

IN HONOR OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE CITY OF PICO RIVERA

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in honor of the 40th anniversary of the City of Pico Rivera. On Thursday, January 29, 1998, residents from the City of Pico Rivera came together at a "City Birthday Party" celebration in honor of this milestone and to inaugurate Pico Rivera's yearlong 40th anniversary festivities.

Following a grass roots movement for incorporation, the neighboring communities of Pico and Rivera decided to join together as an incorporated city. On January 7, 1958, an election was held to select the name of the 61st city incorporated in the County of Los Angeles and to create a City Council-City Manager form of government. On January 29, 1958, the Secretary of State received and filed the election results of the residents of this newly formed city and by resolution of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors the City of Pico Rivera was born.

During the past four decades, the residents of Pico Rivera have grown together as a strong family oriented community. The City's residents are highly motivated, faithful, and unselfishly willing to share their talents and time to build a brighter future for their community. The City provides a variety of programs and services to its residents, who take full ownership in its success. Over the years, citizens of Pico Rivera have remained steadfast and strong in their belief in civic duty. With many proactive youth, senior, veteran and civic groups, Pico Rivera is proud of its over 60,000 friendly citizens.

The City of Pico Rivera has made substantial and significant contributions to the progress and development of Southern California. Located in the center of the City is the former site of the once thriving Ford Auto plant. Now, in that same location is one of our nation's critical links in our national defense, the Northrop-Grumman B-2 Division. Truly the City of Pico Rivera has a long and rich history of local, regional, and national significance.

The birthday celebration was a kick off for the City of Pico Rivera's yearlong family oriented festivities. Entertainment was provided by children and youth groups in the community. The Ladies Vocal Ensemble from El Rancho High School performed "Las Mañanitas," a Mexican birthday folk song as the community joined in the chorus of "Happy Birthday." Other performances were provided by the nationally acclaimed North Park Middle School Marching Band, a participant in the 1997 Tournament of Roses Parade, South Ranchito Elementary and El Rancho High School Folklorico Dancers, and the Pico Rivera Football for Youth Donnas. The Colors were presented by my fellow veterans of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7734, led by Commander Joe Perez.

In February, banners emblazoned with the colorful 40th Anniversary logo will be installed on street lights along major city thoroughfares. In March, the City's annual "Youthfest" will tie in its art celebration with the City's 40th birthday. A city-wide tree planting program will be

kicked off in April, tying in the anniversary celebration with "Earth Day." Discussions are underway for planning a parade and family festival in May. The July 4th fireworks display will carry the anniversary theme as will the "Concert in the Park" summer series in July and August. Junior and business golf tournaments for charity have been proposed as well as a Hispanic cultural event in October. The 40th Anniversary will conclude with the New Year's Gala entitled "The Next Best 40 Years."

Planning the events is the mayor's Select Anniversary Steering Committee chaired by Ms. Terri Bodadilla. Others on the committee who have dedicated their talents and time are Armando Abrego, Stephen Chavez, Charmaine Garcia, Bea Palomarez, and Gregory Salcido.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mayor Bea Proo, Mayor Pro Tem Garth Gardner, Council members Pete Ramirez, Carlos Garcia, and Helen O'Hara, the City staff, community leaders and residents on the occasion of the City of Pico Rivera's 40th Anniversary and send our best wishes for its continued success and prosperity.

THE GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY SYSTEM

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation to improve the competitiveness of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway system and restore its vitality.

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway system is a vital transportation corridor for the United States. The Seaway connects the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean and makes it possible to ship manufactured products from our industrial Midwest directly to overseas markets. Benefits of efficient operations of this transportation route are not limited to the Great Lakes region but extend throughout the United States. Congress recognized the broader impacts and, accordingly, designated the Great Lakes as America's fourth sea coast in 1970.

The Great Lakes region, and international markets, recognized the system's potential, as evidenced by the sharp rise in vessel and cargo traffic through the Seaway immediately after its opening in 1959. Unfortunately, that potential was never fulfilled. The upward trend in cargo traffic peaked around 1977-79. It has since declined in part as a result of a nationwide economic recession that hit the manufacturing sector particularly hard, and in part due to capacity constraints imposed by the Seaway.

Locks on the Seaway and the Great Lakes were built as long ago as 1895. New locks constructed for the Seaway between the mid- and late-1950s as authorized by Congress in 1954 were built to the same size as those completed in 1932. Locks and connecting channels were limited to 27 feet of draft. Because vessel size has grown over time, Seaway facilities were too small on its opening day to service the commercial fleet then in existence. Today, they are capable of accommodating only about 30% of the world's commer-

cial fleet. An undersized Seaway that denies large, specialized, and efficient vessels access to the system will prevent U.S. products, especially those from the Great Lakes region, from competing effectively in the global economy.

In addition to declining traffic, inadequate investment in Seaway infrastructure caused the mix of cargoes shipped through the system to be transformed from one that was diverse to one composed largely of low volume commodities. Although the trend of cargo tonnage through the system turned up once again in 1993, current cargo mix consists of essentially steel coming to the Great Lakes region from abroad, grains going overseas, and iron ore moving from one port to another within the region. Since the late 1980s, industrial manufacturing in the United States has recovered through investment in technology and corporate restructuring. Industrial production is flourishing once more in the Great Lakes region; Midwest economies are booming. Yet, only a small volume of high value finished goods move through the system. The Great Lakes region, therefore, is unable to fully participate in this resurgence of economic strength due to limitations in the Seaway's capacity.

For the past year I have been working closely with interested parties in the Great Lakes maritime transportation community and the infrastructure investment finance sector throughout the United States and Canada to develop a proposal to allow the Seaway to reach its full potential, to guarantee the future viability of the Seaway, and to continue the economic development of the Great Lakes region.

The bill I am introducing today, the Binational Great Lakes-Seaway Enhancement Act of 1998, developed in concert with the Honorable Joe Comuzzi, a dear friend of mine and a member of the Canadian Parliament whose district (Riding) is adjacent to mine, would establish the foundation, create the conditions, and provide the resources to permit the system to achieve its full potential. The bill would authorize the creation of a binational authority to operate and maintain the Seaway. It would also provide for the establishment of a non-federal credit facility to offer financial and other assistance to the Seaway and Great Lakes maritime communities for transportation-related capital investments.

Specifically, the legislation would establish a binational governmental St. Lawrence Seaway Corporation by combining the existing, separate U.S. and Canadian agencies which operate each country's Seaway facilities. It would require the Corporation's top management to run the Seaway in a business-like manner. It would transfer Seaway employees and the operating authority of Seaway assets to the Corporation. It would provide labor protection for current U.S. Seaway employees, whether or not they transfer to the Corporation. It would offer incentives for employment and pay based on job performance. It would set forth a process for the Corporation to become financially self sufficient. At the same time, it would provide the United States with ample oversight authority over the Corporation.

Through merger of the two national Seaway agencies into a single binational authority, we could eliminate duplication and streamline operations. Improved efficiency would reduce government's cost of operating the Seaway. At the same time, a unified Seaway agency