

system would include research projects for the prevention of neural tube defects, one-half of which could be prevented if women of child bearing age consumed a small amount of folic acid daily. In addition, this legislation would set up public education programs to teach more women about the importance of folic acid to the health of their children.

And so together with the March of Dimes I encourage my colleagues to pass this important legislation.●

#### EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

● Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, our Nation benefits when every citizen has the opportunity to contribute to the best of his or her ability to the economy, to the society, and to the country. Discrimination, in any form, prevents the utilization of all available talents and makes our future less bright than it could be—less bright than it should be. It is for this reason that I join my colleagues, Senator KENNEDY, Senator JEFFORDS, and Senator LIEBERMAN, in cosponsoring the Employment Non-Discrimination Act [ENDA].

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. It creates no special rights, or quotas, it merely ensures that gay and lesbian Americans have the same rights as every other American in the workplace.

Employment discrimination impedes economic competitiveness, frustrates fairness, and obstructs opportunity.

Employment discrimination impedes economic competitiveness for America's businesses. Our work force is what makes America strong. Discrimination only serves to lessen that strength. Many companies have already adopted their own antidiscrimination policies, recognizing the negative impact discrimination can have on their continuing competitiveness. These businesses understand that there is no place for discrimination as we transition into the 21st century's global workplace.

Unfortunately, not all businesses understand this yet, and in 39 States, employment discrimination based on sexual orientation is still legal. There are many documented cases highlighting the fact that discrimination in the workplace still occurs. Without national legislation to protect all Americans, cases of discrimination against gay men and lesbian women will continue to occur unchallenged and businesses, and thus our national economy, will continue to suffer.

Employment discrimination is fundamentally unfair. Each of us should be allowed to fully participate in society, regardless of our gender, race, or sexual orientation. ENDA prohibits giving preferential treatment to any individual based on sexual orientation. Employers may not provide special treatment to gay men, lesbians, or heterosexuals. The bill provides that

an employer may not use the fact of an individual's sexual orientation as the basis for positive or negative action against that individual in employment opportunities. Americans should not be promoted, nor should they be held back, by conditions that have nothing to do with merit, or talents and abilities.

Employment discrimination obstructs opportunity for America's workers. If there is any objective that should command complete American consensus, it is ensuring that every American has the chance to succeed—and that, in the final analysis, is what this bill is about. No issue is more critical to our country, and nothing makes a bigger difference in a person's life than opening up opportunities.

The basic principle we should keep in mind is that every American must have the opportunity to advance as far in their field as their hard work will take them. That is the American way. Gay and lesbian Americans should not have to face discrimination in the workplace, should not face dismissal, be denied promotions, or experience harassment, simply because of their sexual orientation.

In endorsing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act in the 104th Congress the American Bar Association wrote:

Over the years, and with some struggle, this nation has extended employment discrimination protection to individuals on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, and disability. ENDA takes the next necessary step by extending this same basic protection to another group that has been vilified and victimized—gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals. All workers, regardless of their sexual orientation, are entitled to be judged on the strength of the work they do; they should not be deprived of their livelihood because of the prejudice of others.

This is an eloquent statement of one of the fundamental tenets of the United States of America—equal opportunity for all. This Nation was founded by people fleeing prejudice and discrimination. ENDA continues that legacy.

As a matter of fundamental fairness and because all workers should be entitled to legal protection and opportunity in the work force, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.●

#### TRIBUTE TO ATLAS ADVANCED PYROTECHNICS, RECENT WINNER OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S 1997 INDEPENDENCE DAY AERIAL FIREWORKS DISPLAY

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Atlas Advanced Pyrotechnics, the Granite State's largest pyrotechnics design firm, on winning the National Park Service's 1997 Independence Day aerial fireworks display, to be held July 4 by the Washington Monument in Washington, DC.

Atlas Advanced Pyrotechnics is well known in the New Hampshire community for some of their spectacular shows like the annual Rock 101

Skyshow and Jaffery's Festival of Fireworks. Atlas won the North American Pyrotechnics Competition in 1994 and was the United States representative at the 1995 Benson and Hedges International Pyrotechnics Competition in Montreal, Canada.

Atlas will light the sky over the Nation's Capital with more than 3,000 shells in 20 minutes. The entire show will be digitally synchronized to patriotic music of Copeland, Gershwin, Bernstein, and Eubie Blake.

In addition to this year's fireworks display on the Mall in Washington DC, the National Park Service has also awarded Atlas the prestigious Harper's Ferry Historical Park display on June 28, at Harper's Ferry, WV.

I commend Atlas for their hard work and dedication that has earned them such prestigious awards. I applaud the people of Atlas for their accomplishments in bringing joy to the American public. I wish them a very happy Fourth of July.●

#### COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

● Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT]. Along with many of my colleagues, I call upon the Senate to ratify this important treaty which will help to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, improve the environment in which we live, save billions of dollars, and enhance the security of our Nation.

The CTBT prohibits all nuclear test explosions worldwide. The treaty establishes an international agency to coordinate nuclear policy and verify test ban compliance through an International Monitoring System, onsite inspections, consultation and clarification, and confidence-building measures. The treaty is quite simple, really, and it is something that Americans have wanted for a long time.

"The conclusion of such a treaty \* \* \* would check the spiraling arms race in one of its most dangerous areas. It would place nuclear powers in a position to deal more effectively with one of the great hazards which man faces \* \* \* the further spread of nuclear arms. It would increase our security; it would decrease the prospects of war. Surely this goal is sufficiently important to require our steady pursuit, yielding neither to the temptation to give up the whole effort nor the temptation to give up our insistence on vital and responsible safeguards."

Those words, so appropriate today, were spoken 34 years ago by President John F. Kennedy, in an historic speech at American University. In that speech, the President announced the beginning of high-level discussions among the United States, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United Kingdom regarding "a comprehensive test ban treaty." Even then,

long before the demise of the Soviet Union rendered the United States the sole remaining superpower, President Kennedy and many others recognized the dangers inherent in nuclear testing, and the many benefits of a test ban.

A test ban will curb the spread of nuclear weapons, helping to keep them out of the hands of rogue states and terrorists. A test ban will mean that children do not have to grow up in areas contaminated by nuclear explosions. A test ban will mean that money spent on maintaining test sites and running tests—hundreds of millions of dollars a year in the United States alone—could be spent on education, health, and other priorities of the American people. In short, a nuclear test ban will enhance the military, political, and economic security of our Nation. That's why President Clinton has signed and 158 countries in the United Nations have endorsed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. That is also why 80 percent of Americans are calling upon us to ratify it.

When President Kennedy began test ban negotiations 34 years ago, he was realistic about the challenges in negotiating with the Soviet Union. He said, "Our hopes must be tempered with the caution of history, but with our hopes go the hopes of all mankind." Today, Mr. President, history and hope are on our side. Now is the time to conclude the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Now is our chance to fulfill the hopes of all mankind.●

#### MICHIGAN'S 1997 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today in tribute of seven truly exceptional educational institutions in my State of Michigan. On Friday, May 23, the U.S. Department of Education announced the recipients of the 1997 Blue Ribbon School Awards. It gives me great pleasure to recognize today before my colleagues each of these schools and commend them on this prestigious award.

To be named a blue ribbon school is no small achievement; it requires the successful passage of a rigorous nomination and screen process. The Department of Education review panel evaluates as conditions of effective schooling the following: leadership; teaching environment; curriculum and instruction; student environment; parent and community support; and organizational vitality. The review panel also considers objective indicators of success, such as: Student performance on measures of achievement; daily student and teacher attendance rates; students' postgraduation pursuits; school, staff, and student awards; and high student retention-graduation rates.

Obviously, those select few schools afforded the status of Blue Ribbon Awards are more than deserving of the national attention that accompanies such an honor. I would like to take a

moment to individually recognize each of the Michigan elementary and middle schools, and the dedicated principals under whose leadership these schools have thrived, for entry into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Anna M. Joyce Elementary School, Detroit, MI, Mr. Leslie Brown, principal.

Brace-Lederle Elementary School, Southfield, MI, Dr. Bobbie K. Hentrel, principal.

Grand View Elementary School, Grandville, MI, Mr. Rich Doyle, principal.

Lincoln Park Elementary School, Norton Shores, MI, Ms. Tresea Goff, principal.

Pine Tree Elementary School, Lake Orion, MI, Mrs. Beverly Tepper, principal.

Roguewood School, Rockford, MI, Mrs. Sharon Bennett, principal.

Troy Union Elementary School, Troy, MI, Dr. Ronald J. O'Hara, principal.

Educating our children is no simple task, and everyone involved with the success of these blue ribbon schools deserves to feel a great sense of pride. On behalf of all my fellow Senators I extend to the staff, students, and parents of each of these communities my most sincere congratulations and best wishes for the even brighter future that awaits them.●

#### ESTATE TAX LAWS MUST BE REFORMED

● Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want Congress to act decisively to stop our estate tax laws from hindering the transfer of family businesses and family farms and ranches to the next generation. These family enterprises are the major creators of new wealth and new jobs in this country. Yet in far too many cases, our estate tax laws force the children and grandchildren who inherit a modestly sized family business to sell it, or a large part of it, to pay off huge estate taxes. I want our tax laws to assist the transfer of family enterprises so they can continue to generate jobs and new wealth. Instead our estate tax laws now hinder that transfer.

I've authored legislation in several Congresses to allow family farms, ranches, and other small family businesses to be passed along to the next generation without being loaded up with massive estate tax debt. The legislation I've introduced in this Congress increases the unified estate and gift tax exemption from \$600,000 to \$1 million. In addition, it provides a new \$1 million exclusion for family business assets. Together, my proposals would allow a family business, valued up to \$2 million, to be passed to the children and grandchildren to operate without any estate tax liability.

A number of my colleagues in the Senate share my concerns about estate taxes. In fact, I worked with a core group of Senators, including Senators

GRASSLEY, LOTT, NICKLES, and BAUCUS for several months this spring to develop a comprehensive, bipartisan estate tax relief bill. This effort led to the introduction of a bipartisan bill, called the Estate Tax Relief for the American Family Act of 1997 (S. 479), which includes a number of important provisions including proposals to increase the unified estate and gift tax exemption and to target additional support for family-owned and operated businesses. Most of the changes recommended in this legislation are long-overdue, and I will work with my colleagues to include them in revenue legislation this Congress.

I have decided to add my name as a cosponsor of S. 479 because I support the primary thrust and goals of this initiative. I want to send a reminder to those calling for tax cuts that estate tax relief for family businesses is not a partisan issue. It is important for the survival of our Nation's family businesses, and it should be included in the balanced budget tax relief package now being drafted in Congress.

Although I am adding my name as a cosponsor to signal a bipartisan desire to pass some estate tax relief, I do want to see one provision of this bill changed. The cut in the estate tax rate for estates in the \$2.5 million to \$11 million range is, I believe, excessive. I would prefer to use the money available for estate tax reduction for a larger exemption at the bottom rather than additional tax breaks at the top.

But I hope that when estate tax relief is enacted that the work we have done together will contribute to helping family businesses and family farms and ranches to be passed on to the children who will continue to operate them.●

#### THANKING THE LANGUAGE SERVICES SECTION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE FOR ITS SUPPORT TO THE SENATE BANKING COMMITTEE

● Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise today to thank the language services section of the Congressional Research Service for its support to the Senate Banking Committee in our inquiry into the disposition of heirless assets in Swiss banks, before, during, and after World War II. During the course of our inquiry thousands of pages of documentation have been examined as we have tried to establish the ultimate disposition of assets which were deposited in Swiss banks by Holocaust victims prior to World War II.

Hundreds of pages of these historical documents were written in various languages which dealt with extremely technical matters. It was imperative that the Banking Committee obtain accurate translations for these documents. The language services section never let us down.

I would especially like to recognize David Skelly who provided translation support in the German and French languages. Mr. Skelly worked with my