TRIBUTE TO SAL TORRES

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to Gonzalo "Sal" Torres, an extraordinary city councilman and community leader from Daly City, California. Sal, who also served as Mayor of Daly City, was recently re-elected to the city council and has been honored as "one of the top 20 lawyers under 40" by the newspaper California Law Business. Sal has demonstrated his commitment to excellence and his civic concern since he was a student of psychology at UCLA. He received the Chancellor's Marshall Honors for his academic accomplishment as well as his participation in various community service projects, including the Amigos Del Barrio Tutorial program. Sal was the Director of this excellent program which matched over 200 under privileged elementary school students with college students who offered various types of academic support. Sal's civic concern with the Hispanic community continued following his graduation from UCLA in 1983 in his work with Hispanic Consumer Advocates, the first consumer affairs radio show in Los Angeles to be broadcast entirely in Spanish.

Mr. Speaker, Sal earned awards for scholarship and advocacy on many occasions during his legal education at the University of San Francisco School of Law. These awards included the Judge Harold J. Haley Award and the Student Bar Association Award. Today Sal puts his legal education to good use as Assistant General Counsel to Tomen Agro Inc., where he handles international commercial, anti-trust and trademark matters, and public relations.

The heavy demands of his profession have in no way limited Sal's commitment to community service. If anything, the list of community activities in which Sal has been involved has grown since the beginning of his professional career. Sal has been an active participant in the State Bar Association's Human Rights Committee and the Volunteer Legal Services Program of the San Francisco Bar. He has volunteered to take San Mateo youths on probation to clean up graffiti as part of Daly City's anti-graffiti program. He is also the mentor for Unity 2000, an organization that aspires to change negative stereotypes about local teenagers.

Sal has also been the General Counsel to San Mateo County's Latino Leadership Council, a remarkable organization that strives to educate the general public on social, political, and economic issues that affect the Latino community. He worked as the Newsletter Editor and as one of the Directors of the San Francisco La Raza Lawyers Association. Sal also managed to find time to host a weekly public affairs television show that focuses on issues of concern to the Latino community. This already extensive list only begins to describe Sal's endeavors to improve the community and the lives of those around him. Mr. Speaker, Sal's service and dedication to Daly City deserves special commendation. He was first elected to the City Council in 1996. The economic prosperity which the city has enjoyed has given him and his fellow council members an opportunity to make an important contribution to the health and vitality of the city. Daly City has been able to implement a $40 million capital improvement program that is creating new community centers, libraries, and improved parks and playgrounds.

Sal has demonstrated his capacity to handle crisis situations. He worked to secure funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which helped to evacuate and reimburse the residents of 30 seaside homes that were dangerously close to slipping off a cliff following severe winter storms. The residents of Daly City are truly fortunate to have Sal's energy and intelligence to advocate their interests.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to pay tribute to Sal Torres. He has been an outstanding leader whose civic concern and whose dedication to public service should be an inspiration for all of us. I think the advice that Sal gives to the teenagers whom he mentors best describes this spirit: "Never give up. Follow your heart. If you are persistent and believe in your heart that you can do it, nothing can ever stop you."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably delayed on Roll Call vote 50. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on Roll Call vote 50.