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VISCLOSKY HONORS AHEPAN OF THE YEAR

Mr. Speaker: It is with great pleasure and admiration that I stand before you today to honor Nick Gianikos as he is recognized by the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) as Chapter, District, and National Ahepan of the Year. AHEPA will be honoring Nick at the AHEPA, Chapter 78 meeting on October 5, 2011, at the Hobart Lodge in Hobart, Indiana.

The Order of AHEPA was founded on July 26, 1922, in Atlanta, Georgia, joining the NAACP and B'nai B'rith in the effort to end racism, bigotry, and discrimination against all immigrants. AHEPA was founded on the principles of ancient Greece promoting civic responsibility, education, philanthropy, family, and individual excellence through volunteerism and community service.

Nick Gianikos, Chapter 78 President of Philanthropy, has been a tremendous leader and a true inspiration. He has been able to touch the lives of many individuals through his position and has done so passionately and persistently. Through these trying economic times, the number of people in need is great. Due to Nick's direction and unwavering dedication, he has been able to plan and execute several projects with the help of other devoted Ahepan brothers and the chapter's Philanthropy Committee. For his outstanding commitment to serving those in need, Nick is to be commended.

Under Brother Gianikos's leadership, Chapter 78's Philanthropy Committee has initiated projects, team visits, and social events with many organizations, including: the Ross Township Food Pantry and Senior and Disabled Bus Service Support, Christian Haven House, Meals on Wheels, Veterans for Life Changing Services, Saint Jude House, Saints Monica and Luke Soup Kitchen, Saint Iakovos Church, Saints Constantine and Helen Church, Sojourner Truth House, Rebuilding South Lake County, the Salvation Army, and the Merrillville Boys and Girls Club. In addition, this past year, Nick chaired the Chapter 78 Membership Committee, which focused on finding new members who wish to participate in AHEPA functions and commit to projects that adhere to AHEPA's goals.

Brother Gianikos's commitment to AHEPA and to serving others in the community of Northwest Indiana is exceeded only by his devotion to his amazing family. He and his wonderful wife Maureen have two beloved children and five adoring grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating AHEPA and Brother Nick Gianikos as he is recognized as Ahepan of the Year for his excellent leadership, perseverance, and everlasting enthusiasm shown through his service to so many in need throughout Northwest Indiana and across the nation. For his outstanding contributions to Indiana's First Congressional District, Nick is worthy of the highest praise.