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TRIBUTE TO STEVE LEVESQUE

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding career of a leader in economic development in the State of Maine. Steve Levesque, of Greenville, ME, is retiring after 41 years of professional experience in the areas of economic and community progress, land use planning, and environmental services in both the private and public sectors, including when I was Governor as commissioner of Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development. Most recently, Steve has made an indelible mark in his position as executive director of Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, MRRA. From his first days in economic and community development in Maine, Steve has held a number of leadership positions in which he has led and advocated tirelessly for local, regional, and State economies with consistent messages of the quality of the business environment in Maine alongside our quality of life as Mainers.

In 2005, there were indications that the Naval Air Station Brunswick, NASB, would be disestablished and Steve, at that time, led the Brunswick Local Redevelopment Authority, charged with overseeing the successful completion of the Reuse Master Plan for NASB. He has been MRRA's only executive director since its formation in 2008. In 2011, when NASB officially closed, there were persistent doomsday forecasts about the hole that was left behind. Steve brought his own brand of fervency to MRRA to realize a dream of the adaptive reuse of the former base, now known as Brunswick Landing. He started by assembling a passionate and hard-working team and began carefully cultivating what would become critical and dedicated partnerships, developed over the years with so many groups: the Navy, the towns of Brunswick and Topsham, the State of Maine, all of Maine's congressional delegation, the FAA, and especially the impressive list of businesses and private developers who have invested in the vision to convert a former Navy base into an economic engine that today holds more than 2,400 jobs, surpassing the \$150 million former Navy payroll.

When you read the list of other benchmarks at Brunswick Landing, over only 10 years—the creation of TechPlace, a manufacturing business incubator with 35

resident businesses; attraction of over a half billion dollars in private sector capital investment; property sales to more than 20 new property owners, including more than 650 units of workforce housing; more than \$150 million in new valuation and \$3 million in annual property taxes generated for the Towns of Brunswick and Topsham; more than \$40 million in upgrades to Brunswick Executive Airport's—BXM—infrastructure and buildings; more than \$100 million invested in new building construction and infrastructure projects owned by MRRA; creation of Brunswick Renewable Energy Center, including ownership of former Navy electrical grid with 3.5-megawatt load and 2 megawatts of on-site renewable electricity generation; 10 percent annual growth in air operations, based aircraft, and aviation fuel sales at BXM; environmental stewardship and wildlife habitat preservation, including transfer of more than 1,200 acres of open space and trails to the town of Brunswick and local land trust—it is no wonder Steve's leadership has been recognized, not once but twice, as a recipient of the Association of Defense Contractor's Community Leadership Award as well as by many other State development organizations. I join them wholeheartedly in recognizing Steve for demonstrating innovation and excellence in his work.

Even in his volunteer time, Steve serves on a number of industry and economic development boards, including the Loring Development Authority of Maine, Moosehead Lake Region Economic Development Corporation, Owls Head Transportation Museum, and the Maine Spaceport Leadership Council, to name a few. Steve has also served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps as an aircraft mechanic.

Due to Steve's commitment to economic development and ability to secure funding for a variety of initiatives throughout the years, there has been continued high quality service for new and expanding businesses here in Maine. His ability to coordinate programs and foster partnerships were critical factors in his success, whether it be at the local, State, or national level. As a champion of economic development, I join with his colleagues, friends, and the people of Maine in thanking Steve for his unwavering service to the economic development of our State.

10/21
Well deserved
praise for a job
actually many jobs
exceedingly well
done!

With
thanks for your
great service, and
your friendship -
Angus