

County Administrator. During his career, Mike has led Deschutes County through a period of unprecedented growth which has transformed a small rural community into a thriving region that attracts visitors and new residents from throughout the country.

Mike was born and raised in Santa Barbara, California. Upon entering adulthood, he proudly served his country as a member of the United States Marine Corps, holding the position of Group Communication Center Supervisor. Following his discharge, he attended, California State University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public and Business Administration in 1974. He then proceeded to obtain a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of Southern California in 1976.

After completing his education, Mike moved to Oregon and became an Administrator in the Oregon Circuit and District Court system. However, Mike's interest in government continued to grow, and by 1979, he chose to pursue a career in the broader field of public administration. He assumed his current position as Deschutes County Administrator in May 1979 and has been a highly respected and valued contributor to both the community and local government ever since.

During Mike's tenure, Deschutes County has consistently ranked as one of the fastest growing regions in the United States. The rapid increase in population, from approximately 62,000 in 1979 to nearly 145,000 in 2005, has presented a wealth of challenges and opportunities. Mike skillfully guided the County through this transition, managing organizational growth from 250 employees to well over 800 and an annual budget of just over \$16 million in 1979 to almost \$228 million today.

Among Mike's many accomplishments as a Public Administrator, he is justifiably proudest of those that brought fiscal strength and stability to Deschutes County. His creativity and innovation are the source of a system in which existing property and partnerships are leveraged to construct new County facilities without additional cost to the taxpayer. He also initiated a self-insurance program that has saved millions of taxpayer dollars while creating an environment of trust and cooperation between County management, employees, and labor organizations and serving as a model for other communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in honoring one of Oregon's finest public servants, Mike Maier. On behalf of the citizens of the Second District of Oregon, I am proud to recognize Mike's numerous achievements and to wish him the best as he enters a well-deserved retirement.

HONORING ARMANDO DE JESUS DOMINGUEZ

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mr. Armando de Jesus Dominguez of Saga Bay for his remarkable work as an artist.

Most recently, Mr. Dominguez has been selected out of 4,000 entries as one of ten artists

featured by the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. Mr. Dominguez's works and journals are published on the gallery's "Portrait of an Artist" web site. His competition entry Mr. Williams is a riveting portrayal of a Palmetto Senior High School teacher, an expression of the artist's patience and skill.

Mr. Dominguez was born in Havana, Cuba, and came to Miami with his family at the age of 12. A self-taught painter, he works as a graphic designer for the Spanish-language network Univision. In his artistic work, he focuses on landscape painting and now has a three-year backlog of commissioned work. Dedicated to his community, he also visits local schools and gives presentations to expose children to the arts.

Mr. Dominguez, thank you for your continued commitment to the promotion of the arts. Your unwavering pursuit of your vision through painting has been an inspiration to others. It is this passion, incredible talent, and service to the community of Saga Bay that makes our lives richer and Florida stronger. I congratulate Mr. Armando DeJesus Dominguez on his achievement and service to the community.

AMENDING TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 6, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Congressman LATOURETTE's bill, H.R. 5449. I am pleased my fellow Ohioan has brought this important issue to the floor of the House.

The contract negotiations between air traffic controllers and the FAA that began in July of 2005 have been an arduous process for both sides. But the resolution of the negotiation stalemate should not be an imposition of the FAA's most recent contract offer on the union. Rather, both parties should return to the bargaining table, or make use of another collaborative process, such as the Federal Service Impasse Panel, to reach a resolution.

News reports in recent weeks have highlighted the upcoming summer travel season and the expected record numbers of air passengers. With more travelers in the air and likely delays associated with the severe weather of summer, the important role of air traffic controllers is even more vital. We need experienced controllers to ensure safe flights and timely arrivals. We need controllers who are able to focus on their jobs and not distracted by contract negotiations.

The result of this extensive negotiation should not be the unilateral imposition of the FAA's will. The negotiated contract should be a result of a collaborative process, as Congressman LATOURETTE's bill would ensure. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5449.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. RICHARD W. POMBO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce legislation today to extend the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Joining with me in this effort are Representatives NICK RAHALL, WAYNE T. GILCHREST, THELMA DRAKE, MARK KENNEDY, JOHN D. DINGELL and CURT WELDON.

First enacted in 1989, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act or NAWCA has become one of the most popular and effective conservation programs in the history of this Nation. Since the first Wetland Grant was a warded 15 years ago, more than 1,500 conservation projects have been funded involving more than 3,200 partners. As a result, more than 23 million acres of wetlands and associated habitat has been protected, restored or enhanced in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Wetlands are among the world's most productive environments. They are critical to the survival of not only thousands of species of marine fish and invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds and wildlife populations but also to the people who live along our coasts. In essence, they are horizontal levees. Without these wetlands and coastal barriers, the impact of last year's huge hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico would have been far worse in terms of loss of human life and wildlife habitat and the destruction of private property. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, for every 2.7 miles a hurricane travels across marshes and wetlands the storm surge is reduced by one foot.

Wetlands protect ground and surface water, purify water by removing sediments and nutrients, reduce the severity of flooding, prevent erosion and provide habitat for a diverse community of plants, animals, fish and birds. In particular, millions of migratory birds depend on wetlands throughout their life cycles as breeding, staging and resting grounds. Sadly, more than half of our Nation's original colonial wetlands have been lost. The fundamental goal of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act is to conserve remaining wetland habitat. It is a program that is working and it is a sound investment of U.S. taxpayer funds.

In my own Congressional District in California, there have been a number of approved NAWCA projects. A recent example is the \$1 million grant issued to the North San Joaquin Valley Wetland Habitat Project to protect, restore and enhance over 36,000 acres of wetlands, riparian and upland habitats. The prime sponsor of this project is the California Waterfowl Association. This organization is working, with local landowners to ensure that critical habitat can provide maximum benefits to migratory birds and a host of other wildlife species. Under their leadership, the California Waterfowl Association and its non-governmental partners will contribute \$2.3 million towards the success of this grant.

Since the inception of this program, the amount of private non-governmental matching money has been remarkable. In fact, it now