

will serve to minimize the use of contract bundling and consolidation of contracts by the Federal Government, and increase the ability of small businesses to fairly compete for such contracts through a host of key improvements, including allowing small businesses to join together in teams to bid on certain procurement opportunities. Additional requirements will help to ensure prompt payment from prime contractors to subcontractors, and make it easier for the Federal government to prosecute businesses who fraudulently identify themselves as small companies.

Since the mid-1990s, with the enactment of acquisition streamlining reforms and the downsizing of the Federal procurement workforce, small businesses have faced a litany of hurdles that have deprived them of Federal contracting dollars. One such impediment is contract bundling which takes contracting opportunities out of the hands of deserving small businesses by grouping numerous small contracts and bundling them into one large award. Ill-equipped to manage the demands of these consolidated awards due to a lack of resources, small business owners again find themselves crowded out of the Federal contracting process. Consequently, the bipartisan measure we are introducing reflects the recommendations made by the Government Accountability Office, GAO, to impose stricter reviews and more comprehensive reporting of bundled contracts, encourages small business teaming to bid on larger contracts, and promotes Federal agency publishing and use of best practices. Additional obstacles to successful small business contracting include "bait and switch" tactics used by prime contractors who use small firms in developing bids but do not subcontract with them once a contract has been awarded. Our bill will address this concern as well as other ongoing problems such as large businesses posing as small businesses, flawed reporting data, and agencies who fail to meet their small business contracting goals.

As ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am further dismayed by the myriad ways that government agencies have time and again egregiously failed to meet the vast majority of their small business statutory "goaling" requirements. It is unconscionable that the statutory goal for only one category of small business—small disadvantaged businesses—has been met, and that goals for the three other programs HUBZones, women-owned small businesses, and service-disabled veterans-owned businesses—have never been achieved.

Consider that, in 2007, small businesses were eligible for \$378 billion in Federal contracting awards, yet received only \$83 billion. This blatant failure to utilize small businesses, thus preventing them to secure their fair share of Federal contracting dollars,

has resulted in firms losing billions of dollars in contracting opportunities. But 23 percent is only a base goal. We must strive to exceed it, not just meet it.

In the last 2 years alone, the Small Business Committee has held numerous hearings and roundtables to identify and explain small business' contracting concerns. In addition, the GAO and the Small Business Administration's, SBA, inspector general have issued multiple reports addressing small business Federal contracting deficiencies. Our legislation builds on the contracting provisions of previous Small Business Committee contracting bills by endowing the SBA with additional tools to meet the demands of an ever-changing 21st century contracting environment.

That said, I am greatly encouraged by the latest statistics relating to Federal contracting dollars awarded to small businesses from the funds appropriated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA. Preliminary reports show that as of February 1, 2010, small businesses have received over 29 percent of the ARRA Federal contracting dollars, well exceeding the imposed 23 percent statutory goal. This begs the question, if the Federal Government can not only meet but exceed these requirements for the Recovery Act, why can't these goals be met year in and year out? The simple answer is they can. I am hopeful this administration will make a conscious effort to reverse the government-wide failure to meet small business goals on a consistent basis.

I am confident that this legislation will result in the changes necessary to reduce fraud and waste while paving the way for the Federal Government to maximize the use of America's innovative small businesses in the contracting arena. Again, I want to recognize Senator LANDRIEU for her leadership in this matter and for her continuing commitment to the small business community.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE ALBANY AREA YMCA

• Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the Albany Area YMCA on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

On October 25, 1909, 100 businessmen met at the New Albany Hotel for the purpose of establishing and building a YMCA in Albany. Five days later, the campaign, led by Judge F.F. Putney, was successful in raising \$30,000.

Just 1 year later, the vision became a reality, and the first YMCA building in Albany opened its doors at the corner of Pine and Jefferson.

Since its inception in 1910, the Albany Area YMCA has been an important part of life for residents of southwest Georgia.

Just last year, more than 30,000 people were involved in the YMCA, wheth-

er it was coaching baseball, participating in the 5K runs or volunteering at the food drives.

I have been to the Albany Area YMCA several times and I am always impressed by the new community initiatives and programs taking place there.

The YMCA has always been committed to challenging boys and girls to think beyond themselves and to set goals—and it is this focus on character development that has helped strengthen the community.

As a former volunteer and past president of the Moultrie YMCA, I have a special appreciation for the great work the volunteers are doing. And they ought to be commended for their tremendous efforts.

For 100 years, YMCA volunteers have helped children develop themselves as honest, respectful, caring and responsible individuals.

Additionally, I would be remiss if I did not mention Dave Wallace, who has made a tremendous impact on the Albany Area YMCA while serving as the executive director.

I have had the good fortune of knowing Dave for several years. The YMCA has flourished under his leadership—and I have no doubt he has touched many lives throughout his tenure there.

Over the years, the Albany Area YMCA has relocated, expanded and changed in many aspects, but it has never steered away from its mission "to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all."

Once again, I would like to offer my congratulations and appreciation to the Albany Area YMCA on this very special occasion.●

RECOGNIZING THE NORRIS STEVENS FAMILY

• Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate the Norris Stevens family for being named the Drew County Farm Family of the Year for 2009.

I have felt a long kinship with Drew County, and I am grateful for the friendships I have made there. I have many fond memories visiting the Drew County Courthouse, where my southern Arkansas field office was located when I was first elected to the U.S. Senate.

As a seventh-generation Arkansan and farmer's daughter, and as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I understand firsthand and appreciate the hard work and contributions of our farm families. Agriculture is the backbone of Arkansas's economy, creating more than 270,000 jobs in the State and providing \$9.1 billion in wages and salaries. In total, agriculture contributes roughly \$15.9 billion to the Arkansas economy each year.

Mr. President, our farm families are critical to our Nation's economic stability. We must work to continue the farm family tradition, so families such

as the Stevens family are able to maintain their livelihoods and continue to help provide the safe, abundant, and affordable food supply that feeds our own country and the world and that is essential to our own economic stability.

I salute the Stevens and all Arkansas farm families for their hard work and dedication.●

RECOGNIZING SHAY AND SHERRIE GILLESPIE

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate Shay and Sherrie Gillespie of Monticello as the 2009 Man and Woman of the Year, as named by the Monticello-Drew County Chamber of Commerce and Monticello Economic Development Commission.

I have felt a long kinship to Monticello, and I am grateful for the friendships I have made there. I have many fond memories visiting the Drew County Courthouse, where my southern Arkansas field office was located when I was first elected to the U.S. Senate.

Monticello is a community with a great spirit of volunteerism and caring, as evidenced by the Gillespies. Owners of Head of the Class Childcare and Learning Center, the Gillespies are known throughout the community for their work with youth, their church and community activities, and their service on the Monticello City Council. Sherrie is a current city alderman and Shay is a former alderman.

According to those who know her best, Sherrie is quick to open up her home to the youth in her church and community, using her personal finances to help feed senior citizens and provide clothing for the needy. She was instrumental in forming a community action organization that provides tutoring to African-American students to help them make the most of their future.

Mr. President, we should all embrace the spirit of service and volunteerism on display by these deserving individuals. I send my heartfelt congratulations to both Shay and Sherrie.●

RECOGNIZING SEAARK MARINE AND RAY'S RESTAURANT

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I proudly join all Monticello residents to congratulate SeaArk Marine and Ray's Restaurant as the Monticello-Drew County Industry and Business of the Year, respectively, as named by the Chamber of Commerce and Monticello Economic Development Commission.

I have felt a long kinship to Monticello, and I am grateful for the friendships I have made there. I have many fond memories visiting the Drew County Courthouse, where my southern Arkansas field office was located when I was first elected to the U.S. Senate.

Industry of the Year SeaArk Marine is one of the Nation's leading commercial and military boat builders. Known for its commitment to customers and quality, SeaArk has been under the

same ownership for over 51 years, with many of their key craftspeople employed for more than 30 years.

Business of the Year Ray's has been a local icon since 1951, when the restaurant first began serving burgers at what was then known as C.L. and Ruth Ray's Anchor Drive In on Hyatt Street. Ray's now serves a diverse menu of Arkansas favorites, including burgers, catfish and hickory-smoked barbeque.

Mr. President, I salute these Arkansas businesses for their hard work and dedication in serving our State.●

RECOGNIZING THE TONGUE POINT JOB CORPS CENTER

● Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I recognize Tongue Point's 45 years of tireless dedication to helping Oregonians improve the quality of their lives. In 1965, the Tongue Point Job Corps Center began teaching young people the skills to become employable and independent. Since then, the center has remained devoted to its mission of helping its graduates find work or pursue additional education. Last year, an amazing 90 percent of Job Corps graduates found work, enrolled in higher education programs, or enlisted in the military.

During these tough economic times, Tongue Point's contribution to our communities helps strengthen the quality of our workforce and ensures that those who want to succeed can. The center provides 16- to 24-year-olds with technical and academic training at no cost to the student, guaranteeing a safe and encouraging space for professional advancement.

In recognition of Tongue Point's 45th birthday, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the work they have done helping young Oregonians find a career path. This center, like all Job Corps Centers nationwide, provides a tremendous service to our Nation, and I wish it all the best in the years to come.●

REMEMBERING COLONEL JACK PITCHFORD

● Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, on December 2, 2009, retired Air Force COL Jack Pitchford died at the age of 82 after a long battle with a brain tumor. The Natchez, MS, native was a decorated fighter pilot, a survivor of the Hanoi Hilton, and a true hero. Our country will miss him.

John Joseph Pitchford was born in 1926 in Natchez. The second of 12 children and the eldest boy, Pitchford enlisted in the Army Air Corps after graduating from high school in 1944. He served as an aircraft and engine mechanic through the end of World War II.

He then attended Louisiana State University from 1949 to 1952, graduating with a bachelor of science degree in forestry and receiving a Reserve Officer Training Corps commission in the Air Force. After entering

pilot training in August 1952 at Bartow Air Force Base, Pitchford went on to receive his wings in September 1953.

As the war in Vietnam escalated, Pitchford volunteered for the Wild Weasel program, tasked with flying low-altitude missions to hunt and destroy surface-to-air missiles. On December 20, 1965, during his third combat mission of the war, Colonel Pitchford's F-100F Super Sabre aircraft was hit by a North Vietnamese missile. He suffered a dislocated right shoulder during his ejection from the aircraft and three gunshot wounds to his right arm when his captors opened fire. Colonel Pitchford was the first Wild Weasel to be taken prisoner in Vietnam. He spent the next 7 years in various North Vietnamese prisoner-of-war camps, including the infamous Hanoi Hilton. After 373 weeks of hellish captivity and torture, Colonel Pitchford was finally released on February 12, 1973.

In recognition of his tremendous service and sacrifice, Colonel Pitchford was awarded the Purple Heart, the Silver Star, and Legion of Merit. Upon retirement from the Air Force, he returned to Natchez where he became an active member of the community. In discussing his time as a POW, Colonel Pitchford once said:

The one thing I would like to convey to the American people is that no matter what happens in one's lifetime, one must never lose faith in the United States of America. Ours is a great country indeed. We must continue to rededicate ourselves to the principles that have made it great. I, as a POW, was maintained by my faith in God, country and by the hardships much worse than my own that were endured by many of my fellow POWs.

I recently returned from Afghanistan. Many of the qualities Jack Pitchford exhibited in his life can be seen in our men and women who are serving our country there today. Their service and sacrifice ensures that Jack Pitchford's legacy will live on.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

(The nomination received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13396 ON FEBRUARY 7, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—PM 44

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message