

support to the orthodontic industry since 1989 and currently employs 65 people.

Ultimate Wireforms was searching for opportunities to expand their product offerings and decided to focus on the Titanium arch wire business which was undergoing rapid growth. Titanium arch wires apply higher forces to the teeth, which accelerate the corrective orthodontic process. Ultimate, however had no titanium technology experts in house and was being restricted from entering this market by an existing patent, held by a competitor.

Ultimate initially attempted to find a Titanium alloy to leap-frog the patent but all of the candidate alloys had one or more drawbacks and, consequently, were not pursued beyond the laboratory phase. With the eventual expiration of the patent, Ultimate was poised to pursue entry into this market, but lacked the in-house expertise to develop Titanium technology. This led them to CONN/STEP for help. A CONN/STEP specialist, knowledgeable in the Titanium industry, identified melting, ingot conversion and wire making suppliers to make small and medium-sized experimental quantities. CONN/STEP soon became the technical interface with the titanium suppliers, resolving problems as they arose until multiple batches with the correct composition and mechanical properties were produced. Ultimate has since entered the Titanium arch market and is now enjoying a 60% increase in sales.

Satisfied with the technical service, Ultimate Wireforms had subsequently entered into several additional projects with CONN/STEP, including a comprehensive assessment of their accounting and financial system to help Ultimate better understand their internal functions as well as their place in the market.

IN RECOGNITION OF DEDICATED  
SERVICE BY MR. ROBERT TOBIAS

SPEECH OF

**HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 27, 1999*

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true leader in the Federal Employees community, Robert Tobias. Since 1983, Bob Tobias has served as the President of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) and he has been involved with NTEU since 1968. Bob Tobias has a proud thirty-one year legacy with NTEU and he has improved the workplace for all federal employees. Since 1995 when I first came to Congress, I have had the opportunity to work with Bob on supporting federal employees and their issues.

Tonight, several members of Congress from both sides of the aisle will pay tribute to Bob and his many victories at the helm of NTEU. When my distinguished colleague, Representative STENY HOYER, and I first sent out a request for participation in an evening of Special Orders, I was overwhelmed by the number of my colleagues who expressed an immediate interest in participating in paying tribute to Bob. It is a testament to his ability to work with members of both political parties to find a common ground that protects federal employees and continues to bring our federal government into the Twenty-First Century.

Every major battle that involved federal employees over the past twenty years has included Bob Tobias. He was integral to the creation of the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) in 1983, protecting the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP), restructuring the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), advocating for the closure of the pay gap for federal employees, and instrumental in reforming the Hatch Act which allows federal employees to exercise their rights to participate in political activity.

Bob has not only encouraged federal employees to become more involved politically at both the national and grassroots level, but has also pursued litigation as a tool to advance and expand worker interests. Bob has not only led the fight in landmark court battles, but before the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Federal Service Impasses Panel, and the Office of Personnel Management.

Under his leadership, federal employees won a federal court victory giving them the right to engage in informational picketing; a Supreme Court win that overturned the ban on speaking and writing honoraria; and just earlier this year, another Supreme Court victory in a critical case that established in law the right of federal employees and their collective bargaining representatives to initiate midterm bargaining. That victory gives employees the same rights that agency managers have, and, to a very great extent, levels the negotiations playing field.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned previously, I have worked closely with Bob Tobias on numerous federal employee issues. Bob has dual goals that he has continually achieved throughout his tenure at NTEU—protecting the rights of federal employees, and ensuring that our government effectively and efficiently accomplishes its job. It has been my great honor to work with Bob in meeting those goals.

As one of the primary advocates for federal employees, Bob constantly reminded us of the necessity of hiring the best and the brightest to work in the government, and the necessity of retaining those employees who have the knowledge and expertise to get the job done. He and I have worked together to keep federal employees in the workforce by making sure that they have the same rights, benefits, and protections as do their colleagues in the private sector.

Before I came to Congress, I worked as high-tech executive for a government contracting firm in Northern Virginia. We made it our top priority to treat our human capital as our most valuable asset. Unfortunately, the federal government does not do that with its federal employees who often make numerous sacrifices to be in public service. Instead, it has always been more popular to ask federal employees to sacrifice pay raises, and forego benefits, or to simply perpetuate negative stereotypes of federal employees. Bob Tobias has always known this is inaccurate and he has devoted his entire career to giving federal employees a stronger voice.

For many years, Bob has sought to educate the members of NTEU and federal employees of the importance of participating in the legislative process. I have had the opportunity to speak to the Northern Virginia legislative leaders as well as those who represent their colleagues from across the country at NTEU's annual legislative conference in Washington,

D.C. It is apparent to me that the legislative program is thriving because of Bob Tobias and his commitment to ensuring that the voices of federal employees are heard on Capitol Hill.

NTEU was one of the main forces behind passage of a bipartisan bill, signed into law by President George Bush that would close the pay gap between the government and the private sector. Since the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act (FEPCA) became law, Bob has fought to have the FEPCA language enforced and the pay raises provided for in the law fully funded for federal employees.

During the 105th Congress, Bob and I worked closely together on efforts to restructure the IRS and to ensure that the rights of both the American taxpayer and IRS employees were protected. Bob sought to make the employee's voices heard in the discussions of how to make the IRS more customer-service oriented and more responsive to the needs of the people it serves. IRS reform continues to be on-track and successful. This is in large part because of Bob Tobias' efforts to involve the employees at the agency.

I am certain that he will enjoy many new successes as he pursues writing, teaching, and educating a new generation. I am personally saddened that I will no longer be working with Bob on the numerous issues that affect the many federal employees living in the Eleventh Congressional District of Virginia but I wish Bob, his wife, and his family well as he pursues new opportunities. I will miss his leadership, his commitment, and his expertise.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in honoring Bob Tobias on his retirement as President of NTEU. Bob has been a tireless advocate for federal employees for the past thirty-one years, and I would like to join my colleagues in saluting him this evening. His dedication to federal employees and their issues is second to none. His commitment and leadership in the federal employees community will be surely missed.

TRIBUTE TO MR. THOMAS  
CHARLES UNIS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 29, 1999*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to honor one of the most productive civic leaders in the history of Dallas, Mr. Thomas Charles Unis, who passed away on July 17th. Mr. Unis was a gentleman, and an outstanding public servant. He was one of the best legal minds ever produced by the state of Texas. The City of Dallas is forever indebted to Mr. Unis for his leadership, and commitment to public service. The loss of Thomas Unis is an incredible blow to Dallas. We are comforted by the fact that Mr. Unis led an exemplary life.

As a man of faith, Mr. Unis was held in the highest regard, being designated a papal knight of St. Gregory by Pope Pius XII in 1953, as well as Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, and a Knight of Malta. Honors were no stranger to Mr. Unis, as he received praise for his dedication to community service, as founder or charter member of a number of organizations including the Catholic Foundation, University