

the Glades; \$249,000 for the renovation of the Lake Park Library; \$500,000 for the St. Mary's Medical Center Children's Emergency Room Wing; \$500,000 for Home Safe; and \$100,000 for project SOAR Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies.

Moreover, Ms. Green has helped to secure funding for projects beneficial to the Palm Beach community such as an aquatics facility in Riviera Beach, the Dan Calloway Recreation Complex, the Northwest Community Center, the Spady House Museum and C. Spencer Pompey Amphitheater in Delray Beach, the Wilson Recreation Center and Pool Renovation, the 1916 County Courthouse Restoration, and the 4-H Community Gardens. She arranged recreational and cultural funding in support of Heritage Fest, Children's Outreach, Mt. Olive Community Outreach Center, Roots Festival, the Soul of Delray, Annual Jazz & Blues Festival in Riviera Beach, Salvation Army, Teen Partnership Coalition, Operation Hope, and a host of school-based programs.

With the concerted efforts of many individuals and business leaders in the community, Ms. Green was able to organize the first Homeless Task Force for Palm Beach County. In 2007, she was named "Commissioner of the Year" by the Florida League of Cities for her extraordinary efforts of presiding over tough County transitions and improved relationships with cities throughout South Florida.

I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to work side by side with Commissioner Greene and it is a privilege for me to have this opportunity to recognize her before the esteemed House of Representatives. Now, in retirement, she embarks upon new challenges in life and I am certain her legacy of greatness will only grow and develop as she enters this new phase of life. I wish her every happiness and success.

HONORING RODNEY JOHN DIRIDON  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 70TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH

**HON. ZOE LOFGREN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 23, 2009*

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Rodney John Diridon, "Rod," on the 70th anniversary of his birth. In addition to celebrating the commemoration of a life well spent, I would like to acknowledge the dedication he has exemplified in serving the Valley of Santa Clara for over half of his life.

Diridon, the son of an immigrant Italian railroad brakeman, has focused on transportation issues for decades. A most effective proponent of public transportation, Rod Sr. is considered the "father of modern transit" in Santa Clara County and credited with countless achievements including building the light rail system. He is a former member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and a former candidate for the California State Assembly.

Upon his retirement from public office in 1994, the main train station in San Jose was

renamed "The Diridon Station" in his honor. He currently heads the Norman I. Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University, and is a former chairman of the board of the High Speed Rail Authority.

Rod's service to his community and country started much earlier in his life. From 1963 to 1967 he served in the U.S. Navy as a Fleet Officer and Combat Duty Officer in Vietnam.

In 1969, Diridon founded the Diridon Research Corporation, later renamed Decision Research Institute (DRI) in 1972. DRI conducted market research, needs assessment surveys and legislative consulting throughout the United States. As founder and president he developed a "shared survey" research procedure subsequently adopted by the UNICEF of the United Nations.

His political career began in 1972 as the youngest person ever elected to the Saratoga City Council. He retired because of term limits, after completing 20 years and six terms as chairperson of both the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and Transit Board. He is the only person to have chaired the San Francisco Bay Area's (nine counties and 104 cities) three regional governments: the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and the Association of Bay Area Governments.

To find the basis for Rod's call to public service, one need only look at his family's roots. Rodney John Diridon was born in Dunsmuir, California in 1939 to Claude and Rhoda Diridon. As the son of Italian immigrants, Rod's father, Claudius Diridoni was compelled to change his name when bigotry in the railroad employment system kept him from being hired. After becoming a union member, Claude was protected from discrimination, thus starting the Diridon family's long appreciation of organized labor.

Although Rod was dyslexic, through hard work and determination, he was a good student and member of championship football teams in high school. While working his way through college as a railroad trainman, he attended Shasta Junior College and Chico State, each for one year. He then transferred to San Jose State University, where he was a student leader, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and an MSBA in Statistics.

He was married to Mary Ann Fudge from July 4, 1964 until 1999 and raised two children, Rodney Jr. born September 10, 1969, and Mary Margaret, born September 14, 1971. On June 10, 2001 he married Dr. Gloria Duffy.

Rod has chaired over 100 international, national, state and local community service programs and projects, most related to transit and the environment. He served, in 1993, as the chairperson of the American Public Transit Association in Washington, D.C., and more recently as the North American Vice President of the International Transit Association in Brussels. He has been an advisor to the Federal Transit Administration and in 1995 chaired the National Research Council's Transit Oversight and Project Selection Committee. Rod chaired the NRC's Transportation Research Board's study panel on "Combating Global Warming Through Sustainable Transportation Policy." He is frequently asked to provide testimony to Congressional Committees.

Diridon has received published recognition and numerous awards for his contributions

and has served on numerous organizations committed to community service at the national, state, regional and local levels. He has been most involved with transportation, the environment, arts and human rights fund-raising and advocacy.

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL  
COMMISSION ON EMPLOYMENT  
AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT  
OF 2009

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 23, 2009*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the National Commission on Employment and Economic Security Act of 2009.

This legislation is a necessary and vital investment in the people of the American workforce and their families. This bill will establish a national commission to examine issues of economic and psychological insecurity within our workforce that have been caused by employment displacement. Further, it will propose solutions, including recommendations for legislative and administrative action, to Congress and the President.

Since the recession began in December 2007, more than 5.1 million jobs have been lost. Last month, the national unemployment rate reached an unprecedented 8.5 percent, the highest it has been since the recession of 1983 and it is much higher in many states like Florida, at 9.7 percent, and it has topped 12.6 percent in Michigan.

Over the past year, unemployment rates have increased in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The scope of the economic downturn is so large that its impact is felt virtually everywhere along the economic spectrum.

While Americans lose their jobs and their incomes shrink, too often, they face the loss of their family's health insurance and, subsequent to the loss of income, even their housing. According to a September 2008 survey by the American Psychology Association, 80 percent of Americans say the economy is a significant cause of stress, an increase from 66 percent since April 2008. Perhaps even more disturbing, calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline have increased by more than 20 percent from January 2008 to January 2009.

Madam Speaker, the mental health of the American worker will be integral on the road to economic recovery and Congress must face this problem head on and help the very people who are facing unemployment, loss of health insurance, home foreclosure, stress, increased violence, and depression. It is time that we create this Commission and get our nation back on track.

We have a solemn responsibility to ensure the greatest possible assistance to the American workforce, whose commitment to economic participation has been a defining feature of the cultural fabric of our country. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.