

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to a period of morning business and that Senators be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL JAMES G. STAVRIDIS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to honor a great American on his retirement. ADM James G. Stavridis will retire at the end of this month after a distinguished Navy career lasting 37 years. During that career, he commanded forces at several levels, including a destroyer, a destroyer squadron, and a carrier strike group.

He has also held significant joint commands, including U.S. Southern Command and, most recently, U.S. European Command, EUCOM, and Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. Of note, he was the first Navy officer to command EUCOM.

At EUCOM, Admiral Stavridis had the very difficult task of ensuring that the members of the coalition operating in Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force, ISAF, pulled together as a coherent team to support NATO strategic objectives there. In this position, Admiral Stavridis was a steady voice upon whom we could always rely for an accurate assessment of the facts on the ground.

Admiral Stavridis was a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, the Naval War College, and the National War College. He also was an outstanding student at the Fletcher School at Tufts University, where he earned two degrees: a doctor of philosophy and a master of arts in law and diplomacy.

Admiral Stavridis has been a strong leader of the men and women in his commands, but he has also been a leading strategic thinker with the Department. He has published numerous articles and essays, and has co-authored several books on subjects as diverse as ship handling and foreign policy.

I am pleased that Admiral Stavridis will continue to make his talents available to our country. Admiral Stavridis will assume new roles as dean of the Fletcher School at Tufts University, and chairman of the board of the United States Naval Institute.

On behalf of the members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I wish Admiral Stavridis "fair winds and following seas" as he approaches a new set of challenges in life. I know he will bring to them the same steady hand, good heart and clear thinking he has given to our Nation for almost four decades.

MINORITY WEALTH GAP

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, as part of Small Business Week, I would

like to mention a fact that is sometimes overlooked: minorities and women open small businesses at lower rates, and when they are able to open businesses, they earn less than their white counterparts.

We have received many studies from all over the country that look at the utilization of minority- and women-owned businesses by public contracting agencies. As the studies show, minority- and women-owned businesses are routinely and disproportionately underutilized in public contracting. In fact, one report that looked at almost 100 studies showed that regardless of where the study was done or who did it, what was seen over and over again was a stark underutilization of minority and women owned contractors.

Studies and litigation about mortgage rates also show us that minorities face additional, discriminatory hurdles when it comes to borrowing money. Minority business owners are more likely to have loan applications turned down than similar white business owners and, if the minority business owner is lucky enough to get the loan, he or she is more likely to pay a higher interest rate.

Minority and women business owners are less likely to have the wealth to start their own businesses because of a history of discrimination in employment. As a result, when they do start out, they are at a significant disadvantage.

We have also heard repeated testimony that minorities and women are excluded from the networks that are essential for small businesses. Minorities and women are quoted higher prices for supplies or excluded from the meetings or the clubs where contacts are formed and decisions are made.

Federal programs that open doors and require outreach to minority-owned businesses are essential. In fact, when the Federal or local government stops requiring that prime contractors reach out to minority- or women-owned businesses, those businesses' participation in public contracts plummets. For example, when States in the western part of the U.S. stopped their programs after a court decision that invalidated some applications of the program, participation in Federal contracting by minority-owned businesses measurably decreased.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of studies that demonstrate these facts.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

RECENT EXPERT REPORTS, DISPARITY STUDIES AND CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ADDRESSING PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND MINORITY- AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES
CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

2013

Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Minority Women, Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 113th Cong. (2013)

2012

Closing the Wealth Gap Through the African-American Entrepreneurial Ecosystem:

Roundtable Discussion with the U.S. House Comm. on Small Business, 112th Cong. (Sept. 9, 2012).

2011

Closing the Gap: Exploring Minority Access to Capital and Contracting Opportunities: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 112th Cong. (2011)

2010

Assessing Access: Obstacles and Opportunities for Minority Small Business Owners in Today's Capital Markets, Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 111th Cong. (2010)

Minority Contracting Opportunities: Challenges for Current and Future Minority-Owned Businesses: Hearing before the U.S. House Committee on Oversight & Gov't Reform, Subcommittee on Government Management, Organization and Procurement, 111 Cong. (Sept. 22, 2010)

Minorities and Women in Financial Regulatory Reform: The Need for Increasing Participation and Opportunities for Qualified Persons and Businesses: Hearing Before the U.S. House Comm. on Financial Services, Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations and Subcomm. on Housing and Community Opportunity, 111th Cong. (2010)

Full Committee Hearing on Small Business Participation in Federal Procurement Marketplace: Hearing Before the U.S. House Comm. on Small Business, 111th Cong. (2010)

2009

Infrastructure Investment: Ensuring an Effective Economic Recovery Program: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Transportation and Infrastructure, 111th Cong. (2009)

The Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2009: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Aviation of the H. Comm. on Transportation and Infrastructure, 111th Cong. (2009)

Full Committee Hearing on the State of the SBA's Entrepreneurial Development Programs and Their Role in Promoting an Economic Recovery: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Small Business, 111th Cong. (2009)

Full Committee Hearing on Oversight of the Small Business Administration and its Programs: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Small Business, 111th Cong. (2009)

The Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Programs: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Transportation and Infrastructure, 111th Cong. (2009)

The Role of Small Business in Recovery Act Contracting: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 111th Cong. (2009)

Trends Affecting Minority Broadcast Ownership: Hearing Before the H. Judiciary Comm., 111th Cong. (2009)

Roundtable on Healthcare Reform: Small Business Concerns and Priorities: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 111th Cong. (2009)

Doing Business with the Government: The RECORD and Goals for Small, Minority and Disadvantaged Businesses: Hearing Before the H. Comm. On Transportation and Infrastructure, 111th Cong. (2009)

Minority Entrepreneurship: Evaluating Small Business Resources and Programs: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 111th Cong. (2009)

The Minority Business Development Agency: Enhancing the Prospects for Success: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection of the H. Comm. on Energy and Commerce, 111th Cong. (2009)

2008

Full Committee Hearing on SBA's Progress in Implementing the Women's Procurement

Program: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Small Business, 110th Cong. (2008)

Holding the Small Business Administration Accountable: Women's Contracting and Lender Oversight: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2008)

Diversity in the Financial Services Sector: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations of the H. Comm. on Financial Services, 110th Cong. (2008)

Military Base Realignment: Contracting Opportunities for Impacted Communities: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Government Management, Organization, and Procurement of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Government Reform, 110th Cong. (2008)

Community Reinvestment Act: Thirty Years of Accomplishments, But Challenges Remain: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Financial Services, 110th Cong. (2008)

Doing Business with the Government: The Record and Goals for Small, Minority, and Disadvantaged Businesses: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management of the H. Comm. on Transportation and Infrastructure, 110th Cong. (2008)

Subcommittee Hearing on Oversight of the Entrepreneurial Development Programs Implemented by the Small Business Administration and National Veterans Business Development Corporation: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Rural and Urban Entrepreneurship of the H. Comm. on Small Business, 110th Cong. (2008)

Women in Business: Leveling the Playing Field: Roundtable Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2008)

Subcommittee Hearing on Minority and Hispanic Participation in the Federal Workforce and the Impact on the Small Business Community: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Regulations, Health Care, and Trade of the H. Comm. on Small Business, 110th Cong. (2008)

Opportunities and Challenges for Women Entrepreneurs on the 20th Anniversary of the Women's Business Ownership Act: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2008)

Business Start-Up Hurdles in Underserved Communities: Access to Venture Capital and Entrepreneurship Training: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2008)

How Information Policy Affects Competitive Viability of Small and Disadvantaged Business in Federal Contracting: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Government Reform, 110th Cong. (2008)

2007

Full Committee Field Hearing on Participation of Small Business in Hurricane Katrina Recovery Contracts: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Small Business, 110th Cong. (2007)

Minority Entrepreneurship: Assessing the Effectiveness of SBA's Programs for the Minority Business Community: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2007)

Full Committee Hearing on the Small Business Administration's Microloan Program: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Small Business, 110th Cong. (2007)

Increasing Government Accountability and Ensuring Fairness in Small Business Contracting: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business & Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2007)

Diversifying Native Economies: Oversight Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Natural Resources, 110th Cong. (2007)

Expanding Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs: The Future of Women's Small Business Programs: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2007)

Federal Contracting: Removing Hurdles for Minority-Owned Small Businesses: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Government Management, Organization, and Procurement of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Government Reform, 110th Cong. (2007)

Full Committee Hearing to Consider Legislation Updating and Improving the SBA's Contracting Programs: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Small Business, 110th Cong. (2007)

Mortgage Lending Discrimination: Field Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Financial Services, 110th Cong. (2007)

Access to Federal Contracts: How to Level the Playing Field: Field Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 110th Cong. (2007)

Preserving and Expanding Minority Banks: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations of the H. Comm. on Financial Services, 110th Cong. (2007)

2006

Reauthorization of Small Business Administration Financing and Entrepreneurial Development Programs: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 109th Cong. (2006)

Northern Lights and Procurement Plights: The Effect of the ANC Program on Federal Procurement and Alaska Native Corporation: Joint Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Government Reform and the H. Comm. on Small Business, 109th Cong. (2006)

Diversity: The GAO Perspective: Hearing Before the H. Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations of the H. Comm. on Financial Services, 109th Cong. (2006)

Strengthening Participation of Small Businesses in Federal Contracting and Innovation Research Programs: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 109th Cong. (2006)

RECENT STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISPARITY STUDIES

CALIFORNIA

Metro Disparity Study Final Report, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (2009)

Metrolink Disparity Study Draft Report, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (2009)

OCTA Disparity Study Final Report, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the Orange County Transportation Authority (2010)

SANDAG Disparity Study Final Report, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the San Diego Association of Governments (2010)

San Diego County Regional Airport Authority Disparity Study, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (2010)

FLORIDA

The State of Minority and Women Owned Enterprise: Evidence from Broward County, Prepared by NERA Economic Consulting for Broward County, Florida (2010)

GEORGIA

Georgia Department of Transportation Disparity Study, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the Georgia Department of Administration (2012)

HAWAII

The State of Minority and Women Owned Enterprise: Evidence from Hawai'i, Prepared by NERA Economic Consulting for the Hawaii Department of Transportation (2010)

INDIANA

Indiana Disparity Study: Final Report, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the Indiana Department of Administration (2010)

MARYLAND

The State of Minority and Women Owned Enterprise: Evidence from Maryland, Prepared by NERA Economic Consulting for the Maryland Department of Transportation (2011)

MINNESOTA

The State of Minority and Women Owned Enterprise: Evidence from Minneapolis, Prepared by NERA Economic Consulting for the City of Minneapolis (2010)

The State of Minnesota Joint Availability and Disparity Study, Prepared by MGT of America, Inc., for the Minnesota Department of Transportation (2008)

NORTH CAROLINA

City of Charlotte: Disparity Study, Prepared by MGT of America, Inc., for the City of Charlotte (2011)

OHIO

The State of Minority and Women Owned Enterprise: Evidence from Northeast Ohio, Prepared by NERA Economic Consulting for the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (2010)

OKLAHOMA

City of Tulsa Business Disparity Study, Prepared by MGT of America, Inc. for the City of Tulsa (2010)

OREGON

A Disparity Study for the Port of Portland, Oregon, Prepared by MGT for America, Inc., for the Port of Portland, Oregon (2009)

City of Portland Disparity Study, Prepared by BBC Research & Consulting for the Portland Development Commission (2011)

PENNSYLVANIA

City of Philadelphia, Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Disparity Study, Prepared by Econosult Corporation for the City of Philadelphia (2010)

City of Philadelphia, Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Disparity Study, Prepared by Econosult Corporation for the City of Philadelphia (2011)

City of Philadelphia, Fiscal Year 2011 Annual Disparity Study, Prepared by Econosult Corporation for the City of Philadelphia (2012)

TENNESSEE

City of Memphis, Tennessee, Comprehensive Disparity Study, Prepared by Griffin and Strong, P.C., for the City of Memphis (2010)

TEXAS

The State of Minority and Women Owned Enterprise in Construction: Evidence from Houston, Prepared by NERA Economic Consulting for the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (2012)

VIRGINIA

A Disparity Study for the Commonwealth of Virginia, Prepared by MGT of America, Inc. for the Commonwealth of Virginia (2010)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

2010 Disparity Study, Final Report, Prepared by Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd., for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (2011)

WISCONSIN

Disparity Study for the City of Milwaukee, Prepared by D. Wilson Consulting Group, LLC for the City of Milwaukee (2010)

BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I would like to speak today about the importance of Federal investment in biomedical research. There are many reasons to invest in biomedical research, but the two most important reasons are very simple: biomedical research saves lives, and it is good for Pennsylvania's economy and the Nation's economy. A thriving biomedical sector creates jobs, and we simply cannot afford, from a public health or economic standpoint, not to support biomedical progress.

I have been a strong and vocal advocate for Federal funds to support biomedical research, including funding for the National Institutes of Health—NIH. In 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013, I authored a letter in support of funding for the NIH; the letter in 2013 was signed by a bipartisan group of 51 Senators.

In 2012, Pennsylvania researchers received \$1,431,589,539—\$1.4 billion—in grants from the National Institutes of Health; the State is ranked fourth in the Nation for the number of grants awarded. The funding in 2012 supported over 3,400 competitive grants to almost 100 Pennsylvania companies or universities; in turn, these grants supported thousands of jobs across the State—an estimated 2,500 in state jobs and total employment impact of over 24,000 jobs.

Long-term deficits are not sustainable, and government spending must be reduced; however, we should not indiscriminately slash funding for good programs, like medical research, that benefit Pennsylvanians, ensure our global competitiveness and invest in our economic future. I have been a champion for the continued growth of the National Institutes of Health, NIH, which drives progress of biomedical research.

While the United States has been the world leader in medical research, other nations such as China are dramatically ramping up their investment in medical research, creating new competition and threatening America's dominance in the field. We must continue to invest in medical research and maintain the capacity we currently have to support work that benefits all Americans.

We risk a scenario in which promising young researchers, seeing the struggles of their mentors and older colleagues to secure funding for their work, will choose a different path, putting a whole generation of scientists at risk. That capacity, that talent, once lost will not easily come back. Failure to invest in research now is a failure to invest in our own future, and is incredibly shortsighted. We must work to support the basic research that has the potential to lead to major advances in medical treatments and improved outcomes for patients.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING NIGHTFORCE OPTICS

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, as National Small Business Week comes to a close I would like to rise today to recognize Nightforce Optics of Orofino, ID, an inspirational small business that has grown and expanded in spite of the economic challenges of the last half decade. Founder Dr. Ray Dennis is an avid hunter and shooter from Australia who had a dream of manufacturing and selling riflescopes of unmatched quality in the United States. His dream led him on a search for a location to help make this vision a reality. Dr. Dennis was ultimately drawn to the beautiful city of Orofino in my home State. A friendly business climate, an enthusiastic labor base, and close proximity to major shipping centers made Orofino, ID the perfect place to establish Nightforce Optics.

In 1999, Nightforce Optics started with four employees occupying a small manufacturing facility. Today, Nightforce Optics employs over 100 people and has expanded their Orofino headquarters to a 35,187 square foot facility. Nightforce is committed to hiring a local workforce, as well as attracting specialized craftsmen and women to Idaho. Throughout this time, the company has delivered the utmost quality, performance, and craftsmanship of their products to customers. This dedication became self-evident as hunters, marksmen, police, and military users have come to revere Nightforce Optics as a top-tier brand in the industry.

Companies like Nightforce represent a critical part of the economy and even national security for the United States. Nightforce riflescopes produced in Orofino, ID have been used by U.S. servicemen in operations all around the globe. It is my opinion that the U.S. military should always have available the best in quality and technology, and it is in small businesses like Nightforce Optics that we often find the innovative ideas and determination that can make these products available.

By 2011, Nightforce underwent a \$1 million expansion, resulting in improved manufacturing and research and development capabilities. This investment has directly led to the company's recent introduction of new, innovative products that otherwise might never have been developed.

Although we hear over and over again that the national climate for promoting small business needs to improve, it is refreshing to hear that a sportsman from Australia with an idea and motivation relocated to Idaho to build his dream. Every year, thousands and thousands of products come from Orofino, ID with a label reading "Made in USA." I commend Dr. Ray Dennis for investing in American entrepreneurship and to Nightforce Optics for representing a small business with in-

genuity and local ties that I am proud to honor as Idaho's Small Business of the Day.●

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 which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:10 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOLF) has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 475. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include vaccines against seasonal influenza within the definition of taxable vaccines.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. Res. 181. A resolution recognizing the sesquicentennial of West Virginia and commemorating its history, people, and culture; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. KING, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 182. A resolution congratulating the American Dental Hygienists' Association on the 100th anniversary of the profession of dental hygiene and commending its work to improve the oral health of the people of the United States; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 380

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 380, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize and update the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative for grants to address the problems of individuals who experience trauma and violence related stress.

S. 647

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr.