

Restaurant Association and in 1997 the association selected him for their highest honor by induction to the TRA's Hall of Fame.

In his free time, Mr. Leger could be found cooking for local fundraisers and charitable organizations such as the Young Mens Business League, Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, City of Beaumont, Texas Fire Museum, Boys Haven, and at the Texas State Capitol. Best known for his gumbo, Mr. Leger once said he had "cooked enough gumbo to float a battleship, over 12,000 lobsters, and millions of pounds of crawfish".

On Tuesday, May 31, 2011, Mr. Leger went to be with our Lord but he will always be remembered and highly thought of by the many lives he touched and the countless hours he devoted giving back to the community he called home. Mr. Leger leaves behind his high school sweetheart, Patricia, to whom he was married for 52 years and three loving daughters, Rhonda, Angie, and Jodie with families of their own, including five grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, stories like A.J. Leger's remind us of what truly makes America a great Nation. It is an honor to join with the Southeast Texas community in honoring the life of Mr. A.J. Leger.

HONORING ANTHONY "SONNY"
BERTONE

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Vermont veteran on his 90th birthday, Anthony "Sonny" Bertone.

A resident of Bennington, Vermont, Mr. Bertone served his country with bravery and honor in the United States Army during the Second World War. Mr. Bertone was assigned to Company "C" of the 634th Tank Destroyer Battalion, a Company that at many times was assigned to campaigns under General George S. Patton.

Mr. Bertone fought in some of the most important campaigns throughout the war, including Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. Mr. Bertone also fought to secure the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen, Germany and concluded his service in Czechoslovakia.

Mr. Bertone was honorably discharged from the Army in 1945 and received the Croix De Guerre. Upon leaving the Army, Mr. Bertone went on to raise his family in New Jersey before moving to Vermont.

As Vermont's Representative in this Congress, I ask that Mr. Bertone be recognized for his accomplishments and applauded for his service to the state of Vermont and the United States of America.

46TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
CREATION OF MEDICARE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, today, Congressman ED TOWNS joined millions of grateful recipients in celebrating the 46th anniversary of

the enactment of Medicare, signed into law on July 30, 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson. Today, Medicare provides comprehensive health care coverage to 47 million Americans, including 39 million seniors and eight million people with disabilities under the age of 65 years old. Many consider Medicare one of the crowning achievements of the Democratic Party.

"On the 46th anniversary of Medicare it is important to recognize the profound impact it has had on American families. Slightly more than half of Americans over the age of 65 years had health coverage in 1964. Today coverage is virtually universal," stated TOWNS. "Because of Medicare, millions of Americans enjoy guaranteed benefits and affordable premiums for health care at a time in their lives when they need it most."

Medicare is arguably the best anti-poverty program to ever come out of Congress. Nearly 30 percent of seniors lived below the poverty line in 1964. Since Medicare was signed into law that number has dropped to 7.5 percent. Recent studies have shown, the average Medicare beneficiary saves hundreds of dollars per year in premiums because of Medicare. Most Americans believe Medicare must be preserved, regardless of age.

"Support for Medicare is nearly universal among Americans across the political spectrum, yet we have heard recently proposals that would end the program as we know it," TOWNS stated. Some of my colleagues passed a budget that would replace Medicare with a voucher system where seniors would be forced to spend \$6,000 on average to purchase private insurance. I have made a commitment to vigorously fight any policies that would change Medicare. Medicare is a program that has worked well for millions of Americans and their families and I will do all I can to preserve it."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 308, I was delayed in leaving a meeting with a constituent off the House floor during this two-minute votes series and was unable to cast my vote before the vote was closed.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

INTRODUCTION OF THE BILL TO PROVIDE FOR AN ANNUAL AUDIT OF THE UNION STATION REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a bill to require greater accountability for a prized federal asset, Union Station in Washington, D.C. My bill would require an annual audit by the Department of Transportation Inspector General of the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, USRC, and Union Sta-

tion, which is owned by the Department of Transportation. For decades, no official audit has been performed and, increasingly, questions have been raised about the management and condition of the facility.

Commissioned by Congress, Union Station first opened in 1907 as a train facility for the nation's capital, with a much heralded design by the famous architect Daniel Burnham. The station once was the largest building in the nation's capital. However, Union Station deteriorated from a bustling transportation hub and commercial center as rail use declined in the 1950s. Following a long series of failed ideas, wasted federal funds, cost overruns, major utility needs and mismanagement, Congress passed the Union Station Redevelopment Act (P.L. 97-125) in 1981, authorizing the Secretary of Transportation to create USRC, a non-profit corporation, to spearhead the redevelopment of Union Station into a modern facility, to maintain and expand it into a great intermodal facility, and to protect the federal government's interest in the station. In 1988, Union Station, which had become a neglected, boarded up wasteland hardly fit for trains, reopened after a multi-million dollar renovation with federal funds as a beautiful historically restored facility, shopping mall, and major multi-modal transit hub and tourist destination.

When I chaired the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, we held what likely were the first hearings on Union Station since the USRC was formed and the renovations were completed. I was astonished to find that there was no master plan to account for the major renovations and modernizations planned for inside and outside of the station, including reconstruction of Columbus Circle, expanded Metro access for the busiest Metrorail station in the region, development of Burnham Place, a three-million square foot mixed-use development project over the rail tracks, and indispensable expansion of the concourse and waiting areas for Amtrak, the Maryland Rail Commuter Service, MARC, and the Virginia Railway Express, VRE. Today, the various components of Union Station have developed a master plan for the station, including a separate Amtrak master plan that currently is being developed because of the urgent need to improve capacity and service along the Northeast Corridor. Yet both the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management have met significant resistance as we continue to press USRC to create an intercity bus deck in its existing space, in accordance with its mission to develop and maintain a true intermodal facility. It was only after two hearings and letters from the committee and from me that USRC developed a "pilot" intercity bus deck. Even so, after failed negotiations with intercity bus companies, it has required many meetings between USRC and me and my staff, a meeting with Chairman MICA and me, and the inclusion of the Department of Transportation, which, by statute, chairs the USRC Board of Directors, to finally jumpstart meaningful discussions on a permanent intercity bus program.

The audit is particularly essential now because of increasing evidence that USRC may not be able to meet its mandate to be self-supporting. For example, Union Station contains the kind of popular retail shops and restaurants that pay significant taxes everywhere

else in the city, including in other federal buildings. However, USRC has asked the District of Columbia for a reduced Possessory Interest Tax assessment, a tax levied by the District on private businesses located in federal buildings. Yet USRC was given authority under the Union Station Redevelopment Act to negotiate lease agreements in this valuable property in order to ensure that the needs of Union Station would be covered, but USRC has negotiated a master retail lease that obligated USRC to pay half of any Possessory Interest Tax, thereby depriving USRC of significant funds that could be used for station maintenance and improvements. USRC says that its payment of the Possessory Interest Tax would hinder its mission of maintaining and preserving Union Station. The amount of the Possessory Interest Tax is small compared to Union Station's needs and casts further doubt about USRC's ability to meet its congressional mandate to make Union Station self-supporting.

Although USRC was created in 1984 to ensure that Union Station would be self-sustaining, it is impossible for Congress or the public to gauge the health and progress of USRC without a proper audit. Particularly today, when there are no federal funds to rehabilitate Union Station, as Congress provided before, it is essential that we have a definitive and continuing view of the financial viability of Union Station, beginning with a full annual audit that is made available to Congress and to the public.

Major planned development, ongoing negotiations on the intercity bus deck and questions about USRC's maintenance and needed improvements for Union Station make an official annual audit essential. With nearly 90,000 visitors passing through Union Station every day, Congress is obligated to track the financial condition of this great asset in order to protect the significant federal investment and to avoid another cycle of the disrepair that once led to the closure of the facility. The only responsible course is to require a full annual and public audit of this historic federal property.

CONGRATULATING GLEN HAEGE,
"AMERICA'S MASTER HANDY-
MAN", ON HIS INDUCTION INTO
THE MICHIGAN BROADCASTING
HALL OF FAME

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House Floor today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to a wonderful Michiganiyan who is commonly referred to as "America's Master Handyman". When you think of home improvement shows in Detroit, Michigan, one might be quick to mention the popular TV sitcom of the 1990s, "Home Improvement" which featured Michigan native Tim Allen as Tim "The Toolman" Taylor. As you know, this was a fictional show and character. But what I bet many didn't realize is this: there is a real home improvement expert who does exist in Detroit and has had one of the most successful careers long before Tim Allen hit our TV screens.

His name, Mr. Speaker, is Glen Haege, known quite simply as "America's Master Handyman". His name might sound familiar if you are or know someone who is a "do-it-yourselfer". Glen is a nationally renowned radio talk show host, television personality, author, and columnist. He offers people advice with any type of home improvement project and has an uncanny ability to answer any question posed to him. Not even the Toolman's right-hand man, Al Borland, could hold a hammer to him.

Glen's training in the home improvement business started at the retail level where he worked as a store manager and a corporate manager. But Glen was a man destined for much larger audiences.

His extraordinary talents recently earned him the very prestigious award presented by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters for his lifetime of accomplishments: Glen was inducted into the Michigan Broadcasting Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to put this prestigious award into perspective. Mr. Haege joins the ranks of the late great Detroit Tigers Broadcaster and Major League Hall of Famer, Ernie Harwell, and the company of other outstanding individuals who have made a long and lasting impact on the industry and whose talents are never to be forgotten. He shares this rare distinction with people like Bob Reynolds, Mike Whorff, Dick Purtan, Ray Lane, Diana Lewis, Mort Crim, Bill Bonds, Sonny Eliot and J.P. McCarthy just to name a few.

Glen's broadcasting career started in 1983 by making appearances on several Detroit radio and TV shows offering insightful home maintenance techniques to those seeking assistance. These appearances catapulted Glen to a new job hosting his own radio show in 1987. He soon began taking on even more responsibilities as magazine writer and columnist for the Detroit News. Glen's polite, courteous and genuine caring personality allowed him to add listeners and their trust to his ever-expanding and popular show, and more and more readers to his columns.

Eventually in 1996, his show became nationally syndicated and was one the best known home improvement shows in the country. His current program on WJR 760-AM, "The Handyman Show with Glenn Haege", reaches over 1.3 million listeners a week and airs on 150 radio stations across the U.S.

In addition to his own radio program, Glen stays extremely busy with the little spare time he has by producing television shows, appearing on other radio stations offering free advice and tips, attending home improvement conferences, authoring books, and serving as President and CEO of his own business, H&S Services. Yet he also finds the time to maintain his own website that helps him reach out to even more people seeking guidance on their home improvement projects.

Glen is a great teacher and his considerable expertise helps countless people save time and money, inspires them to believe they can be "do-it-yourselfers" while also cautioning them that sometimes professionals are indeed the best option.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Mr. Glen Haege on this most recent recognition as he joins the 2011 Class in the Michigan Broadcasting Hall of Fame. I am very happy to see his hard work, dedication and commitment officially recognized by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters.

Lastly, I want to personally congratulate Glen on this notable achievement and thank him on behalf of the scores of people he has helped by converting their homes into more comfortable, efficient and beautiful living spaces. We are very fortunate indeed to have this outstanding man living in our magnificent state, and I am very proud to call him my constituent and friend.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH
COUNTRYMAN

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Joe Countryman as he retires from his position as President of MBK Engineers. Through his work as an expert engineer, he has protected numerous regions of California, including Sacramento and the Central Valley, from flooding. Over the last 45 years, his engineering excellence has safeguarded the lives, homes and businesses of millions of Californians. I ask all my colleagues to join me today in honoring a true leader of the Sacramento community.

In the Sacramento area, flooding is of paramount concern to all of us. Joe's work has been crucial to protecting us from disaster, first as a senior civilian at the Army Corps of Engineers and then as the President of MBK Engineers. In 1986, during the historic storms, he managed the Folsom Reservoir flood operations for the Army Corps of Engineers. His decisions and resolve helped avoid a potential disaster for hundreds of thousands of residents in Sacramento along the American River, as a catastrophic flood threatened our dams and levees. Since then, he has worked to improve flood control operations at Folsom Reservoir, Oroville Dam, Shasta Dam, and other critically important sites across the Western United States. He has been influential in countless other projects not only in California, but also in Nevada, Utah, and Colorado.

Since I was elected, I have turned to Joe for his advice on a number of flood protection projects. Mr. Countryman is known not only for his incredible work in his field, but for his integrity and ability to communicate complex engineering and hydraulic information to the public. He has received many honors, including the Award of Merit from San Jose State University, the Commander's Award for Distinguished Service by the Army Corps of Engineers, and the American Society of Civil Engineers' Region 9 Lifetime Achievement Award. He is a member of the American Society of Engineers, the Flood Plain Managers Association, the Environmental and Water Resources Institute, and has been acknowledged as a Diplomat Water Resources Engineer for the American Academy of Water Resources Engineers.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize and thank Joe Countryman for his remarkable service not only to Sacramento, but to many other communities throughout the nation, and for his innovation and accomplishments in the field of engineering. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Countryman on his service and retirement. His expertise will certainly be missed.