

HOOPS FOR HOPE -- (House of Representatives - September 25, 2006)

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Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report upon a recent event which was refreshingly bipartisan that succeeded in advancing humanitarian causes and personal fitness, all in the same event. There were no political speeches. It was simply a group coming together from different political perspectives. I am speaking of the eighth annual Hoops For Hope, the intense athletic contest between select Members of this venerable institution and a representative team from the seemingly infinite number of registered lobbyists.

Our bipartisan bicameral group of eight, small in size and stature, took the court against an all-star team of superior athletes. On paper, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, our undermanned, overmatched band, should have never even been in the same building as our foe. But as they say on ESPN SportsCenter, that's why they play the game.

Suffice it to say that this impressive and gleaming trophy suggests the outcome of the game. Yes, we Members defeated the lobbyists 44-39.

But the true winners are the kids of the D.C. area and beyond who will benefit through three extremely worthwhile charities: Hill Help, Horton's Kids, and the Luke Tiahr Foundation. The moneys raised from this cause will help provide comprehensive service to underserved kids in an effort to improve the quality of each child's daily life and enhance each child's desire and ability to succeed academically. This is through money raised to go to tutoring, to participate in community service projects, summer camp and mentoring.

This annual event, Hoops For Hope, was the brainchild of Paul Miller, President of the American League of Lobbyists, and our former colleague from New York, Mr. Quinn.

The first game 8 years ago generated about \$7,500 for charity. After this most recent event the other night, the cumulative total has exceeded \$260,000. Over a quarter of a million dollars have been raised during the life of this charitable event.

There was some concern expressed earlier, I admit, concerning the scandal surrounding a high-profile lobbyist as to whether the game would even go forward this year. Well, the American League of Lobbyists passed a code of ethics in 1987 in order to help preserve and advance the public trust in the democratic process. Paul Miller, who was instrumental in this game and this cause, has so passionately advocated for lobbying reform in several congressional hearings before the other body and our own.

Let me say a special thank you to that band of eight: Senator *Thune* from South Dakota, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. *Larsen*), the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. *Flake*), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. *Kind*), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. *Shimkus*), the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. *Tiahrt*) and the dean of our group, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. *Oxley*), who is retiring after serving this institution so venerably. In fact, Mr. *Oxley* was inducted into the Hoops for Hope Hall of Fame; and, as I remarked to the crowd then, Mr. *Oxley's* belief about basketball is if it feels like leather, shoot it. We will miss Mr. *Oxley's* on-court antics.

I want to thank Roll Call and George Washington University for their instrumental role as far as making a very successful eighth annual Hoops for Hope.

I invite my teammates on both sides of the aisle to share in the spoils of victory. I mentioned this to some of my teammates. This trophy can be an impressive office decoration. It certainly is a unique conversation starter or simply a gaudy hood ornament.

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