were so impressive that the town of Shrewsbury rewarded her in 1996 by making Mrs. Fairbanks principal of Floral Street School, the town's largest elementary school.

Mrs. Fairbanks plans on spending her retirement quilting, traveling, researching her genealogy, and spending more time with her friends. Without doubt, Mrs. Fairbanks has touched the lives of many and will be greatly missed by the over ten thousand students who have passed in and out of her classrooms and office.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Mrs. Fairbanks for her dedication to the students of Central Massachusetts and present her as an example of what all educators should strive to be.

COMMEMORATING THE SERVICE OF RUDY SVORINICH AS CHAIRMAN OF THE ALAMEDA CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Honorable Rudy Svorinich, Jr., a Los Angeles City Councilman and Chairman of the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority (ACTA).

Councilman Svorinich has provided eight years of distinguished public service to the City of Los Angeles and the public agency spearheading the Alameda Corridor rail cargo expressway. This July, Councilman Svorinich leaves public office and, as a consequence, must relinquish his position with ACTA.

We will miss his vision, sharp wit, and steady leadership.

Councilman Svorinich has been the City of Los Angeles' representative to the ACTA Governing Board since 1993. He served four separate terms as chairman.

This body identified the Alameda Corridor as ''a project of national significance'' in 1995. The Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles comprise our nation's busiest port complex and cargo volumes are projected to triple by the year 2020. The Alameda Corridor will link the ports to the transcontinental rail yards near downtown Los Angeles, creating a more efficient way to distribute cargo and allowing these ports—and the nation—to maintain their competive edges.

It is testament to the distinguished service of Councilman Svorinich that the Alameda Corridor is now in full scale construction, on budget and on schedule to open in April 2002.

We owe him a debt of gratitude for his dedicated service.

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE FEATURES PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the National Defense Features Program. As my colleagues may know, Congress created this program in 1992 response to a report by the Department of Defense describing a shortage of sealift capacity during military contingencies. At that time, Congress decided the best way to solve the shortage of shipping space for heavy military vehicles and other cargo would be the NDF program, providing a cost-effective way to augment the substantial investment that was being made in new sealift ships by the Navy.

Within the last several years, Congress has authorized and appropriated funds to install special defense features in new commercial vessels to be built in the shipyards of the United States. Most recently, as a result of the leadership of my colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. WELDON, Congress included in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2001 a provision that would expand the Secretary of Defense's ability to fund militarily useful projects under the NDF program.

Since the NDF program was launched, Congress anticipated that our allies would recognize the mutual defense benefits of promoting the program on their trade routes with the United States. One particular project that has received attention called for ten commercial vessels to be built in the United States based on a design funded and approved by DARPA's Maritime Technology Program. These vessels would normally operate in the Japan-United States vehicle trade, which is at present entirely dominated by Japanese carriers. This project is also important to maritime labor and our new domestic shipyards, which continue to support our NDF program and to look for new, viable commercial projects.

Notwithstanding past expressions of support by senior government officials, this expectation has not been realized. Unfortunately, the Government of Japan

In view of the US role in providing security for our allies in the Far East, it hardly seems appropriate that defense concerns expressed by our government should not have been met with a more positive response by our allies in the region. Past discussions with the Japanese government have not yielded desired results, as the NDF program continues to be characterized as one with limited military value. This position has been contradicted by two US Navy reports on the NDF program. Given our past history of military cooperation with the Japanese government, the reluctance encountered on the NDF program, especially in light of its military value, has been somewhat surprising.

Unfortunately, the Japanese government's position appears to have been driven by commercial rather than governmental factors. Japan, like other nations, supports its merchant marine with financial assistance, including direct construction loans at artificially low rates of interest.

The reason our carriers are effectively being excluded from this market is the Japanese kereitsu system of doing business. It is not price, but rather the interwoven industrial and financial structure that closes this market, like so many other sectors of the Japanese economy, against international competition. This situation makes it quite difficult for a fleet of US built and operated ships which are commercially competitive and have significant defense value to both nations to break through the economic fence encircling the Japanese vehicle trade.

Despite this resistance, I continue to hope that the Government of Japan and the vehicle manufacturers will ultimately recognize the merits of supporting the NDF program, especially given the longstanding support of the Department of Defense. Last year, the former Secretary of Defense and the

Given past experience, these new communication channels may not prove enough. That is why today, along with my colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. WELDON, I am introducing the National Defense Features Program Enhancement Act. Under this bill, if the Federal Maritime Commission finds that vessels built under the NDF program are unable to obtain employment in a particular trade route in the foreign commerce of the United States for which they are designed to operate, and if that sector of the trade route has been dominated historically by citizens of an allied nation, the Commission can take action to counteract the restrictive trade practices that have led to this situation.

I wish it were not necessary to introduce legislation to encourage support for a program so self-evidently in the mutual security interests of allied nations, and that through consultation between our Nation and Japan we can begin to undertake the much-needed recapitalization of our aging Ready Reserve Force. Should that not prove the case, I look forward to working with my colleagues to move forward this legislation.

NATIONAL DEFENSE FEATURES PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2001

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague from New Jersey, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, in introducing the National Defense Features Program Enhancement Act of 2001, a bill we intend to push to enactment if the Government of Japan, the Japanese vehicle manufactures, and the Japanese carriers continue to undermine our efforts to breathe life into the National Defense Features program.

We created the NDF program because we believed it would be the most cost-effective way to augment the substantial investment that is being made in new ships by the Navy. Having seen one very attractive proposal by which vessels would be built to carry cars from Japan to the United States and refrigerated products on the return leg, we authorized and appropriated funds in the mid-1990s to jump start the program. Since then, we have continued to look for ways to make the program as attractive as possible to companies to build ships in the United States for operation in the United States-Japan and other trades. Last year, for example, Congress approved as part of the National Defense Authorization Bill for FY 2001 a provision that would expand the Secretary of Defense's authority to finance appropriate projects under the NDF program.