

that requires twice as much energy as the United States to produce each dollar of economic growth is problematic.

At the same time, China needs to find cleaner sources of energy. Sixteen of the twenty cities with the worst air in the world are in China, and China is poised to overtake the United States in greenhouse gas emissions in 2 to 3 years. Just this week, a new report found that worldwide carbon dioxide levels have accelerated rapidly since 2000, in part because of China's reliance on coal.

China should rely on international energy markets to provide its oil and gas imports and work with the United States and others to develop common approaches to energy supplies and security. To continue seeking privileged arrangements with countries such as Sudan and Iran—states that commit gross human rights violations and that threaten to develop weapons of mass destruction—is to dramatically complicate efforts of the international community to address these questions and, in effect, to ratify these deeply troubling practices.

I hope Treasury Secretary Paulson can persuade the Chinese to change their practices. We will all be better off with a China whose emergence strengthens the international system rather than disrupts it.

China's economic growth is a good thing for China's 1.3 billion people, and can be a good thing for the United States. China is increasingly a constructive participant in the international system, and that trend should be supported and encouraged. But China cannot expect the United States and its overseas partners to tolerate unfair practices and glaring imbalances triggered by its rise. China needs to take steps that not only benefit its people but sustain the international system from which China itself benefits so greatly.

NATIONAL VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, when the Congress passed Public Law 106-50 in 1999, it was impossible to imagine the positive impact it would have on all veterans and, in particular, all those young men and women now returning from active duty in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Veterans Corporation, TVC, is a not-for-profit organization that amplifies business opportunities and the tools our veterans need to start and grow their businesses. Through unparalleled public and private sector business, and strategic partnerships with the U.S. Department of Defense, the Veterans Affairs Administration, the Small Business Administration, and the U.S. Department of Labor, veterans have the three main ingredients for success: access to capital; access to bonding, and the important educational, mentorship and program case work followup.

Today, more than ever, our Nation's veterans present an opportunity for en-

trepreneurship. Entrepreneurship based on the skills and practiced discipline they embraced as part of their service to our Nation. Membership in TVC remains free to our veterans because the Congress invested wisely in this organization.

In partnership with the Surety and Fidelity Association of America, SFAA, we have a 50-State surety bonding program that includes a comprehensive education curriculum and a three-step process for veterans to secure the bonding they need on government contracts. Bonding is critical to service-disabled veteran entrepreneurs and to the Federal Government if the 3-percent goal, mandated by the President's Executive Order, is to be achieved. TVC's partnership with SFAA provides a complete solution to the mandate by fulfilling the needs for identification and qualification of service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, along with casework followup as veteran entrepreneurs experience growth in their businesses.

Access to capital for both business start-up and infusion growth remains the number one need of veteran entrepreneurs. To address this issue, TVC has formed a strategic partnership with the National Economic Opportunity Fund, NEOF. Through this partnership, TVC is able to assist veterans in obtaining micro-loans of \$500 to \$25,000 through ACCION USA. PNC Bank has also begun accepting referrals from TVC and has already funded one veteran-owned business. In addition, TVC is in the process of finalizing partnerships with several banking institutions to provide veterans with larger loan programs for their increasing business needs.

TVC's leadership has made extraordinary progress in addressing the broad scope of issues facing veteran entrepreneurs. While embracing the existing community networks of the Small Business Development Centers, the Department of Labor's One Stop Centers, and the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, PTAC, TVC has been able to develop programs that complement and enhance the resources already available to current and aspiring business owners. By doing so, TVC is now providing the programs and services most needed by the veteran community, including access to capital and bonding, and is more effectively meeting the real needs of veteran entrepreneurs.

TVC's strength is in its ability to bring together the best in public and private entities to leverage scarce federal dollars in effectively and efficiently assisting veterans, service-disabled veterans, and members of the National Guard and Reserves, who want to start or promote growth in small businesses. By benefiting from the strong resources already available from national business networks, and by eliminating duplication of efforts through strategic partnerships, TVC has the programming and the capacity

to serve the needs of all veterans in 50 States.

TVC is working for our Nation's veterans and we have an obligation to continue funding programs that respond to all business entrepreneurial needs. We must build a solid transition from active military service to veterans' entrepreneurship. I am confident TVC is that investment.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WE THE PEOPLE HONORABLE MENTION

• Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Hamilton Southeastern High School's We the People class on receiving an Honorable Mention at the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution national competition held April 28 to 30 in Washington, DC. I am pleased that the members of the Hamilton Southeastern High School We the People class were among the 1,200 students from across the country who participated in this important event specifically designed to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.

I join family, friends, and the entire Hamilton Southeastern High School community in recognizing the hard work and dedication of the following members of the Hamilton Southeastern High School We the People class: Ben Anderson, Lauren Bowser, Austin Brady, Kristin Buckingham, Jesse Hawkins, Kirk Higgins, Chris Hill, Tiernan Kane, Nika Kim, Ryan Landry, Julie Lux, Rachel Morris, Jeff Neuffer, David Ostendorf, Ryan Puckett, Taylor Schueth, Matt Stein, Amy Thomas, Aleks Vitolins, and Edward Wolenty. I also wish to commend Jill Baisinger, the teacher of the class, who committed her time and talent to prepare the students for the national competition.

The success of the Indiana We the People program is also attributed to the hard work of Stan Harris, the State coordinator, and Lisa Hayes, the district coordinator, who are among those responsible for implementing this program in our state.

The We the People national competition is a 3-day academic competition that simulates a congressional hearing in which the students "testify" before a panel of judges on constitutional topics. Students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles as they evaluate and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues.

The We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education through congressional appropriations. I am proud to note that between 2003 and 2006, Indiana had 176,653 students participate in the programs offered through the Center for Civic Education, with 8,439,873 participating nationally. •

CONGRATULATING CAITLIN SNARING

• Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I congratulate Caitlin Snaring, a bright young woman from my home State of Washington. Today, she won the National Geographic Bee, a competition that starts with nearly 5 million students each year. Caitlin is from Redmond, WA, and this was her second time representing our State in the national competition held in Washington, DC.

On Monday, Caitlin and I sat near each other on the plane flight from Seattle to Washington, DC. While everyone else was reading magazines or watching a movie, Caitlin was studying her notebooks and preparing for the competition. I had a chance to talk with her, and I could see that she was really determined and focused. I remember thinking to myself, "She's going places."

After her victory today, I called her and said: "Caitlin, I can tell that when you decide what you're going to be and what you want to do, you are going to achieve any dream you have." And I really believe that.

Caitlin won a \$25,000 college scholarship. I understand that she is the second girl to win the geographic bee since the competition started in 1989 and the fifth winner from Washington State. In fact, Washington has produced more national winners than any other State.

I want to congratulate Caitlin, her family, and friends on this great achievement and on the wonderful example she has set for young people in Washington State and around the country.●

HONORING OAK ISLAND SEAFOOD, INC.

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I wish today to recognize for the week of May 20 an outstanding small business from my home State of Maine that will on May 31 receive the Maine Exporter of the Year Award for 2007 from the Maine International Trade Center. Oak Island Seafood, Inc., of Rockland, MA is a scallop processing company. In addition to providing quality seafood products to U.S. retailers, Oak Island Seafood has expanded to include Europe and Asia in its distribution network. Incredibly, 70 percent of its finished product is exported to other countries, most notably to nations within the European Union. Clearly, Oak Island Seafood is a Maine company that has wide, international reach.

Oak Island Seafood, founded in 1995, has expanded to serve many corners of the globe over the past 12 years, while simultaneously maintaining its status as a unique small business. The company employs roughly 30 year-round employees in Rockland, an historic seaport community in Maine's well-known midcoast region where Penobscot Bay converges with the Atlantic

Ocean. Their use of state-of-the-art equipment to deliver Maine seafood to the rest of the world exemplifies the innovation that small businesses can use to do exceptional things.

With Maine's 5,500 miles of coastline, its fishing and seafood industries are clearly vital to the State's economy. And while everyone knows Maine for its lobster—which I would argue is the best—Maine's fruitful portion of the Atlantic Ocean and our many waterways provide a variety of delicious and often healthy fish and shellfish, including salmon, shrimp, and scallops. Oak Island Seafood's commitment to providing Maine seafood to not only the region but also to the rest of the world is remarkable. As fish and other fresh and frozen seafood products comprise Maine's No. 4 export industry, it is crucial that we find ways to continue augmenting the work that Oak Island Seafood and other companies do in seeking foreign markets to showcase Maine seafood. Equally necessary, we need to do all that we can to protect and preserve our seafaring families and the crucial work they undertake.

The Maine International Trade Center, which is presenting the Maine Exporter of the Year award to Oak Island Seafood, is Maine's small business link to the rest of the world. It is a public-private partnership between the State of Maine and its businesses. The center's goal is to increase international trade in Maine and in particular to assist Maine's businesses in exporting goods and services. Clearly it sees in Oak Island Seafood the entrepreneurial spirit and innovation that make Maine's small businesses so unique and successful.

I again congratulate Oak Island Seafood on being recognized Maine Exporter of the Year and wish them well. The award, which will be presented to them on Thursday, May 31, at the 27th annual Maine International Trade Day, is truly something of which we can and should all be proud.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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 and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:57 a.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. 1525. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to discourage spyware, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1615. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for aiming laser pointer at airplanes, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1722. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 601 Banyan Trail in Boca Raton, Florida, as the "Leonard W. Herman Post Office".

H.R. 2264. An act to amend the Sherman Act to make oil-producing and exporting cartels illegal.

H.R. 2399. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act and title 18, United States Code, to combat the crime of alien smuggling and related activities, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 128. Concurrent resolution authorizing the printing of a commemorative document memory of the late President of the United States, Gerald Rudolph Ford.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 214. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to preserve the independence of United States attorneys.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, with amendments, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 1104. An act to increase the number of Iraqi and Afghani translators and interpreters who may be admitted to the United States as special immigrants.

At 4:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4355(a), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy: Mr. Hinchey of New York, Mr. Hall of New York, Mr. McHugh of New York, and Mr. Tiahrt of Kansas.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1525. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to discourage spyware, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1615. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for aiming laser pointers at airplanes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1722. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 601 Banyan Trail in Boca Raton, Florida, as the "Leonard W. Herman Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2399. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act and title 18, United States Code, to combat the crime of alien smuggling and related activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.