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HONORING TADASHI YAMAMOTO

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Tadashi Yamamoto. At the age of 76, Mr. Yamamoto died from cancer on April 15, 2012. He left behind four sons, four daughters-in-law, and eight grandchildren. He left behind a legacy and enduring partnership with his friends in the United States.

As Japan rose in world influence in the 1960s and '70s, Tadashi Yamamoto created one of his country's first nongovernmental organizations in the field of international affairs. In 1967, he organized the first Shimoda Conference, designed to bring together U.S. and Japanese leaders to discuss issues of mutual interest to both countries. Out of that conference, he founded and became president of the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE). Since 1970, JCIE has enabled more than 1,000 U.S. and Japanese political leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue and problem-solving, strengthening our relationship and paving the way for decades of productive endeavors.

In February 2011, Mr. Yamamoto, recognizing the necessity for continued bilateral cooperation, decided to revive the concept of a frank discussion between political, business, and media leaders. He convened the New Shimoda Conference in Tokyo. I was pleased to lead the bipartisan, bicameral U.S. delegation to that historic event. Less than one month later the depths of the U.S.-Japan relationship were affirmed by the outpouring of assistance in the wake of the devastating earthquake in March 2011.

Tadashi Yamamoto was a pioneer. In the decades before the Internet brought together people from diverse cultures to connect and exchange ideas, inspired individuals like Tadashi Yamamoto built bridges that made our world stronger. At a time when both countries were in the midst of change and protest, discovering post-war identities and ideals, Tadashi Yamamoto made our world safer. He led us to a brighter future. The United States and Japan has a distinct partnership today because of his vision, and those like him, who work tirelessly and optimistically toward peace and security for all of humanity.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me and the House delegation to the New Shimoda Conference, Congressman TOM PETRI, Congresswoman NITA LOWEY, Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS and Steve Davis, and Congresswoman MAZIE HIRONO, in remembering Tadashi Yamamoto. May his work and his legacy live on in continued cooperation between the United States and Japan and the open exchange between our leaders.