The Garden State Symphonic Band has played at numerous venues including the Garden State Arts Center and the Clinton Museum, in addition to several county and municipal parks. Each summer, the band provides 8–10 free outdoor performances entitled ''Concerts by the Bay'' at Bayview Park in Perth Amboy.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in celebrating the centennial anniversary of the Garden State Symphonic Band. Through its cultural and artistic contributions, the Garden State Symphonic Band has become an integral part of the New Jersey community.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2007

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues Mr. HINOJOSA and the Mrs. BIGGERT, for introducing H. Res. 273, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Financial Literacy Month. As a member of the Financial and Economic Literacy Caucus and a cosponsor of this resolution, I am proud to support this measure.

In this 21st century economy, more Americans have access to financial services and products than ever before. With the click of a button, consumers can perform a variety of financial activities over the Internet, from paying bills to managing investments. Increased availability of credit allows more people to enjoy the benefits of easy access to capital and enhanced purchasing power. Today, half of all American households own stocks. This growing number of ''investor class'' Americans are participating in financial markets through retirement plans, investment vehicles or Internet trading accounts.

Yet, as this resolution recognizes, we must do more to ensure that American citizens not only have access to these important financial services, but are equipped with the knowledge to make critical financial decisions as they plan for the future. Whether it is buying a home, paying for college, starting a small business or planning for retirement, it is imperative that we help individuals develop a solid foundation in personal finance.

We must also continue efforts to ensure that individuals are equipped with the proper tools to make smart financial decisions from an early age. Reading, writing and math, the traditional cornerstones of our education system, need to be supplemented with a curriculum that will equip America's youth to meet the real-life demands of the 21st century. In the fast-paced and increasingly complex world in which we live, teaching our students about personal finance issues, from basic spending decisions to investing and saving for retirement, is critical. The efforts of organizations like Visa USA, Citigroup, the Credit Union National Association, the American Bankers Association and the Securities Industry Association have helped to bring financial literacy programs to our Nation's youth in classrooms, after-school programs and libraries. I am proud that in my own district, Bonita High School, the Boys and Girls Club of the Foothills and the Glendora Public Library have had the opportunity to benefit from these programs.

It is also important to note that efforts to enhance financial literacy should not just be confined to our own country. As we strive for expanded trade and investment with our global partners, the financial ups and downs in world markets have a greater impact on our local economies. Helping to spread financial and economic literacy to emerging markets is critically important to establishing stability in developing nations. For example, in 2004 Citigroup and the Citigroup Foundation provided more than $22 million in support of financial education programs in activities that reached millions of people in more than 40 countries. These activities included community development projects to support the expansion of thrift and credit-based cooperative groups in India and the development of a micro-finance industry in China.

Ultimately, expanding access to the financial system and knowledge of its workings provides individuals with greater choice when managing finances, building wealth and making investments. These activities in turn lead to increases in economic activity and growth that benefits our entire Nation. I urge my colleagues to recognize the importance of financial literacy and support this measure.

TRIBUTE TO NEW DIRECTIONS ON ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate New Directions, a remarkable program located in the congressional district I represent, on celebrating its 15th year.

New Directions is a superb veterans' service organization located on the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs property. Started by Toni Reinis and John Keaveney 15 years ago in a small rented house, it has grown to encompass four facilities totaling 223 long-term residential treatment beds for homeless veterans and their dependents.

New Directions has become a national model for the successful treatment of veterans battling co-occurring disorders—mental illness and substance abuse. Over the past 15 years, New Directions has been responsible for assisting over 8,000 homeless veterans and their families in getting back on their feet and reintegrated into our community.

New Directions provides a comprehensive network of therapeutic services to assist veterans. Veterans living at New Directions are given job training and placement assistance, parenting and money management classes, legal and financial assistance, remedial education and resources for alumni. Residents leave New Directions with a job, housing, a savings account, computer skills, renewed self-confidence and the support of mentors and peers. Under Toni and John's guidance, veterans undergo astounding, life-altering transformations.

As veterans enter the building, the first thing they see is a plaque on the outside of the building that refers to New Directions as ''The Last House on the Block.'' Veterans arrive often feeling they have bottomed out and are without hope of overcoming their challenges. New Directions offers them another chance to turn their lives around.

Los Angeles has the largest population of homeless veterans in the Nation. An estimated 24,000 veterans live on the streets of Los Angeles. Many of them suffer from co-occurring disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder—PTSD—as well as chronic medical problems. New Directions welcomes these veterans and offers them a safe environment to address their challenges.

I want to thank and acknowledge Toni and John for the tremendous contributions they have made to veterans these past 15 years. Their dedication and commitment are inspirational. They have helped rebuild countless lives and for that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our highest praise and thanks to Toni Reinis and John Keaveney on celebrating the first 15 years of New Directions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AND MANUFACTURING STIMULATION ACT OF 2007

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today as an original co-sponsor of the Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act of 2007. This bill provides a three-year authorization for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). NIST is one of three agencies targeted by the President's American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI). The ACI aims to double the federal investment in physical science research over the next 10 years. This investment will ensure that American remains technologically competitive in the complex global marketplace.

NIST plays a unique role in that its scientists and engineers have a 100-year plus history of working directly with American industries to address their needs for measurement methods, tools, data, and technology. These are the building blocks that allow industry to grow and prosper. To cite just a few examples, NIST's labs develop chemical, biochemical, and chemical engineering measurements, data, models, and reference standards, provide measurement science for the electronics and electrical industries, and research and develop test methods and standards to improve the usability, reliability and security of computers and computer networks for work and home.

The Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act of 2007 supports the President's ACI by authorizing NIST's labs at a rate that would double the budget over the next 10 years. The bill also supports the competitiveness of American's small and medium-sized manufacturers by authorizing the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program. Finally, the bill ensures that new research findings will find their way quickly to the marketplace by authorizing the Technology Innovation Program to provide grants to accelerate the development of high-risk technologies.