

telephone networks support Internet access and will soon offer video, and the Internet supports an amazing variety of applications.

I believe reform to our telecommunications laws is needed, and we should make reform a priority. It is time to tear down regulatory barriers between telephone, wireless, video, and the Internet to unleash innovation and encourage private investment.

I applaud the leadership of Senators STEVENS and INOUYE on the Senate Commerce Committee in scheduling an ambitious slate of hearings to address telecom reform. As the hearings begin, I want to outline some basic principles I would like to see embodied in any reform legislation that moves forward out of committee.

In order to tap the infinite potential technology has to improve the way we communicate, I believe we should do the following:

No. 1, eliminate regulatory barriers that hinder innovation and encourage private investment in new telecommunications facilities and services; No. 2, streamline video franchising requirements to facilitate greater consumer choice of video providers, while allowing municipalities to protect community interests; No. 3, encourage a favorable regulatory environment for robust competition among communications providers, while protecting consumers' access to content and services; No. 4, allow for the development of uniform consumer protection standards, while recognizing the importance of State and local regulators in addressing consumer concerns; and No. 5, use the public spectrum to promote development of new wireless communications services such as broadband Internet.

Any telecom reform must address the needs of every American consumer regardless of where they live. Rural areas like Nebraska cannot be left behind. I believe that technology holds enormous economic promise to rural America, and innovation and competition must be encouraged in even the most remote areas of our country. Therefore I advocate that reform legislation do the following:

No. 1, ensure the stability of the Universal Service Fund in order to preserve affordable telephone service in rural areas, and for all Americans, as well as to continue support for schools, libraries and rural health care providers; No. 2, promote private investment in and deployment of broadband Internet and other advanced telecommunications services, in rural America; and No. 3, encourage increased wireless coverage and introduction of new wireless services to rural America.

In order for the United States to be a leader in the global economy, we must modernize our telecommunications laws to ensure we are fostering investment, innovation, and competition and not impeding progress. We also must ensure that everyone—regardless of

where they live—benefits from modernization of our telecom laws.

I believe we must act now to protect our place in the world as a leader in communications, and I look forward to the debate on this very important issue.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, this year, as we celebrate Black History Month, we also mourn the loss of two great civil rights leaders: Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King.

These women were both pivotal figures in the civil rights movement, leaders who inspired all of us with their commitment, their dignity, and their incredible courage.

Both dedicated their lives to the cause of freedom—to ridding the South of the cruelty of segregation and ridding our society of the scourge of racism.

Both lived to see tremendous progress in America and both lived to see how much is still left undone.

As we mourn the passing of these heroic figures of the civil rights movement, we must ensure that the cause of justice for which they worked so hard, and sacrificed so much—marches on.

As we mourn these great leaders, and celebrate their lives, we must also ask ourselves what we can do to honor the contributions they made, and the way they worked to transform our Nation. I am reminded of something Rosa Parks once said about Dr. King. She was concerned that, while the birthday of Dr. King had become a national holiday, he was being depicted as merely, "a dreamer." As I remember him," she said, "he was more than a dreamer. He was an activist who believed in acting as well as speaking out against oppression."

Once again, Rosa Parks was right: It is not only Dr. King's dream that endures, although it does endure, and has given strength to so many. It is the actions of Dr. King, and Coretta Scott King, and Rosa Parks, and the actions of so many millions of others, that have brought us forward in an inexorable march to freedom.

Dr. King said it himself, in a different way, when he spoke about the Montgomery Bus Boycott: "We came to see that, in the long run, it is more honorable to walk in dignity than ride in humiliation. So, in a quite dignified manner, we decided to substitute tired feet for tired souls, and walk the streets of Montgomery."

They met injustice with action. They walked in dignity, for 381 days, until they met with victory. And today we, too, must move forward on the civil rights issues that press us to action—on racial profiling, on voting rights, on the death penalty; and also on access to good education and good health care, on addressing the HIV/AIDS crisis, and all the issues where inequality still plagues our Nation.

Dr. King, Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks—they, and so many others, would rather have tired feet than tired souls, and so must we.

During Black History Month, as we pay tribute to their accomplishments, and as we rededicate ourselves to the goals we have yet to achieve, we know that those great Americans would never be complacent, would never tire, would never be satisfied with anything less than justice. And neither must anyone in this body, or in this country.

We must commit to walk on together in that march for equality in this country, and justice in this world, resolving that we, too, may have tired feet but never a tired soul.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PACCAR, INC.

- Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate a great American innovator.

It is a special pleasure to recognize an exceptional company which today has earned the prestigious National Medal of Technology, the highest honor given in our Nation for technological innovation. PACCAR Incorporated is a model of success and a Washington State institution. In 2005, the company celebrated its 100th year in business. You might not recognize the PACCAR name, but perhaps you have heard of some of PACCAR's finest brands: Kenworth and Peterbilt trucks.

PACCAR is one of our Nation's top truck manufacturers and today they are cited for: "pioneering efforts and industry leadership in the development and commercialization of aerodynamic, lightweight trucks that have dramatically reduced fuel consumption and increased the productivity of U.S. freight transportation."

This National Medal is a distinct honor bestowed by the President since 1985. It was first mandated by Congress in 1980, established to recognize the significant contributions that America's leading innovators have made to the Nation's economic strength and standard of living. The award is given annually to individuals, teams, and/or companies or divisions whose work has made a lasting impact on our lives through the development and commercialization of groundbreaking technology in our Nation.

Past recipients include leaders in our Nation's cutting-edge science and high-tech communities—companies such as Dow, Dupont, and Corning or individuals such as those who have performed the first human heart transplant and invented the first whole-body CT scanner. The National Medal serves to honor the legacy of innovation that has made our Nation a technological leader for more than two centuries. And it seeks also to inspire the future generations of innovators who will keep our Nation strong for years to come.

This year, PACCAR, a Bellevue, WA company has earned this special recognition. But what, you may ask, do a lot of big rigs have to do with science and innovation?

Well, PACCAR has time and again led the industry in the design and manufacture of fuel efficient and lightweight trucks. They were the first to use a diesel engine in a heavy-duty truck. They were the first to introduce a truly aerodynamic truck design. And they were the first to use lightweight composites and aluminum in truck suspensions on a large scale. It would be difficult to name a single innovation in the recent history of truck design without finding a PACCAR product at its foundation.

These advances have required both significant investment and no small amount of risk. But PACCAR's faith has paid serious dividends to the truck buyer, the consumer, the economy, and the environment. For too long, heavy-duty trucks couldn't improve beyond a weak 10-mile-per-gallon fuel efficiency ceiling. But today, thanks to Peterbilt's and Kenworth's transformation, they have soared above and beyond that mark, significantly altering the economic and environmental forces at play in the market.

PACCAR's example has shown that it makes sense to support and advance fuel efficient technology, not only to protect our precious natural resources and reduce our dangerous reliance on foreign oil but also to help our economy thrive and grow. We would be wise to note PACCAR's model as we develop a comprehensive strategy for thoughtful investment in our energy future.

Day and night in all 50 States, PACCAR's trucks travel our Nation's highways—roads that have no end, constantly curving, folding and merging into one another. In our complex world of commerce and the vast transportation system on which that world relies, change is great and inevitable. PACCAR recognizes this beautiful evolution, embraces it, and seizes the opportunities it creates.

I rise to congratulate PACCAR Incorporated. It has made Washington State proud, it has made our Nation strong. The National Medal of Technology they receive today is well deserved.●

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE: IN COMMEMORATION

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of one of the most significant disasters in California history, San Francisco's Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906.

One hundred years ago, the city of San Francisco experienced this horrific tragedy when the city shook for almost 60 seconds and communities from as far away as Oregon, Los Angeles, and Nevada felt the tremors. The Richter scale was not yet in existence in 1906, but seismologists today estimate this earthquake had a magnitude of 7.7 to 8.0.

Following the earthquake, fires broke out across the city and raged for 3 days. In fact, the fires did more damage than the earthquake. As a result of this disaster, over 3,000 people were killed, 300,000 people became homeless, and the city suffered about \$500 million worth of damage. Telegraph and telephone services were destroyed as well as the municipal railway and all government buildings.

The 100th anniversary of this historic tragedy provides an opportunity to reflect on what we have learned and how to better prepare for a similar event. We now know that residents must be prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours following a disaster. And the city of San Francisco has done a great deal to make the community safer.

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom has spearheaded an updated citywide emergency plan—the first time it has been done in 10 years. The San Francisco Fire Department offers training in disaster and emergency response for residents. Over 11,000 San Francisco residents have completed the course in the past 15 years. San Francisco has also invested \$2.5 million in leading the development of a regional response plan with seven other bay area counties. This is one of the first regional response plans in the country. I commend the city and county of San Francisco on its efforts to ensure the city is ready to respond to a disaster.

Having witnessed the slow response to Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf States, I wrote to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, in September asking for a copy of their disaster response plan for a serious earthquake in California. I am still waiting to receive their plan. Without the plan in hand, I remain very concerned that FEMA is not prepared should a major earthquake or natural disaster occur in California.

It is very important that the State of California and its residents are working to prepare themselves for a major disaster. I have created a "Getting Ready" guide on my Senate Web site to help my constituents prepare their homes and families for a disaster. This guide is organized in easy-to-follow steps and provides links to other preparedness sites—www.boxer.senate.gov/quake.cfm.

On the 100th anniversary of the Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, I rise to honor the memory of those who lost their lives during this disaster. I also pause to reflect on the tragedy that befell this great city and its citizens. The community came together to repair and restore the city, and today, San Francisco is one of the United States' top tourist destinations and a dynamic urban center.

I also commemorate this anniversary by encouraging all of us to look forward and ensure our families are prepared for a major earthquake or similar disaster. I will continue fighting to ensure the Federal Government is taking the steps necessary to help our

local communities in disaster response.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT DATED FEBRUARY 2006 WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS FOR 2006—PM 39

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report, which was referred to the Joint Economic Committee:

To the Congress of the United States:

The United States economy continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience, flexibility, and growth. Having previously endured a stock market collapse, recession, terrorist attacks, and corporate scandals, this year the economy showed strong growth and robust job creation in the face of higher energy prices and devastating natural disasters. This is the result of the hard work of America's workers, supported by pro-growth tax policies.

In 2005, the Nation's real gross domestic product (GDP) grew 3.5 percent for the year, above the historical average. About 2 million payroll jobs were added in 2005, and the unemployment rate dropped to 4.7 percent last month, well below the averages of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Real disposable personal income increased, and real household net worth reached an all-time high. This growth comes on top of an already strong expansion. More than 4.7 million payroll jobs have been added since August 2003.

Compared with the performance of other nations' economies, our economic growth is especially impressive. The United States has added more jobs in the past two-and-a-half years than Japan and the European Union combined. Real GDP growth in the United States has been faster than in any other major industrialized country since 2001, and America is forecasted to continue as the fastest-growing country over the next two years.

Our economy's fundamental strength comes from the ingenuity and hard work of our workers. Productivity—how much workers produce per hour—