

In particular, she committed to consult with outside experts to get to the bottom of the differences between the Government Accountability Office, GAO, and the FTC on the impacts of the FTC oil merger policies on gasoline prices. Ms. Majoras' letter states that she is working to do this by conducting a public review of the GAO report on the Effects of Mergers and Market Concentration in the U.S. Petroleum Industry. Following that review, Ms. Majoras also promises to share her views with me on the GAO report.

Ms. Majoras' letter indicates she is making a good-faith effort to take a fresh look at the issues raised by the GAO report. In light of this and the other actions Ms. Majoras has initiated to get to the bottom of the reasons why consumers in my part of the country are paying such high gasoline prices, I will no longer object to any unanimous consent request for the Senate to take up Ms. Majoras' nomination. I will, however, continue to closely monitor the FTC actions under Ms. Majoras' leadership to ensure gasoline consumers are not overpaying at the pump.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of this statement along with Ms. Majoras' letter be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2004.

Hon. RON WYDEN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR WYDEN, In response to your recent inquiries, I want to assure you that I am working to implement the actions that I laid out in my letter of June 10, 2004. For example, we are working on the public review by outside economic experts of the findings in the GAO Report, *Energy Markets: Effects of Mergers and Market Concentration in the U.S. Petroleum Industry* and the criticisms of that report. As you know, it is common for economists to submit their work for peer review and discussion, and I believe that such an assessment would be useful. Given your interest in the report, I plan to share my views with you about the findings and conclusions of this public discussion once we have completed that process.

Here at the FTC, we are working at full throttle to protect American consumers; I look forward to working cooperatively with the Congress in the coming session on these efforts.

Sincerely,

DEBORAH PLATT MAJORAS.

COMMENDING SECRETARY POWELL AND STATE DEPARTMENT ON MANAGING INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS FOR U.S. TERRITORIES

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, as our colleagues on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will attest, it takes years of experience to understand some of the nuances of Federal law and policy applicable in American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Vir-

gin Islands. Yet, our current Secretary of State has shown remarkable knowledge of the sometimes complex issues arising from official international activities of local territorial governments.

In responding to international issues arising from Federal-territorial relations in the case of Puerto Rico, Secretary Powell has articulated sound principles that are relevant to Federal policy with respect to the other territories as well. Specifically, the record should reflect the success of measures adopted by the Department of State to ensure that local government officials in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico do not take official actions inconsistent with the reservation of foreign relations powers to the federal government under the U.S. Constitution.

The Department of State has tried to show flexibility and include territories in international programs and activities when appropriate, as it does in the case of other domestic political subdivisions. However, Department of State oversight and regulation of all official international activities by local territorial governments is necessary to preserve the constitutional allocation of powers within the U.S. Federal system, especially as it relates to administration of territories with a political status defined by Federal statute rather than the U.S. Constitution itself. In the case of Puerto Rico, Federal authority in all official international matters is consistent with the Puerto Rico Federal Relations Act (64 Stat. 319), and required by the status of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as a territory subject to the authority of Congress under Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution. All powers of the local government remain subject to the supremacy of Federal law.

The Department of State acted in the national interest and in the best long-term interest of our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico by not acquiescing in actions by U.S. citizen officials of the local government seeking international recognition and treatment for Puerto Rico that are reserved for sovereign nations. The Department must continue to adhere to the simple rule that the Commonwealth should not be permitted to act officially in the international sphere in a manner that would not be permitted for other political subdivisions, whether State, county, city or territorial, unless otherwise specifically provided by Congress.

By confirming the correct application of Federal law and policy in his cable to our embassies, Secretary Powell has given diplomatic expression to the principles of federalism that apply to Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories. This "Powell Doctrine", if you will, ends the ambivalence and ambiguity that have existed about these issues for too long. The Secretary of State applied the correct legal doctrine in these matters, based on the principle that the Federal Government conducts

the foreign policy of the United States and all its citizens, which includes the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico under its current status.

The actions taken by the Department of State in this matter do not affect the process of self-determination as to the ultimate political status of Puerto Rico. Rather, this is a matter of confirming and in a proper manner implementing Federal powers and responsibilities beyond the realm of local politics regarding the status of the territory, until informed self-determination recognized under Federal law and policy leads to status resolution. Of course, neither local government powers nor the terms for political status resolution can be determined unilaterally by local law or political processes, because in each case Federal law is supreme and only changes in Federal law can change the status or define the extent that local governments can exercise sovereignty as to local matters.

For making these realities clear, and doing so in an impartial and entirely fair way, it is appropriate to commend our Secretary of State and the men and women of the U.S. State Department.

TRIBUTE TO INTERNS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, today I extend my appreciation to my fall 2004 class of interns: Sonja Loges, Colleen Coffey, Lauryn Douglas, Cheri Rolfes, Sarah Helgen, Katie Callahan, Milan Dalal and Deborah Sundquist. Each of them has been of tremendous assistance to me and to the people of Iowa over the past several months.

Since I was first elected to the Senate in 1984, my office has offered internships to young Iowans and other interested students. Through their work in the Senate, our interns have not only seen the legislative process, but also personally contributed to our Nation's democracy.

It is with much appreciation that I recognize Sonja, Colleen, Lauryn, Cheri, Sarah, Katie, Milan and Deborah for their hard work this fall. It has been a delight to watch them take on their assignments with enthusiasm and hard work. I am very proud to have worked with each of them. I hope they take from their fall a sense of pride in what they have been able to accomplish, as well as an increased interest in public service and our democratic system and process.

TRIBUTE TO HOWARD TINBERG AND ROBERT BELL

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to take this opportunity to commend two college professors in Massachusetts for the national recognition they have won today. Professor of English Howard Tinberg at Bristol Community College in Fall River was named an Outstanding Community College Professor of the Year, and Robert Bell, professor of English at Williams College in Williamstown, was

named an Outstanding Baccalaureate College Professor of the Year.

The awards were presented by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Four professors were recognized at each level of higher education—community college, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral/research—for their outstanding teaching, their commitment to undergraduate students and their contribution to teaching as a profession.

Howard Tinberg teaches literature and composition, and is renowned for involving his students in researching the use of literacy in families and communities. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Writing Center at Bristol Community College and the Center for Teaching and Learning on the campus. He also serves as editor of the national journal, *Teaching English in the Two-Year Colleges*.

Robert Bell's approach to teaching is grounded in his personal connections to his students and the exploration of literature through the details of the author's language. In 1994, he founded a mentoring program for new faculty members, the Project for Effective Teaching, which brings teachers together for weekly discussions, symposia and conferences.

The Professors of the Year Program was created in 1981 and is the only national program specifically designed to recognize excellence in undergraduate teaching and mentoring. This year's winners were selected from a pool of nearly 300 teachers nominated by their provosts and academic vice presidents and supported by colleagues, former students, and current students.

Massachusetts is proud of the national recognition earned by these two distinguished educators who have dedicated their careers to improving the learning and lives of their students and colleagues, and I congratulate them for their impressive leadership.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING AKO ABDUL-SAMAD

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, today I would like to call my colleagues' attention to the extraordinary work of one of my Iowa constituents. This year, Ako Abdul-Samad, a Des Moines-based activist, received the prestigious 2004 National Caring Award for his work with at-risk youth in urban areas throughout Iowa. His organization, Creative Visions, was founded in 1996 after gang violence killed a young woman in suburban Des Moines. By working with both community leaders as well as gang leaders, Ako has helped many youth overcome their troubled past.

I am proud to call Ako Abdul-Samad not only a fellow Iowan, but also a friend. Since 1996, his organization has aided countless Iowa youth. Without

his remarkable efforts and compassion, the urban areas of Iowa would not be the same. His progressive vision of today's youth places a positive outlook not only for the youth of today, but also the youth of the future.

Mr. President, I ask that the following magazine article be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Caring Magazine, Dec., 2004]

In 1996, a young woman from an outlying suburb of Des Moines, Iowa, was killed when caught in gang crossfire—a tragedy frequently played out in all too many American cities and towns. The community was outraged, and many people approached local activist Ako Abdul-Samad and asked what could be done. He replied, "Let's talk with the kids you're talking about. Let's hear what they need."

And so Chuck Johnson, president and CEO of Pioneer Hi-Bred and president of the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, and Tom Glenn of the Des Moines Labor Institute met with Abdul-Samad for hours along with 14 of Des Moines' top gang leaders. Then Abdul-Samad met with the gang members alone, discussing an idea he had to build an organization to help at-risk youth.

Of the 14 gang leaders who showed up that day, six bought into Abdul-Samad's idea. And thus Creative Visions was born. The only thing the newly birthed organization asked of the six gang members who stayed on was to stop all of their illegal activity. "We didn't ask them to denounce their gang or to shed their gang colors," says Abdul-Samad. "And for two months we all worked out of my house—with members of the Crips, Bloods, Gangsta Disciples, and Vice Lords coming and going, much to my neighbors' wary curiosity."

"After the two months, we met again with the president of Pioneer Hi-Bred, among others. The gang members walked in wearing their colors, and then shortly into the meeting they all got up and walked out. I kept on talking, and it seemed like they weren't coming back, so I began to apologize to the president and attendees. Just then, all of them walked in again dressed in business suits ready to give their individual presentations. Tears streamed down my face."

In the eight years that have since passed, only one of the six original gang members who agreed to work with Abdul-Samad returned to his former ways, and now even he is starting to put his life back together again.

From that small but powerful beginning, Abdul-Samad estimates that Creative Visions has probably taken more guns and drugs off the street than any other organization in the Midwest. Their secret? Very simple, really. Give the so-called "lost-to-the-streets" youth and young adults a customized, holistic program of self-development, and you will see them transform into self-sufficient, productive citizens. The seeds for Creative Visions were planted 15 years before its formal founding. "I had a contract to visit and work in the prisons statewide," says Abdul-Samad. "One day I was in the intake center where all the prisoners come once they are sentenced. I met a 16-year-old who was about to serve an adult sentence, and before I left he asked me to tell his dad and uncles when I saw them that he was OK. I thought he meant when I got back to Des Moines to look them up. But no, he said his dad was in one state prison and his uncles were in another. Then I learned that all of them had been to El Dora, a well-known boys' training school that supposedly helped troubled youth avoid a life of crime. Obvi-

ously, we were failing to turn young lives around."

Abdul-Samad began to research the problem. He resigned his prison contract and went to work for a Des Moines organization called Urban Dreams, where he worked with kids already at El Dora. "But I wanted to catch the kids before they got to that institution," explains Abdul-Samad. "And I was tired of hearing people say we can fix kids. You can't 'fix' a child or an adult. You can provide resources for them to fix themselves because if the motivation to change doesn't come from their own heart, it doesn't work."

It was at that time that the young woman in Des Moines was killed in the crossfire, providing a catalyst to test Abdul-Samad's concept. "With Creative Visions we showed the kids we were willing to give them an opportunity," Abdul-Samad affirms. "We gave them a new family to belong to. We gave them an opportunity to have a building—that gave them ownership because they put the graffiti on the walls. Every young person who was here in 1996 was involved in all aspects of Creative Visions. We didn't do one program without their input. We would do focus groups until we got it right. And they saw me walking the talk."

And then came 1997 and a personal tragedy that tested Abdul-Samad's faith and ability to continue to "walk the talk." In December his only son, "Little Ako," was shot to death by a young man named Rodney. "When I went to the hospital, it was full of young people waiting to see what I would do," Abdul-Samad recalls. "The police declared it an accidental shooting. My family wanted me to press charges and send the killer to jail. And the gang members wanted to kill Rodney. I will tell you now that the walk became very difficult for me. I worked hard at just trying to think straight. Sometimes I wouldn't know what I was doing."

"I prayed for guidance. Within a week, I called a press conference and had Rodney and his mother there. And I forgave Rodney in public. I said that I've already lost my son and that it would do no good to lose another young man. I said if I could forgive him, who had the right not to? And then I took Rodney home with me for the next four or five days."

"I think this is what the fate of Creative Visions, because the kids and young adults now saw me walk the talk despite my personal pain. They saw I was willing to keep on giving, no matter what it cost. And not only me. There was another staff person whose son was shot and killed in a street not far from our office. The kids could see that there are people who work here that are in pain, but they keep on going." Lest one label Abdul-Samad and his co-workers "role models," he is quick to correct the term: "We don't use the term 'role model'; we use 'goal model.' Too many times we put our role models upon pedestals; we don't allow them to be human, which hinders their giving. We think a 'goal model' allows someone to make mistakes, to learn from those mistakes, and to grow. As goal models we 'model' setting goals, striving to reach those goals, and making those goals a reality."

Certainly part of what makes Creative Visions work is its peer counselors—some of whom are former gang members, drug addicts, and dealers themselves. They are especially able to form trusting relationship with young people who know they have "been there, done that."

Like many dedicated to a life of service, Abdul-Samad's reward is not accolades. "A reward is when a young street person, whom everyone else had given up on, goes through our program and then walks in the door one day and shows you their diploma, or tells you they've gone back to school, or shares