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House of Representatives

VISCLOSKY HONORS MICHAEL SULLIVAN

Mr. Speaker: It is with great respect that I stand before you today to congratulate Mr. Michael J. Sullivan on his retirement from his position as General President of the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association (SMWIA). For 46 years, Mike has devoted his life to serving, protecting, and improving the lives of all Americans who want to earn a living wage for their labor. This is particularly true for the members of the Sheet Metal Workers. Michael Sullivan will be honored for his many years of dedicated service at a retirement celebration on September 20, 2011, at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland.

Michael Sullivan's leadership over the years has been indispensable for the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association. During his tenure, Mike has held numerous positions. I'm proud that his career began in my home state, in Indianapolis, Indiana, where he completed his apprenticeship. In 1973, Mike was elected business representative. He later became the business manager and financial secretary of Sheet Metal Worker's Local Union 20. While residing in Indiana, he served as president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) for the state of Indiana. Later, he was appointed by the Governor to serve as a member for the Indiana Workers' Compensation Commission and Hoosier Alliance Against Drugs. Mike was vice president of the SMWIA General Executive Council for 10 years and then served as the General Secretary-Treasurer of the SMWIA. In 1999, Michael became President of the SMWIA, a position that includes supervising and directing 157 Sheet Metal Workers' Local Unions throughout the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. This vital group provides skilled services to various industries including sheet metal, air conditioning, kitchen equipment, transportation and other metal related manufacturing. Mike has also served as the vice president of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, while also participating in several AFL-CIO executive committees. In addition to the prestigious positions held by Mike, he has served as the labor co-chairman of the Democratic Governors' Association and also currently serves as president of the Eugene Debs Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, Mike Sullivan represents the very bed values of his home state of Indiana; hard work, perseverance in the face of setbacks, and a selfless nature of wanting to serve others before being served. He is a gentleman in the truest sense of the word: strong, decisive, but governed by compassion and kindness.

Michael's dedication to his fellow members throughout his outstanding career is exceeded only by his devotion to his amazing family. Mike and his lovely wife, Amy, are happily married and enjoy spending time with their family, especially their beloved nieces and nephews and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending Mr. Michael Sullivan as he is honored for his lifetime of service to the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association, its membership, and communities across the nation. Michael Sullivan is worthy of the highest praise for the tremendous contributions he has made to all of us. As my 95 year old father, John Visclosky, would say, "He's a 100 percent guy."