

TRIBUTE TO FORMER
CONGRESSMAN PHILIP RUPPE

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former Congressman Mr. Philip Ruppe. I would also like to thank my colleague from Michigan for offering this resolution to pay tribute to a great man.

Philip Ruppe is a prime example of the outcome of hard-work and determination. Before serving his constituents for twelve years as their Representative to Congress, he was a successful banker. Before that, he defended our great nation and served in the Navy during the Korean War.

I have known Philip Ruppe for over twenty years and was active in supporting his campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1982. His passion for politics was only trumped by his loyalty to his constituents. He was the first Congressman representing the district to have district offices, no easy task considering the size of his district.

Because of his dedication and hard work, I wish to congratulate Phil on his lifelong achievements and wish nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

UNITED STATES TEXTILE
INDUSTRY

HON. CASS BALLENGER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced four measures which will help the United States textile industry in its efforts to compete on the global playing field.

Many American textile companies are fighting for their survival due to unfairly undervalued imports produced by low-wage foreign manufacturers. One competitive advantage that the U.S. industry still has is its productivity. The American textile industry is one of the most productive in the world, but American companies must constantly modernize to retain that edge.

Unfortunately, much of the machinery the American textile industry needs to compete is no longer produced here in the United States, so the industry must seek such equipment from foreign sources. However, they must still pay duties on those machines. At a time when our domestic industry is suffering its most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression, with hundreds of closed mills and nearly 70,000 jobs lost in the past year, it makes no sense to require companies to pay duties on equipment that is not produced domestically.

Some of our leading American textile companies have entered Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code, others are experiencing substantial losses, and even some of those who are profitable are barely so. For these companies, if we suspend the duties, the money they could save when purchasing new equipment can be put to better use, and we could save more American textile jobs from being lost.

Congress has acted previously to suspend the duties on these particular machines, but

that suspension has now expired. Accordingly, I am introducing legislation to temporarily suspend the collection of duties on these four types of machines that are no longer produced in the U.S.

The machines in question include certain ink jet and other textile printing machines, certain shuttle type power looms, and certain shuttleless power looms. The detailed description of these machines, including their Harmonized Tariff Schedule numbers, are found in the bills themselves. All four types of equipment are essential to various textile producers, large and small, throughout the United States.

I urge the Ways and Means Committee to act swiftly to approve these bills.

THE AMERICAN DREAM
DOWNPAYMENT ACT

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, turning the key in the door of your very own home for the first time is a thrill that few families ever forget. For generations, the ability to purchase your own home has symbolized the hard work, thrift and personal responsibility that embodies the American Dream.

For some, the idea of owning their own home is but a dream, an unattainable dream. Across our nation, families get up, go to work every day, and play by the rules; but, they find that the downpayment on a home is a hurdle that keeps them from making that important investment in themselves and their community. These are families who, after paying the rent, buying groceries, and meeting their children's needs, have a tough time saving enough money to get past the first step of home ownership—the downpayment and closing costs.

To help first-time, low-income families overcome those highest barriers to home ownership, I am introducing the American Dream Downpayment Act. This legislation will give effect to President Bush's proposal to help 200,000 low-income families achieve the dream of home ownership over five years.

The President's Fiscal Year 2003 budget request included \$200 million in grants to assist first-time, low-income home buyers. As part of his call to expand home ownership opportunity, the Fiscal Year 2003 budget quadruples the President's Down Payment Assistance Initiative from its 2002 level.

In announcing the funds provided in the budget, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Mel Martinez said it best: "Opening the doors to home ownership to more and more Americans is one of this Administration's goals. The American Dream Downpayment fund will accomplish much more than that. By giving as many Americans as possible an opportunity to become stakeholders in their communities, we believe it will help to stabilize some neighborhoods and completely revitalize others."

When I reviewed the President's budget, I knew this would be important for all Americans, especially families in Michigan's metropolitan areas such as Lansing, Flint and Detroit. In giving the President's proposal legislative effect, the American Dream Downpayment

Act will provide communities throughout America with \$200 million in annual grants in Fiscal Year 2003 thru Fiscal Year 2006 to help home buyers with the downpayment and closing costs, the biggest hurdles to home ownership.

Upon enactment, the American Dream Downpayment Act will be administered as part of HUD's existing HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME). HOME is a successful program that helps communities expand the supply of standard, affordable housing for low-income and very low income families by providing grants to states and local governments.

The flexible program will enable more than 400 local and state governments to help communities provide low-income families with rate reductions, closings costs and downpayment assistance. Specifically, the focus of the proposal is on low-income families who are also first-time home buyers. To participate, recipients must have annual incomes that do not exceed 80% of the area median income.

I believe that the American Dream Downpayment Act will help increase the overall home ownership rate in the United States, especially among minority groups who have lower rates of home ownership compared to the national average. For example, more than two-thirds of all Americans own their own home, while fewer than half of African-Americans and Hispanic families are homeowners.

I look forward to working with my House colleagues on a simple, but powerful, proposal to move more American families into their own homes—and making their American Dream a reality.

EQUAL PAY DAY—APRIL 16, 2002

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I don't need to tell you how far women have come in the workplace. Women now make up roughly half of all workers. They're breaking into traditionally male fields, from medicine to law enforcement. Women are attending professional and graduate schools at ever increasing rates. Yet, one thing holds women back—unequal pay.

Despite the fact that women's earnings have been growing faster than men's since 1975, women still make only 74 cents for every dollar men earn. More women than ever are participating in the workforce, yet minority women earn only 64% of what men earn. Despite all of these accomplishments, studies show that the pay gap in management positions is actually increasing. It is long past time to stop this wage discrimination.

Unequal pay hurts not just women, but entire families. Tragically, single mothers and their families have a poverty rate of roughly 28%. The number is as high as 40% for African-American single mothers and their families. We cannot sit idly by while families such as these fall deeper and deeper into poverty. These women and children all deserve an equal chance to be financially secure.

Income lost to the pay gap represents lost opportunities for these families. If women in my home state of Michigan earned as much as men, each family would see an income increase of \$5000 per year—income that could