

August 1, 2001

MAGEE RIETER HONORED

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the House of Representatives to the outstanding achievement of the employees of Magee Rieter Automotive Systems of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, which has won General Motors' prestigious "Supplier of the Year Award" for the ninth consecutive year. Of GM's 30,000 suppliers, Magee Rieter Automotive Systems is the only nine-time winner in North America and one of only six suppliers globally to be honored every year since the award was established.

Magee Rieter, the leading supplier of car parts to General Motors in America, will celebrate this accomplishment on August 28, 2001. The company has been in business in Bloomsburg since 1889 and has been supplying General Motors for more than 90 years, first with hand-draped tapestries or Fisher Body carriages, through today's production of fully molded carpet floors and integrated acoustical systems.

Through the past 112 years, the company has endured and overcome numerous challenges, including floods, fires and the rapidly changing business environment. The company received the Army/Navy "E" Award for Excellence after World War II in recognition of its production of high-quality materials for the war effort. As demonstrated by the more recent awards, the current employees have carried on the tradition of pride and success handed down by their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents who worked at Magee Rieter. Under the leadership of President and Chief Executive Officer Mike Katerman, Magee Rieter continues to be a cornerstone of the Bloomsburg community.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives the hard work and impressive achievement of the people of Magee Rieter, and I wish them all the best.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. FELIX J. GRUCCI, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2620) making appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. GRUCCI. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of Weldon Amendment which would

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

increase the Fire Assistance Grant Program by \$50 million.

This past Monday, it was my honor to announce the awarding of a Federal grant to the Davis Park Fire Department in my district. This grant was one of only 108 that were awarded to fire departments across this country under the FEMA's Fire Assistance Grant Program.

The Davis Park Fire Department along with nearly 20,000 other fire companies applied for grants—that is almost two-thirds of all fire companies in America. In the coming months, more than \$100 million in grants will be rewarded to fire companies for vehicles, fire prevention programs, equipment and training.

The Davis Park Fire Department will use its \$30,000 in funds to train its firefighters in the most recent firefighting and rescue techniques. When I spoke with the department's chief he expressed his excitement over how the grant would help to strengthen the safety of not just the citizens of Davis Park but also the brave men and women who serve them.

By supporting the Weldon Amendment we can guarantee that Fire Departments like the Davis Park will be able to benefit from this vital program next year. In doing so we can increase the safety of countless communities throughout our nation.

I call upon all of my colleagues to join me in providing our nation's local fire departments with the opportunity to improve the quality of both services they offer and safety standards under which they serve.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICARDO MONTERO DUQUE

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Major Ricardo Montero Duque for his efforts to fight the communist threat, and later communist dictatorship, in Cuba, and his commitment to Cuban immigrants throughout America.

Ricardo Montero Duque was born in Matanzas, Cuba on July 4, 1925. In 1950, he graduated from the Military Academy of the Cuban Army with the rank of Second Lieutenant. As a result of his hard work and dedication, he quickly climbed through the ranks of the military hierarchy, eventually assuming the rank of Major.

Major Duque's extensive military career can be traced to battles against the guerrilla forces of Fidel Castro. In 1956, Major Duque was instrumental in leading the Cuban Army against Fidel Castro and his rebel forces in the province of Oriente. During the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, he commanded the No. 5 Infantry Battalion of the 2506 Brigade, was captured by Castro's forces, and later imprisoned for 25 years. On June 8, 1986, Major Duque was released from prison in Cuba and reunited with his family in Union City, New Jersey.

Over the past two decades, Major Duque has remained actively involved in the Cuban American community. Former New Jersey Governor Christie Todd Whitman appointed

Major Duque to serve as a member of the "Cuban Task Force" of New Jersey. He has served as Director and Editor of the newspapers "El Cuba Libre" and "La Semana." In addition, he has twice been elected to serve as President of the Union of Former Cuban Political Prisoners.

Beyond his services to the community, Major Duque has been a real estate agent since 1987. He is happily married to Esther, his wife of fifty years.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ricardo Montero Duque for his unflinching commitment to fighting the terror and repression of communism in Cuba, and for his outstanding contributions to the Cuban American community.

PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, small business participation in government procurement is dropping. While the dollar value of procurement opportunities is relatively constant, the absolute number of small businesses winning government contracts has dramatically decreased over the past four years.

One possible solution to this problem can be to enhance the role of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs). During the 1980's, Congress created local PTACs around the country to increase small business participation in defense procurement. Modeled after Small Business Development Centers (SDBCs) run by the Small Business Administration (SBA), these centers offer free advice and help to small businesses both in educating them about how to get involved in government procurement and also how to obtain contracts. Most of the PTACs are co-located in a local higher education institution or a Chamber of Commerce. About half of the funding for most of the PTACs comes from the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). The remainder comes from the state government and/or the local host (i.e., the community college). States currently have a choice: they can either ask for up to \$300,000 to run a state-wide program or regional centers can ask for up to \$150,000 to run a program locally.

Some states have decided to run a state-wide program in order to have continuity of service throughout the state. However, some states do not care and have allowed regional or city PTACs to operate. Currently, 15 states have regional or city PTACs that receive an excess of \$300,000. This penalizes states like my home state of Illinois who have opted for a "good government" solution—a seamless delivery of procurement assistance services throughout the state.

I have introduced the Procurement Technical Assistance Improvement Act to increase the DLA grant match to states that run a state-wide PTAC program so that they would be able to receive up to \$600,000 in funding, double the current level of \$300,000. This

15609