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COMMITTEE STAFF TRIBUTE

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on December 7, 2000, I gave remarks reflecting on my years of service on the Judiciary, Banking and Intelligence Committees. Specifically, I paid tribute to the many committee staff members who worked tirelessly and made outstanding contributions during my years of service.

In those remarks, I failed to mention a few of those staff members, and wanted to submit a comprehensive list of those who I had the pleasure of working with in Congress. Without their efforts the work I accomplished would not have been possible. The public owes them many thanks.

COMMITTEE STAFF TRIBUTE: (1981-2000)

Doyle Bartlett, Chris Barton, Anita Bedelis, Yosef Bodansky, Mark Brinton, Aerin Dunkle Bryant, Dan Bryant, Audrey Clement, Veronica Eligan, Rick Filkins, Carmel Fisk, John Heasley, Charlene Vanlier Heydinger, Gerry Lynam, Paul McNulty, Nicole Nason, Tom Newcomb, Jim Rybicki, Glenn Schmitt, Kara Norris Smith, Carl Thorsen.

HONORING DOMINIC D.
DiFRANCESCO FOR FIVE DEC-
ADES OF SERVICE

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dominic D. DiFrancesco for five decades of service to the United States of America. Dominic served his country as a Korean War veteran and was the past National Commander of the American Legion. He also served as Pennsylvania's National Executive Committeeman.

On the national level of the American Legion, Dominic served as chairman of the Membership and Post Activities Committee and the Legislative Committee. He was also a member of the Public Relations Commission, The National Security Council and the Resolutions Sub-committee. Dominic has been an active participant in veteran affairs in the 17th Congressional District where he has been a strong advocate for the improvement of services to veterans.

Dominic also served as a special representative to Saudi Arabia prior to Desert Storm to gather information about the needs and concerns of U.S. soldiers.

Dominic has recently been honored in my district by having the Dauphin County veterans building named in his honor. The Dominic D. DiFrancesco Veterans Memorial Office Building stands as a testimony of the service of Dominic and the many veterans like him who have given so much to their country.

Dominic, thank you for your service to this great land of ours and to the 17th Congressional District, I know the entire United States House of Representatives joins me in honoring your many accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5668,
SWEETEST ACT—SACCHARIN
WARNING ELIMINATION VIA ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING EMPLOYING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, today I submit legislation that would eliminate needless bureaucratic regulations in the labeling of the sweetener saccharin. I've called it the "SWEETEST Act" which stands for Saccharin Warning Elimination via Environmental Testing Employing Science and Technology.

Saccharin was first discovered in 1879 and it has been safely employed as a no-calorie sweetener for over one hundred years now. Concerns over saccharin's safety were first raised twenty years ago after a flawed study that administered huge quantities of the artificial sweetener to laboratory rats produced bladder tumors in rats. New and better scientific research has decisively shown that the earlier rat studies are not at all applicable to humans.

Earlier this year, the National Toxicology Program (NTP) removed saccharin from its 9th Report on Carcinogens. In doing so NTP joined numerous other world health agencies in recognizing the safety of saccharin.

NTP's action negated the need for the current warning label mandated by the Saccharin Study and Labeling Act of 1977 (SSLA) on all products containing saccharin. The Food and Drug Administration recognized that the mandated warning label is inappropriate and agreed to support its repeal.

This legislation removes Section 403, paragraph (o) of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 343) and Section 4, paragraph (c) of the Saccharin Study and Labeling Act (P.L. 95-203). Those requirements formed the basis for the unnecessary warning statements found on common packets of sweeteners used every day in thousands of households and restaurants across the nation.

Given saccharin's favorable synergistic properties in combination with other sweeteners and its low cost, many food, beverage, and health care manufacturers are very interested in developing new products utilizing this sweetener.

UKRAINE AT THE DAWN OF THE
21ST CENTURY

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today, as we conclude the work of the 106th Congress, it is ap-

propriate that we mark an important milestone in Ukraine: This afternoon, at 1:16 local time, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was shut down for good.

On April 26, 1986, Reactor Number Four at the Soviet-designed Chernobyl nuclear facility exploded, releasing more than 100 tons of lethally radioactive material into the environment. The human cost of this disaster is staggering. It is unlikely we will ever know how many deaths can be directly attributed to Chernobyl, but surely the loss of life is measured in the thousands. Hundreds of thousands more were subjected to radiation poisoning.

Nearly 15 years later, the consequences of the world's worst nuclear accident continue to plague Eastern Europe. Ukraine has been especially impacted. Vast tracks of once prime farm land remain dangerously contaminated. Thyroid cancer among children living near Chernobyl has risen to levels 80 times higher than normal. The concrete and steel sarcophagus that encases the ruined Reactor Number Four is leaky and in need of repair. In addition, the loss of Chernobyl's generating capacity exacerbates an already difficult energy shortage in Ukraine, which depends heavily on energy imports, especially during its harsh winters.

It is fitting that the first year of the new century should see the closure of this apparatus from a dangerous past. At the same time, we must be mindful that Chernobyl's legacy remains a heavy burden for the people of Ukraine which does not end with the shutdown of this facility today. The fatally flawed nuclear technology that build Chernobyl was truly a kind of Pandora's Box that, once opened, released lasting harm and grievous sickness into the world. The sole consolation is that we can yet hope to redress the damage.

The final closure of Chernobyl ends a tragic chapter in Ukraine's history, and begins a new one. I call on every member of the House to join with me in remembering the victims of this tragedy. Let us resolve to do our part to help Ukraine build a brighter future.

INTRODUCTION OF UNIFORM POLL
CLOSING ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join today with my colleagues Senator STEVENS and Senator INOUE, along with Representatives TAUZIN and DINGELL and 20 other Democratic and Republican House and Senate Members to introduce the bipartisan Uniform Poll Closing Act.

Over the years, both the Democratic and Republican parties have been concerned about the fact that the news media frequently projects a particular Presidential candidate to be the victor in key battleground states before all the polls have closed nationally.

In 1980, many Democrats were outraged when Ronald Reagan was proclaimed the victor of the Presidential race on network television at 5:15 p.m. Pacific time. At that moment, polls were still open in approximately