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House of Representatives

HONORING JIM MAHLER, LABOR LEADER OF THE YEAR!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a very dedicated committed leader of the labor movement who deserves to be recognized for his many achievements and contributions to organized labor.

The past year was an important one in the history of California's Labor Movement, with workers campaigning to restore a pro-labor governor for California.

Tens of thousands of California's union members dedicated 2010 to ensuring that our next governor would stand up for the fundamental right of workers to organize.

In San Diego, American Federation of Teachers Local 1931 President Jim Mahler answered nearly every call in ensuring that collective bargaining rights and worker protections remained a priority in California.

As workers prepared for the March for California's Future, which featured union members marching from Bakersfield to Sacramento in a call to solve the state's budget crisis, Mahler committed his union to driving its success. Several buses full of AFT Local 1931 members and their students left San Diego City College at dawn on March 5, bound for Los Angeles and Bakersfield, to kick off the historic march.

When the Labor Council proposed an aggressive approach to courting voters' support for Jerry Brown for governor, Mahler and AFT Local 1931 committed \$100,000 to fund the program. He also realized money alone could not win the governor's race, so he organized nightly phone banks to support Brown and Proposition 25, the simple majority budget bill. His organizing yielded phone bank nights and Saturday precinct walks that overflowed with student and teacher volunteers.

For his dedication to keeping California worker-friendly, I join with the Executive Board of the Labor Council in congratulating Jim Mahler as the 2011 Labor Leader of the Year.