history, I am confident Wilson Greene will serve as a valuable member to the National Museum Service Board.

The Commonwealth of Virginia deeply appreciates Mr. Greene's service and his passionate interest in helping Virginians and all Americans to better understand the very important story of our nation's past.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Wilson Greene, for his recent appointment to serve as a member of the National Museum Service Board.

INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, it was 50 years ago, on January 26, 1953, that the World Customs Organization, formally known as the Customs Co-operation Council, held its first meeting in Brussels, Belgium. In recognition of this occasion, the Council observed January 26 as International Customs Day. This occasion also serves to recognize the role that customs services around the world play in facilitating trade while protecting national borders from importations posing security threats.

I am particularly proud of the U.S. Customs Service for its great contributions to the Nation over the past 214 years of its existence. U.S. Customs was once the sole revenue producer for the young United States. Although that role has diminished over the years Customs collected a record $23.8 billion in revenue in fiscal year 2001. Today, Customs is still a major source of revenue for the Federal Government, returning about $8 to the taxpayer for every dollar appropriated by Congress.

For nearly 125 years, Customs funded virtually the entire government and paid for the Nation's early growth and infrastructure. The territories of Louisiana, Oregon, Florida and Alaska were purchased; the National Road from Cumberland, Maryland, to Wheeling, West Virginia, was constructed; and the Transcontinental Railroad stretched from sea-to-sea. Customs collections built the Nation's lighthouses, the U.S. military and naval academies, and the City of Washington, and the list goes on. In 1835, Customs revenues alone had reduced the national debt to zero.

Customs was the parent or forerunner to many other agencies. In the early days, Customs officers administered military pensions (Department of Veterans Affairs), collected import and export statistics (Bureau of Census), and supervised revenue cutters (U.S. Coast Guard). Customs also collected hospital dues to help sick and disabled seaman (Public Health Service) and established standard weights and measures (National Bureau of Standards).

During the first stages of the response to the terrorist attack on September 11th in New York and Washington, D.C., U.S. Customs quickly assumed a leading role. With terrorism causing concern worldwide, the international Customs community has a vital role to play. Every administration is playing an active part in efforts to protect the international supply chain from terrorist acts, while at the same time offering improved trade facilitation.

Today, the United States Customs Service will have new challenges to face as it moves from the traditional home that it has known within the Department of the Treasury to the newly created Department of Homeland Security. It will be important for Customs to continue to offer the world class level of trade service and facilitation that U.S. business has come to rely on while insuring that security needs are addressed. It will also be important to maintain the revenue collection linkage with the Treasury Department that has historically been so significant.

The U.S. Customs Service represents the United States at the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC). The number of Members increased over the years, and the Council subsequently adopted the working name ''World Customs Organization'' in order to better reflect the fact that the Organization was an intergovernmental body that genuinely made the transition to worldwide status. The WCO now speaks for 161 Customs administrations drawn from every continent and representing every stage of economic development. The United States has been a member since November 5, 1970.

At present, WCO Members are responsible for ensuring that more than 98 percent of international trade is conducted in compliance with national legislation and international agreements. The WCO renders technical assistance in areas such as customs tariffs, valuation, nomenclature, and law enforcement. Its objective is to obtain, in the interest of international trade, the best possible degree of uniformity among the customs systems of member nations. America benefits when both exporters and importers operate in an atmosphere of simple unambiguous customs operations around the world.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the U.S. Customs Service for its fine work both nationally and internationally, and I look forward to the completion of work within the World Customs Organization to further harmonizing and simplifying the customs rules that affect international commerce.

UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND SOCCER RESOLUTION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I am submitting to the House a resolution congratulating the University of Portland Women's soccer team on their winning the 2003 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Championship. This title marks the first national championship in any sport for the University of Portland.

The championship game between Portland and reigning 2001 champion Santa Clara was hard fought, going down to a rare double-overtime. The victory by the Pilots brought their season record to 20–4–1 to tie the school record for wins in a season. The team's performance garnered other records as well; Christine Sinclair set an NCAA tournament record with 21 points on 10 goals and one assist, shattering Mia Hamm's 1993 record of 16; Goalkeeper Lauren Arase set a record for goals-against average, allowing just one goal in 6 games.

I want to commend the coaches at the University of Portland for their hard work and dedication to helping these young women grow and ultimately bring national recognition to their school and our state. Head Coach Clive Charles, Assistant Coaches Bill Irwin, Garrett Smith, Nyla Stuckey, Trevor Warren and Wynne McIntosh all deserve recognition for the work that they have done developing an outstanding collegiate sports program.

Coach Charles has built an impressive record over the 14 years that he has coached women's soccer at the University of Portland. Collectively, his men's and women's teams have won 12 conference championships, losing only 31 league games, and earned 16 NCAA playoff berths, including seven Final Four appearances, in a combined 27 seasons. Twenty-five Pilots have earned All-America status during Charles' tenure. Early in the 1998 season, Charles won his 300th career college game. The Portland men and women won on the same day, making him just the 11th coach in NCAA soccer history to amass 300 wins.

I am honored to represent many of these individuals in Congress and proud to have the University in my district. This resolution is a fitting tribute to the accomplishments of the coaches, players, and the University of Portland.

TRIBUTE TO MELINDA OHLER

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to Melinda ''Mindy'' Ohler, a brave woman and true trailblazer of the San Francisco Fire Department. Mindy's passing, which occurred while responding to a fire alarm at San Francisco International Airport, unfortunately marked the first death of a female San Francisco firefighter in the line of duty.

When Mindy joined the San Francisco Fire Department in 1989, she was one of the first women to become a firefighter in the department's history. In the 13 years since her enlistment, the number of women firefighters in San Francisco has risen to an impressive 235 (12 percent of the force). This increase is in no small part due to Mindy, whose hard work and total dedication to her duties changed the minds of many who had originally opposed the idea of women firefighters. Her inspirational power was ably summed up by one of her colleagues at her memorial service who said, ''Frankly, I was against women joining the department, but her willingness to do the job showed me women had a place here.''

John Hanley, President of Fire Fighters Local 798, expressed praise for Mindy and characterized her performance as a firefighter as bold and versatile; she was able to handle the challenges she faced with courage, he said, whether it was a small fire or five-alarm conflagration. In addition, Mindy's lighter side—she was a noted prankster—was credited with lifting spirits around the firehouse.

A tireless worker who once held down six jobs at one time, Mindy, 46, was still working two other jobs in addition to her primary one as a firefighter at the time of her death.

In the spirit of solidarity with Mindy, over 3,000 people from around the country—including many fellow firefighters and law-enforcement officers—came to St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco to pay tribute to Mindy.