

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF STEPHEN BARROUK AS HE LEAVES THE WILKES-BARRE CHAMBER OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2006

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Mr. Stephen Barrouk, of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, who has served as president and chief executive officer of the Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry from 1989 until earlier this month.

Mr. Barrouk's extraordinary leadership has helped guide and forge the beginning of a truly remarkable revitalization of the City of Wilkes-Barre.

Since 1989, Mr. Barrouk has led the growth of the Chamber from 500 members to 1,338 members in 2005. He has been at the forefront of a litany of catalytic projects that have transformed the region. Those projects include the Wachovia Arena, an entertainment venue that has spawned tens of millions of dollars of commercial expansion and created hundreds of new jobs. An innovation center was carved out of a vacant department store complex in central city to nurture fledgling businesses. Public Square Commons, formerly the Pomeroy's Department Store, was completely renovated to provide first class office space. Also during his tenure, Mr. Barrouk secured an American Hockey League franchise and recruited the Penguins as an anchor tenant for the Wachovia Arena.

In addition, Mr. Barrouk helped launch a 14-screen downtown theater complex as well as studies for the Susquehanna Riverfront Convention Center and Hotel and the Riverfront Museum.

Mr. Barrouk also led the way for the development of two business parks, Hanover Crossings and the East Mountain Corporate Center, both of which have major tenants responsible for creating hundreds of jobs.

During his tenure he managed three capital campaigns that raised over \$10 million to support 15 years of economic development marketing that attracted over 125 new companies to the region. He also led the effort to create Penn's Northeast, Inc., a regional marketing organization; the Diamond City Partnership and Downtown Business Association, the Great Valley Technology Alliance and the Luzern County Convention Center Authority which manages the Arena.

Mr. Barrouk has been the worthy recipient of numerous service awards, among them the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Boy Scouts of America; the Distinguished Leader Award from Leadership Wilkes-Barre; a 25 Year Leadership Star Award from Leadership Wilkes-Barre, a Special Achievement Award from the Pennsylvania Ben Franklin Partnership and, in 2001, he received the Chamber of the Year award from the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry and the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce executives in 2001.

Mr. Barrouk serves on the boards of directors of numerous organizations including 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, Chairman of

Steering Committee for the Renew Pennsylvania effort; NEPA Alliance; Luzerne-Schuylkill Counties Work Force Investment Board; Great Valley Technology Alliance; Joint Urban Studies Center, Earth Conservancy, United Way of Wyoming Valley, Catholic Social Services and the Diamond City Partnership.

On a personal note, I have worked closely with Steve on many projects over the last 17 years. There is no economic development official who is more dedicated to improving the quality of life in our area. His perseverance, hard work and integrity made him one of the most effective leaders in our area. I am proud to call him a friend and look forward to continuing working with him to help northeastern Pennsylvania for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Barrouk for the exemplary community service he has contributed over the past 17 years. His commitment to revitalizing the Wilkes-Barre area has been responsible for a wealth of community improvements that have greatly enhanced the quality of life in northeastern Pennsylvania.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN
MICHAEL R. WOMACK

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Captain Michael R. Womack, of North Richland Hills, Texas on his years of dedicated service and commitment to law enforcement.

Captain Womack joined the North Richland Hills Police Department as a police officer in September of 1976. During his thirty years of service to North Richland Hills, Captain Womack has been awarded the Patrolman of the Year Award, the Supervisor of the Year award, as well as three Meritorious Service Awards and a Life Saving Award.

On Wednesday, January 31, 2007, Captain Womack will be retiring from law enforcement. Having worked in the Patrol Division, the Administrative Services Division, as well as the Technical Services Division and Investigative Services Division, Captain Womack's tenure, skills, and experience will surely be difficult to replace.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Captain Womack on his devotion to the service and protection to his community. His contributions and commitment to North Richland Hills should inspire us all. I wish him the best of luck in his retirement and all of his future endeavors.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2006

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2808, a bill that directs the Treasury Department to mint 500,000 one-dollar coins marking Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday. Abraham Lincoln is a true American

hero who will always be remembered for his commitment to the ideals of freedom, democracy, and equal opportunity. Illinois, known as the Land of Lincoln, is where Lincoln lived for many years and began his political career. Today, many historical sites in Illinois are dedicated in honor of Lincoln and his legacy. Illinois will be a focal point for activities to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth.

Besides being a noble tribute, this commemorative coin will help provide significant funding for the bicentennial and is an important part of how the United States will mark Lincoln's 200th birthday in 2009.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF BROOKLYN
CENTER JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL IN BROOKLYN CENTER,
MINNESOTA

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2006

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, last evening I had the great pleasure to join in a celebration in honor of our Nation's high schools that have made an outstanding commitment to music education. As a strong supporter of the arts and music education, it was a pleasure to sit among music industry supporters, arts advocates, individuals in the private sector, and corporate sponsors such as 7UP, who work every day to ensure that young people have access to strong music education programs.

It was an even greater privilege to be part of a celebration where a Minnesota high school headlined the event. Brooklyn Center Junior/Senior High School, located in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, received one of the Foundation's highest honors—the GRAMMY Foundation's Signature Schools Enterprise Award, which honors those schools that make great efforts to bring music to economically underserved students. I'd like to extend a warm congratulations to Ms. Chris Porter, Brooklyn Center High School's music teacher and all of her students, including Chanel Chatham, who both traveled to DC to participate in last evening's special event.

As budgets for the arts and arts education continues to dramatically decline, I applaud the efforts of the thousands of teachers and students across the country who are working to piece together the critical funding needed to strengthen, and sometimes simply sustain, their music education programs. It is my hope that the federal government will recommit its resources to the arts and arts education—especially since we know that there are strong correlations between arts education and achievement in math and science. Our nation's ability to compete in an increasingly competitive world will depend on not only strong math and science preparation—but also on an emphasis in the arts and in music education. As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I will continue to fight for a well-rounded education for all students.

I commend the hard work and dedication of the students and staff at Brooklyn Center Junior/Senior High School. Thank you for the opportunity to join you in your celebration. I look