

Florida into the world-class institution it has become today.

As a member of the Florida State Legislature, I had the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with Dr. Lombardi as he worked with the legislature to ensure the university obtained the resources it needed to serve Florida's students and develop its reputation as a quality research institution. I have always been impressed by his tireless efforts on behalf of the university to raise academic standards and student performance and expand opportunities for the entire university community.

Dr. Lombardi's commitment, however, extended beyond the boundaries of his campus, as the entire State of Florida has benefited from his years of service. The constituents of the Second Congressional District, in particular, have profited from Dr. Lombardi's support of the land grant university's concept of a "People's" university through its Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Dr. Lombardi recognized the campus' critical role in developing research, teaching and extension programs to serve Florida's agricultural community.

Most impressive, however, has been Dr. Lombardi's devotion to the University of Florida's most important resource—its students. At a time when higher education institutions are bursting at the seams, Lombardi has always put the needs of his students first, and as a result, he has earned the affection of the entire student body.

On behalf of the Second Congressional District, I would like to thank Dr. Lombardi and send him best wishes for all his future endeavors. We will not forget the many ways he has made the University and the State of Florida a better place.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DR. JOHN LOMBARDI, PRESIDENT OF UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I also rise to pay tribute to President John Lombardi on his last day as President of the University of Florida.

From the very first day that John Lombardi became President of the University of Florida, about 10 years ago, he demonstrated a vision and a passion that would be very difficult to duplicate. He arrived in a 1985 GMC red pickup truck, and it became quite clear immediately that this was a very special person who could relate just as effectively with the students as he did with the academics and the administrators.

He truly believed in the greatness of the university and he had a very unique style of communication that allowed him to spread his vision that, notwithstanding the tremendous reputation the University of Florida had, it was far ahead of its reputation.

John Lombardi's style of communication was unique; professional, hon-

est, direct and at times blunt, but he said what many people wanted to hear and he took the university through a great deal of progress in a very short period of time. As the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN) has elaborated, research dollars increased by double the amount they were when he arrived; the academic credentials of the student body increased dramatically. One statistic I will quote, which is a little daunting for us, the entering freshman at the University of Florida now is a 3.90.

Dr. Lombardi also shepherded through the creation of three very nationally well-known centers, the UF Brain Institute, the Engineering Research Center for Particle Science, and the National High Magnetic Laboratory, which is under the auspices of the University of Florida, Florida State University and Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The 1990s has not been the easiest decade to manage a university. But John Lombardi's creativity and resourcefulness helped the University of Florida thrive in a time of shrinking budgets and bulging enrollments. He created a money management system that gave his deans and directors more control and flexibility of their own budgets. The deans thrived under this system, saving more than \$6.7 million in 1996 and 1997, and \$12 million the next year. They took those savings and put them directly into student services.

In addition to all these achievements, Dr. Lombardi taught us something very important. Something that helps us answer the question, how do we define success in any major State university, not just in Gainesville, Florida? We define success by the value we add to the students that enter the university and ultimately leave there. John Lombardi never lost sight of the fact that a university is only as great as each and every one of its students that attend there.

He made a point of doing something that not enough university presidents do today. He spent a great deal of time with the students. Whether it was cheering the many University of Florida sports' teams on to victory, or marching with the student band with his clarinet, Dr. Lombardi showed the students how much he cared about them and their University.

Now, Dr. Lombardi, starting tomorrow, is returning to his first love; teaching. He will be teaching history again, and his students will be very lucky to have him there. But this is our opportunity tonight to thank him for his courageous leadership and for his example in the years to come as the University of Florida prospers under his tremendous stewardship.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. John Lombardi, the outgoing President of my alma mater, the University of Florida.

Dr. Lombardi leaves his distinguished position today after a proud decade of immeasurable service. During this period, he was instrumental in promoting the University of Florida's reputation as one of the premier public universities in the United States. However, even as he prepares to leave this position, his commitment to education remains unabated. Dr. Lombardi plans to return to the classroom as a professor in the University's history department. Such dedication is typical of Dr. Lombardi, as evidenced by his record of accomplishments and achievements as the President of the University of Florida.

Complete enumeration of Dr. Lombardi's accomplishments would take days, so I will focus on a few accomplishments that I believe best portray Dr. Lombardi's tenure.

Foremost among the accomplishments during the Lombardi years is the creation of the University of Florida Brain Institute. This institute focuses on brain and spinal cord research and treatment, and is recognized internationally for its faculty, clinicians, students, and staff. Dr. Lombardi oversaw the creation of this institute, and construction of a six-story, \$60 million building to house this comprehensive center devoted entirely to neuroscience.

Under Dr. Lombardi, the University has also increased the availability of combined degree programs for undergraduates who want to earn both a Bachelors and a Masters degree in five or six years. These programs have proven to be very popular with students seeking to take advantage of the university's curricular depth during a five or six year experience.

Also underway, as a direct result of Dr. Lombardi's vision and leadership, is the Graduate Growth Initiative. This initiative to increase the graduate student population to approximately 25% of the entire student body has resulted in growing numbers of graduate students, and proven to be an important asset in support of the University's research agenda.

Dr. Lombardi will be missed as President of the University of Florida. I wish him the best of luck in his return to the classroom, and commend him for his dedicated service to the University of Florida.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, Washington has hit the point on the political calendar when Congress and the President pound the tables and thump their chests over the final budget decisions of this year. Our jobs are to look past the theatrics and to make decisions based upon principle.

This year we sat forth an ambitious goal that we would hold the line on spending instead of dipping into the Social Security Trust Fund. This year

we have an opportunity for the first time since the Eisenhower administration to balance the budget without touching the Social Security Trust Fund. Congress needs to stand on principle. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations.

For too many years, these budget negotiations did not create such a fuss. Congress and the President settled their differences the old-fashioned way: They simply spent more money. When spending exceeded revenues, they borrowed money first from the Social Security Trust Fund, then from the public, by issuing government bonds. Forty years later we have run up one heck of a tab. Our Federal debt now stands at over \$5 trillion.

There is hope. The Republican Congress over the past 5 years has been more serious than ever about fiscal discipline. That, coupled with a strong national economy, have put our Federal Government in the black for the first time in a generation and allowed us to retire \$130 billion in Federal debt. The next step is crucial. Congress and the President need to keep their hands out of the Social Security cookie jar. It is too important to our future and to our country.

The Federal Government will raise about \$1.7 trillion this year in non-Social Security revenue. This really ought to be enough to operate our government. Americans are likely to hear some hysterics coming out of our Nation's capital during the next couple of weeks over whether we should spend more money on this or that program. These decisions are important, but my focus will be on the bigger picture: Can we get through this session without robbing Social Security and future generations?

We must end the year by holding the line on spending, force some savings, and stay out of the Social Security Trust Fund. It is a matter of principle worth fighting for.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION AGREEING TO CONFERENCE REQUESTED BY SENATE ON H.R. 2990, QUALITY CARE FOR THE UNINSURED ACT OF 1999

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-430) on the resolution (H. Res. 348) agreeing to the conference requested by the Senate on the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2990) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals greater access to health insurance through a health care tax deduction, a long-term care deduction, and other health-related tax incentives, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to provide access to and choice in health care through association health plans, to amend the Public Health Service Act to create new pooling op-

portunities for small employers to obtain greater access to health coverage through HealthMarts; to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage; and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOHN LOMBARDI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to pay tribute to one of the most progressive leaders in the history of Florida, Dr. John Lombardi. He has been a cherished friend to me for over the past 10 years, but he has also been a great friend to the University of Florida and the rest of the State. He is a passionate supporter of public education and he is also a refreshing thinker.

I have been able to count on Dr. Lombardi for so many years as a valuable friend and resource person. Though Dr. Lombardi is leaving his position as President of the University of Florida, he will still be a part of the University's community. We will continue to count on him as a resource.

As a graduate of the University of Florida, I am proud of all the work he has done to make the University of Florida one of the finest public universities in the country, and the best football team. His hard work has helped us reach new levels of academic achievement and we are all proud of his commitment.

I know that the State of Florida is grateful to Dr. Lombardi for being so dedicated in his advocacy for equal rights and a quality education for all of our students. We will miss his leadership, but we will count on his continued support and guidance.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

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Mr. Speaker, Dr. John Lombardi represented and carried through a renaissance in Florida's public education. He chartered a new course for a university which many times before him was in a sleepy existence.

Dr. Lombardi came along; he was a university president who had vision and he had foresight. He was a scholar, respected. He was an academic, yet he was very well-centered in the community, as well as the students. He pulled

this university up in research and development. He shaped and defined a new direction for the university.

I had quite a few meetings with President Lombardi. I respected him, as I was a member of the Florida Senate Committee on High Education. I must say to the graduates and the students of the University of Florida, John Lombardi will be missed; and to that entire university system, he brought them into the 21st century kicking and screaming. We are hoping that they will be able to replace him. But I say, no, it is hard to replace a man with the genius and heart of a John Lombardi.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN LOMBARDI

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUYKENDALL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my best wishes and appreciation to an outstanding educator, administrator, and author, Dr. John Lombardi, who has been the president of the University of Florida for more than 9 years now, and in that time he has become much beloved by the student body, faculty, and alumni. This is a man who truly made a difference during his years as president.

It would take too long to list all of his many accomplishments, so I would like to highlight just a few.

As an educator, Dr. Lombardi focused on and achieved higher academic standards, student performance, and graduation rates. As an administrator, he took care of critical details, such as offering better access to computers and augmenting opportunities by increasing the number of combined degree programs available to undergraduates. He was intricately involved in the opening of the Brain Institute, a premier center dedicated to brain and spinal cord research and treatment.

He also excelled in the vitally important role as a fund-raiser, with gifts to the University increasing exponentially during his tenure, including a recently arranged multimillion dollar contribution to the law school.

In addition, Dr. Lombardi was responsible for Florida's acceptance into the Association of American Universities, the prestigious higher education organization comprised of the top 62 public and private institutions in the United States.

More important, though, was Dr. Lombardi the person, a person of great popularity and high regard. Let me just give my colleagues two examples.

Dr. Lombardi was so well-loved by the students that I know that recently the student body voted to ask the Board of Regents to allow Dr. Lombardi to sign each of their diplomas.