

Representatives FARR, HONDA, LANTOS, LOFGREN and STARK, I rise to honor California State Senator Byron Sher, one of the most highly respected legislators in California, who, after representing San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties in the California State Legislature for nearly a quarter century, will retire. Senator Sher will be honored on Friday, April 30, 2004 by the Santa Clara County Democratic Party for his career of extraordinary public service.

Byron Sher graduated from Washington University, St. Louis, and earned a law degree from Harvard Law School in 1952. He held academic teaching positions in law at Southern Methodist University, the University of Southern California, Harvard Law School, Stanford Law School, and was a Fulbright Research Scholar in New Zealand. His elective public service spans from serving on the Palo Alto City Council with two terms as Mayor, to service on the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Committee on Environmental Quality for the National League of Cities, and the League of California Cities.

In November, 1980, Byron Sher was elected to the California State Assembly where he served with distinction as the acknowledged leader of environmental policy for over fifteen years. In 1996, he was elected to the California State Senate in a special election to represent the 11th Senate District which currently spans three counties and stretches from San Carlos in the north to the City of Santa Cruz in the South, and which borders on both San Francisco and Monterey Bays.

During his tenure in the California State Legislature, Byron Sher expanded his reputation as the foremost expert on environmental issues. He is the first Chairman of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee, as well as the author of landmark laws to protect our environment and serve as legislative models for the rest of the nation. Among the laws he has authored are the California Clean Air Act, the Integrated Waste Management Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act. He has strengthened the State's timber regulations with his Surface Mining and Reclamation Act and he has been at the forefront of computer recycling programs to ensure that the dangerous byproducts of the information age, such as mercury, don't contaminate our landfills and water supplies. Senator Sher also authored the Nation's first law to prevent toxic contamination of water supplies from leaking underground storage tanks. Virtually all his legislation is considered the gold standard for environmental conservation and protection laws in our country.

Mr. Speaker, we're proud to call Byron Sher our friend and our colleague in public service. This quiet, humble, decent and brilliant man is a source of great pride to the Democratic Party, to our mutual constituents, to all Californians and to our entire Nation. We ask our colleagues to join us in honoring and thanking Senator Sher for his lifetime of extraordinary service to California and our country. Because of him and his distinguished service, we are unmistakably a stronger and a better Nation.

ON THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. NAVY'S DEPARTURE FROM VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

HON. ANÍBAL ACEVEDO-VILÁ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 29, 2004

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. Mr. Speaker, 1 rise today to commemorate the one-year anniversary, this Saturday, May 1st, 2004, of the U.S. Navy's departure from the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico.

Puerto Ricans have played a pivotal role in the national defense of the United States. The people of Vieques, Puerto Rico, in particular, bore over 60 years of bombing with everything from napalm to depleted uranium. In the 1940's, about two-thirds of their land was occupied by the U.S. Navy to make way for a bombing range on the eastern part of the island and a weapons depot on the western part of the island.

The movement to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques was in existence for many years. But the tragic death of Viequense David Sanes Rodríguez on April 19, 1999 as a result of two stray bombs dropped on the Observation Post in Vieques, contributed to galvanize the movement beyond partisan affiliations and political ideologies. That struggle reached its fruition with the U.S. Navy's departure from Vieques on May 1, 2003. It is important to note that the Navy has recently indicated that the replacement training scenario for the Atlantic Fleet is as good if not better than the training conducted on Vieques. This realization is well received by those who called for the cessation of training on Vieques.

The victory in Vieques is a victory first and foremost of the Viequenses. Yet it is also a victory of Puerto Ricans in the Island, in the U.S., and of many non-Puerto Rican elected officials, civic, community, labor and religious leaders and activists who participated in the struggle, organized marches, rallies, and lobbying initiatives. Many were arrested for peaceful civil disobedience in support for peace in Vieques.

I am proud to say that many of my fellow Members of Congress participated in this important initiative for peace in Vieques. For instance, on March 8, 2001, 110 Members of Congress signed a letter to President Bush calling for the immediate and permanent cessation of military practices in Vieques.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the March 8, 2001, letter from these 110 Members of Congress to President Bush into the RECORD at this time. On behalf of the people of Puerto Rico, I thank these Members of Congress for their support for peace in Vieques, and I urge them and my other colleagues to join me in working towards finishing the inconclusive agenda for the people of Vieques. The immediate task at hand is ensuring the adequate, full and prompt clean up and decontamination of the lands and surrounding waters of Vieques.

Although the Navy has left Vieques, much remains to be done before the residents of Vieques have the peace and justice they deserve. When the Navy left Vieques and transferred the lands on the eastern part of Vieques to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a year ago, the people of Vieques finally were free of the bombings that so disrupted and af-

fecting their peace, health, well-being and livelihood. That achievement is a testament to the resilience and perseverance of the Viequenses and their allies. That resilience and perseverance is now needed to make sure that the lands are fully and promptly cleaned up and decontaminated. The legacy of contamination and health crisis in Vieques must end.

The Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Sila Calderón, has requested that Vieques—and the island of Culebra—be included in the National Priorities List under the Superfund law. That request is currently under consideration by the Office of Management and Budget. Once the relevant areas are designated for clean up and decontamination, the necessary funds must be appropriated to make sure that the clean up and decontamination is conducted fully and promptly. Unnecessary delays in the clean up process and insufficient funding would only exacerbate the health crisis suffered by Viequenses.

Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Navy's departure from the beautiful island of Vieques, we are proud of the victory achieved by the Viequenses and their allies in a peaceful struggle for peace and justice for the close to 10,000 residents of Vieques. At the same time, we are mindful that the agenda for complete peace and justice in Vieques is still inconclusive. We will continue to work towards completing this agenda. I am counting on my colleagues' support in doing so.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, March 8, 2001.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,

President of the United States of America, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: For the last 60 years the U.S. Navy has been conducting military operations in two-thirds of the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico. From the beginning, such operations have caused concern because of their consequences on the people, the environment, and the economy. The tragic death on April 19, 1999 of David Sanes-Rodríguez, a Vieques resident, during a training exercise, brought to the forefront of the Puerto Rican national and international communities the health, environment, and the violation of human and civil rights of the residents of that Island.

The People of Vieques have a mortality rate 40 percent higher than that of Puerto Rico, a 27 percent higher risk of dying from cancer, and a 70 percent higher risk of dying from diabetes. At the same time, Vieques' natural resources and environment have been seriously damaged by the continuous bombing and shelling, which have left heavy toxic metals in the environment. The island's economy has also been affected because Vieques has not been able to develop to its full potential as a direct result of the U.S. Navy's presence. In sum, the situation of Vieques has become an issue of health, environmental protection, and human and civil rights. In spite of all of these concerns, the U.S. Navy is determined to continue using Vieques for bombing exercises.

This issue has transcended political party and ideological lines in Puerto Rico. Leaders from all sectors of society agree that the bombing and shelling must end. At the same time, in the United States, the Senate of the State of New Jersey, led by the Republicans, approved a resolution, by unanimity, requesting the immediate cessation of the bombings. Governor Donald DiFrancesco (R-NJ), and Governor George Pataki (R-NY) have also stated their support for this effort.

Today, the vast majority of the Puerto Rican society favors the immediate and permanent cessation of the bombings and shellings. Past Presidents of the United States, under similar circumstances, have ordered the immediate and permanent cessation of military operations in other locations. For instance, in 1975, President Gerald Ford, by an Executive Order, terminated the use of the island of Culebra for military purposes. Likewise, President George Bush, on October 22, 1990, directed the Secretary of Defense to discontinue the use of the island of Kaho'olawe for bombing and target practice.

Your fellow Americans are seriously concerned about the ailing health, the violation of human and civil rights of the Viequenses, as well as the impact on their environment and natural resources. Under the Constitution of the United States, you have the authority to call for the immediate cessation of the bombing and the shelling that are affecting these rights. Therefore, the undersigned urge you to order an immediate and permanent end of the bombing in Vieques.

Respectfully,

Anibal Acevedo Vilá (D-PR), Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), Jose Serrano (D-NY), Nydia Velázquez (D-NY), Ed Pastor (D-AZ), Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX), George Miller (D-CA), Charles Rangel (D-NY), Edolphus Towns (D-NY), Patsy Mink (D-HI), Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Bobby Rush (D-IL), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Edward Markey (D-MA), Hilda Solis (D-CA), Major Owens (D-NY), Mike Honda (D-CA), Sam Farr (D-CA), Elliot Engel (D-NY), Cynthia McKinney (D-GA), Carrie Meek (D-FL), Eva Clayton (D-NC), Louis Slaughter (D-NY), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Nita Lowey (D-NY), John Larson (D-CT), Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-CA), Brad Carson (D-OK), Mark Udall (D-CO), Tom Udall (D-NM), Grace Napolitano (D-CA), Charlie Gonzalez (D-TX), Donna Christensen (D-VI), Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Albert Wynn (D-MD), Xavier Becerra (D-CA), Joe Baca (D-CA), Robert C. Scott (D-VA), Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX), Anthony D. Weiner (D-NY), Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), Sanford D. Bishop Jr. (D-GA), Gregory Meeks (D-NY), Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH), Robert Underwood (D-GU), Rod Blagojevich (D-IL), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Karen McCarthy (D-MO), David Phelps (D-IL), Nick Rahall (D-WV), Eni Faleomavaega (D-AS), Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), David Bonior (D-MI), Howard Berman (D-CA), Bernard Sanders (I-VT), William Jefferson (D-LA), Dale Kildee (D-MI), Sen. John Corzine (D-NJ), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Jesse L. Jackson Jr. (D-IL), Bob Filner (D-CA), William Lacy Clay (D-MO), Ted Strickland (D-OH), Lane Evans (D-IL), Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Robert Brady (D-PA), Jim McDermott (D-WA), John Olver (D-MA), Lois Capps (D-CA), Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY), Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY), Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL), Melvin Watt (D-NC), Bennie Thompson (D-MS), Jerrald Nadler (D-NY), James E. Clyburn (D-SC), James McGovern (D-MA), Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), John Conyers Jr. (D-MI), Martin Meehan (D-MA), Elijah Cummings (D-MD), Barney Frank (D-MA), Jerry F. Costello (D-IL), Diana DeGette (D-CO), Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), Michael McNutty (D-NY), Joseph Crowley (D-NY), Gene Green (D-TX), Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Earl Hilliard (D-AL), Maxine Waters (D-CA), James Oberstar (D-MN), Janice Shakowsky (D-IL), Nick Lampson (D-TX), Bill Delahunt (D-MA), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), William Lipinski (D-IL), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Thomas Allen (D-ME), Carolyn Kilpatrick (D-MI), Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), John LaFace (D-NY), Lynn Rivers (D-MI), Robert A. Borski

(D-PA), James A. Barcia (D-MI), Chaka Fattah (D-PA).

RECOGNIZING THE PASSING OF PHIL LELLI

HON. NORMAN D. DICKS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 29, 2004

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the passing of Phil Lelli, a good friend of mine and a great leader of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union from Tacoma, Washington.

Philip M. Lelli was a born longshoreman; he began his career on the Tacoma, Washington waterfront in 1949 and retired in 1993. He was President of the Tacoma Longshore Union Local 23 from 1966 to 1993, and I recall quite well the advice and counsel he freely gave to me and to other political leaders throughout his tenure of Union leadership. Afterward, he remained deeply engaged in community affairs in the Puget Sound area, serving as a Port of Tacoma Commissioner and the Harry Bridges History Chair Trustee at the University of Washington.

Today in the House of Representatives, I would like to express my sincere wishes of sympathy to the Lelli Family, Mr. Speaker, and to extend my thanks and the appreciation of a grateful community for the many contributions that Phil has made. I would also like to include in today's RECORD the notice that was printed in today's News Tribune newspaper from Tacoma, Washington.

[From the News Tribune, Apr. 28, 2004]

(By Philip Lelli)

HANGS HIS HOOK

Longshore leader Philip Martin Lelli was born December 4, 1929, in Edgewood and passed away April 25, 2004, in Puyallup. He was the son of Martin and Mary (Baller) Lelli and attended Fife schools and Pacific Lutheran University. He married Joanne Williams April 18, 1953, in Fife. Phil and Joanne were the proud parents of five sons: Jay (Judith E. Peterson), Marty, Dean (Susan), Vance (Kimberlie) and Ross, and grandparents of Janelle, Jayson A. (Jennifer), Paula, Rori, Scott, Mathew, and Marina. There are three great-grandchildren, MacKenzie, Kailee and Ryan. Also surviving is his brother Tom (Phyllis) Lelli. One son, Ross, and a sister, Jeanne Retallick, preceded him.

Phil Lelli was a dominant figure on the Tacoma waterfront from the moment he lifted his first 180-pound sack of wheat in 1949 until he retired as a gearman in 1993. He was a born longshoreman: a practical physicist who could come up with the most effective method of moving any size or weight of cargo; a leader of men in times of great technological change; and a stalwart ally who won hundreds of friends in ports all over the world.

His mentor was T. A. "Tiny" Thronson, a veteran of the Great Strike of 1934. Thronson's advice, "Do a hard day's work and you'll get rewarded with more opportunity," was Phil's guiding principle as President of Tacoma Longshore Union 23 from 1966 until 1983. He never abandoned his belief that port-union cooperation would result in a Golden Age. He teamed with Port Executive Director E. L. Roy Perry, Union Business Agent George Ginnis, and Port Commissioner Robert Earley to raise Ta-

coma from a backwater log port to become the fifth largest container port in North America.

During his 55 years on the waterfront, Phil served as Port of Tacoma commissioner, Propeller Club president, Tacoma Longshore pension club president, and University of Washington Harry Bridges History Chair trustee. The Propeller Club awarded Philip its highest honor, Master Mariner, in 1982. The Harry Bridges Chair designated him its Distinguished Supporter in 2003.

After Phil and Joanne's youngest son died in a waterfront accident in 1989, the Propeller Club created the Ross E. Lelli Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Phil Lelli learned the meaning of community service from his father, Martin, who taught his son to care for other people, especially the poor. In the 1980s Phil and Father William Bischel S.J. organized the Hospitality Kitchen to serve hot lunches to the Tacoma homeless. Phil rescued a stove from the old Knights of Pythias Temple. Longshore workers trucked the stove to the Kitchen, took out a wall, installed the stove, and rebuilt the wall. The longshore union continues its support of the Kitchen, which serves 450 meals a day.

Visitation will be from 8 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Saturday, May 1 (International Workers Day), followed by the Funeral Mass at 10:00 a.m. at St. Andrews Catholic Church, 1401 Valley Ave., Sumner. Rosary services will be at 7 p.m. Friday at St. Martin of Tours Church 2303-54th Avenue East, Fife. Grave-side services will be at Gethsemane Cemetery, 37600 Pacific Highway, at noon May 1. The Longshore Union will honor brother Phil with an open house from 1 to 4 p.m. There is an online guest book at www.mountainviewtacoma.com

Arrangements are by Mountain View Funeral Home, 253-564-0252. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in the name of Philip Lelli to the Ross E. Lelli Memorial Scholarship, PO Box 453, Tacoma, WA 98401, or the Hospitality Kitchen, 1323 S. Yakima Ave., Tacoma, WA 98405.

REMEMBERING CHERNOBYL

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 29, 2004

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember those who lost their lives and those who are suffering the aftereffects of the world's worst nuclear accident—Chernobyl, April 26, 1986.

The suffering extends outside Ukraine's borders to Russia, Belarus and beyond. I ask my colleagues to take a moment to honor those innocent lives that will be forever changed by such a horrific event.

I applaud the efforts of the United States Department of Energy, the International Atomic Energy Association, and other donor nations in remediation and containment efforts in Ukraine. Estimates indicate that these projects may last at least 100 years. Our commitment must remain firm.

I am including for the RECORD an article highlighting some of the challenges ahead and devastation many have already faced.

[From CBS News, Apr. 26, 2004]

REMEMBERING CHERNOBYL

Across the former Soviet Union, people lit candles, laid flowers and held demonstrations Monday to mark the 18th anniversary