

HONORING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 469, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 469) honoring the entrepreneurial spirit of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, which begins on May 20, 2012.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. LANDRIEU. We have submitted a resolution, because it is Small Business Week, on behalf of myself and Senator SNOWE, Senator PRYOR, Senator LIEBERMAN, Senator ENZI, Senator KERRY, Senator BROWN, Senator CANTWELL, Senator AYOTTE, Senator RISCH, Senator CARDIN, and Senator HAGAN, a very good representation of our Small Business Committee and others that submitted a resolution this week, again, as we have done every year since 1953. We have done so every year since 1953 to recognize this week, or 1 week in the year, as Small Business Week. So that is what our resolution, which was submitted earlier today, does.

I hope Leaders MCCONNELL and REID will take up this resolution and pass it so we can honor the 28 million small businesses that exist today in America. We have been doing everything we can, and I am very proud, as the chairman of the Small Business Committee, that we have worked in a bipartisan fashion for the most part trying to give our businesses, first of all, the recognition that 9 out of 10 new jobs created were created by a small number, a very small number, of small businesses that are fast growing. They are the new job creators. These are the businesses that are going to be putting this recession behind us. These are the businesses that are innovating and adapting and changing and being more strategic and smarter, looking for those opportunities in all areas and in all geographic parts of our Nation.

Over the past few months my committee has held three very special roundtables to explore strategies, tools, and methods to strengthen what I like to call the ecosystem of entrepreneurship. Much like a rain forest or desert or much like the ocean itself, that is an environment where many creatures or organisms have to live and interact. The same is true of our financial ecosystem, the political ecosystem. Society itself is an ecosystem where small businesses have to function.

In order for them to be healthy, there have to be the right nutrients, if you will, present. So we have explored in our committee what—we know the United States does this well. We do it better than any country on Earth. That is one of the great strengths of

America; we foster that entrepreneurship, free but fair markets, well regulated, not too lightly, not too heavily. Sometimes we go a little overboard and we need to pull back. Sometimes we do not regulate enough and we need to step up. But that is what we have been exploring.

In fact, we have broken our roundtables into domains: Do our small businesses have enough access to capital? Do our small businesses truly have access to grow global markets? What did we learn this year? We learned that less than 12 percent of all small businesses in America export. With the market growing overseas and only the small percentage of the world market being now in the United States—we were at one time the biggest market, when China was closed, when communism was reigning in the Soviet Union, and the Arab world was in darkness. I mean the market was in the United States.

But that is no longer the case, as these countries and areas have emerged and created markets and opportunities of their own.

So one thing we learned is that the ecosystem needs to be stronger by helping small businesses to export. They do not have the back office or the expertise of 10 accountants and a Chinese specialist and a South American specialist. But we can, by being smart, help. Through the Commerce Department, the Small Business Administration, or maybe even through some of our research and development arms of some of our departments, we can be the back office for small businesses.

We are excited about what is happening there. So access to capital, access to global markets, access to counseling, mentoring, technical assistance and education. I have had so many small businesses come before our committee and say: You know, Senator, getting the loan from the bank was the first step. But if so-and-so had not shown up in my office from the Score Chapter or if I could not have reached out to my local university or my small business center there, I would never have been able to make it because they told me what to do to save me from making a fatal mistake and got me on my way or helped me to rethink my market during the recession.

How one lady put it before our committee, they helped her remarketer her business so now it is growing faster than ever. I think also access to strategic partnerships is important. No man is an island. We do not accomplish anything by ourselves in the world. That is true of individuals, that is true of small businesses. So we asked ourselves: Who are the partners, strategic partners for small businesses? Cities are doing some creative things.

Madam President, you were a county executive. You know the things you did as a county executive. Your reputation is well known in that regard.

States can be strategic partners to their small businesses. We explored

those opportunities. Access to government contracting—you know, the Federal Government, state governments, and local governments are some of the biggest spenders and biggest businesses—if they were businesses, which they are not; there are clear differences—but if we were a business, the Federal Government would be the largest business in the world. It buys more goods and services than others. We do not have to do all of that just with the big businesses such as IBM, GE, ExxonMobil. We can contract with small businesses. It takes a little more time, takes a little more energy, takes a little bit different approach, but we most certainly can buy some of the things we need from the small business right down the street.

So we are shaping policies to do that. Senator CARDIN from Maryland has been particularly aggressive when it comes to contracting with minority and women-owned businesses, which make up a significant and growing area. It is very exciting as more women enter not just the workforce but decide they want their flexibility. They want to set their own hours. They want to be their own bosses. They want to establish businesses that allow them to also raise children at home, to be there when their kids need them. So they find that small businesses operating out of their homes are the answer to that dilemma. We want to give them access to government contracting when, of course, they are capable and provide the right price.

One of the big areas that we looked at is access to human capital. I think you probably heard, Madam President, many of our businesses saying: Why is it that we are bringing in some of the smartest people in the world, educating them at our universities, to where they are getting master's degrees and Ph.D.s in engineering, math, and science, and then we send them back to the country they came from so they can create businesses to compete against us? Why don't we extend visa privileges to these master's and Ph.D. candidates?

That is a good question, and we have bills to answer that. We also want to develop a skilled workforce in America. Access to human capital is what small businesses need to grow and to expand.

Finally, we need access to flexible regulation and smart tax policy. We are never going to live in a world where we do not pay taxes. It is just the nature of what we have to do to keep our government running and operating, with a government that serves the people—by the people, for the people.

But our taxes should not be too heavy, too burdensome, and our regulatory regime should not be either too light or too onerous. It should be just right. But it is hard to get that just-right approach. We are working at it every day. Senator SNOWE has been working on regulatory reform. Senator WARNER has been working very hard on regulatory reform—and other Members of this body.

The bottom line is that this is Small Business Week. We want to honor the small businesses that are helping us put this recession in the rearview mirror. I want to ask the leadership to pass this resolution—a very straightforward, noncontroversial resolution by both Democrats and Republicans, recognizing this is Small Business Week.

I also wanted to bring to the attention of the body the conclusion, basically, of the three roundtables we have held and thank the Members who attended. We had good attendance, and we gleaned some excellent ideas about the brackets I have outlined today, and have been in the process of filing over the last week, and throughout this week, individual bills that reflect what we have learned in these roundtables. We have taken those ideas and turned them into legislation.

I am happy to say there is not going to be a big pricetag on this legislation. It is not just throwing money at the problem, but we do need additional resources. It is sharpening things, reforming some of our strategies, laws, rules, and regulations on the books, and encouraging, by granting some competitive grants, some of these strategic partnerships with counties, cities, and States. I look forward to seeing how this body responds to some of the new pieces of legislation we put out. I look forward to working with my colleagues through this week and the month of May, through the summer, and into the election, to keep focused on the No. 1 issue on the minds of the American people, which is jobs, economic hope, and economic opportunity for themselves and their families. Tom Friedman has been saying all over the world that when kids graduate from college, it is not a job they are looking for. They may not be able to find the job they are looking for. They need to create the job they want. They need to build a business, build a better mousetrap, think about a different way of delivering a product or a service or think about a business that is selling to a domestic market and taking it global. With technology and opportunities, many young people are doing just that.

In conclusion, I had the wonderful opportunity on Friday to be involved and took the opportunity Saturday morning to stop in at the Cambridge Innovation Center, the granddaddy of all small business incubators. It is across the street from MIT, Microsoft, and Google. There were some young and exciting college students in the building. You could either rent a cubicle that looked like a kindergarten with your name on it to get in the building or you could rent a space such as a bullpen where you could work or rent your own cubicle or private office; and thousands, literally, of young people were moving into that building—actually people of all ages, even retired executives who decided, I have always wanted to try out my idea, so let's see if I can get my business started. Even

on a Saturday—and it was very quiet—I could feel the energy in that building, although it was virtually empty.

I have walked through incubators in New Orleans, and I hope the occupant of the chair did, and helped to create them in Delaware. That is what it is going to take, a strategic partnership between government and the private sector, letting the private sector do what they do best, but letting government do what it does best. That was a perfect example of what I saw in terms of taking research dollars that are spent at MIT, moving them out to the universities, and then on to these ideas, where they are literally being tested and commercialized to get out into the market to create wealth and opportunity for the United States and the world.

I am happy to be chair of the Small Business Committee. For small business and economic growth, it is National Small Business Week. I thank all the groups helping us to celebrate this week and, most important, I thank the entrepreneurs who literally risk everything to create their dreams and bring economic prosperity not just to themselves and their family business but to a Nation that relies on them every day. We want to make that burden lighter. I want to help them in every way we can in our committee in Washington and throughout our States, counties, and cities, and be the partner they can rely on to get the job done.

Madam President, I don't see anyone else on the floor. I urge my colleagues to adopt our resolution. I thank all of us who will be speaking today and this week on Small Business Week.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, it is my understanding we are ready to act on this resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 469) was agreed to.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I now ask that we act on the preamble.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the preamble.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 469

Whereas the approximately 27,500,000 small business concerns in the United States are the driving force behind the Nation's economy, creating 2 out of every 3 new jobs and generating more than 50 percent of the Nation's non-farm gross domestic product;

Whereas small businesses are the driving force behind the economic recovery of the United States;

Whereas small businesses represent 99.7 percent of employer firms in the United States;

Whereas small business concerns are the Nation's innovators, serving to advance technology and productivity;

Whereas small business concerns represent 97.5 percent of all exporters and produce 31 percent of exported goods;

Whereas Congress established the Small Business Administration in 1953 to aid, coun-

sel, assist, and protect the interests of small business concerns in order to preserve free and competitive enterprise, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total Federal Government purchases, contracts, and subcontracts for property and services are placed with small business concerns, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total sales of government property are made to such small business concerns, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the United States;

Whereas every year since 1963, the President has designated a "National Small Business Week" to recognize the contributions of small businesses to the economic well-being of the United States;

Whereas in 2012, National Small Business Week will honor the estimated 27,200,000 small businesses in the United States;

Whereas the Small Business Administration has helped small business concerns by providing access to critical lending opportunities, protecting small business concerns from excessive Federal regulatory enforcement, helping to ensure full and open competition for government contracts, and improving the economic environment in which small business concerns compete;

Whereas for more than 50 years, the Small Business Administration has helped millions of entrepreneurs achieve the American dream of owning a small business, and has played a key role in fostering economic growth; and

Whereas the President has designated the week beginning May 20, 2012, as "National Small Business Week": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the entrepreneurial spirit of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, which begins on May 20, 2012;

(2) applauds the efforts and achievements of the owners and employees of small business concerns, whose hard work and commitment to excellence have made such small business concerns a key part of the economic vitality of the United States;

(3) recognizes the work of the Small Business Administration and its resource partners in providing assistance to entrepreneurs and small business concerns; and

(4) recognizes the importance of ensuring that—

(A) guaranteed loans, including microloans and microloan technical assistance, for start-up and growing small business concerns, and venture capital, are made available to all qualified small business concerns;

(B) the management assistance programs delivered by resource partners on behalf of the Small Business Administration, such as Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives, are provided with the Federal resources necessary to provide invaluable counseling services to entrepreneurs in the United States;

(C) the Small Business Administration continues to provide timely and efficient disaster assistance so that small businesses in areas struck by natural or manmade disasters can quickly return to business to keep local economies alive in the aftermath of such disasters;

(D) affordable broadband Internet access is available to all people in the United States, particularly people in rural and underserved communities, so that small businesses can use the Internet to make their operations more globally competitive while boosting local economies;

(E) regulatory relief is provided to small businesses through the reduction of duplicative or unnecessary regulatory requirements that increase costs for small businesses; and

(F) leveling the playing field for contracting opportunities remains a primary

focus, so that small businesses, particularly minority-owned small businesses, can compete for and win more of the \$400,000,000,000 in contracts that the Federal Government enters into each year for goods and services.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to Public Law 96-114, as amended, appoints the following individuals to the Congressional Award Board:

Michael Schmid of Wyoming,
Cheryl D. Maddox of Kentucky, and
Charmaine Yoest of Virginia.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2012

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 am on Tuesday, May 22; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two

leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and that the majority leader be recognized; that the first hour following the remarks of the majority leader and Republican leader be equally divided and controlled between the two sides, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, it is the majority leader's intention to resume the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 400, S. 3187, the Food and Drug Administration user fees legislation, when the Senate convenes tomorrow. At 2:15 the Senate will begin consideration of the bill. Senators will be notified when votes are scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:53 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, May 22, 2012, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

THOMAS M. DURKIN, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS, VICE WAYNE R. ANDERSEN, RETIRED.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BUILDING SCIENCES

JOSEPH BYRNE DONOVAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BUILDING SCIENCES FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 7, 2013, VICE LANE CARSON, RESIGNED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

BRUCE R. SIEVERS, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018, VICE KENNETH R. WEINSTEIN, TERM EXPIRED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM B. GARRETT III

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 21, 2012:

THE JUDICIARY

PAUL J. WATFORD, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT.