribution to Fireman's Fund and to the well-being of the Bay Area.

TRIBUTE TO BURT BLUMERT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, Burton Samuel Blumert passed away on Monday March 30, following a long battle with cancer. Burt was a true hero of the freedom movement and my close friend, advisor, and business partner.

As the founder and manager of Camino Coins in Burlingame, CA, Burt was one of the nation's leading dealers in gold and silver coins. A student of Ludwig von Mises and the Austrian school of economics, Burt understood the important role precious metals played in protecting ordinary citizens from the damage wrought by fiat money and inflation. Thus, he regarded his work as a coin dealer not just as a business, but as an opportunity to help people by providing with some protection from the Federal Reserve's inflation tax.

After I stepped down from Congress in 1984, I partnered with Burt in the coin business, a partnership which lasted until I returned to Congress in 1996. Our partnership was based on nothing more than our words. As anyone who ever dealt with Burt could testify, that was all that was needed, because Burt's word was truly his bond. I am unaware of anyone who dealt with Burt who questioned his integrity or his commitment to his customers.

As well-known and respected as he was for his leadership in the coin business, Burt was best known as a promoter of libertarian ideas. Burt was a long time friend and patron of Murray Rothbard, one of Mises' top American students and a pioneer in economics, political theory, history, and much else. Burt helped Murray establish the Center for Libertarian Studies, and served as its president from 1975 until his death.

Burt also played a key role in the flourishing of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, which, as its name suggests, is the leading center for the promotion and development of Austrian economics and libertarian political theory in the nation. Burt served as a founding board member of the Institute and the chaired the Institute's board after the original chair, Mrs. Margit von Mises, passed away in 1993. He also published The Rothbard-Rockwell Report, a well-read libertarian newsletter written by Murray Rothbard and Mises Institute President Lew Rockwell.

Burt played a major role in making the ideas of liberty a force on the internet by serving as the publisher of Lewrockwell.com, as well supporting the development of Mises.org. Burt also played an instrumental role in the development of Antiwar.com. Burt also served as chairman of my first run for the presidency, and important counselor in the second.

In addition to his work with these organizations, Burt was a friend, mentor, and patron to numerous libertarian scholars and activists. He was incredibly generous with both his time and his resources. Talking to Burt was always a treat, because he had one of the best senses of humor I have ever known, and it seemed like he was always in a good mood. Events that would send his friends into fits of depression, rage, or both would be used by Burt as fodder for a series of jokes and wisecracks. Even in the last days of his battle with cancer he remained upbeat. One of Burt's friends called him shortly after learning about Burt's cancer, but instead of consoling Burt, this friend ending up having his sprits lifted by Burt's humor.

It is somewhat of a comfort to myself, and I am sure to Burt's other friends, to know that he lived long enough to see so many of his efforts bear fruit. Today, the Mises Institute teaches sound economies and the principles of liberty to thousands of students every year while Mises.org is one of the leading economics websites in the world. Lewrockwell.com is one of the top providers of political, economic, and cultural commentary on the web, while Antiwar.com is the leading source of information for scholars, journalists, and activists looking for material to combat the propaganda of the war party.

As I travel across the country, I am astounded at the number of young people I met who are interested in the cause of individual liberty, peace, and sound money. Many of them got their introduction to these ideas through one of the many organizations nurtured by Burt Blumert.

Madam Speaker, perhaps the highest compliment one can pay to a departed friend is to say that they left the world better than they found it. That is certainly true in the case of Burt Blumert. While I am saddened that I will never again benefit from Burt's good humor and wise counsel, I am comforted by knowing that I was blessed by his friendship and the thought that the vibrant and growing freedom movement will serve as a living monument to Burt for years to come. I therefore join friends of liberty around the world in mourning Burt's passing, and saluting all he accomplished during his lifetime.

IN RECOGNITION OF PRINCETON'S BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. BRAD ELLSWORTH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Princeton Community High School Boys Basketball Team for winning its first 3A State Championship. The victory capped a perfect 29–0 season for the Tigers and earned them their first state title in school history.

The Tigers defeated the Rochester Zebras by a score of 81–79 in a thrilling double overtime victory at Conseco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. I was able to attend the game and it was one of the best I've seen, with 16 lead changes and a last second pair of free throws to put Princeton over the top.

As Tigers' coach Tom Weeks said, ''That's what Indiana high school basketball is about. It doesn't get any better than what we saw tonight.''

These young men are shining examples of the idea that success in life comes to those who are willing to set goals and work hard to achieve them. They are an inspiration to me and everyone in the Princeton, Indiana, community who have followed them throughout the years.

Go Tigers!

RECOGNIZING PAUL K. HARRAL FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Paul K. Harral for his service to the Fort Worth community throughout his career with the Fort Worth Star Telegram. After providing his expertise for nearly a quarter-century in almost every news department of the Star Telegram, Harral will retire at the end of April.

Media is Harral's passion. Before joining the Star-Telegram family in 1986, Harral served the United Press International, Baptist Medical Center and Florida City Magazines Inc. In the Star-Telegram, his goal has always been to present the issues that are important to his community and keep citizens informed. Over the years, Harral served as Senior Editor of Metro news, Ombudsman, Editor of the editorial pages, Editor of zoning operations, and supervised the online department. Under his tenure in 1995, the Texas Associated Press Managing Editors (APME) recognized the weekend and daily commentary sections as best in the state.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to recognize Paul K. Harral for his years of service to Fort Worth. His devotion serves as an example to those who had the privilege of working with him. Even though he is retiring, his contribution will be forever appreciated by the Fort Worth community. It is an honor to represent him as a member of the 26th district of Texas.

TRIBUTE TO KEITH CLARKE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Corona, California are exceptional. Corona has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Keith Clarke is one of these individuals. On April 16, 2009, Keith will retire as the Director of the Building Department for the City of Corona.

Keith graduated from Pacifica High School in 1973 and obtained his Associates Degree in Engineering from Cypress Junior College in 1976. He attended the University of California at Los Angeles and then attended California State University at Long Beach from 1977 to 1979.

After attending college, Keith became a General Contractor and contracted a variety of projects which included masonry structures, patio covers and room additions. From 1981 to 1982, Keith worked as a Deputy Concrete and Masonry Inspector for Southern California Testing Labs where he performed inspections on masonry and concrete structures in order to insure compliance with approved plans and structural specifications. In 1982, Keith came to the City of Corona and he began as a Building Inspector. He quickly rose up the ranks: he became a Senior Building Inspector in 1984, an Assistant Building Official in 1986, a Building Official/Director in 1989, the Acting Director of Parks and Community Services in 2005 and the Building Official/Director from October 2005 to March 31, 2009.

Keith is a member of several organizations, including: the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO), the International Association of Electrical Inspectors, the International Fire Code Institute, Building Officials and Code Administrators, the Citrus Belt Chapter of ICBO, and California Building Officials. He also serves or has served on the California Building Officials (CALBO) Board of Directors, the CALBO State Contractors License Board, the United States Navy League, the CALBO State Historical Code Committee, the ICC Citrus Belt Chapter, the Toastmasters International, and the Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Club and as a Calbo CTI Instructor.

Keith has received several awards over the years including: Building Inspector of the Year; Citrus Belt Chapter ICBO 1986; Building Official of the Year; Citrus Belt Chapter ICBO 1988; Toastmasters, Best Table Topics Speech Contest 1997; California Building Officials, Building Department of the Year, 2003; California Building Officials, Building Official of the Year, 2004; and California Building Officials, Hall of Fame Award, 2009.

Keith's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Corona, California. I am proud to call Keith a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him and his 27 years of service to the City of Corona.

HONORING ROBERT AYERS GOULD, SR.

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, today I would like to honor Mr. Robert Ayers Gould, Sr., for his exceptional leadership and outstanding public service.

After graduating from Athens High School in 1957, Bob joined the United States Navy where he served aboard the USS *Coral Sea*. Following an Honorable Discharge, he returned to Athens where he opened the Gould Insurance Agency in 1962, which he has owned and operated for over forty years.

Bob Gould served on the City Council of Athens for twelve years before his retirement in 2007, where he oversaw many projects benefiting his community. Among his many civic activities, Bob has been the Director and Vice-President of the Athens Chamber of Commerce, Co-Founder of the Texas High School Basketball Hall of Fame, and the Charter Director for the Henderson County YMCA. He has also received many awards from his community, including the Roadhand Award from the Texas Highway Commission and the Athens Citizen of the Year Award in 1984.

In addition to faithfully serving his community, Bob is a husband to Mrs. Peggy Lorene Lubben Gould and father of four children: Robert Jr., Joseph, Patricia, and Mary.

I want to recognize Bob for his service and commitment to his community. Due to Bob's leadership in the city and throughout the business community, Athens remains a strong, supportive, and vibrant community.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the 5th District of Texas, it is my pleasure to recognize my good friend Mr. Robert Ayers Gould, Sr. for being an invaluable public servant and community leader.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to reintroduce the Private Property Protection Act of 2009. I am also pleased to be joined again by Rep. JIM SENSENBRENNER, the Chairman Emeritus of the Judiciary, and the lead Republican on this bipartisan bill. This bill is successor to H.R. 3053, from the 110th Congress and we are joined today by 24 original copsonsors.

The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution provides in part that ''nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.''

On June 23, 2005, a majority of the Supreme Court chose to close its eyes to the Constitution and our Nation's rich history of protecting private property rights. The Supreme Court's 5–4 decision in Kelo vs. City of New London, held that ''economic development'' can be a ''public use'' under the Fifth Amendment's Takings Clause justifying the government's taking of private property. The Court held that the creation of a more lucrative tax base can justify the government's taking of private property from one small homeowner and giving it to a large corporation for a private research facility.

The Kelo decision interpreted government taking for ''public use'' to mean no more than ''public purpose.'' Put simply, this decision meant that government would have an almost unlimited ability to seize private property—homes, churches, synagogues, and thriving businesses—and hand it over to private companies so long as they convince the local land authority that the project will yield economic benefit for a community that has been arbitrarily deemed ''distressed.'' Private companies and developers all over the country went into a frenzy to file project site plans when Kelo was decided. They knew that they would be able to make huge amounts of money so long as they produced public benefit—this was a ridiculous over-expansion of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

As the dissent in Kelo pointed out, ''To reason, as the Court does, that the incidental public benefits resulting from the subsequent ordinary use of private property render economic development takings 'for public use' is to wash out any distinction between private and public use of property—and thereby effectively to delete the words 'for public use' from the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment.'' The dissent made clear that, as a result of the