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VISCLOSKY HONORS AMERICAN HELLENIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78

Madam Speaker: It is with great pleasure and admiration that I stand before you today to honor the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) Chapter 78 of Merrillville, Indiana, for being named “Chapter of the Year,” during the association’s national convention that was held in July, 2010. For its outstanding service to numerous charitable organizations throughout Northwest Indiana, AHEPA Chapter 78 is to be commended.

On July 26, 1922, the Order of AHEPA was founded 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. Today, AHEPA is the largest American-based Greek heritage organization, and is made up of over 500 chapters throughout North America.

AHEPA Chapter 78 of Merrillville was established on July 25, 1925. Currently, Chapter 78 consists of 130 total members, with 13 being life members of over 50 years. In accordance with the AHEPA mission of community service, Chapter 78 participated in President Obama’s “United We Serve Initiative,” a national year-long effort calling all individuals, organizations, corporations, foundations, and governments to participate in the spirit of volunteerism within their communities. Answering the White House’s call, over the past year, AHEPA committed to the national campaign with the mission of supporting two local soup kitchens and organizing canned food drives. AHEPA Chapter 78 went above and beyond this call, and over the past year, donated over \$50,000 to many organizations throughout the area. The organizations assisted by AHEPA’s generosity included; the Ross Township Food Pantry, and other food pantries throughout Northwest Indiana, Boys and Girls Club, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, Christian Haven House, Saints Monica and Luke Soup Kitchen, Veterans Life Changing Services, Clothing Our Children, the Ross Township Trustee Bus Service, and Rebuilding Together. Chapter members also volunteered many hours of service to local soup kitchens and delivered meals to the needy. AHEPA Chapter 78 will continue its passionate effort to serve the community of Northwest Indiana for many years to come. For enthusiastically helping so many families, children, veterans, elderly, and those in need, the members of AHEPA and AHEPA Chapter 78 are truly inspirational.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the organization of AHEPA and especially AHEPA Chapter 78 of Merrillville, for their exceptional service and dedication to the Northwest Indiana community. The members of this truly outstanding organization continue to touch the lives of countless people, and for their unselfish, lifelong commitment, they are worthy of the highest praise.