

TRIBUTE TO THE UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE ON ITS 209TH ANNIVERSARY SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women of the U.S. Customs Service as it celebrates its 209th anniversary today.

As our young nation was on the verge of economic despair and in search of revenue, the First Congress passed and President George Washington signed into law the Tariff Act of July 4, 1789, which authorized the collection of duties on imported goods. This, the fifth act of the 1st Congress, established Customs and its ports of entry as the collector and protector of the revenue on July 31, 1789, essentially creating what we now know as the U.S. Customs Service.

For approximately 125 years, until the passage of the Federal Income Tax Act in 1913, Customs provided our federal government with its only source of revenue. During this time, the incoming revenue from Customs funded the purchases of Alaska and Florida, and the territories of Louisiana and Oregon. In addition, Customs collections built Washington, D.C., the U.S. military and naval academies, and many of the nation's lighthouses from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Most impressively, by 1835, Customs revenues alone reduced the national debt to zero.

Customs offices first appeared in Minnesota around 1851, seven years before Minnesota achieved statehood. Minnesota's geographical layout as head of three great navigation systems—the Red River to the North, the Mississippi to the south, the Great Lakes-Saint Lawrence River to the east, and 395 miles along the Canadian border to the north—was a key to handling the traffic of people and goods that passed through these ports.

In its first year of existence, Customs collected \$2 million in revenue in 59 ports of entry. Today, the U.S. Customs Service has a total of 301 ports of entry which collect over \$20 billion annually in revenue. In addition, Customs processes over 450 million persons entering the United States each year. As for Minnesota, there are 14 ports of entry throughout the entire state. These ports of entry collected nearly \$2 billion in revenue for the U.S. Customs Service during FY 1997. Besides all the products that are processed, many people enter the United States through Minnesota. An estimated 1.1 million people have entered through Minnesota's ports of entry since last October alone. This number continues to grow at an increasing rate over previous years.

The U.S. Customs Service has grown from being the chief collector of revenue on imports into what has become our nation's first defense against the threat of terrorism, combatting the illegal drug trade, and ensuring that all imports and exports comply with U.S. laws and regulations.

Mr. President, I commend the U.S. Customs Service for its long history protecting the American public. But most of all, I want to pay tribute to the many men and women who continue to stand as symbols of national pride and enforce the mission of the U.S. Customs Service: to ensure that all goods and persons entering and exiting the United States do so in accordance with all United States laws and regulations.●

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PURPLE HEART

• Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today to say "Happy Birthday" to the Purple Heart. The Purple Heart is the oldest military decoration in the country, and it turns 216 years old on August 7th.

The Purple Heart honors combat-wounded veterans who have given their blood for their country. It is the only medal which is earned, not awarded. It is earned by being wounded by an enemy during a hostile action toward the United States or an ally.

I want to thank my friend, Jim Wendt of the Purple Heart in Minnesota, for bringing my attention to this important occasion. The Purple Heart was created by George Washington on August 7, 1782, almost 216 years ago, and the first three medals were awarded during the Revolutionary War.

On the Purple Heart's 216th birthday, I want to thank Jim and all my friends at the Purple Heart for all their great work. Thank you, and Happy Birthday.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. KARL K. WALLACE, JR.

• Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate a devoted and energetic physician for his tireless service to his patients, students, and fellow radiologists. On September 12, 1998, the American College of Radiology (ACR) will bestow the 1998 Gold Medal to Karl K. Wallace Jr., MD at their annual meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The prestigious Gold Medal is ACR's highest award, and will honor this distinguished doctor as a national leader as well as a dedicated servant for Radiology.

K.K., as he is known to those in medicine and Radiology, was a long time community hospital clinician at the Virginia Beach General Hospital. After 28 years as the director of the Virginia Beach General Hospital Department of Radiology, Dr. Wallace made an unusual career move. He undertook a "second career" as a professor at the University of Virginia Health Sciences Center, where he is currently co-director of thoraco-abdominal imaging and the medical director of chest diagnosis.

Dr. Wallace's active commitment to medicine has been characteristic ever since his career began. Two years after starting his practice, he became an officer in the Virginia Beach Medical So-

ciety. One year later he was elected to the House of Delegates of the Medical Society of Virginia where he was speaker from 1977 to 1980. His history of service to the American College of Radiology goes back to 1967 where he was elected secretary/treasurer of the Virginia Chapter. Six years later, he served as its president and held a number of key leadership positions for the following 14 years, including speaker of the council and chairman of the Board of Chancellors.

During those 14 years, Dr. Wallace continued to lead Radiology in its efforts to work on national health policy such as physician payment reform and the Mammography Quality Standards Act. He worked with members of the U.S. Senate to develop reasonable approaches to legislation in our rapidly changing health care system. He provided honest, fair and meaningful input efforts. I know all of my colleagues join me in congratulating my fellow Virginian, Dr. Wallace, on being chosen as a recipient of the Gold Medal.●

LEO B. FLAHERTY, JR.

• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute a good friend to me and my family, and a pillar of the Connecticut legal and political community: Leo Flaherty of Vernon, Connecticut. Sadly, Mr. Flaherty recently died at the age of 75.

Leo Flaherty was Vernon's elder statesman. For years, young attorneys and political aspirants in town have looked to Leo Flaherty as a role model and for his advice and leadership. He was respected by all who knew him for his integrity as a lawyer, his instincts as a politician, and, in general, his strong moral character.

While remembered as possessing a great legal mind, Leo's intelligence was not limited to any one discipline. In 1942, he left Connecticut to attend Georgia Tech. A year later he received an appointment to the United States Naval Academy, where he was a classmate of President Jimmy Carter. After graduating from the Academy, he earned a degree in engineering from the University of Connecticut, and he worked at both Pratt & Whitney and Hamilton Standard.

But despite his ventures into engineering, there was always something drawing him to politics. It was in his blood. His father, Leo, Sr. served as a Rockville city alderman and Democratic Town Committee Chairman—a position that Leo, Jr. held for 10 years.

He held several positions in Rockville from tax collector to a member of the State Board of Education. In 1960, he became Rockville's mayor. The most significant accomplishment of his tenure in the mayor's office was managing the consolidation of Rockville with the neighboring, more rural town of Vernon. This was a controversial proposal, but Rockville had one of the worst urban poverty rates in the state, and he saw the merger of the two cities as key to Rockville's future prosperity.

The Rockville mayor's job was eliminated upon completion of the merger. So, in the end, Leo Flaherty worked himself out of a job. But Leo Flaherty never regretted his actions because he knew that this was the right thing to do, not for him, but for his community.

The final political office that he ever held was chairman of Connecticut's members of the Electoral College, which chooses the President. True to form and his principles, his first act in this position was to call for the elimination of the college. He always believed that the popular vote should prevail.

His tenure as an attorney lasted even longer than his political career. Leo Flaherty earned a reputation as a lawyer who would help anyone. Oftentimes he found himself representing some of society's undesirables, but he never wavered in his belief that every individual, rich or poor, had certain rights and was entitled to effective legal representation. He never sought the high powered clients, and he never became a millionaire. But, as was said after his passing, Leo Flaherty died a rich man because he owned his soul.

In a 1996 interview, Leo Flaherty said that he had no intention of retiring unless he had to. This prophecy was fulfilled. He worked until his body would no longer allow it, as he contracted Lou Gehrig's disease—a terminal degenerative nerve condition.

Leo Flaherty was a man whom I looked up to with the highest respect and admiration. He will be dearly missed.●

GERALD R. AND BETTY FORD CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

● Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise today, pleased to urge bipartisan support for and passage of H.R. 3506, the Gerald R. and Betty Ford Congressional Gold Medal Act.

Mr. President, this bill commemorates a number of anniversaries that few individuals succeed in reaching. This year is quite a milestone for our former thirty-eight President and First Lady. First and foremost, Gerald Ford celebrated his 85th birthday on July 14 and Betty Ford celebrated her 80th birthday on April 8.

This October marks another anniversary well worth mentioning—the 50th wedding anniversary of Gerald and Betty Ford. In 1948, they were wed only a few weeks before Gerald Ford won his first term in the House of Representatives. The Fords returned to Washington every term thereafter until 1974. Gerald Ford served as House Minority Leader from 1965 to 1973.

And finally Mr. President, this year commemorates the 25th anniversary of Gerald Ford becoming the first Vice President chosen under the terms of the Twenty-fifth Amendment. Less than a year later, he succeeded the first President ever to resign.

President and First Lady Ford led our country with bravery and dignity

during a time that he declared upon his inauguration, “. . . troubles our minds and hurts our hearts.” Gerald Ford was faced with seemingly unsurmountable tasks when he took the oath of office of the Presidency on August 9, 1974. There were the challenges of mastering inflation, reviving a depressed economy, solving chronic energy shortages, and trying to ensure world peace.

For their first twenty five years in Washington, Betty Ford not only was instrumental in rearing the four Ford children, she supervised the home, did the cooking, undertook volunteer work, and took part in the “House wives” and “Senate wives” for Congressional and Republican clubs. In addition, she was an effective campaigner for her husband. In 1974, Mrs. Ford set aside personal need for privacy when she openly discussed her experience from radical surgery for breast cancer. She reassured troubled women across the country with her openness, care and bravery.

H.R. 3506, a bill authorizing the President to award Gerald R. and Betty Ford the congressional gold medal, passed the House by unanimous consent on July 29, 1998. It is my sincere hope that the Senate act expeditiously on this legislation.

Mr. President, this honor, the highest award bestowed by the United States Congress, is a fitting tribute to life-long public service and dedication bestowed upon the American people by the thirty-eight President and First Lady, Gerald and Betty Ford. In addition, it is a wonderful way for all of Congress to commemorate and congratulate the Fords on their fifty years of commitment to one another. On behalf of all my colleagues, I wish them many more happy years together.●

VIRGINIA S. BAKER

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to pay special tribute to a special lady who passed away Wednesday July 30, 1998 in Baltimore, Maryland. Virginia S. Baker was special to me, my family and the entire city of Baltimore.

Virginia Baker started as a volunteer playground monitor in Baltimore, where she brought joy and fun to the city's streets and neighborhoods. But more importantly, she always kept an eagle eye out for the children with a broken heart or the ones from a broken home. Without notice she would find a way to bring those children into her circle of compassion, to let them know they always had a home at her recreation center. She had the special gift of mending children's hearts.

She came to serve in the recreation departments of nine Baltimore Mayors and always made sure children had a safe place to play. When I was a City Councilwoman I became friendly with Virginia because she was always hustling the City Council for more money. She took me to the playgrounds and community events, got me

to play hopscotch, and got me leap-frogging over the bureaucracy to ensure strong community programs for the city of Baltimore. Virginia was also friends with my dear mother. My mother volunteered for me for several years when I served on the Baltimore City Council. When my schedule wouldn't allow me to tour the city streets, Virginia would take Pearl, her assistant, and my mother out to visit the senior centers and community playgrounds. They would never forget to stop at Faidley's for a crabcake, Greektown for a few stuffed grape leaves, or countless other diners and snack shops where Baltimoreans gathered.

Virginia Baker was just a special person. She had a God-given gift of compassion and caring and used it selflessly. Today, I have humbly tried to express my personal experience with Virginia and her gift. I also request the Baltimore Sun article on Virginia's life be printed in the record. It really expresses Virginia's effect on Baltimore and its citizens best.

The article follows:

[From the Baltimore Sun, July 31, 1998]

CITY'S QUEEN OF FUN DIES AT 76—VIRGINIA BAKER RAN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

(By Rafael Alvarez)

Baltimore's oldest kid has died at the age of 76.

Virginia S. Baker—who began her career in fun and games as an East Baltimore playground monitor in 1940 and hopscotched her way up to City Hall in the silly-hat regime of William Donald Schaefer—died yesterday at St. Joseph Medical Center of complications from pneumonia.

“I've made a lot of kids happy,” she said in a 1995 interview. “That's what I get paid for.”

Never married, Miss Baker counted generations of Baltimore youngsters as her own special brood.

Her secret?

The girl who grew up as “Queenie” in her father's confectionary at Belnord Avenue and Monument Street—where she honed her child-like playfulness and steely resolve—never stopped thinking like a kid.

In a century that whittled an American child's idea of a good time down to pushing buttons on plastic gadgets, Miss Baker championed timeless fun: hog-calling contests, frog-jumping races, turtle derbies, sack races, beanbag tosses, peanut shucking and doll shows.

“And don't forget her annual Elvis salute,” said Sue McCardell, Miss Baker's longtime assistant in the Department of Recreation and Parks. “We'll keep going with all the things Virginia started.”

Bob Wall, a recreation programmer in Patterson Park—where the rec center is named in Miss Baker's honor—first met his mentor as an 11-year-old Little Leaguer in 1968.

“It was a Saturday and our game was rained out and we were walking past the rec center in our uniforms. I'd never been inside it before,” Mr. Wall remembered. “This boisterous lady yelled out to us: ‘You boys want to catch frogs for me today?’”

Of course they did. And that was Mr. Wall's initiation into a world he unexpectedly found himself eulogizing yesterday when the city's 58th annual doll show—launched by Miss Baker at the start of her career—coincided with her death.

“We had a moment of silence,” said Mr. Wall. “And then we said the show's got to go on.”