UNREASONABLE SHIPPING RATE PROVISION HARMS OFFSHORE AREAS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 1995

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my concerns with the maritime provisions of H.R. 2539, legislation to abolish the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Federal Maritime Commission. As the conferees meet on this legislation, I urge them to strike the section defining a ''zone of reasonableness'' for rates.

This provision would allow carriers to raise their rates 10 percent per year, plus 7.5 percent in the version passed by the other body. Such increases would be deemed reasonable and no challenge would be allowed. It does not matter if costs decrease, the price of fuel is cut in half, more efficient ships can do the job at half the price, labor costs are significantly lowered, or economic factors cause all other prices to decrease.

To call this a zone of reasonableness is an oxymoron. I know of no other industry which is guaranteed a yearly increase of 10 percent plus inflation. I know of no other law that guarantees in statute a formula for increasing prices year after year. Such a guarantee is not a move toward deregulation of the transportation industry as the legislation is designed to do.

For those of us who receive a majority of our goods by ocean carrier, this provision would significantly impact our economy. We do not have other transportation options. If enacted, this legislation would encourage businesses on Guam to buy fewer goods from the mainland because of the unprecedented increases in rates. It would result in an increase in the importation of goods from foreign nations because we would have no other choice. People on Guam want to buy goods from the mainland, but not if the shipping costs make consumer prices increase at an astonishing rate.

As the conferees meet on H.R. 2539, I urge the conferees to consider the economic effects of enacting such an anti-competitive provision, under the mantle of deregulation, and the dangerous precedent it sets. I encourage the conferees to strike this provision.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL BRUTON

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 1995

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great sadness at the recent passing of Michael Bruton at the age of 59. Michael Bruton, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, died Sunday, November 12, from complications caused by cancer.

Michael held numerous positions with the CFL and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. He was elected president of the CFL in 1994, and had been assistant to the president since January 1986. He served as vice president of the CFL.

Michael started his union career in 1954, when he became an apprentice electrician with Local 134. He was a 1954 graduate of De La Salle High School in Chicago. He attended Washburne Trade School and received his journeyman credentials in 1958. He also attended the Kennedy Electronics School and the University of Illinois Labor Program from 1972 to 1976. In 1989, he was appointed to the board of directors of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority by Mayor Richard Daley. Michael was a former member of the Illinois State Board of Education. He served as secretary of the board and vice chairman of its Equal Employment Opportunity Committee.

Michael was a member of St. Daniel the Prophet Church on Chicago's Southwest Side and its Holy Name Society. He coached basketball at St. Daniel in the 1980's, and was active in the Boy Scouts of America. Michael served on the board of the United Way/Crusade of Mercy Catholic Charities, the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Planning Council and the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau. He also was a labor representative on the Chicago Private Industry Council and served several other charitable and civic organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my condolences to his wife, Marilyn; three sons, Michael, Timothy, and Thomas; six daughters, Susan Cerebona, Mary Beth Carroll, Nancy Herbster, Sharon, Denise, and Karen; three brothers, Lawrence, Patrick, and James; and two sisters, Ann Howell and Pauline Thomas.

TRIBUTE TO MR. STEPHEN LEE, LOCAL FARMER, PATRIARCH, AND AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 1995

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago our Nation celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday. It was a time to spend gathered with family and being thankful for all that we have. For the family of Stephen V. Lee, Jr., a local cranberry farmer back home in my district, it was a time to truly give thanks.

Stephen Lee is an American success story. After serving his country in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Mr. Lee returned to America and took up the family tradition as a cranberry farmer.

Although his family had successfully farmed their property as early as the 1870's, the Great Depression had forced its closure until Mr. Lee took individual initiative to restore and revive the family's agricultural heritage. After years of hard work, Mr. Lee and his sons reclaimed the land, restored old bogs, and built new ones used for growing the berries. His original loan of a couple thousand dollars in the 1940's has flourished into a multimillion-dollar farm. Throughout this productive return to the family heritage of cranberry farming, Mr. Lee has continued to be a strong father and grandfather as well as a leader throughout the community.

Mr. Speaker, recently Modern Maturity magazine published a story entitled ''Crimson Harvest'' which details the life of Stephen Lee. I would ask that this article also be included as part of Extension of Remarks as a tribute to Mr. Lee.

[From Modern Maturity, Nov.–Dec. 1995]

CRIMSON HARVEST

(By Mark Wexler)

On a brisk autumn afternoon Stephen V. Lee, Jr., looks out onto a sea of floating red berries and beams like a little boy who has just opened a bag of Halloween candy. ''How that's what I call a pretty crop,'' he says with a big smile. ''There's good crimson color on the fruit this year, and that means a sweet Thanksgiving.''

Lee is a fourth-generation cranberry farmer living the American dream in the heart of New Jersey's scenic Pine Barrens region. In the late 1940s he used a $4,000 loan to rescue his historic family farm from the brink of bankruptcy. Now, after years of hard work, he's turned the operation into a million-dollar business.

''This is my life,'' he says, pointing to the miles of red-colored bogs surrounded by trees and marshes. ''I've got cranberry juice running through my veins.'' Today, at 85, Lee continues to put in long days in what he calls his ''labor of love.'' and his two sons are by his side.

Family farmers like the Lees cultivate most of the world's cranberries on only about 30,000 acres in the United States and Canada. There are 44 other families that grow the berries in the Pine Barrens, a 2,000-square-mile oasis of forests, wetlands and wildlife in southern New Jersey that in 1979 was designated a federal preserve, which protects the area by controlling development. Last year Pine Barrens growers produced more than 53 million pounds of cranberries, a figure only Massachusetts and Wisconsin farmers surpassed. ''It's not the easiest way to make a living,'' says Lee, ''but it keeps me young.''

The object of Lee's affection is more American than apple pie. European settlers introduced the apple to this continent; the cranberry is native to North America. A slender vine that creeps along the ground, the cranberry plant produces a tart-tasting, finicky fruit that survives only in very specialized conditions: It requires an acid peat soil, sand, plenty of fresh water, and a growing season stretching from April to November. Under those conditions the vines can live indefinitely; some Cape Cod cranberry plants are more than 150 years old.

Cranberries don't actually grow in water. Instead, they blossom on the dense mat of vines that make up impermeable beds in marshy areas called bogs, which glacial deposits originally formed. Native Americans in the Northeast picked the berries from the natural bogs and used them to flavor their food and dye their blankets and clothing. Because raw cranberries have an astringent effect that contracts tissue and stops bleeding, the Indians also used the fruit to make poultices for wounds. And they made a tea from the leaves to use as a diuretic.

Legend has it that when the Pilgrims arrived in New England in 1620, the Wampanoag Indians who greeted them gave the settlers ibimi (''bitter berries'') as goodwill gifts. Apparently the word ibimi didn't roll easily off the Plymouth colonists' tongues, so they coined their own names for the fruit. Noticing that the vine's flowers vaguely resembled cranes' heads, they eventually dubbed their new food ''crane-berries.''

Historians disagree over whether cranberries were actually served at the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621, but one fact is certain: They became a big hit with the English settlers, who found the fruit not only edible and useful as a dye but also ''excellent against the Scurvy.''

Word of the miraculous berries soon spread back to England, and the colonists recognized a good thing when they saw it. With a