TRIBUTE TO RONALD L. FREELAND, NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINORITY TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

- Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated and respected leader in public transportation, Ronald L. Freeland, Administrator for the Mass Transit Administration of the Maryland Department of Transportation. Ron has recently been chosen to be President of the Board of the National Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, COMTO, and I would like to express my appreciation for the work he has done for Maryland, and my congratulations and best wishes as he assumes his new leadership responsibilities.

Throughout his career, Ron Freeland has demonstrated a commitment to ensuring quality transportation in Maryland. Since 1997, Ron has overseen the Mass Transit Administration, MTA, which operates the bus, light rail, Metro, and MARC systems throughout the Baltimore-Washington area—systems that provide transportation services to 350,000 people every day. Prior to his service at MTA, Ron was Administrator of the Motor Vehicle Administration, where he made key reforms in that agency’s operations, including improvements in the operation of the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program. His public service also includes tenure as Director of Operations at MTA, membership on the Board of Directors for the Maryland Transportation Authority, and membership on the Board of the Canton Railroad. Well-maintained highways and reliable transit systems provide safe travel for millions of Americans, and I want to commend Ron for his dedication to improving transportation services in Maryland. I have known Ron for many years and have had the opportunity to work closely with him on many issues affecting transportation in Maryland. I have found him to be a dedicated public servant and a steadfast ally to the friends of public transportation.

In addition to his work for the people of Maryland, Ron has fought tirelessly for equality within the transportation community. He is an active member of the conference of Minority Transportation Officials, a national organization founded in 1971, which now boasts over 2,000 members and over 25 local chapters throughout the United States. Ron has been working with COMTO for almost twenty years, and has demonstrated unyielding devotion to COMTO’s dual mission of achieving inclusion and upward mobility for minorities and women within the industry, and for citizens and groups who are underserved by existing transportation services. His leadership and integrity in this pursuit inspired the members of COMTO to choose Ron as National President—and they could not have made a better choice. I am confident that, as President, Ron will inspire his colleagues across the country to dedicate themselves to ensuring minorities and women equal access to transportation jobs and services. It is the courage and the hard work of people like Ron Freeland that will make certain no one is left behind as the transportation industry evolves to meet America’s growing needs in the 21st century.

TRIBUTE TO BERT M. CONCKLIN

- Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to a patriot, federal servant, and industry leader. Bert M. Concklin and I have worked closely for nearly twenty years in his capacity as president of the Professional Services Council (PSC), as a representative of two of the largest employers in Virginia, PSC and Computer Sciences Corporation, and as a driving influence on numerous advisory panels.

After more than eight years with PSC, Bert has accepted the role of Business Systems Modernization Executive at the Internal Revenue Service. I admire his courageous willingness to tackle such an obvious challenge and I anticipate that he will, as always, perform exceedingly well. The agency is fortunate to acquire such a talented executive.

Throughout his career, Bert has proved himself to be an effective leader and an even-handed advocate. The fact that he has been such a dynamic leader for the professional and technical services industry, which is populated by so many of our nation’s most innovative companies, has in no small way made our jobs in the United States Senate that much easier. Those companies represent the very heart of our national defense and I know that Bert’s dedication originates in large part from a love of our country that I share. Perhaps this trait comes from his days at the United States Naval Academy, but I suspect he had it even before.

Bert is no stranger to federal service. During his many years of service with the federal government he has held a number of distinguished positions including, Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Deputy Administrator for Policy Evaluation for the Federal Energy Administration; Administrator of Price Controls for the Cost of Living Council; and Administrator of Information Resources with the Office of Management and Budget. He has also held significant special assignments including membership on the FAA Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee.

I wish every success to Mr. Concklin as he starts the next chapter of his truly remarkable career and thank him for a job exceedingly well done.