

VOCA-funded victim assistance programs serve nearly 4 million crime victims each year, including victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, and drunk driving, as well as survivors of homicide victims. Our VOCA-funded compensation programs have helped hundreds of thousands of victims of violent crime.

The Crime Victims Fund is the Nation's premier vehicle for supporting victims' services. It bears repeating that the Crime Victims Fund does not receive a dime from tax revenue or appropriated funding. Instead, it is made up of criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties, and special assessments.

Since fiscal year 2000, Congress has set a cap on annual fund obligations expressly for the purpose of ensuring "that a stable level of funding will remain available for these programs in future years." The "rainy day" fund created by this spending cap has been used to make up the difference between annual deposits and distributions three times during the past 7 years.

The future of the fund is being threatened, however. After 26 years of progress, the Bush administration is proposing to rescind all amounts remaining in the fund at the end of fiscal year 2008. That would leave the fund with a balance of zero going into fiscal year 2009 and create a disastrous situation for providers of victims' services. Over the last few years, the Senate has successfully blocked several past attempts by this administration to rescind the fund's remaining balance and has supported the retention of all amounts deposited into the fund. Over the past 6 years, the Bush administration has squandered record surpluses and racked up \$8.5 trillion in Federal debt. It is wrong to try to pay for its failed fiscal policies by emptying out the Crime Victims Fund. These resources are appropriately set aside to assist victims of crime.

In order to preserve the fund once again, Senator CRAPO and I, joined by more than a dozen other Senators are sending a letter this week to the Senate Appropriations Committee asking that the committee oppose the administration's proposal to empty the Crime Victims Fund and, instead, permit those amounts to remain in the fund, in accordance with law, to be used for the important programs and services needed by crime victims.

Also, last week the Vermont Department of Corrections received a \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to implement a Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification, SAVIN, system to provide timely notifications to crime victims who request it. Programs like these give crime victims some peace of mind and facilitate communication among the courts and corrections and other law enforcement officials.

We need to renew our national commitment to crime victims. The Senate can help by recognizing the importance

of the Crime Victims Fund and supporting its essential role in helping crime victims and their families meet critical expenses, recover from the horrific crimes they endured, and move forward with their lives. I urge Senators on both sides of the aisle to honor our longstanding commitment to crime victims by working together to commemorate victims of crime and to preserve the Crime Victims Fund.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING DR. HOWARD-YANA SHAPIRO

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, I wish to congratulate Dr. Howard-Yana Shapiro, who will receive the Organic Leadership Award on May 7, 2007. The award is bestowed annually by the Organic Trade Association on individuals who have demonstrated leadership and vision in furthering the goals of organic agriculture.

Dr. Shapiro has had a very impressive career in organic agriculture, having been involved with sustainable agricultural and agroforestry systems, plant genetics, and food production systems for over 35 years. He is best known as the principal author of "Gardening for the Future of the Earth," which shows how to "create natural bounty in your own backyard and help save the planet one seed at a time."

During his long and diverse career, Dr. Shapiro has been a community gardening activist, a university professor for 15 years, twice a Fulbright Scholar, twice a Ford Foundation Fellow, and winner of the National Endowment for the Humanities Award. He has worked with indigenous communities, non-governmental organizations, governmental agencies, and private institutions throughout the world, including Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Forest Service, ICRAF, The World Agroforestry Centre, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, and many other national and regional agricultural institutions in Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Senegal, South Africa, Vietnam, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Australia.

Most recently, Dr. Shapiro has held a leadership role in Seeds of Change, the largest certified organic seed company in the country. Located along the Rio Grande in El Guique, NM, Seeds of Change, a division of Mars, Incorporated, is a pioneering cultivator of organically grown seeds for home and market growers, a leader in the organic foods industry, and a valued resource for organic farmers. Dr. Shapiro has been dedicated to Seeds of Change since its inception and was a key figure during the launching of the Seeds of Change 100 percent certified organic food line in the United States, Europe, Australia, and Japan.

I am proud that New Mexico is home to Seeds of Change and that the company, and organic agriculture as an industry, has been so well served by the expertise and vision of Dr. Shapiro throughout its growth. Again, I congratulate Dr. Howard-Yana Shapiro for receiving the Organic Trade Association's highest honor. I thank him for his commitment to furthering organic agriculture around the world, and I wish him continued success in the years ahead.●

MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE

• Mr. CRAIG. Madam President, today with great pride I honor Mountain Home Air Force Base for their recent achievement of winning the Commander in Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence for an Air Force base. Over 85 Active-Duty Air Force installations competed this year for the award, and I was extremely pleased to get word that Idaho's own Air Force base came out the winner.

Over the years, I have worked very closely with the different wing commanders at Mountain Home Air Force Base to ensure that their installation will provide our soldiers with the best living conditions and optimal training space to ensure that should they be called to duty, they would be fully prepared. I know firsthand that the work being done both at home and abroad by our airmen and soldiers at Mountain Home Air Force Base is among the best our military can offer.

Over 500 airmen and crew from Mountain Home Air Force Base are currently deployed in Afghanistan in support of our joint mission with NATO to provide freedom and security from terrorist, and they are serving with great courage and determination. I know that their fellow servicemembers, the Idaho delegation, and all of Idaho await their return and they will be greeted with a hero's welcome. Although they are not in Idaho to celebrate this very prestigious honor from the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the Commander in Chief, I know that their contributions greatly aided in Mountain Home Air Force Base receiving this award.

COL Tony Rock, wing commander of the 366 Fighting Wing at Mountain Home Air Force Base, expressed his pride of winning this award but gave the credit to the 4,000-plus men and women who operate the base on a daily basis. Colonel Rock was quoted as saying, "This award validates the hard work, commitment and pride of all our Gunfighters who work together to make Mountain Home the best base in the Air Force. I am simultaneously humbled and awed to be part of this team and lead our Gunfighters as we continue to prove we are the premier combat wing in the entire Air Force."

I couldn't agree more with Colonel Rock's statement.

Again, I would like to extend the appreciation and congratulations of myself and all of Idaho to the soldiers and

civilians at Mountain Home Air Force Base for their incredible work serving and protecting our Nation.●

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. KERRY. Madam President, today I honor the distinguished 70-year history of the National Small Business Association. This member-driven organization continues to take the lead on important issues facing small businesses and is the oldest small business advocacy group in the United States. It is especially fitting that we recognize this organization during National Small Business Week.

The NSBA can trace its founding back to DeWitt M. Emery, a determined small business owner struggling to keep his business running in the midst of the Great Depression. As owner of the Monroe Letterhead Corporation in Akron, OH, Mr. Emery labored to keep his small business running while feeling burdened by the increasing cost of doing business—including higher material costs and wages.

Frustrated by the lack of support for small businesses in national politics, and inspired by an idea to make his and his peers' voices heard, Mr. Emery founded the National Small Business Men's Association on November 13, 1937. One hundred sixty small business owners out of 200 who received Mr. Emery's recruitment letter joined the organization that now boasts a reach of over 150,000 small businesses.

In keeping with the organization's responsiveness to the ever-changing small business climate, and to be more inclusive of the growing number of women small business owners, the group changed its name in 1962 to the National Small Business Association.

In 1986, the organization changed its name again to National Small Business United when it joined with Small Business United, or SBU, a rival organization that started 5 years earlier. SBU and its member groups, such as the Smaller Business Association of New England, or SBANE, helped establish the current organization's vast network of small business affiliates. After the merger, the new organization became responsible for running the SBANE-created Washington Presentation. In addition to SBANE, some of the other NSBA affiliates are the Arizona Small Business Association, the Small Business Association of Michigan, Missouri Merchants and Manufacturers Association, SMC Business Councils, Council of Smaller Enterprises and Small Business California. Thanks to its strong affiliates NSBA has emerged as a vibrant grassroots organization.

In 2003, the oldest small business advocacy group changed its name back to the National Small Business Association. Through its name changes and merger, the organization's commitment to representing small business owners has been unwavering, and to-

day's group boasts a wide variety of members from carpenters to investors, from manufacturers to grocers. NSBA truly represents the diversity of our Nation's small businesses. As chairman of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I work with NSBA's members in my State and across the Nation, welcoming their insights and unique perspective.

I find it important to note that today's small business owners struggle with some of the same issues that plagued Mr. Emery in 1937, and many new issues. From access to capital to health care, we will continue to work with small businesses as they strive to maintain and grow their firms—and as they make a significant contribution to our economy. Through the efforts of advocacy groups like the NSBA working with us to pass legislation, we have been able to assist thousands of determined small business owners like Mr. Emery. The tireless work of the NSBA is testament to the resolve and spirit of small business owners, and I am gratified that the current organization leads the charge on many important issues. I invite the Senate to join me in honoring NSBA and its distinguished history of nonpartisan work on behalf of small businesses.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1257. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide shareholders with an advisory vote on executive compensation.

H.R. 1495. An act to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Speaker removes Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, as a conferee and appoints Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, to fill the vacancy thereon, on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1591) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. WELLER of Illinois, Mr. DREIER of California, Mr. MACK of Florida, and Mr. FORTUNO of Puerto Rico.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d, clause 10 of rule 1, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Speaker appoints

the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group: Mr. MANZULLO of Illinois, Mr. McCOTTER of Michigan, Mr. STEARNS of Florida, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 3:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1003. An act to amend the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 to reauthorize the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

H.R. 1130. An act to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to extend the authority to withhold from public availability a financial disclosure report filed by an individual who is a judicial officer or judicial employee, to the extent necessary to protect the safety of the individual or a family member of that individual, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 865. An act to grant rights-of-way for electric transmission lines over certain Native allotments in the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1257. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide shareholders with an advisory vote on executive compensation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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-1593. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army that is identified as being case number 04-07; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-1594. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Donald J. Wetekam, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1595. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Albert M. Calland III, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1596. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" (72 FR 17426) received on April 18, 2007; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.