

of abortion on demand, and something inside them could no longer deny the truth, or they could no longer condone the murder of a defenseless child.

What changed their minds? Perhaps I will really never understand what sparked that change in their hearts, Mr. Speaker. But I am convinced of one thing: that it is the same spark in the human soul that has turned the tide of blood and tragedy and hatred and inhumanity throughout human history. And whatever else it is, Mr. Speaker, it is mankind's only hope.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CBC HOUR: SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials into the RECORD on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and my privilege once again to stand here on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus to help anchor this Special Order along with my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from the Silver State, Representative STEVEN HORSFORD, where for the next 60 minutes, members of the Congressional Black Caucus have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about an issue of great significance as we kick off Small Business Week in America and commemorate the 50th anniversary.

Entrepreneurship innovation, the capacity of Americans who have an idea and want to translate that idea into a business initiative in urban America, in rural America, in suburban America, is something that we here in the Congress should not simply celebrate, as we will do this week, but figure out ways to make sure that we can facilitate those entrepreneurial ideas in the most robust manner possible and help those entrepreneurs from all over the country translate their ideas and their dreams into small business reality.

It goes without saying that small businesses are the heart and soul of the American economy. A significant number of people all throughout the country are employed in small businesses on Main Street and throughout inner-city commercial corridors and in the far reaches of rural America. Many of these small businesses we, of course, know were also hit extremely hard in the aftermath of the collapse of the

economy in 2008. They were knocked down on the ground. And it's our job in the Congress and government, working with industry, to help lift those small businesses up off the ground and get them back on their feet so they can survive and thrive in the face of the economic difficulty that they confronted.

□ 2030

So we will be presenting ideas related to entrepreneurship for small businesses throughout America generally and in the context of entrepreneurship and innovation in the African American community.

We are going to begin today with the distinguished gentleman from Newark, New Jersey, our good friend, Representative DONALD PAYNE, who is a distinguished member of the Small Business Committee. Prior to arriving in Congress, he worked hard on these issues, and he has been a leader since being sworn in as a Member of the House of Representatives. It is my honor and my privilege to yield to Representative PAYNE.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for anchoring tonight's CBC Special Order on entrepreneurship in the Black community.

Since 1963, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation designating a week in which the country applauds the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners. Annually, we recognize the fact that, though they are called "small businesses," there is nothing small about the impact they have on the Nation's economy. Last year, small businesses created nearly 700,000 jobs, accounting for 40 percent of employment gains across companies of all sizes nationwide. So it is fair to say that small businesses are truly the backbone of our economy and that entrepreneurship is still a primary pathway to realizing the American Dream.

This is particularly true in the Black community. The heart of entrepreneurship is opportunity, and, historically, Black entrepreneurship has meant opportunities for equality, equity and a vehicle out of poverty. Throughout the years, Black entrepreneurs have harnessed economic power to strengthen the Black community, create jobs and develop a voice to advocate for the well-being of Blacks in America.

After the Civil War, though employment prospects were slim for former enslaved men, Isaac Myers organized 1,000 black ship caulkers who had lost their jobs in Baltimore. He created a union, bought a shipyard and won a government contract to provide employment for these men.

In 1903, Maggie Lena Walker pooled her community's money to charter the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank. This bank was for the community, by the community, and it provided a safe and courteous place to conduct business away from the racism and harsh treatment often encountered in White-owned businesses.

In 1906, a young entrepreneur by the name of Dr. O.W. Gurley bought 40 acres of land in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He created and supported the creation of several businesses which attracted African Americans fleeing the oppression in Mississippi. The area became known as "Black Wall Street," and it was home to several prominent Black businessmen who created jobs and provided a safe haven for African Americans who were banned from other sections of the town.

We well know that Madam C.J. Walker revolutionized black hair care and that she was America's first Black female millionaire. However, she also used her financial power to contribute to anti-lynching campaigns and other efforts to equalize rights for Blacks in America.

These are a few of the countless examples of Black entrepreneurs who, through their businesses and their philanthropic efforts, have empowered the Black community. These efforts, as well as their relevance, continue today.

It is estimated that by the year 2015 Black buying power will be \$1.1 trillion. In this economy where the Black unemployment rate is double that of the Whites and where the income and wealth gap persistently intersects with the race gap, Black entrepreneurship is more important than ever in helping the community at large. More than 60 cents out of every dollar spent at local businesses is recirculated into the local economy. So local Black-owned businesses are a true asset to the community.

As a member of the Committee on Small Business, I have worked to strengthen the SBA's lending programs and have increased access to capital for all populations but especially for minorities and women. I will also be introducing two key pieces of legislation to assist small businesses as well. Recognizing the Nation's energy boom and green energy potential, this legislation will ensure that "green" small businesses have the resources to grow their businesses and hire more workers, especially in low-income communities. This effort will help Black businesses and other marginalized populations remain competitive in the small business arena.

Small businesses and entrepreneurship fuel the engine for economic growth and opportunity. For the Black community, that means lower unemployment, higher college attendance and completion, and strong outcomes for the present and the future. Consequently, there is no time to waste in getting our small businesses up and running. I will continue to be an outspoken advocate in empowering entrepreneurs to take risks, to pursue their dreams and to continue being an integral part of growing this Nation's economy.

Mr. Speaker, before I take my seat, I would just like to talk a minute about my entrepreneurial experiences back in the mid-seventies, when my uncle, William Payne, a former assemblyman for

the State of New Jersey, created a business in 1969 that manufactured computer forms—the old printed sheets that we used to use that had the holes down the side. I'm sure some of us remember that who are old enough. We were the only African American firm in the Nation in Newark, New Jersey, that manufactured computer forms, and the challenges that my uncle faced in business were great.

He would have to pay for his raw materials ahead of time and was not given the normal net 30 days or 60 days in order to manufacture the product and sell it. He had to come with a certified check, and there was no other reason than the color of his skin. So I understand what it is to have your back against the wall in terms of trying to make it in this Nation. But he persevered, and we were in business for 20 years. I am very proud of that legacy that he left behind. He was hiring people with handicaps back in those days. Our forklift driver was actually hearing impaired—deaf—but he worked. He was a great worker, and he did not let that get in the way of his being a useful person in society and earning his way. We also in the seventies were ahead of the curve in terms of hiring young men who were coming back from prison, far before “reentry” was the word of the day.

I am very proud of that legacy and heritage there in Newark, New Jersey, with Urban Data Systems, and that is why I feel so strongly about continuing to support small businesses throughout this Nation.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey for so eloquently laying out the history of entrepreneurship in America through the lens of the Black community, and also for detailing his own personal experiences in Newark, New Jersey, experiences that, I think, were replicated in many inner cities all across the country in the face of urban decay and abandonment that took place in the 1960s and in the 1970s. It was those African Americans who remained behind in inner city after inner city after inner city in America with an entrepreneurial idea of providing a service that otherwise may not have been available. We want to make sure that we create opportunities for all Americans to be able to grow their businesses and transform their ideas into reality.

□ 2404

I look forward, and all the members of the CBC look forward, to working with Representative PAYNE in his capacity on the Small Business Committee with the leadership that he has demonstrated.

We've now been joined by another distinguished member of the freshman class who also has experience from a personal perspective as a successful small business owner and entrepreneur. So it's my honor right now to yield the floor to the distinguished gentlelady from Ohio, Representative JOYCE BEATTY.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank my colleague, Congressman JEFFRIES.

I rise this evening to discuss a very important topic to me, a topic that is important to me, to my district and to this Nation: why entrepreneurship matters to Black America.

This week, we celebrate National Small Business Week, which gives us a chance to collectively recognize small businesses and the impact they have and have had on our local communities and the Nation. Tonight you will hear a lot about African Americans who started from humble means; African Americans who had great ideas and decided that they wanted to open a beauty shop, a barbershop, maybe a bakery or like my husband's family, a family restaurant. We'll hear the stories about how they became millionaires and billionaires.

We've heard about Madam C.J. Walker who started with a small idea and became the first African American female millionaire. Then we all know about the young lady in the State next to mine that grew up and wanted to be a radio announcer, and probably 50 some years ago she had no idea that she'd be one of America's billionaires. And that's Oprah Winfrey. So today is so important to us not only as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, but it's important to us as a Nation that we recognize those who spur the economy.

So often we think that it is large industrial operations that make up the businesses in this wonderful country. But if you thought about where half of this Nation works, they work in small businesses, they own small businesses.

You see, small business in America has been the stabilizing force in the economy. Entrepreneurs are the backbone of creativity and production. Small business is what stimulates economic growth. With over 60 percent of all private sector nonfarm jobs coming from small businesses, it is a proven fact that small businesses are critical to the United States' economy.

Minority-owned businesses are also very important to the economy. The strong growth in owner income and decrease in the amount of companies going bankrupt is a great sign. Self-employment figures are also growing in this Nation.

As a matter of fact, in the last year alone, small businesses created nearly 700,000 jobs, accounting for 40 percent of employment gains across companies of all sizes. You see, I know firsthand the value of being a small business owner because for the past 20 years, I have been a small business owner. My husband is a small business owner, and we have been able to employ a diverse group of employees right in Columbus, Ohio, providing our employees with stable wages and the opportunity for professional development.

For minority communities, small businesses are often the primary economic drivers by employing those who are seniors, those who are unemployed,

those who live right in the neighborhood or have had some financial or workforce development challenges.

This is why we are here today and why it is so important in minority communities for the Small Business Administration to continue to develop programs which help minority small business owners break through the many barriers that prevent them from entering into the business community. But more can be done and more should be done to help support minority businesses because in addition to the many economic benefits they provide, small businesses also foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity.

As a member of the Financial Services Committee, I was pleased to learn that tucked within that broad package of financial industry reforms contained in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform and the Consumer Protection Act law is a provision that mandates that each covered governmental agency establish an office of minority and women inclusion.

The Office of Minority and Women Inclusion directors must develop and implement standards and procedures to ensure to the maximum extent possible the fair and inclusion utilization of minorities, women and minority- and women-owned businesses in all business activities of all levels in the agencies, including procurement, insurance, and all other types of contracts.

So what I've decided to do is to host a roundtable discussion with small and minority women-owned businesses through the leadership of our ranking member on Financial Services, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS. I'm also so pleased that so many organizations like Black Enterprise recently partnered with Nationwide Insurance to hold its 2013 entrepreneurs conference right in my district in Columbus, Ohio, this past May. This conference provided a great platform for African American entrepreneurs to share ideas, to be able to network, and to grow their businesses among some 1,200 participants. We also honored African American entrepreneurs who own some of the best small businesses in the country.

I think it's also important for us to know, as in my home State and many other States, small business owners can take advantage of SBA programs. In my district, too, the Ohio Mini-Loan Guarantee program provides guarantees or fixed assets for small businesses for projects of \$100,000 or less. Also, there is a mini-direct loan program, which provides direct loans for businesses that are going to locate in Ohio or that want to expand their business to demonstrate that they can create new ideas and new jobs for Ohioans.

It is very clear to me that small businesses will continue to grow and they will grow our economy at a proven rate. While effective programs exist today to help minority-owned small businesses, I believe we can continue to do more. I believe that's why my colleagues are here today, allowing us the

opportunity to come and tell our stories, because it educates the public, it makes a difference, and that's why I am here.

I thank you so very much for allowing me the opportunity to come and talk about small businesses and more importantly to talk about small businesses that are owned by women and that are owned by African Americans, because we're making a difference.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlelady from Ohio. She certainly eloquently illustrated the point that small business and entrepreneurship are as American as baseball and apple pie. And for women and minority-owned businesses to thrive is for America to thrive, as has been pointed out by speaker after speaker.

So many of the jobs that Americans hold to this day are as a result of the employment that small businesses provide. So as we figure out how we can continue to recover from the Great Recession of 2008, it's critically important for us to make sure that we can guarantee the best possible opportunity for small businesses to succeed and for entrepreneurial ideas to flourish. That is why we've taken to the floor today, and it's my honor and my privilege to now yield to another distinguished member of the freshman class, my co-anchor for the CBC Special Order, the gentleman from the Silver State, Representative STEVEN HORSFORD.

□ 2050

Mr. HORSFORD. Good evening.

Let me first thank my good friend, the gentleman from the Empire State, my coanchor, Mr. JEFFRIES. It has been a pleasure now, for the first six months of our term in this 113th Congress, to work with you to bring these issues to the floor each week on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus. I really have appreciated your friendship, your perspective, and your intelligence on so many issues, and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

And to my other colleagues, the dynamic freshman class, it is so great to have colleagues who work together, who have like mindedness to represent our communities and to do it in a way that addresses the needs of all people. The gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) has so many experiences from the private sector, to her role working as an administrator in the university, Ohio State University. It has been great to get to know her, as well as my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE). These are individuals who have great perspective and experience and whose voice on these issues are incredibly important. I'm just pleased to be among such a dynamic group that is trying to make a difference here in this 113th Congress.

So today, we are here to bring attention and focus to celebrating the 50th anniversary of National Small Business Week. It is fitting that tonight's Special Order hour will focus on how small

businesses are critical to the growth of our economy. As we do during these normal hours, people can follow us on #CBCTalks. If you have a question or you have an idea, if you have a perspective that you want heard, this is your opportunity because it's not just about us coming here, but it is about us listening to what it is our constituents want us to bring to the floor.

As my colleagues have already said, small businesses are the backbone of our economy. The CBC has fought and continues to fight to strengthen programs that create economic opportunity and foster entrepreneurship. Over the last year, small businesses in our country have created 700,000 jobs, accounting for 40 percent of employment gains, across companies of all sizes. More than half of all Americans either own or work for a small business.

So when we talk about increasing access to capital, enhancing business partnerships, and providing important technical assistance, the CBC is talking about the small businesses who are the engines of our economy. And we have solutions, and they are solutions that we hope our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will work with us to pass because they are the right solutions for America—solutions like Representative RUSH's expanding opportunities for Main Street. So much focus is always on Wall Street, but we want to bring the issues of Main Street and small businesses to this body. Whether it is Representative RICHMOND's Microenterprise and Youth Entrepreneurship Development Act, making sure we are helping new businesses and young entrepreneurs have the resources they need to start and grow their business, or whether it is Representative CLARKE's Expanding Opportunities for Small Businesses Act, the CBC is working on solutions. And these are the types of real policies that are before this body, and we would urge our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work with us to make these bills law. These bills, if enacted, would greatly enhance the small business landscape for minority entrepreneurs.

You know, I had an opportunity recently to visit the American History Museum. When you're there and you reflect on our history as a Nation and you see the important contributions that African Americans have made to the establishment and growth of our great Nation, whether it be in politics or government, civil rights or social justice, and, yes, entrepreneurship, it's African Americans who have helped build our country, and it is African American businesses that need to be part of our plan for economic growth.

Three issues that I hear most from my constituents, small business owners that I believe have to be at the center of our discussion as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Small Business Week, is, number one, access to capital, whether it be on the need for lines of credit to help with the day-to-day

operations of a business or capital loans to help a business buy new equipment so that they can expand or grow.

The second issue is equal opportunity to bid on and win contracts both in the private sphere but, most importantly in our role, the Federal contracting opportunities. When I look at the amount of money that is being spent by these Federal agencies and to know that there are not the types of efforts to really provide outreach or support to our minority- and women-owned and veteran-owned businesses is something that the Congressional Black Caucus believes has to be a priority.

And third is the need to ensure compliance with minority participation in Federal contracting. This is an area, to my good friend from New York, I hope that we will be able to work on. I know the ranking member over Small Business, this is a priority of hers as well, and I want to see what we can do to hold accountable every agency to do their part to ensure that there's ample participation from all communities.

You know, in April I held my first small business forum with my constituents that focused on creating good-paying jobs through Federal contracting opportunities. We held another one recently on access to capital. It was the Small Business Administration which was there that talked about the fact that they deliver millions of dollars of loans, contracts, counseling sessions, and other forms of assistance to small businesses. Well, we sought to replicate that type of support in our district with our small business owners. We had representatives from various agencies attend, and they mapped out strategies for local businesses who are looking to grow and add more workers. We had representatives from agencies, including the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, the Department of Energy, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Small Business Administration, as well as our Governor's Office of Economic Development.

The forum provided a great opportunity to discuss our plan to create jobs in our local community. Over 60 local small business owners attended the event, along with representatives from Federal agencies. Other business owners helped local residents and aspiring entrepreneurs figure out how to position themselves to compete for Federal contracts and grants. Those grants create jobs in our local community, and job creation and economic growth is what we should be about as we talk about celebrating National Small Business Owners Week.

What was most rewarding, to my friend from New York, was a panel of young entrepreneurs. We had young people who are still in high school who have a business plan for how they can create everything from backpacks to marketing to social marketing opportunities. These are young people with ideas, with passion, with vision; but we

want to make sure that they have the right support as well. So listening to these young people makes me appreciate just how important these resources are and why we need to continue to work to make them a reality.

Let me finish my remarks at this point by talking about the need for business-to-business partnerships and making sure that we have these face-to-face meetings with those who know the ins and outs of securing grants, those who know how to go about contracting, and also the need for access to capital and how to secure the loans that small businesses need to grow their business.

□ 2100

We want to encourage those who are listening, or following us on #CBCTalks, to attend one of the Small Business Administration's match-making events during Small Business Week—there are several. There's one in Seattle, there's one in Dallas, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and even here in the Nation's Capital in Washington, D.C.—and to reach out to resources like Black Enterprise.

They have a very successful Young Entrepreneurs Conference that they hold annually that helps young people learn about the opportunities of starting their small business and what it means to develop a plan to do marketing, to have all of their plans in place so that their business, once launched, is successful.

And, finally, I want to encourage people to reach out and join the U.S. Black Chamber of Commerce and their local urban and Black chambers of commerce because these are opportunities where they can connect to resources, get the support that they need, and help to grow their businesses.

So I yield back to the gentleman from New York at this time and thank him and the other Members for this spotlight on Small Business Week.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I want to thank my good friend, Representative HORSFORD, who's made several important points. And if I could just highlight a few in particular, we hear a lot of talk here in Washington, D.C., about the evils of regulation. That talk is generally put forth in very generalized terms, without being able to point to specific regulations that actually are impeding the growth and opportunities of small businesses, but is certainly something that we hear a lot about, the evils of regulation.

But the reality is if you really want to deal with some of the problems that are confronting small businesses in America, I think Representative HORSFORD has laid it out in pretty compelling ways.

One, we need to ensure that our small businesses have access to capital in order to be able to grow their businesses, allow them to flourish and expand, build upon the ideas that exist.

Two, we've got to make sure that we give these small businesses access to

contracting and procurement opportunities. Many times there are small businesses that have the capacity to do the job, but are unaware of the opportunities that actually exist, whether that's at the Federal Government level, the State government level, or down at the municipal or county governmental level.

And, lastly, as my good friend, Representative HORSFORD, pointed out, we've got to make sure that we provide access to technical assistance to deal with the compliance issues that businesses do confront. That doesn't mean that all of these issues are overly burdensome or unnecessary. But we want to make sure that small businesses do have the capacity to operate within the regulatory framework that is applicable and reasonable and that the elected officials in whatever the particular jurisdiction have deemed necessary for the proper functioning of a small business.

So I thank the distinguished gentleman from Nevada for raising those very compelling points.

We've now been joined by a very important leader on the issue of small business and entrepreneurship, who comes from the great State of New York, the great borough and county of Kings and Brooklyn, where we have many entrepreneurs. And she's helped many businesses over time. She is on the Small Business Committee.

She's my neighbor, so I wanted to make sure I gave her the appropriately generous introduction. It's an honor to yield the floor to the distinguished gentlelady from New York, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE.

Ms. CLARKE. Let me thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to thank my colleague, Mr. HORSFORD of Nevada, and my colleague and neighbor from Brooklyn, New York, the Honorable Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, for yielding their time and for their tremendous leadership, week in and week out, in providing a view into the Congressional Black Caucus perspective on the issues of the day.

Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly 5 years since our Nation experienced the worst financial calamity since the Great Depression. However, as our economy continues to recover, unemployment remains stubbornly high, sitting at 7.5 percent nationally, with unemployment at 13.2 percent and 9 percent, respectively, for African Americans and Latino Americans.

As a member of the House Small Business Committee, I know the challenges facing our Nation's minority-owned small businesses and entrepreneurs, from access to capital, a problem for minority-owned and disadvantaged small businesses in the best of economic times, or a lack of access to knowledge and information of the available options to assist them.

I understand that we must—that we must work increasingly and unceasingly to ensure that, even as the media focuses on the booming stock market,

that our Nation's real job creators are not forgotten, not marginalized and overlooked. Their success is vital, not only for a more robust recovery, but it is to fully addressing our Nation's national employment crisis.

Ironically enough, Mr. Speaker, this week is the 50th commemoration of National Small Business Week. It appears, though, that the Republican-led House is totally tone deaf to the millions of Americans still unable to find gainful employment, that not one of the bills before the House this week supports job creation, real job creation, nor do they rescind the harmful effects of the sequester, which, by almost every measure, has been clearly detrimental to our Nation's economy and is tantamount, it is tantamount to negligence.

In my capacity as a member of the Small Business Committee, I've worked with my colleagues to promote all small businesses, especially minority, women, and veteran-owned small businesses in my district and across the Nation as they try to navigate these self-imposed and manufactured uncertain economic times.

I am a strong supporter of the SCORE Program, which provides technical assistance necessary for small businesses in underserved communities to just get off the ground. I also work with the SBA and the SBA's Office of Advocacy to ensure that all the firms that qualify for SBA contracting and capital access programs are provided an equal opportunity for participation.

Mr. Speaker, I have the honor and privilege of representing Brooklyn's Ninth Congressional District. My constituency includes an extremely large small business community with commerce corridors lined from block to block with small mom-and-pop businesses and storefronts.

This unique community provides the foundation of not only the economic but the unique social fabric of Brooklyn. We must build on this foundation in Brooklyn, New York, and across our great Nation.

Every day that the House majority focuses the people's time on issues that divide us is another day that our small businesses are treated as a subordinate concern. It is another day that our Nation's job-seekers spend time searching in vain, looking for the proverbial "needle in the haystack," and another day that our Nation will have to wait for the engine that powers our economy to be firing on all cylinders.

Mr. Speaker, as our Nation celebrates National Small Business Week, I look forward to a genuine debate that addresses the totality of our Nation's small business communities, and not cherry-picking the low-hanging fruit.

I'd like to thank the Congressional Black Caucus, which, like myself, treats every week as Small Business Week, for focusing on this crucially important issue and for having me this evening.

□ 2110

In closing, I just want to share with you that, as we go through the immigration debate, we acknowledge that oftentimes in the Black community much of our entrepreneurial spirit is found in those entrepreneurs who have come to the United States and find a niche market where they can provide goods, services, and products to people from their homes of origin and, by extension, to the rest of the Nation.

I had the distinct honor and privilege of meeting a gentleman who immigrated to the United States from the island nation of Jamaica. One of the great delicacies, and they've actually become nationally renowned, it's called the beef patty. This gentleman's name is none other than Lowell Hawthorne, and he started with a small storefront in the Bronx, New York, and has now grown that storefront into a franchise opportunity that has made him, his family, and all those who have engaged very wealthy individuals, created job opportunities for hundreds of people and has provided one of the most delicious delicacies that one can ever taste.

Lowell Hawthorne is truly an entrepreneur who has availed himself of small business support from the SBA and has been able to grow his business. This is a success story that can be modeled and patterned after. We need to make sure that those entrepreneurs who have ideas that are innovative and that are creative get the support they need to continue to build this great country of ours.

I'd like to thank my colleague for anchoring this CBC Special Order.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlelady from New York for her very thoughtful and insightful remarks, and I certainly thank her for pointing out that immigrants from the great State of New York and, in fact, immigrants who have come across the world to States all across the United States are hardworking, family-oriented, entrepreneurial, and innovative individuals who have helped to revive and rejuvenate communities all across this great land. It's something that we in this Chamber need to recognize as we celebrate and commemorate Small Business Week and prepare to move forward hopefully with some form of comprehensive immigration reform that we recognize the contributions that immigrants have made in the small business context.

We've been joined by another champion of small businesses here in the Congress who has got a very distinguished record on a wide variety of issues. She has been a thoughtful, eloquent, and passionate voice as it relates to entrepreneurship in America, and specifically within the black community. It is my honor and privilege now to yield the floor to the distinguished gentlelady from the great Lone Star State of Texas, Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank my colleagues who have gathered here today and tonight.

Thank you, Congressman JEFFRIES again for the combined leadership of yourself, Mr. HORSFORD from Nevada, and, of course, my dear, dear friend, Congressman DON PAYNE, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE, and I know that the gentlelady from Ohio was also contributing this evening, and I certainly thank her for her leadership.

I am very pleased to be able to stand here and honor a group that I, frankly, believe are the anchor of the economy for the United States of America, and that is small businesses. We look at the landscape of American history. We did not start with multinationals and international corporations. We really started with mom-and-pop businesses, whether it is, in fact, when we were told in the historical concept to go West young man and woman, and those from the 13 Colonies originally as they moved from the east coast to explore the West as far as California. In those pioneering towns, you had to have small businesses.

Then, of course, if we speak about the history of our community, first coming to this Nation as slaves and then developing artisan skills in the spirit of Booker T. Washington, being carpenters, painters, and bricklayers. If you will look at the history of the South, many of the African Americans, this was their business, along with funeral homes and along with restaurants.

I remember the aunt of my husband. It was one of our special treats to be able to go down to Aunt Frances' location in Alabama. Her store was near Alabama State, and it was the place to go. It was also a little hotel, and there was no doubt that Aunt Frances could cook, but she turned it into a business. And the students knew that that was a place that was a comfort to them, that good meals could be gotten for reasonable prices. Those were small businesses in the African American community.

Frankly, I believe that we have not done well by them. We have not done well by minority businesses overall, by women-owned businesses. Yes, there are some moments of success that I will recount in just a moment, but in terms of the Federal Government really putting elbow grease to the idea of outreach to minority businesses, they can do better. Yes, we have the Small Business Administration and there are many instances of outreach, but let me share with you how we could do better.

First of all, we can eliminate the sequestration. We can put on the floor H.R. 900, which is legislation that many of us have signed, led by JOHN CONYERS. I'm an original cosponsor among many others. Eliminate the sequestration. It is killing us. Frankly, it is killing small businesses. It is killing the opportunities for small businesses in terms of small businesses who do a small amount of business with the Fed-

eral Government. All of that is being cut.

We can also fix the Internal Revenue Service because I will tell you, Mr. JEFFRIES, if you poll any of your small businesses, any of those S corporations or any of those mom-and-pops or any of those individuals who have businesses in their name, I can assure you that there is a difficult situation with IRS audits. They seem to find small businesses, and they seem to find minority businesses. And so I think, as a Congress, we want fairness. We certainly want the IRS, that has a lot of hard-working workers—we have just found out that they targeted liberal groups as well as others. We want them to find a sort of the right space to be able to allow our small businesses to not suffocate but to grow and to work with them in what we call offer in compromise. So I think we need to fix the IRS.

Certainly, we need to fix the whole issue of credit scoring, allowing small businesses to access, if you will, the right kind of credit. If they can get credit, then they can grow. I would imagine that if this whole place was filled up with small businesses and I asked them, the colleagues that are in this room, it was all filled up with small businesses, asked them to raise their hand about access to credit or this whole issue of credit scoring—and we in the Federal Government can do better. We can do better with a fixed tax system that respects the growth of small businesses to allow them to grow their business and give them the kind of tax incentives that would be helpful.

Let me also say, as I bring my remarks to a close, and I want to say to Congresswoman CLARKE, who is already on the floor—she knows now that I'm going to have to cite some of my businesses that have come and made great opportunities for workers. But let me just say that we need to be able to—how should I say it?—encourage, encourage all these government agencies.

Do you know how much the General Services Administration buys and how much they build? All of these agencies, every single bill that comes through here, we should work with our Republican colleagues, who believe in small businesses, to be able to add amendments that deal with the outreach to minority, women, and small businesses. That's what we're missing. They're intimidated by doing business with the Federal Government.

The General Service Administration is one of the worst offenders. They spend money on building buildings. They spend money on buying buildings, and their MWBD record is horrific. And what they say is they don't have a provision that incentivizes them, or there's no provision in their structure that causes them to move forward on MWBD.

We've got to do something about that. Maybe we can collectively do it as a Congressional Black Caucus to be

able to address the question of an agency that buys everything and builds everything for the Federal Government, and they don't have an incentive.

□ 2120

Just last week I put an amendment on the defense authorization. I want to thank the Democrats and Republicans for being supportive. I look forward to working with them again in the agriculture bill.

But finally what I would say is that I am grateful that we are highlighting small businesses today, and I hope that I've listed a few items that we will hear from small businesses about, that we can hear your voices tell us how we can help you better, either with the IRS, with sequestration, with the outreach in the Small Business Administration or working with the General Services Administration so that you have more opportunity to participate as a small business.

Now let me cite a few of my businesses, as I go to my seat, in Texas. I want to celebrate Frenchy's, the Creuzot family, that has been in the chicken frying business for 50 years plus. Yes, I have a great excitement that they have taken that business and they are in the marketing business of making food products that they are selling to grocery stores. They've grown from being that place where the students from Texas Southern University would go and the rest of us would go by expanding. They have kept people hired for 50 years. Their father has gone on to glory, their mother is still alive, but the children have kept it alive. I want to salute them because it is a business of the family. They came from Louisiana, made their way over in this direction.

I want to salute Kase Lawal and CAMAC as one of the only standing energy companies owned by an African American in the United States, along with Osyka, owned by Michael Harness, and a pipeline company, Milton Carroll, who's had Precision Instruments for a number of years that was in the oil drilling business. I want to salute them.

I want to salute Cool Runnings, my first visit to them, a Jamaican restaurant. They have taken their business and grown it—in Houston, Texas by the way. To be able to have a restaurant and a takeout business is great. I want to salute the Houston Black Expo, because they are having their big event on June 21 and businesses all over Houston will be benefiting from Mr. Love's great effort in the Houston Black Expo.

Finally, I want to conclude by saying that small businesses are in fact the backbone of America. I know that there will be a great opportunity for us to expand on that.

Let me close by thanking you, Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. HORSFORD, thank you so very much for highlighting what is truly the infrastructure of jobs in America, small businesses and minor-

ity-owned businesses, women-owned businesses. Thank you for your courtesy.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlelady from Texas for her very eloquent and thoughtful remarks and for her putting forth some very important policy prescriptions for what we in the Congress can do to help advance the agenda on behalf of small businesses all across this country, and certainly in the women- and minority-owned business context.

I also want to note, I am thankful that Representative CLARKE mentioned one of the important immigrant businesses that began in the Bronx, New York, but has spread all across the country, the Golden Crust Caribbean Bakery and Grill, as well as I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas for highlighting some of the important businesses that have sprouted up in Houston, Texas. Those are just a few examples of what entrepreneurs in the black immigrant community, in the African American community, have done all across the land. All we're saying is we want to make sure that we provide these businessmen and -women the same opportunities that others throughout time in America have had, because if we do, they will be able to translate their entrepreneurial spirit, their innovative ideas, their vision, into reality that will make economic sense for their communities and lead to the hiring of American citizens and others who need the employment opportunity that these small businesses will continue to generate.

Just a few observations in closing. One of the things that was mentioned earlier today on the floor was the fact that many small businesses confront an uncertain economic environment. And as a result of this uncertainty, they are unable to move forward in any concrete fashion because they don't know when the next crisis will hit our economy: Are we going to default on our debt? Are we going to fall over the fiscal cliff? How long are we going to be dealing with sequestration?

I would suggest to my good friends on the other side of the aisle that if we really want to help out small businesses and entrepreneurs, we've got to figure out a way to come together and find common ground as it relates to moving our economy forward, because as long as we're in this period of uncertainty, it will be difficult for small businesses and for entrepreneurs to take any step forward as it relates to growing their businesses and allowing them to be more prosperous.

Now there is a vehicle for us to try and find common ground. For 4 years, my good friends on the other side of the aisle were complaining about the fact that we were not in regular order, that the Senate failed to pass a budget. Well, this year a budget resolution was passed in the House of Representatives. A budget resolution was passed in the Senate. Two very different visions for where we should go as a country. But

the vehicle to find common ground is to move forward with a conference committee. The majority in the Senate has indicated they are prepared to move forward and appoint conferees, but the Speaker of the people's House refuses to do so, even though for the last 4 years folks were complaining about the absence of regular order.

If you want to do something about small businesses, what we should do in America is figure out how we in the Congress can come together, find common ground and create some economic certainty so these entrepreneurs can move forward.

I don't know if my good friend has any parting comments, but let me just say that we in the CBC are committed to continuing to stand up for entrepreneurship in America, for opportunity, for the fruitful pursuit of the American Dream through innovation, and we extend an olive branch to Members of the other side of the aisle on this issue and on all other issues so we can finally find a way to come together and move this economy forward in a way that should benefit all Americans.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate American small businesses during the 50th Annual National Small Business Week, it is important that we recognize minority entrepreneurs and their contributions to local economies all across the country. Small businesses serve as the backbone of America's economy, and minority-owned enterprises have played a critical role in our Nation's economic development, generating an estimated \$1 trillion in annual revenue as of 2011.

In Texas, there are more than 365,000 minority-owned firms, employing more than 690,000 individuals. Small businesses account for the majority of the employers in the State of Texas, and create a substantial number of local new jobs. Small businesses bring dynamic ideas, and generate innovative services and products, to the marketplace which are necessary for economic prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, as we honor small businesses this week, let us all reaffirm our commitment to expand economic opportunities for aspiring business owners all across the country. These enterprises are a key component to a strong economy and a flourishing middle class.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. With respect to a unanimous-consent request entered earlier today, the Chair would clarify that, under clause 7 of rule XII, a request to remove the name of a cosponsor cannot be entertained after the final committee authorized to consider the measure reports it to the House or is discharged from its consideration.

H.R. 1797 is currently on the Union Calendar and any request to remove a cosponsor at this point may not be entertained.