CONGRATULATIONS BASEBALL STANDOUT STEVE RUGGERI

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 1995

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Mr. Steve Ruggeri who was recently invited to play in the U.S. Olympic Festival baseball competition held in Colorado Springs, CO. Now a senior at Johnston City High, Steve is considered one of the top baseball players in southern Illinois. He is known throughout the State for his commanding presence at shortstop, and played last season for the Herrin Thunderbirds American Legion team and the Herrin High School Tigers.

I trust that Steve's experience at the U.S. Olympic Festival was as memorable for him as it was for his family. Becoming an award winning baseball player takes more than simply raw talent. It takes a strong commitment to working hard, always doing your best, and most importantly it takes family support. Steve has been blessed with these precious gifts, and I wish him the best of luck in all he does.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Steve Ruggeri's determination to make his baseball dreams come true. Being selected to play in the U.S. Olympic Festival is a marvelous accomplishment, and I am proud to represent this outstanding athlete and his family in Congress.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESS EXPORT

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, September 27, 1995, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESS EXPORT

I recently held some meetings with 9th District businesses on ways to help them export, and I was impressed by the extent to which several are already involved in exporting. Local companies are exporting products ranging from chairs and machines to popcorn and sewer pipe. Hossiers are sending their products not just to Canada and Mexico but also to Japan, South Korea, and Australia. For some companies, exports represent as much as half of their business. There is an increasing recognition among local businesses that much of their future growth lies in exports. Yet smaller businesses in particular need more information and assistance with how to pursue export opportunities.

IMPORTANCE OF EXPORTS

Exports are an increasingly important factor in our economy—both in Indiana and nationwide. Since 1988, exports have accounted for more than one-third of our nation's economic growth, and export-related jobs have grown eight times faster than total employment. Strong export growth is good news for our economy. Exports tend to support jobs that are higher-skilled and higher-paying—some 15% higher—than average U.S. jobs.

In Indiana, exports have nearly doubled since 1988, reaching a record $9.2 billion last year. The leading export industries in Indiana are transportation equipment, industrial machinery and computer equipment, chemicals, and electronic equipment. Nearly 80% of Hoosier exports are from the manufacturing sector, with the rest coming from mining (17%) and agriculture (4%). Indiana exports support roughly 180,000 Hoosier jobs. In the 9th District, more than 700 manufacturers are pursuing export opportunities. Despite these successes, I find that most Hoosiers are not fully aware of the extent to which current and future jobs in their communities are linked to exports. It is no exaggeration to say that much of our area's economic future—including our ability to create good-paying jobs—is linked to our ability to export and be competitive in the world market.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

U.S. export prospects look good for the remainder of this decade. World economic growth is expected to be strong over the next several years, generating increased demand for U.S. products and services. Recent international trade agreements are lowering trade barriers and opening promising new markets to U.S. companies. Continued low U.S. inflation will boost the price competitiveness of our products. Overall, U.S. exports are expected to grow between 8.5% and 10% annually for the rest of this decade. Increased exports mean business growth, greater profits, and more and better jobs for U.S. workers.

CHALLENGE FOR SMALL BUSINESS

I find that large corporations in the District are generally well-informed about the importance of exports. They often have employees who specialized in identifying and exploiting export opportunities. But many small businesses—those with 50 or fewer employees—still find the prospect of exporting daunting. Small businesses account for 24% of the manufacturing sector's total sales, but only 12% of its exports. Even when they have a product or service they believe will be attractive overseas, many small businesses do not know how to get started or how to explore potential markets.

Certainly companies can get help from the local business community and from business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. And they can hire export management companies to help them establish overseas markets for their products. But government can also play a supportive role.

STATE EFFORTS

The Indiana state government has fourteen Small Business Development Centers located throughout the state to assist companies that are relatively new to exporting. These Centers help companies prepare international marketing plans and target certain foreign markets for their products. The International Trade Division of the Indiana Department of Commerce offers financial and technical assistance to small and medium-sized firms, and maintains seven foreign trade offices in Canada, Mexico, Europe and Asia to help Hoosier companies enter new markets.

FEDERAL EFFORTS

At the most general level, the federal government gets involved by negotiating the reduction or removal of foreign trade barriers to our products and by working to maintain a stable international economy. By working to promote stability and prosperity in the world economy, U.S. policy creates new opportunities for U.S. firms abroad.

But the federal government also assists Hoosier companies more directly. U.S. officials act as advocates overseas for companies bidding on foreign contracts, especially on government contracts. Federal agencies such as the Export-Import Bank and the Small Business Administration help finance projects in countries where private banks will not tread. The U.S. Department of Commerce—the lead agency for trade policy and export promotion—provides export counseling, country and regional market information, and overseas promotion services. It provides information to local businesses on the latest export opportunities and resources through newsletters, faxes, and on-line computer services. Export Assistance Centers have been set up to provide a single point of contact for all federal export promotion and finance programs.

BUDGET PRESSURES

The effort to balance the federal budget is forcing a reevaluation of many U.S. government programs that support business. The congressional budget plan passed earlier this year recommends eliminating the Commerce Department, terminating federal assistance for Small Business Development Centers, and reducing funding for the Export-Import Bank. Certainly some cutbacks can be made, and various programs could be streamlined or combined with others to make them run better at less cost. But we should not gut worthwhile programs that help create profits and jobs for American enterprises. It would be short-sighted to end export programs that are producing significant results and are helping to improve our country's long-term economic outlook.

CONCLUSION

Exports are critical to our nation's economic future and to the job prospects of many of our young people today. U.S. businesses both large and small need to think globally and try to tap into the vast and rapidly growing markets overseas.

TRIBUTE TO VINCENT M. PICCIANO

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 1995

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Vincent M. Picciano who is retiring as the director of court services for the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in Fairfax County, VA.

For the past 34 years Vince has served the court, first as a probation counselor, then as probation supervisor. In 1965, he became its director where he was responsible for a wide range of intake, probation, detention, and other residential services. At the court he has been instrumental in implementing an extensive management information system and has overseen the design and construction of a major juvenile courthouse renovation project plus four youth residential programs with several new ones planned.

In addition to his duties as director of the court, Mr. Picciano has served as chair of the Virginia Court Directors Association, the Virginia Juvenile Officers Association as well as other local and regional groups addressing the needs of youth and families in trouble. He is currently president of CASA, Fairfax County's Court Appointed Special Advocate program for abused and neglected children.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in honoring Vincent M. Picciano for his many years of service to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court and his community of Fairfax, VA and wish him well in his retirement.