spouses age 62 and older, to provide for a one-year open season under that plan, and for other purposes.

S. 2020

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2020, a bill to prohibit, consistent with Roe v. Wade, the interference by the government with a woman's right to choose to bear a child or terminate a pregnancy, and for other purposes.

S. 2049

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2049, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to reauthorize collection of reclamation fees, revise the abandoned mine reclamation program, promote remining, authorize the Office of Surface Mining to collect the black lung excise tax, and make sundry other changes.

S. 2132

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2132, a bill to prohibit racial profiling.

S. 2143

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2143, a bill to extend trade adjustment assistance to service workers.

S. 2157

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2157, a bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to extend the trade adjustment assistance program to the services sector, and for other purposes.

S. 2158

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2158, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the supply of pancreatic islet cells for research, and to provide for better coordination of Federal efforts and information on islet cell transplantation.

S. 2175

At the request of Mr. DODD, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2175, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to support the planning, implementation, and evaluation of organized activities involving statewide youth suicide early intervention and prevention strategies, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 28

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II.

S. CON. RES. 81

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAUX) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 81, a concurrent resolution expressing the deep concern of Congress regarding the failure of the Islamic Republic of Iran to adhere to its obligations under a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the engagement by Iran in activities that appear to be designed to develop nuclear weapons.

S. RES. 308

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 308, a resolution designating March 25, 2004, as ''Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy''.

S. RES. 309

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 309, a resolution designating the week beginning March 14, 2004 as ''National Safe Place Week''.

S. RES. 311

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 311, a resolution calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Father Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2639

At the request of Mr. EDWARDS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2639 intended to be proposed to S. 1637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to comply with the World Trade Organization rulings on the FSC/ETI benefit in a manner that preserves jobs and production activities in the United States, to reform and simplify the international taxation rules of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2697

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2697 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 95, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2005 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 through 2009.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORZINE:

S. 2177. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to change the effective date for paid-up coverage under the military Survivor Benefit Plan from October 1, 2008, to October 1, 2004; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Military Survivors' Fairness Act of 2004, legislation to eliminate a major inequity that has existed for several years among certain year-groups of military retirees already enrolled in the Survivors' Benefit Plan.

In the interest of a strong national defense, it is critical that we keep faith with the men and women who serve in our military. This applies both while military members are serving, and as they move beyond their working years. Our military retirees and their families have made significant sacrifices in the defense of their country. They deserve benefits commensurate with those sacrifices.

In 1972, Congress created the Survivors' Benefit Plan (SBP), giving career military members the option of taking less retirement pay in their own lifetime in return for the continuation of that pay to the surviving spouse, in the event the retiree pre-deceased his or her spouse.

SBP was a wise and important decision by the Congress; hundreds of thousands of military members have enrolled in SBP since 1972, and the program has given much-deserved security and peace of mind to those spouses who, along with military members, share the burdens of a military career.

Congress expanded the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) in 1999, by creating the ''Paid-Up Provision.'' Under that provision, retirees who are at least seventy years old and have already been paying into SBP for at least thirty years are considered ''paid up'' and do not have to continue paying in to receive benefits.

This change provides a modest but frequently important boost to retirees' income at a stage in their lives, in their 70's, when they may be less able to supplement their retirement income from other employment.

However, there is a major caveat, and a significant inequity here. The ''Paid-Up Provision'', under the 1999 legislation, does not take effect until October 2008. As a result, those who enrolled before 1978 will continue under the current law to have to pay in as much as six years longer than enrollees from 1978 or after.

The SBP program was created in 1972. An effective date of 2008 for the SBP's ''Paid-Up Provision'' means that those who enrolled in the first six years of the program, i.e., between 1972 and 1977, must, in order to get the same retirement benefits, pay in longer, as much as six years longer, than those who enrolled in 1978 or later.

In other words, those who signed up before 1978 get the same benefits but have to pay a much higher price. This arrangement is unfair on its face and should be corrected.

My bill, the Military Survivors' Fairness Act of 2004, simply takes the ''Paid-Up Provision''—already established by Congress in 1999, and moves its effective date ahead four years, from October 1, 2008 to October 1, 2004. That is the only change it makes.

This bill, if approved, would benefit some ninety-two thousand military retirees nationwide, those who enrolled in SBP between 1974 and 1977. The Military Officers Association of America has estimated that the cost would be $2.7 billion over ten years.

Under my bill, ninety-two thousand military retirees participating in the SBP program, from every State and congressional district, will no longer be forced to pay more for their retirement than military retirees who enrolled in SBP in 1978 or later. This is only fair—the benefits for which these 92,000 are paying are identical, and their service was just as worthy.

The 1999 legislation establishing the ''Paid-Up Provision'' was a good idea with the wrong effective date—it was given a 2008 effective date because that Congress wanted to defer any budgetary impact. Accounting conventions and budgetary targets, however, should not determine whether we are going to keep faith with our military men and women. Any arrangement that treats them with any trace of unfairness or lack of appreciation for their service is not right, is not in our national interest and should be fixed.

The Military Survivors' Fairness Act of 2004 is such a fix it—corrects a significant inequity among an important group of military retirees, and I urge its adoption.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the legislation be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2177

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Military Survivors' Fairness Act of 2004''.

SEC. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE FOR PAID-UP COVERAGE UNDER SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN.

Section 1452(j) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking ''October 1, 2008'' and inserting ''October 1, 2004''.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

S. 2180. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to exchange certain lands in the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests in the State of Colorado; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce a bill today that would effect a small land exchange to help the city of Golden, CO in its efforts to augment its water supply, that it might better prepare for a resumption of the drought which has plagued our State in the past several years. The bill I am proposing would direct that the U.S. Forest Service complete a land exchange with the city of Golden at the earliest possible date.

In the land exchange, the city would receive approximately 10 acres of National Forest land near Empire, CO. The city needs this land to complete construction of a 140-foot stretch of water pipeline connecting the West Fork of Clear Creek with a brand new water storage reservoir, known as the Guanella Reservoir, which the city completed in December. The Guanella Reservoir will increase the city's existing water storage capacity by approximately 40 percent, and better enable it to cope with future water shortages.

This legislation is critical, because while the Guanella Reservoir is now completed, as is the diversion dam, penstock, and all but 140 feet of the connecting pipeline, the reservoir remains dry. In short, the pipeline is completed up to the National Forest boundary, and authorization is needed from either the Forest Service or Congress to complete the small remaining stretch of pipeline that must cross National Forest land. Until that authorization is provided, the reservoir is sitting empty, and that is a situation we do not want to see continued into the dry summer months. Unfortunately, the Forest Service has indicated it would take quite some time, possibly several years, to authorize the pipeline, and we have agreed with them that this land exchange is the best approach to meet everyone's needs and time frames.

For this reason, I am introducing this important legislation, and have asked the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to expedite it in every way possible.

Additionally, I would like to note that while providing the city of Golden the ability to finish a critical water storage project, my proposal is also a beneficial deal for the United States. In return for the 10 acres it will give up, the Forest Service will receive up to 80 acres of land near a popular trail and recreation area in Evergreen, CO, and will also receive 55 acres of land on and near the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail in Clear Creek and Summit Counties. The 55 acres are located along one of the most popular stretches of the Trail, and are one of the ways hikers and other users can access the popular Greys and Torreys Peaks, two of the most heavily-climbed 14,000 foot peaks in our State. Further, my bill provides that all land values will be determined in accordance with Forest Service appraisal procedures, so we will be insuring that the United States will receive full market value for its land. In addition, the City is making a donation of Continental Divide Trail lands above which are required. I believe this is truly a ''win-win'' situation for all concerned, and commend the City for making the additional donation to the Forest Service.

Finally, I would like to note that my proposal has been endorsed by the County Commissioners of all three counties that have lands involved in the trade, the non-profit Continental Divide Trail Alliance, the City of Blackhawk Public Works Department, the Georgetown Loop Scenic Railroad, and by numerous others.

Again, I would recommend this legislation for my colleagues' quick approval in order that the City of Golden can get on with its urgent needs to supply adequate additional water to its residents this summer.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2180

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests Land Exchange Act of 2004''.

SEC. 2. LAND EXCHANGE, ARAPAHO AND ROOSEVELT NATIONAL FORESTS, COLORADO.

(a) CONVEYANCE BY THE CITY OF GOLDEN.—

(1) LANDS DESCRIBED.—The land exchange directed by this section shall proceed if, within 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the City of Golden, Colorado (in the section referred to as the ''City''), offers to convey title acceptable to the United States to the following non-Federal lands:

(A) Certain lands located near the community of Evergreen in Park County, Colorado, comprising approximately 80 acres, as generally depicted on a map entitled ''Non-Federal Lands—Cub Creek Parcel'', dated June, 2003.

(B) Certain lands located near Argentine Pass in Clear Creek and Summit Counties, Colorado, comprising approximately 55.909 acres in 14 patented mining claims, as generally depicted on a map entitled ''Argentine Pass/Continental Divide Trail Lands'', dated September 2003.

(2) CONDITIONS OF CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance of lands under paragraph (1)(B) to the United States shall be subject to the absolute right of the City to permanently enter upon, utilize, and occupy so much of the surface and subsurface of the lands as may be reasonably necessary to access, maintain, repair, modify, make improvements in, or otherwise utilize the Vidler Tunnel to the same extent that the City would have had such right if the lands had not been conveyed to the United States and remained in City ownership. The exercise of such right shall not require the City to secure any permit or other advance approval from the United States. Upon acquisition by the United States, such lands are hereby permanently withdrawn from all forms of entry and appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining and mineral leasing laws, and the Geothermal Steam Act of l970 (30 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

(b) CONVEYANCE BY UNITED STATES.—Upon receipt of acceptable title to the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture shall simultaneously convey to the City all right, title and interest of the United States in and to certain Federal lands, comprising approximately 9.84 acres, as generally depicted on a map entitled ''Empire Federal Lands—Parcel 12'', dated June 2003.

(c) EQUAL VALUE EXCHANGE.—

(1) APPRAISAL.—The values of the Federal lands identified in subsection (b) and the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(A) shall be determined by the Secretary through appraisals performed in accordance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (December 20, 2000) and the Uniform Standards of

Professional Appraisal Practice. Except as provided in paragraph (3), the conveyance of the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(B) shall be considered a donation for all purposes of law.

(2) SURPLUS OF NON-FEDERAL VALUE.—If the final appraised value, as approved by the Secretary, of the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(A) exceeds the final appraised value, as approved by the Secretary, of the Federal land identified in subsection (b), the values may be equalized—

(A) by reducing the acreage of the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a) to be conveyed, as determined appropriate and acceptable by the Secretary and the City;

(B) the making of a cash equalization payment to the City, including a cash equalization payment in excess of the amount authorized by section 206(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716(b)); or

(C) a combination of acreage reduction and cash equalization.

(3) SURPLUS OF FEDERAL VALUE.—If the final appraised value, as approved by the Secretary, of the Federal land identified in subsection (b) exceeds the final appraised value, as approved by the Secretary, of the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(A), the Secretary shall prepare a statement of value for the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(B) and utilize such value to the extent necessary to equalize the values of the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(A) and the Federal land identified in subsection (b). If the Secretary declines to accept the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(B) for any reason, the City shall make a cash equalization payment to the Secretary as necessary to equalize the values of the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a)(1)(A) and the Federal land identified in subsection (b).

(d) EXCHANGE COSTS.—To expedite the land exchange under this section and save administrative costs to the United States, the City shall be required to pay for—

(1) any necessary land surveys; and

(2) the costs of the appraisals, which shall be performed in accordance with Forest Service policy on approval of the appraiser and the issuance of appraisal instructions.

(e) TIMING AND INTERIM AUTHORIZATION.—It is the intent of Congress that the land exchange directed by this Act shall be completed no later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. Pending completion of the land exchange, the City is authorized, effective on the date of the enactment of this Act, to construct a water pipeline on or near the existing course of the Lindstrom ditch through the Federal land identified in subsection (b) without further action or authorization by the Secretary, except that, prior to initiating any such construction, the City shall execute and convey to the Secretary a legal document that permanently holds the United States harmless for any and all liability arising from the construction of such water pipeline and indemnifies the United States against all costs arising from the United States' ownership of the Federal land, and any actions, operations or other acts of the City or its licensees, employees, or agents in constructing such water pipeline or engaging in other acts on the Federal land prior to its transfer to the City. Such encumbrance on the Federal land prior to conveyance shall not be considered for purposes of the appraisal.

(f) ALTERNATIVE SALE AUTHORITY.—If the land exchange is not completed for any reason, the Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to sell the Federal land identified in subsection (b) to the City at its final appraised value, as approved by the Secretary. Any money received by the United States in such sale shall be considered money received and deposited pursuant to Public Law 90–171 (16 U.S.C. 484(a); commonly known as the ''Sisk Act'', and may be used, without further appropriation, for the acquisition of lands for addition to the National Forest System in the State of Colorado.

(g) INCORPORATION, MANAGEMENT, AND STATUS OF ACQUIRED LANDS.—Land acquired by the United States under the land exchange shall become part of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, and the exterior boundary of such forest is hereby modified, without further action by the Secretary, as necessary to incorporate the non-Federal lands identified in subsection (a) and an additional 40 acres as depicted on a map entitled ''Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest Boundary Adjustment—Cub Creek'', dated June 2003. Upon their acquisition, lands or interests in land acquired under the authority of this Act shall be administered in accordance with the laws, rules and regulations generally applicable to the National Forest System. For purposes of Section 7 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–9), the boundaries of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, as adjusted by this subsection shall be deemed to be the boundaries of such forest as of January 1, 1965.

(h) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—The Secretary, with the agreement of the City, may make technical corrections or correct clerical errors in the maps referred to in this section or adjust the boundaries of the Federal lands to leave the United States with a manageable post-exchange or sale boundary. In the event of any discrepancy between a map, acreage estimate, or legal description, the map shall prevail unless the Secretary and the City agree otherwise.

(i) REVOCATION OF ORDERS AND WITHDRAWAL.—Any public orders withdrawing any of the Federal lands identified in subsection (b) from appropriation or disposal under the public land laws are hereby revoked to the extent necessary to permit disposal of the Federal lands. Upon the enactment of this Act, if not already withdrawn or segregated from the entry and appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining and mineral leasing laws and the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), the Federal lands are hereby withdrawn until the date of their conveyance to the City.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

S. 2181. A bill to adjust the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park in the State of Colorado; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I am today introducing legislation that would authorize the exchange of lands between the Muriel MacGregor Trust and the National Park Service, and to amend the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park to include the newly acquired land.

Rocky Mountain National Park was established by Congress on January 26, 1915, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States and to protect the natural conditions and scenic beauties of this portion of the Rocky Mountains. The park currently encompasses approximately 266,000 acres and has some of the most beautiful mountain scenery to be found anywhere in our country. Each year the park draws over 3 million visitors.

The MacGregor Ranch, located near Estes Park, CO, was homesteaded in 1873, which predates the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park. In 1917, shortly after the establishment of the national park, the National Park Service built a residence for park employees just inside the park boundary, with access via a one-lane dirt road which crosses the MacGregor Ranch for about ¾ of a mile. This access was provided with the permission of the MacGregor family, but no easement, right-of-way, or other legal document was ever recorded.

The MacGregor Ranch is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is owned by the charitable Muriel MacGregor Trust. The mission of the trust is to support youth education through the preservation and interpretation of the historic buildings and educational tours of this working high mountain cattle ranch. In 1980, the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park was amended to include much of the MacGregor Ranch, and in 1983 the National Park Service purchased a conservation easement covering 1,221 acres of the ranch. While the ranch is located within the authorized boundary of the national park, it remains private property.

In the early 1970s, hikers and rock climbers began using the access road through the MacGregor Ranch to reach a small parking lot located just inside the park boundary. Known as the Twin Owls trailhead, the popularity of the area has grown steadily. In recent years, overflow parking has negatively impacted the ranch, and traffic on the one-lane access road has negatively affected the character of the historic homestead and has diminished the quality of the historic scene that visitors to the ranch come to experience.

For several years, the National Park Service and the MacGregor Ranch have been working to find a solution to the traffic and parking problems. Several environmental assessments have been prepared to examine various alternatives and gather public input. In 2003, based on public input and an Environmental Assessment, the National Park Service decided to relocate the Twin Owls parking lot to the east end of the MacGregor Ranch, some distance away from the historic homestead. A new access road and a larger trailhead parking lot that can accommodate 80 to 100 cars will be built at the new location.

So that the rules and regulations governing Rocky Mountain National Park can be enforced at the new trailhead and along the access road, the land needs to be incorporated into the national park. To accomplish this, the MacGregor Trust and the National Park Service have agreed to a land exchange. The National Park Service will acquire three parcels of land containing 5.9 acres from the MacGregor Trust for the development of the new parking lot and access road. In exchange, the MacGregor Trust will acquire up to 70 acres from the National Park Service that will be used for

growing hay and cattle grazing. A conservation easement will be placed on the 70 acres that is transferred to the MacGregor Trust. The conservation easement will ensure that the property is used solely for ranching.

The land exchange is intended to be an equal value exchange. One of the three parcels currently owned by the MacGregor Trust is zoned for residential development and has a high monetary value. A conservation easement will be placed on the 70 acres currently owned by the National Park Service, which will diminish its monetary value. If the lands currently owned by the National Park Service are of higher value, less than 70 acres will be transferred to the MacGregor Ranch. If the three parcels owned by the MacGregor ranch are of higher value, the Ranch is willing to accept the unequal value and will only receive a maximum of 70 acres from the National Park Service.

This legislation is needed to authorize the land exchange, and to amend the park boundary to include the new lands to be added to park.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2181

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Rocky Mountain National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2004''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FEDERAL PARCEL.—The term ''Federal parcel'' means the parcel of approximately 70 acres of Federal land near MacGregor Ranch, Larimer County, Colorado, as depicted on the map.

(2) MAP.—The term ''map'' means the map numbered 121/60,467, dated September 12, 2003.

(3) NON-FEDERAL PARCELS.—The term ''non-Federal parcels'' means the 3 parcels of non-Federal land comprising approximately 5.9 acres that are located near MacGregor Ranch, Larimer County, Colorado, as depicted on the map.

(4) PARK.—The term ''Park'' means Rocky Mountain National Park in the State of Colorado.

SEC. 3. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) EXCHANGE OF LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept an offer to convey all right, title, and interest in and to the non-Federal parcels to the United States in exchange for the Federal parcel.

(2) CONVEYANCE.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary receives an offer under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall convey the Federal parcel in exchange for the non-Federal parcels.

(3) CONSERVATION EASEMENT.—As a condition of the exchange of land under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall reserve a perpetual easement to the Federal parcel for the purposes of protecting, preserving, and enhancing the conservation values of the Federal parcel.

(b) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT; MANAGEMENT OF LAND.—On acquisition of the non-Federal parcels under subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall—

(1) adjust the boundary of the Park to reflect the acquisition of the non-Federal parcels; and

(2) manage the non-Federal parcels as part of the Park, in accordance with any laws (including regulations) applicable to the Park.

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, and Mr. DODD):

S. 2183. A bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to create team nutrition networks to promote the nutritional health of school children; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, Federal child nutrition programs have long played a critical role in promoting healthy diets for American children. First conceived over 50 years ago in response to concerns about the impacts of the diets of American youth on their fitness for the armed forces, Federal child nutrition programs have since expanded and evolved to meet the needs of a diverse population.

However, alarming increases in obesity rates for children and adolescents indicate that we are not doing enough in terms of nutrition education. The statistics are truly startling. Heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two out of three deaths in the United States, and the major risk factors for those diseases and conditions are established in childhood through unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, obesity, and tobacco use. In the last two decades, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents, and today, one in seven young people are obese, and one in three are overweight. Additionally, three out of four high school students in the United States do not eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Finally, a recent report by the Surgeon General estimated that obesity-related costs in the U.S. are close to $100 billion a year.

Unfortunately, nutrition education programs have been chronically underfunded. We have authorized 50 cents for every child served through Federal child nutrition programs, which is equivalent to over $24 million. This amount refers not to 50 cents per day, per week, or per month—this is 50 cents per year! However, last year, the only nutrition education program specifically directed at our Nation's school children, Team Nutrition, was funded at $10 million. This is equivalent to spending 21 cents a year on each child, a woefully inadequate amount. In addition, no funds were appropriated to nutrition education programs specifically designed to help States implement Team Nutrition materials.

The Early Attention to Nutrition (EATN) Act of 2004, which I am introducing today together with Senators Lugar and Dodd, would raise the total amount dedicated to nutrition education to $50 million a year. The funds would be used by the USDA to develop Team Nutrition materials, and to support Team Nutrition Networks in the States. Currently, only 21 States receive funding through Team Nutrition. This bill would allow all States to obtain Team Nutrition grants, and would fund a Team Nutrition Network in each State, which would be responsible for disseminating and coordinating nutrition education initiatives. The goal of the Team Nutrition Networks is to: instruct students with regard to the nutritional value of foods and the relationship between food and human health; provide assistance to schools in the adoption and implementation of school policies that promote healthy eating; foster community environments that support healthy eating and physical activities; provide training and technical assistance to teachers and school food service professionals consistent with this section; evaluate State and local nutrition education programs; disseminate educational materials statewide through the use of the Internet, mailings, conferences, and other communication channels; provide subgrants to school and school food authorities for carrying out nutrition education activities at the local level; and provide information to parents and caregivers regarding the nutritional value of food and the relationship between food and health.

Now is the time to take action toward improving the health and well-being of our Nation's youth. The cost of improving the health of our children will be far less than the cost of the health consequences to come if we do nothing.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill and two letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2183

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Early Attention To Nutrition (EATN) Act of 2004''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for ⅔ of deaths in the United States;

(2) the major risk factors for those diseases and conditions are established in childhood through unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, obesity, and tobacco use;

(3) obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last 2 decades;

(4) today, 1 in 7 young people are obese, and 1 in 3 are overweight;

(5) obese children are twice as likely as nonobese children to become obese adults;

(6) an overweight condition and obesity can result in physical, psychological, and social consequences, including heart disease, diabetes, cancer, depression, decreased self-esteem, and discrimination;

(7) only 2 percent of children consume a diet that meets the 5 main recommendations for a healthy diet from the Food Guide Pyramid published by the Secretary of Agriculture;

(8) 3 out of 4 high school students in the United States do not eat the recommended 5

or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day; and

(9) 3 out of 4 children in the United States consume more saturated fat than is recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans published by the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 3. TEAM NUTRITION NETWORK GRANTS.

Section 19 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1788) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 19. TEAM NUTRITION NETWORK GRANTS.

''(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

''(1) to promote the nutritional health of school children through nutrition education and other activities that support healthy lifestyles for children;

''(2) to provide grants to States for the development of statewide, comprehensive, and integrated nutrition education programs; and

''(3) to provide training and technical assistance to States, school and community nutrition programs, and child nutrition food service professionals.

''(b) DEFINITION OF TEAM NUTRITION NETWORK.—In this section, the term 'team nutrition network' means a multidisciplinary program to promote healthy eating to children based on scientifically valid information and sound educational, social, and marketing principles.

''(c) GRANTS.—The Secretary is authorized to make grants to State educational agencies to promote the nutritional health of school children through the establishment of team nutrition networks.

''(d) ALLOCATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2) and subsections (g) and (h), the Secretary shall allocate funds made available for a fiscal year under subsection (i) to make grants to eligible State educational agencies for a fiscal year in an amount determined by the Secretary, based on the ratio that—

''(A) the number of lunches reimbursed through food service programs under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) in schools, institutions, and service institutions in the State that participate in the food service programs; bears to

''(B) the number of lunches reimbursed through the food service programs in schools, institutions, and service institutions in all States that participate in the food service programs.

''(2) MINIMUM GRANT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of a grant made to a State educational agency for a fiscal year under this section shall not be less than $500,000.

''(B) INSUFFICIENT FUNDS.—If the amount made available for any fiscal year is insufficient to pay the amount to which each eligible State educational agency is entitled under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall select, on a competitive basis, eligible State educational agencies that will receive, at least, the minimum amount of grants required under subparagraph (A).

''(e) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a State educational agency shall submit a State plan to the Secretary for approval, in such manner and at such time as the Secretary determines, that includes information regarding how the grant will be used in accordance with this section.

''(f) USES OF GRANT.—Subject to subsection (g), a grant made under this section may be used to—

''(1) instruct students with regard to the nutritional value of foods and the relationship between food and human health;

''(2) promote healthy eating by children;

''(3) provide assistance to schools in the adoption and implementation of school policies that promote healthy eating;

''(4) foster community environments that support healthy eating and physical activities;

''(5) provide training and technical assistance to teachers and school food service professionals consistent with this section;

''(6) evaluate State and local nutrition education programs;

''(7) disseminate educational materials statewide through the use of the Internet, mailings, conferences, and other communication channels;

''(8) provide subgrants to school and school food authorities for carrying out nutrition education activities at the local level; and

''(9) conduct programs and education for parents and caregivers regarding healthy eating for children.

''(g) STATE COORDINATORS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that at least 10 percent of a grant made to a State educational agency for each fiscal year is used by the State educational agency to appoint a team nutrition network coordinator for the State.

''(2) ROLE OF STATE COORDINATORS.—A team nutrition network coordinator for a State shall—

''(A) develop and administer the team nutrition network in the State; and

''(B) coordinate the team nutrition network of the State with—

''(i) the Secretary (acting through the Food and Nutrition Service);

''(ii) State agencies responsible for children's health programs (including school-based children's health programs); and

''(iii) other appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies.

''(h) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall reserve 20 percent of the amount of funds made available for each fiscal year under subsection (i) to promote team nutrition networks nationally in accordance with this subsection.

''(2) ACTIVITIES.—Of the amount of funds that are reserved for a fiscal year under this section, the Secretary shall use—

''(A) 50 percent of the reserved funds for—

''(i) evaluation of activities funded under this section; and

''(ii) development of a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information on best practices for promoting healthy eating in school and community child nutrition programs; and

''(B) 50 percent of the reserved funds to carry out national activities to support team nutrition networks through the Secretary, acting through the Undersecretary of Food and Nutrition Services.

''(i) FUNDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—On October 1, 2004, and on each October 1 thereafter through October 1, 2007, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out this section $50,000,000, to remain available until expended.

''(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this section the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation. ''.

AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BINGAMAN: Congratulations on developing the Early Attention to Nutrition Bill (EATN Bill) of 2004. ADA believes that when fully funded this bill will provide American children and their families with better nutrition education, physical activity education, and an overall more supportive environment that will help them develop healthy eating and activity patterns for life.

The American Dietetic Association is the world's largest food and professional association, and bases its work on evidence-based science to make recommendations that can promote optimal nutritional health and well-being. With that commitment to the public, our members are particularly pleased that this bill give due focus to nutrition education.

ADA supports the legislation's concept of the team Nutrition Network. Once enacted, Congress will need to assure funding for these programs so that they may genuinely contribute to improved health for American children. Your support for a funding level that would ensure that all 50 states receive at least a minimum level of funding is highly commendable and right on target as to what is needed. The nutrition education programs funded by these grants should be made available to both School lunch and breakfast sites as well as the CACFP programs governed by the Child Nutrition Act. Nutrition education and physical activity are key components to promoting healthy lifestyles and must be addressed across programs.

Thank you for introducing this very important legislation. The ADA is pleased to endorse this important step toward improving the health of our children.

Sincerely,

RONALD E. SMITH,
Director Government Affairs.

CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST,
March 8, 2004.

Hon. JEFF BINGAMAN,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Attention: Dr. Daniela Ligiero.

DEAR SENATOR BINGAMAN: The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) thank you for for your long-standing record of leadership in promoting healthy eating among children. CSPI is a nonprofit health organization specializing in nutrition that has over 800,000 members and subscribers to its Nutrition Action Healthletter. We are pleased to strongly support your ''Early Attention to Nutrition Act.''

As obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, the need for effective nutrition education for children has become painfully apparent. Your bill establishes a Team Nutrition Network that would help educate children about the importance of healthy eating to lifelong health. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture's current Team Nutrition education program has been effective in helping states to develop innovative nutrition education programs, it does not provide consistent and reliable funding year-to-year, nor does it include a central mechanism to facilitate information-sharing between states on best practices and innovations. The Team Nutrition Network that your bill would establish is needed as an addition to the existing Team Nutrition program to develop and deliver effective nutrition education programs and activities in schools.

Again, CSPI applauds your efforts to help ensure that schoolchildren are taught valuable skills for lifelong healthy eating. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to promote children's health.

Sincerely,

MARGO G. WOOTAN,
D. Sc., Director, Nutrition Policy.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS:

S. 2185. A bill to simplify the process for admitting temporary alien agricultural workers under section

101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, to increase access to such workers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I introduce the Temporary Agriculture Work Reform Act of 2004.

American farmers are the most efficient farmers in the world. Technologies have allowed farmers to produce higher quality products while increasing yields, and at the same time, reducing pesticide use. I applaud our farmers for their important role in our Nation's economy.

One obstacle that agriculture producers continually grapple with is labor. For many years, migrant workers have been the main source of labor for agriculture. In fact, today migrant workers make up about 56 percent of farm labor. A key issue for our American producers is having an efficient program to provide an agriculture workforce.

Reforms to the H2A program are warranted and needed. The program should be user-friendly for both growers and workers with less bureaucratic hassle. The program should operate in such a way to ensure that American producers can have their crops harvested in a timely fashion and that willing workers can get access to job opportunities. We need a program that is easy to use and provides a stable, reliable workforce for America's farmers.

My guest worker legislation reforms the cumbersome and uncompetitive aspects of the H2A temporary agriculture worker program—without providing amnesty to illegal aliens in the U.S. The bill gives farmers and workers a more functional program by simplifying the application process, providing a prevailing wage rate, and ensuring U.S. workers are not displaced.

The Adverse Effect Wage Rate, known by its acronym AEWR, has consistently failed to provide competitive incentives for farmers to become users of the H2A program. Due to the current need for foreign workers and job protections in place for domestic workers, the AEWR is no longer necessary. By replacing the AEWR with a prevailing wage rate, legal workers will maintain a pay scale that is equal with their counterparts.

The bill provides a labor attestation process to ensure that American workers are not displaced. This labor attestation process replaces the burdensome labor certification process currently in effect, which too often causes delays that have a detrimental effect on the seasonal agricultural industry. A similar labor attestation process has worked well for the H1B visa program, and I believe it can be used effectively for the H2A program. The bill also mandates stiff penalties on employers for misrepresentation and U.S. worker displacement. Bottom line, if a U.S. worker wants the job, under my bill he can have it.

But when foreign workers are needed, the bill encourages workers to come to the United States through legal channels. A one-time waiver allows foreign workers to apply for the H2A program from their home country if that person is inadmissible to the U.S. due to prior authorized entry—this will deter the cycle of illegal entry that endangers our national security. My bill does not provide amnesty or a new way for illegal aliens to adjust to legal permanent resident status other than in accordance with current law.

Finally, the bill includes a few narrow provisions, including re-establishing language that Congress has repeatedly passed on appropriations bills, to protect against frivolous lawsuits. Our farmers should be providing for America's dinner table, not defending meritless lawsuits.

There are a number of guest worker bills already introduced in the Senate, and in fact, my Subcommittee held the first hearing several weeks ago on the President's guest worker proposal. The bill I am introducing today is a good first step to the kind of overall reform we need. It meets our economic interests, protects U.S. workers, and respects the rule of law without a broad amnesty for illegal aliens.

This legislation establishes a common sense and competitive H2A program so that these employers can continue to produce the highest quality food supply in the world. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass a much needed reform to the H2A program this year.

By Mr. DASCHLE (for Mr. KERRY):

S. 2186. A bill to temporarily extend the programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, through May 15, 2004, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation that keeps the Small Business Administration and its financing and counseling assistance available to small businesses. Small businesses need us to act now to keep critical assistance available to our Nation's biggest job creators.

There should not be any objections to this bill. It has broad support in the small business and the lending communities. The lending provisions of the bill have the support of small borrowers that testified before Congress over the past few weeks and the support of a coalition of small business trade associations, including the trade associations of 504 lenders and of 7(a) lenders, the American Bankers Association and the Independent Community Bankers Association, as well as the National Small Business Alliance and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the women's business center provisions have the support of women's trade associations such as Women Impacting Public Policy and the Association of Women's Business Centers.

This bill authorizes the SBA and most of its programs through the May 15, 2004, which will allow time for the House to complete its work on the SBA's 3-year reauthorization bill, passed by the Senate in September 2003. In addition, this bill addresses several urgent issues that are critical to keep SBA programs operating and helping small businesses across the country.

Let me outline these for you. The first provision authorizes the continued operation of the SBA's 504 loan guarantee program for the rest of fiscal year 2004. Unless we act, the authority to operate this program will expire on March 15, next Monday, and small businesses in need of financing for fixed assets will be turned away. These loans are for growing small businesses that need loans with long repayment terms and fixed interest rates to afford a new building or perhaps land to expand their business and their workforce, or equipment to improve or increase production. The lenders who make these loans serve a unique role in our economy—they develop economic opportunities where conventional lenders are not willing to take a risk. They are not a shy group, and care deeply about the communities where they live. I am sure most, if not all, Senators have received numerous calls and communications from them over the past few weeks. It is my hope that extending authorization will provide some stability to the industry so that they continue to fund our growing businesses, and then in the near future, the House will consider our more comprehensive SBA reauthorization legislation, bill number S. 1375, that we passed in September, to enact other important 504 program improvements that are supported by the small business community. This loan program requires no appropriations because it is funded entirely by fees that borrowers and lenders pay.

The second provision keeps open the doors of our most experienced and successful Women's Business Centers, again without added cost to the Treasury. This bill contains a small adjustment to the Women's Business Center program that updates the current funding formula. The adjustment changes the portion of funding allowed for women's business centers in the sustainability part of the program to keep up with the increasing number of centers that will need funding this fiscal year. In short, this change directs the SBA to reserve 48 percent of the appropriated funds for the sustainability centers, instead of 30 percent, which will give the most experienced centers the greatest opportunity to receive sustainability funding, while still allowing for new centers and protecting existing ones.

Currently there are 88 women's business centers. Of these, 35 are in the initial grant program and 53 will have graduated to the sustainability part of

the program. These sustainability centers make up more than half of the total women's business centers, but under the current funding formula are only allotted 30 percent of the funds. Without the change to 48 percent, all grants to sustainability centers could be cut in half—or worse, 23 experienced centers could lose funding completely. Cutting funding for these, our most efficient and successful centers, would not only be detrimental to the centers themselves, but also to the women they serve, to their local communities, to their states, and to the national economy.

As the author of the Women's Business Centers Sustainability Act of 1999, I can tell you that when the bill was signed into law, it was Congress's intent to protect the established and successful infrastructure of worth, performing centers. The law was designed to allow all graduating Women's Business Centers that meet certain performance standards to receive continued funding under sustainability grants. This approach allows for new centers to be established—but not by penalizing those that have already demonstrated their worth. It was our intention to continue helping the most productive and well-equipped women's business centers, knowing that demand for such services was rapidly growing.

Today, with women-owned businesses opening at one-and-a-half times the rate of all privately held firms, the demand and need for women's business centers is even greater. Until Congress makes permanent the Women's Business Center Sustainability Pilot program, as intended in Senate-passed legislation, an extension of authority and increase in sustainability funds is vital—not only to the centers themselves, but to the women's business community and to the millions of workers employed by women-owned businesses around the country.

The importance of the women's business centers to small business owners in communities across this country cannot be overstated. Take for instance the story of Melanie Marsden and Shannon Lawler, who recently opened A Better Place to Be Day Spa in Charlestown, MA. While working on a business plan last summer, the two hopeful entrepreneurs happened across the website of the Center for Women and Enterprise (CWE), a women's business center in Boston. Having just signed a lease and with a target opening for their spa quickly approaching, Melanie and Shannon were looking for help, and quick. At first, the process seemed overwhelming, but the experts at CWE were able to guide Melanie and Shannon through the complicated process—from business plan to long-term financing and management. CWE helped Melanie and Shannon open A Better Place to Be Day Spa and already see a steady stream of clients pass through their doors. Without CWE, Melanie and Shannon believe that they would not have opened their business on time, or at all. Last year alone, women's business centers like CWE helped over 100,000 entrepreneurs just like Melanie and Shannon with their small business needs. The majority of these women have few resources and little access to business development assistance, and without the women's business centers, they might have none.

As I have said on more than one occasion, women business owners do not get the recognition they deserve for the contribution to our economy: Eighteen million Americans would be without jobs today if it weren't for these entrepreneurs who had the courage and the vision to strike out on their own. For 19 years, as a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I have worked to increase the opportunities for these enterprising women, leading to greater earning power, financial independence and asset accumulation. For these women, in addition to the challenge and experience of running their own business, it means having a bank account, buying a home, sending their children to college, and being in control of their own future.

I want to again express my sincere and continuing support for the growing community of women entrepreneurs across the Nation and for the invaluable programs through which the SBA provides women business owners with the tools they need to succeed. For years, I have fought for increased funding for SBA assistance that helps women entrepreneurs, including measures that have sustained and expanded the Women's Business Centers, and give women entrepreneurs their deserved representation within the Federal procurement process.

The third provision makes temporary changes to the SBA's largest loan program, the so-called 7(a) program, in order to compensate for the administration's budget gimmicks and program mismanagement that caused a substantial shortage in funding. This shortage led to a temporary shutdown of the program in January, followed by lending restrictions that created serious financial hardships for small businesses and reduced access to affordable capital for small businesses in general. For the remainder of fiscal year 2004, a coalition of 7(a) lenders and small business groups have worked with Congress to come up with some limited fees, paid by lenders and not borrowers, that will increase the amount of lending available. That extra funding will increase from $9.5 billion to more than $11 billion the amount of loan guarantees available to small businesses. With more funding, Congress expects the SBA to lift the loan cap size of $750,000 and other restrictions, give priority in processing and approval to eligible small businesses that have been shut out this year, and require the SBA to renew export working capital loans to eligible small businesses.

Of course, these changes would not be necessary if the administration had either requested adequate funding in its budget or used its authority to reprogram money to compensate for the shortfall. It also could have sent up a request for supplemental funding. On three different occasions, I wrote to the administration urging these actions, with the support of Senators LEVIN, HARKIN, LIEBERMAN, LANDRIEU, EDWARDS, CANTWELL, BAYH, and PRYOR, urging any of these solutions, but the administration refused to act. Instead, the insufficient funding was compounded by mismanagement and the program was completely shutdown from January 6 to January 14. When the administration reopened the program, it was with extreme restrictions. The restrictions were aimed at keeping the demand for the loans down without regard to their effect on the small businesses the Agency is intended to serve. Small businesses appealed to the administration and our committees for help because they were caught in the middle. For example, one company in Pennsylvania has a $1 million export working capital loan that needs to be renewed, but it can't because one of SBA's restrictions does not allow loans of more than $750,000. At risk is the home of one of the owners because it is part of the collateral securing the existing loan. This company is qualified; it's just trapped by the SBA's restrictions. With your help in passing this bill immediately, we can do the right thing for these small business owners and others who played by the rules. There is no cost to the Treasury in enacting these provisions.

Last, the fourth provision, addresses an urgent need for some firms in New York needing disaster loan assistance. Many have said we should wait until we address other SBA legislation in the next 60 days. However, hundreds of jobs are at stake and these businesses do not have 2 months. This language is included at the bipartisan request of the House Small Business Committee leadership. Their staffs worked closely with the SBA to develop this language, which is acceptable to all of them. In addition to the support of House Committee Chairman DON MANZULLO and Ranking Member NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, this provision is also supported by Congresswoman SUE KELLY and Senator CHARLES SCHUMER.

All four provisions address circumstances that require immediate action. Let me remind everyone: Without this legislation, the SBA's loan program for growing businesses, commonly referred to as the 504 Loan Guarantee Program, would shut down next Monday, March 15, 2004. Without this legislation, the future of counseling and training for women starting and growing their businesses, through the most established SBA's Women's Business Centers, would be compromised. Without this legislation, small businesses with their homes and life savings at stake may face financial and personal devastation because of program mismanagement. Without this

legislation, small business disaster victims may go out of business.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that two letters relating to programs affected by this legislation be printed in the RECORD. I thank my colleagues for their support of small businesses and for considering immediate passage of this important small business bill.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

A BETTER PLACE TO BE DAY SPA,
Charlestown, MA.

DEAR SENATOR KERRY: This past summer I had the opportunity to work with the Center for Women & Enterprise when I was in the beginning stages of writing a business plan for a small day spa that had long been a dream. My business partner and childhood friend and I were both born to working class families and raised in Charlestown. I was educated in the Boston Public School system and went on to attend Boston University on one of their Boston Scholars full tuition scholarships. While working full time after graduation, I decided to enroll at the Muscular Therapy Institute in Cambridge with the goal in mind of opening my own business someday. My business partner held down a full time job and attended The Elizabeth Grady School of Aesthetics in preparation for our venture. While for many years we talked about our dream, we know that making that dream become the reality it is today, would not have been possible without programs like the Center for Women & Enterprise and the Small Business Administration.

For the last 2 years we had been keeping our eyes and ears open about commercial space in Charlestown, which is not easy to come by and generally not affordable. Our goal was to open by May 2004 (when I will turn 30 and my partner will be 31). We hadn't even begun the business plan writing when the ideal location became available in August. The 1,500 square foot commercial space is located at Mishuwam Park Apartments on Maine Street in Charlestown which is an apartment complex funded through the HUD Section 236 program and is managed by Peabody Properties. We had to move quickly on the space and before we knew it we had signed a lease and incorporated in a matter of days. Our target opening date then became November 1st which didn't leave us much time to pull things together but we didn't even know how overwhelming the whole process might have been if we had not found the Center for Women & Enterprise.

After contacting CWE, I received a call back within minutes from Bea Chiem and she would prove to be an invaluable resource to us during the following months. She took what was very complicated and overwhelming for us and made it so much easier to understand. Every time we would come to a part of the financials that we thought we might never figure out, we knew Bea was only a phone call away. I was most impressed by her response time to each and every question I had. Her patience, knowledge and belief in our vision played a major role in us getting the financing we needed. CWE should be proud to have such a caring and knowledgeable woman on the team.

The closing on our loan with Sovereign finally took place last week and we got a $60,000 term loan and the $40,000 line of credit we requested from Sovereign through an SBA loan. Shannon and I cannot thank the Center for Women & Enterprise enough for all of their help. We have no doubt that without CWE (and Bea) in our corner the financial institutions we approached would not have taken us as seriously.

The way in which the center for Women & Enterprise reaches out to help women in business inspired us to do the same. In selecting suppliers and inventory for our gift shop within the spa, we chose to carry products that were made by women or by women owned businesses with a preference given to Massachusetts or New England based businesses.

A Better Place to Be Day Spa, was received well by the Charlestown community, we had 400 people at our grand opening open house on November 1st and have a steady stream of clients coming through our doors each day. And in the short time we have been open we have seen many repeat clients already. Our business got off to a great start because of the Center for Women & Enterprise and as we continue to grow I will be sure to let our clients know that A Better Place to Be Day Spa is here because of the guidance we received from the Center for Women & Enterprise and the support of the Small Business Administration.

In closing I need you to know that what the Center for Women & Enterprise and the SBA do for women in business is truly incredible. I particularly enjoy the frequent newsletters outlining upcoming events as well as educational opportunities and workshops that I will be sure to take advantage of in the future. A Better Place to Be Day Spa will be represented at the upcoming State House Day and we will continue to look for ways that we can give back to other women in business through CWE.

Thank you.

MELANIE MARSDEN,
SHANNON LAWLER,
Owners.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS,
Kansas City MO, March 9, 2004.

Hon. JOHN KERRY,
Ranking Member, Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

DEAR SENATOR KERRY: On behalf of the Kansas City chapter of the National Assoc. of Women Business Owners (representing 200 members), I would like to request the following actions be taken regarding the SBA 7(a) program.

Absent the SBA asking congress for additional funding, NAWBO supports increasing fees on lenders as an approach to adequately fund the SBA 7(a) program and to lift restrictions.

Specifically, NAWBO would like the program to:

Allow piggyback loans, but charge a 0.50 percent lender fee for each;

Raise lender fees by 0.10 percent; and

For loans that are under $150,000, have lenders pay the SBA the 0.25 percent fee that lenders currently keep for themselves. This only applies to these small loans.

Thank you.

ELAINE HAMILTON,
Public Policy Chair.●

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 312—COMMENDING THE BRAVERY OF THE INITIAL RESPONDERS IN THE BALTIMORE HARBOR WATER TAXI ACCIDENT OF MARCH 6, 2004

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. SARBANES) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 312

Whereas on Saturday, March 6, 2004, a water taxi overturned in Baltimore Harbor during a sudden and vicious storm;

Whereas 25 passengers were thrown into the Harbor, into frigid 43 degree water, with little chance of survival;

Whereas tragically, 1 person died and 3 people are presumed to be dead;

Whereas if not for the immediate action of the initial responders, more lives would certainly have been lost;

Whereas the initial responders demonstrated extraordinary bravery in their heroic response in rescuing the passengers;

Whereas after noticing the accident, the initial responders rushed to the scene, piloting their vessel to the accident site and immediately diving into the frigid waters in their street clothes and boots to help those clinging for their lives;

Whereas the initial responders not only saved those clinging to the boat for survival but used their exceptional skills and ingenuity to elevate the capsized boat to rescue those passengers trapped beneath;

Whereas the team of initial responders worked together to pull the passengers out of the water, identify those who needed immediate medical attention, turn the Fort McHenry Drill Hall into a triage center to identify the victims who were most in need, and provide all with dry clothing and warm blankets;

Whereas it was a team effort to rescue and save those stranded in the freezing Chesapeake waters that involved rescuers in the water, on the pier, and at Fort McHenry;

Whereas we commend the courage and resolution of Maryland's outstanding initial responders whose quick reaction to this terrible accident saved lives; and

Whereas we praise these initial responders—the Navy Reservists, Coast Guard, Maritime Fire Department, Baltimore Fire Department, Bowleys Quarters Search and Rescue Team, and the emergency medical team—who worked together as a team to rescue people and save lives: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) pays tribute to the victims of this terrible accident and expresses its condolences to their families;

(2) commends the initial responders in the Baltimore water taxi accident of March 6, 2004, for their bravery, quick thinking, courage, and ingenuity in rescuing the passengers of the water taxi that capsized after a sudden and vicious storm swept over the Baltimore Harbor; and

(3) commends the team of initial responders for this extraordinary demonstration of their ongoing commitment and dedication to saving lives.

SENATE RESOLUTION 313—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ENCOURAGING THE ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT OF AMERICANS IN WORLD AFFAIRS AND URGING THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO COORDINATE WITH IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN CREATING AN ONLINE DATABASE OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AND RELATED OPPORTUNITIES

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and Mr. HAGEL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 313

Whereas many polls and studies have indicated that the United States needs to do a