

most domestic producers of hot band steel are reportedly unable to meet the demands of the Kalama plant.

Therefore, BHP CSC has relied on imported hot band steel for the majority of their needs since beginning operations in 1997, and the primary source of those imports has been the BHP parent company, located in Australia. That Kalama plant has been the exclusive recipient of imports to the U.S. from the company's Australian parent. This plant has not been used as a conduit for large quantities of steel imports to be used by other manufacturers.

My concern deals with the consequences of imposing a strict quota on steel imports. In its current form, the legislation only cuts back steel imports to levels existing in July of 1997. This restriction is not only reasonable, it is necessary, and to be clear, I think we need this legislation. However, it may also severely limit the availability of the high-grade hot band steel required by the Kalama BHP facility.

As a consequence, Mr. Speaker, the productive capacity of the plant will be significantly diminished, and the limits may, in fact, result in the loss of jobs in the steel industry. Now, I can't imagine that supporters of this legislation would find job losses to be an acceptable result of a United States response to illegal trade activities.

And Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to call your attention to why this facility is so important to the economic survival of this corner of rural America. This economically disadvantaged area in Southwest Washington was, until recently, primarily dependent on natural-resource based industries for its economic survival. As a result of increasing limitations on timber cutting and shrinking salmon runs, the workforce needs in Cowlitz County have been scaled back again and again. Only six years ago, this area faced double-digit unemployment rates, and still has one of the highest rates in the nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we pass legislation that may affect the job security of over 250 hard-working people in Cowlitz County, I get gravely concerned. That's why I immediately began working on this issue when I was sworn into office at the beginning of this year.

And it is also the reason that I drafted an amendment to this legislation to provide limited waiver authority for companies with legitimate barriers to obtaining steel products for their manufacturing processes from domestic sources, to import limited amounts of steel in order to continue operations. My amendment would have permitted the Secretary of Commerce to establish a certification process to determine whether or not a manufacturer has sincere impediments to obtaining adequate quantities of steel raw materials; and, in such cases, to waive the import restrictions in only those cases.

Unfortunately, the rule providing for consideration of this legislation prevented me from introducing such an amendment, and precluded members from having the opportunity to vote on a measure that I believe would make a minimal, but desperately necessary adjustment to the overall bill. In fact, that rule prevented the introduction of any amendments.

Although I find this disappointing, I have received assurances from my colleagues that efforts will be made to address this situation as this legislation moves through the process, and I will continue to support those efforts.

As a Member of Congress, I have a responsibility to ensure that what we do here in Washington, DC, benefits my constituents in Washington State, and also to help safeguard our national interests. I believe that the enactment of this legislation, as perfected by my amendment, would serve both of these purposes. Although still imperfect, I will act today to enforce the trade policies of the United States, while continuing my efforts to protect the economic security of all steelworkers nationwide as the legislative process moves forward.

I ask my colleagues to support these efforts as we work with the other body in considering this measure. We all have an interest in keeping jobs in the United States, so let's work together to take the strongest, most appropriate measures possible to bolster this industry.

Of equal importance, I call on the President to address this situation before this flood of steel imports overwhelms what remains of the United States steel industry—an industry that has retroceded to become one of the most efficient in the Nation. In the future, as a result of this measure, I hope that we can take swifter, and more effective actions when sudden surges in foreign exports to our nation unfairly threaten our industries.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank my colleagues Mr. VISLOSKY and Mr. TRAFICANT, and many others, for their tremendous, persistent work in bringing public attention to this issue and for helping bring this measure to the full House for our consideration.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 25, 1999*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to insert in the RECORD that I inadvertently voted no on Roll Call 69 on March 24, 1999. I intended to vote yes on this amendment offered by Representative Tiahrt to H.R. 1141, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill.

This amendment would have offset the remaining portion of the Supplemental that was not offset by the bill. It is vitally important that all additional spending is offset. Because if it is not offset, it is paid for out of the Social Security Trust Fund surplus.

Of primary concern is Social Security. As we all know Social Security is the most popular and important program in the nation's history. It touches almost every family in America. When it comes to Social Security, this program must not be sacrificed to tax cuts or extra spending. I look forward to the day when we engage in the debate on reform with the knowledge that every cent in the Social Security Trust Fund is safe.

IN HONOR OF DR. HORACIO AGUIRRE

### HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 25, 1999*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today it is a distinct honor to recognize Dr. Horacio

Aguirre, an outstanding journalist, good family man and contributing member to our South Florida community, for his many years of dedication and vision in the area of journalism. As an acknowledgement of his endeavors, the Miami International Press Club will present Dr. Aguirre with its 1999 Good News Award on April 15th.

The Cuban patriot Jose Marti once said: "Talent is a gift that brings with it an obligation to serve the world, and not ourselves, for it is not of our making". Dr. Aguirre has taken those prophetic words to heart, for his entire life has been dedicated to protecting and advancing the entire spectrum of journalism with his feverish talent and love for the field.

From his early years as the editorial writer at El Panama America newspaper in Panama, to his experience as a founding editor with one of the longest running dailies, Diario Las Americas; Dr. Aguirre has always been a champion for all journalistic causes.

His achievements have been such that other nations such as Panama, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Spain have all bestowed awards upon him. Dr. Aguirre has also been very active with the Inter-American Press Association, where he has held the posts of Secretary, Chairman, First Vice-President and President.

Mr. Speaker, in an era where journalistic rights have come under increasing attacks from dictatorial governments, Dr. Horacio Aguirre is worthy of recognition because he is and continues to be a defender of journalists' rights to report.

He has contributed immensely to the hemispheric discussion on this most important of issues. Dr. Horacio Aguirre offers to all of the Americas what the brilliant Ruben Dario gave to his native country, Nicaragua: "I offer unto you the steel upon which I forged my efforts, the coffer of harmony that guards my treasure, the crown of diamonds the idol that I adore."

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO HIGH POINT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

### HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 25, 1999*

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, while all eyes will be on St. Petersburg this weekend to observe the NCAA Final Four basketball championships, those of us in the Sixth District of North Carolina are already celebrating a roundball title. We are proud to say that High Point Central High School has won the North Carolina 2-A girls basketball championship.

The High Point Central Bison defeated St. Pauls 78-63 to capture the 2-A crown in Chapel Hill on March 13. High Point Central finished the year with a record of 28-2 and captured its third state title in seven years—an impressive feat.

What makes the win even more remarkable was that the Bison went into the title contest knowing one of their senior starters was injured. Lee Culp broke her foot on the Thursday before the Saturday championship, but that didn't stop her from scoring a team-leading 20 points in 29 minutes of action. For her gutsy performance, Culp was named MVP of the game.