

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING SENATOR CONNIE MACK

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the career of Connie MACK as he retires from the Senate. Senator MACK has served the people of Florida with distinction during his two terms in the Senate, as well as during his three terms in the House of Representatives. Throughout his career in public service, Senator MACK has been willing to address complex issues and help move the debate forward.

On matters of fiscal policy, Senator MACK and I have not often agreed, but I have admired his willingness to engage these issues in a serious way that fosters the kind of discussion we need in the Senate to deliberate on the difficult questions before us.

Senator MACK has been a steadfast advocate for increased NIH funding, and I have been proud to support his efforts, including his proposal, passed as an amendment to the fiscal year 1998 budget resolution, to double funding for NIH over the next five years. I share his belief that increasing funding for biomedical research is one of the most important ways we can improve the quality of life for America's families. Groundbreaking research, development of drug therapies and new medical procedures, all of these steps move us closer to life-saving medical breakthroughs that can detect, prevent, and eliminate life-threatening disease.

I have also been pleased to support Senator MACK's effort, along with Senator GRAHAM, to restore the Everglades. His work to preserve and restore this unique and beautiful area, home to fragile habitats and many endangered species, will undoubtedly be one of his greatest legacies.

It has been a pleasure to serve with Senator MACK over the last seven years. As he leaves the Senate, I wish him all the best and thank him for his many years of distinguished public service.

TRIBUTE TO BOB KERREY

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, when I first heard that BOB KERREY had decided not to run again, I knew the Senate was losing a true American original, and a big part of what makes the Senate special.

From my first moments in the Senate back in 1993, there was one thing I could tell right away—BOB KERREY is a true leader. In an age of poll-driven politics, BOB KERREY isn't afraid to ruffle a few feathers to raise the level of debate and work for the greater good. He has sparked debate on the big issues: saving Social Security, controlling federal spending, guaranteeing the right to health insurance, and helping the poor, just to name a few.

I was proud to work with him on the bipartisan deficit reduction package he spearheaded with former Senator Hank Brown of Colorado, and I'm proud to

have a colleague with such a sincere commitment to fiscal responsibility. He fought to balance the federal budget when others said it could not be done. As Chair of the Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform, BOB KERREY directed our attention to the long-term challenges that we need to heed.

BOB KERREY is a pleasure to work with, but he is also a courageous public servant who is willing to stand alone when it is necessary. In addition to his heroic record of public service, he is a hero who served his country valiantly in the Vietnam War. BOB KERREY brings great honor to the Senate as only the fifth Medal on Honor winner to serve in this body, and while he never makes a big deal about the honors he has received, every day he has served in the U.S. Senate, BOB KERREY has exhibited the strength of character that befit those tributes.

And while all those things are important, it is also essential to have a sense of humor, and we all know that BOB possesses that quality in spades. He is a pleasure to be around, and a good friend. I wish him all the best as he moves on to head the New School, and in everything he does.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK LAUTENBERG

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, as this Congress draws to a close, I want to take a moment to thank my friend FRANK LAUTENBERG for his 18 years of service in the body. The people of New Jersey are losing a skilled legislator and a gifted advocate. Whether he is fighting racial profiling or taking on the tobacco industry, FRANK LAUTENBERG has consistently fought for a healthier, safer, more just world for all of us.

After a successful career in the private sector, FRANK ran for the U.S. Senate motivated to give something back to his state and the nation. And never has he had greater success than during his 18 years in public service. It has been a pleasure to serve with Senator LAUTENBERG on the Budget Committee, where he has provided outstanding leadership as the committee's ranking member. Senator LAUTENBERG played a crucial role in crafting the bipartisan budget agreement of 1997 which led to the balanced budget, and putting this body back on the road to fiscal responsibility.

I stood side by side with Senator LAUTENBERG in the fight to implement the gift ban in 1995. And I've been especially proud to work with him to end racial profiling—the abhorrent law enforcement practice that targets African Americans, Hispanic Americans and other minorities for traffic stops based on the color of their skin. Together Senator LAUTENBERG and I introduced S. 821, the Traffic Stops Study Act, to require the Attorney General to conduct an initial analysis of existing data on racial profiling and then design a study to gather data

from a nationwide sampling of jurisdictions. We've worked together on this issue for more than two years, and I believe our legislation will prevail, if not in this Congress, then in the next one.

I will proudly continue the fight to pass the Traffic Stops Study Act in the next Congress, but I will miss greatly FRANK's leadership on this issue. When we do finally pass this simple bill to get an accurate picture of racial profiling on our nation's roadways, we'll owe a big part of that victory to Senator LAUTENBERG.

Today I thank FRANK LAUTENBERG for his leadership on racial profiling and so many other issues that matter to the people of this nation. I wish him and his family all the best in his retirement, and thank him for his many contributions to the U.S. Senate, and to the American people.

THE SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH'S RURAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about giving small businesses the tools they need to be successful in today's competitive marketplace. I am committed to providing those tools by fully supporting the continuation of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Rural Outreach Program. Congressional commitment to small business development has created a network of people nationwide, especially in Wyoming, that is excited and knowledgeable about the SBIR Rural Outreach Program.

The SBIR Rural Outreach Program provides an excellent funding opportunity for individuals and small businesses in rural areas that have a passion to explore, develop and commercialize their innovative ideas. Created in 1982, the SBIR Program is a highly competitive program that encourages small business to explore their technological potential and provides the incentive to profit from its commercialization. By including qualified small businesses in the Nation's research & development arena, high-tech innovation is stimulated and the United States gains entrepreneurial spirit as it meets its specific research and development needs.

The SBIR Program is designed to target the entrepreneurial sector because that is where most innovation and innovators thrive. However, the risk and expense of conducting serious R&D efforts are often beyond the means of many small businesses. By reserving a specific percentage of federal R&D funds for small business, the SBIR Program protects the small business and enables it to compete on the same level as large businesses. The SBIR Program funds the critical startup and development stages and it encourages the commercialization of the technology, product, or service, which, in turn, stimulates the U.S. economy.

Each year, ten federal departments and agencies are required by the SBIR

Program to reserve a portion of their R&D funds for award to small business. Such agencies include the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and National Science Foundation.

Following submission of proposals, agencies make SBIR awards based on small business qualification, degree of innovation, technical merit, and future market potential. Small businesses that receive awards or grants then begin a three-phase program. Phase I is the startup phase, awarding up to \$100,000 for approximately 6 months support exploration of the technical merit or feasibility of an idea or technology. Phase II awards of up to \$750,000, for as many as 2 years, expanding Phase I results. During this time, the R&D work is performed and the developer evaluates commercialization potential. Only Phase I award winners are considered for Phase II. Phase III is the period during which Phase II innovation moves from the laboratory into the marketplace. The small business must find funding in the private sector or other non-SBIR federal agency funding.

In 1997, Senator BURNS and I cosponsored legislation and Congress established the SBIR Rural Outreach Program to increase the SBIR participation of small businesses located in the states that receive the fewest SBIR awards. The program is limited to funding activities which encourage small firms in those states to participate in the SBIR Rural Outreach Program. The Outreach Program is targeted toward the 25 under-represented jurisdictions in the SBIR program in an effort to provide a secure funding mechanism to states so that they could develop an effective five-year effort to assist small businesses to take advantage of the SBIR program.

As you may know, western small businesses have some special impediments to overcome. The SBIR Rural Outreach Program provides an excellent funding opportunity for individuals and small businesses that have a passion to explore, develop and commercialize their innovative ideas. This is especially true in rural states like Wyoming. The Wyoming small business community is one of the cornerstones of our state's economy. Wyoming is the smallest state, with a large number of small businesses. The SBIR Rural Outreach Program is one way for Wyoming's small businesses to access federal funding.

Rural states need technology-based businesses that the SBIR program nurtures. The SBIR Rural Outreach Program is one of the few opportunities for Wyoming's small businesses to access federal R&D funding. I believe more innovative and aggressive approaches are needed to help rural states achieve greater participation in this, especially at those agencies that have proved difficult for small businesses to access.

There are several outreach activities that have been effective in helping small businesses in rural states compete successfully in the SBIR Rural Outreach Program. For example, the Wyoming SBIR Initiative outreach efforts have led to substantial gains in both the number of proposals submitted, the quality of proposals submitted, and the number selected for award. For example, Wyoming received one Phase I award in 1994. Wyoming, however, received 8 Phase I awards by 1995 and has received a total of 43 Phase I awards by 2000. To date, Wyoming has received approximately \$9 million since 1987 for both Phase I and II awards, but there is still more that should be done to assist small businesses in the West.

I want to share the dramatic impact that SBIR awards have made on one Wyoming company—Wyoming Sawmills, Incorporated. The company's first Phase I SBIR award was from U.S. Department of Agriculture in May 1997, and it won the follow-on Phase II program in September 1998. The project aims to convert low-grade lumber into construction quality lumber through an innovative laminating technique. Wyoming Sawmills will begin commercial sales of the new product in 1999, and it already has captured related R&D funding based on this SBIR project. In January 1999, the company won a National Science Foundation Phase I award on another laminated wood product concept.

Another success story is CC Technology. CC Technology, a Laramie-based small business, has been notified of a \$400,000 SBIR Phase II grant award from the National Science Foundation, NSF. During Phase I, the business did research on measuring cyanide levels in gold mining leach pads. For Phase II, a team consisting of CC Technology, Detection Limit, and Aspect Consultant Group has been built to monitor cyanide at both the mining solution levels and at trace levels for environmental compliance.

I want to express a special thank you to Chris Busch, from Senator BURNS' home state of Montana and who coordinated SBIR efforts in Wyoming for the past five years. Chris Busch did a remarkable job working with people in Wyoming to raise the awareness and participation of small businesses in the SBIR program. Working with small businesses, public organizations, and others in Wyoming and nationwide, Chris got people involved, helped them through the grant management process, and guided them in market development and commercialization. His commitment to small business development has created a network of people in Wyoming that is excited and knowledgeable about SBIR. Chris has helped to plant the seeds of economic diversity in communities that really need it. Chris' activities and commitment of this program are making SBIR work.

In closing, SBIR programs work for small businesses in rural states, espe-

cially Wyoming. Fortunately, we have several dedicated westerners in the Congress who have committed their time and legislative efforts to expand the successes of SBIR to all parts of the country. It is my hope that my colleagues will see the importance of this particular government program that is truly assisting small businesses nationwide. I look forward to continued bipartisan efforts to benefit our nation's small businesses by strongly supporting the SBIR Rural Outreach Program.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE STATE AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAM

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr President, I rise today to applaud Senate adoption of legislation I introduced to re-authorize and expand a popular program which provides mediation services between agricultural producers and the various credit and United States Department of Agriculture agencies who family farmers and ranchers work with to maintain their farming and ranching operations.

On June 15, 2000, I introduced S. 2741, legislation to re-authorize, expand, and clarify the state agricultural mediation program. Nine Senators cosponsored this legislation, including Senators DASCHLE, ROBERTS, CONRAD, GRASSLEY, KERREY, CRAIG, HARKIN, DORGAN, and LEVIN. I thank these colleagues for their bipartisan support for my bill, which was included as part of the Grain Standards Act adopted by the Senate earlier this week.

Extension of this mediation program was adopted with wide bipartisan support in the Senate as part of the Grain Standards Act Reauthorization. The present state agricultural mediation law was set to expire this year, but our reauthorization extends it through 2005.

This step was significant because family farmers and ranchers in my state of South Dakota and all across this country continue to suffer from a depressed rural economy and rock-bottom commodity prices. Agriculture is the backbone of our economy, and we must not fail to provide support to our family farmers and ranchers who are coping with these difficult times.

During the 1980's farm crisis, Congress approved federal funds and participation in a state-by-state operated farm mediation program. Authorized in the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987, this mediation program helps farmers and ranchers, and their creditors, in resolving credit disputes in a confidential and non-adversarial setting, which is outside the traditional process of litigation, appeals, bankruptcy, and foreclosure. The mediators are neutral facilitators and they do not make decisions for the disputing parties.

Each year Congress provides funding for state mediation, and these funds are matched with state funds to carry out the mediation program. Currently,