

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—

has accelerated since 2000. In the past five years, productivity has grown faster than in any other five-year period since the mid-1960s. The productivity of the United States is increasing faster than any other major industrialized country.

Productivity growth raises our standard of living and plays a central role in our competitiveness in the worldwide economy. Productivity growth will be even more important as new technologies accelerate global economic integration and as the American population ages.

We must now build on this fundamental strength by making robust investments in physical sciences, improving private incentives for research and development, and boosting math and science education and worker training. The American Competitiveness Initiative will help us remain a world leader in science and technology, which means good high-paying jobs for the American people.

We must also continue to pursue pro-growth economic policies and foster a culture of entrepreneurship. To adopt innovations effectively, our companies and workers need the incentives and flexibility that support a thriving free-market economy.

Maintaining a low tax burden is essential for our economic growth and competitiveness. Tax relief has helped our economy, and raising taxes will increase the burden on our families and small businesses. To keep our economy growing, Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent.

Two years ago, I called for cutting the budget deficit in half by 2009 by restraining spending and spurring economic growth. Every year of my presidency, we have reduced the growth of non-security discretionary spending, and last year Congress passed bills that cut this spending. This year, my budget will cut it again, and it will reduce or eliminate more than 140 programs that are performing poorly or not fulfilling essential priorities. By passing these reforms, we will save the American taxpayer another \$14 billion next year, and we will stay on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

Controlling discretionary spending alone is not enough, however. We have recently passed significant savings in mandatory spending programs. We need to do more because the only way to solve our Nation's fiscal challenges is to address the explosions in growth of entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. I have called for a bipartisan commission to examine the full impact of the Baby Boom retirement and help us come up with bipartisan answers. The longer Congress waits to act, the more difficult the choices will become.

Working together, we accomplished other significant pro-growth reforms that will help our Nation's economy grow stronger and create more jobs. More remains to be done.

Growth in spending on health care has been more rapid than general infla-

tion, straining consumers, employers, and government budgets. Two years ago, we created Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) to help give patients more control over their health care decisions and to make health care more available and affordable. This year, I am proposing to enhance HSAs to make them more widely available, valuable to consumers, and attractive to small businesses—and to make it easier for people to keep their insurance policies when they change jobs. Last year, we worked with Congress to pass a patient safety bill that will help reduce medical errors. Getting doctors and patients the information they need on the quality, cost, and effectiveness of different treatments will help Americans get the highest quality and highest value care. This year, my Administration will push to make more information about price and quality available to consumers, and move forward on these and other policies to lower the cost of health care.

Our Nation's liability laws allow too many frivolous lawsuits and raise costs for consumers and businesses. A year ago, we worked with Congress to pass bipartisan class action reform to help curb lawsuit abuse. I urge Congress in the coming year to pass other essential legal reforms, including asbestos and medical liability reforms.

Energy prices have risen in the last year, but the underlying causes of high prices are long-standing. Last year, we passed the first major energy bill in over a decade. It encourages new technologies and updates government regulations. Over time, the new law will help increase the reliability of our energy supply and the efficient use of the energy we have. We must continue to find new ways to diversify our sources of energy. I have proposed the Advanced Energy Initiative to help increase research in alternative energy sources and technology and to make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Because 95 percent of the world's customers live outside of our borders, opening international markets to our goods and services is critical for our economy. My Administration will continue to work tirelessly to open markets and knock down barriers to free and fair trade so that American farmers and workers can compete on a level playing field worldwide.

These and other issues are discussed in the 2006 Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers. This report is prepared by CEA to help policymakers understand the economic context of a variety of issues and trends as our Government makes decisions regarding our economic future. By adopting sound economic policies that build on our strengths, we will keep our economy moving forward and extend prosperity for all Americans.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 2006.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2271. A bill to clarify that individuals who receive FISA orders can challenge non-disclosure requirements, that individuals who receive national security letters are not required to disclose the name of their attorney, that libraries are not wire or electronic communication service providers unless they provide specific services, and for other purposes.

S. 2273. A bill to make available funds included in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 program for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5695. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Office of Administration and Resource Management, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports (3) relative to vacancy announcements within the Agency; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5696. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, the URL address of a report entitled "Initial Distribution System Evaluation Guide for Systems Serving <10,000 for Final Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule and the Initial Distribution System Evaluation Guidance Manual for Final Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts" received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5697. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Rule Recodification" (FRL No. 8027-4) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5698. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revised Compliance Dates for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Regulation and Effluent Limitation Guidelines for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations" (FRL No. 8031-3) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5699. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan; San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 8029-4) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5700. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Election Activity" (11 CFR Part 100) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.