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HON. SANDER M. LEVIN OF MICHIGAN

Washington, Thursday, March 18, 2010

Madam Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise today to honor my friend Robert Larson and pay tribute to his life and legacy.

Robert Larson was a real estate executive, philanthropist, community leader, and dear friend. His keen knowledge and distinguished career positioned him as one of the industry's most respected executives. He was chairman of the Larson Realty Group, a family-owned real estate investment company; chairman of Lazard Real Estate Partners LLC, a merchant banking business; and chairman of the board of UDR, Inc., one of the country's largest real estate companies. He spent twenty-six years with the prestigious Taubman Company, where he was elevated to chief operating officer, chief executive officer, vice chairman of Taubman Centers, Inc., and chairman of the Taubman Realty Group during the course of his tenure.

The knowledge and insight Mr. Larson provided the federal government in the wake of the Savings and Loan crisis of the 1980s were integral to successfully restructuring our savings institutions and recovering from the crisis. President Bush and President Clinton appointed Mr. Larson to the Thrift Depositor Protection Oversight Board, where he served from 1990 to 1995 and was made chairman of the Board's Audit Committee. The Board was established by Congress to provide direction, oversight, and funding to the Resolution Trust Corporation.

Throughout his life, Mr. Larson's commitment to Southeast Michigan was unyielding and he worked to bring new investment and opportunity to Michigan's economy. His contributions to Michigan extended far beyond the real estate industry: he served as the director and chairman of the ULI Foundation, a trustee of the Children's Hospital of Michigan, director of the Detroit Zoological Society, chairman of the Cranbrook Educational Community, chairman of the Greening of Detroit, and trustee of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, among many other boards and causes.

Unquestionably, though, Mr. Larson's most durable impact was on his family, his colleagues, and those of us who knew him. We remember him for his profound intellect, his endless energy, and his tremendous warmth. He is survived by his beloved wife, Bonnie, their six children, and eleven grandchildren. I extend my deepest condolences to them on their loss.