

we use every day. I remain committed to pursuing sound forestry and trade policies that will ensure this important industry can compete fairly, contribute to sustainable forest management, and continue to provide good jobs in Montana.

The forest products industry is also looking forward to find new ways to put our wood fiber to good use and create additional value for local economies in Montana. In Whitefish, SmartLam, Inc. is the first manufacturer of cross laminated timber, CLT, products in the Nation. This Montana company is on the cutting edge of engineered-wood technology for building construction materials. SmartLam is producing more than a million board feet of CLT products a month and hopes to open a new facility due to increasing demand. These products can aid in the construction of taller, more fire-safe wood buildings and help reduce the carbon footprint of the construction process. Innovative wood construction systems are flexible and can be easily combined with other building materials, offering alternatives for construction in urban areas while supporting sustainable development in rural communities.

In addition to providing good jobs, the forest products industry plays a key role in the sustainable management of the more than 25 million acres of forests in Montana. Most of the forested lands in Montana are managed by the U.S. Forest Service. We have seen industry come together with a wide array of stakeholders in Montana to develop collaborative recommendations for projects aimed at supporting local economies, improving forest health, reducing wildfire risks, and restoring watersheds. On private lands, industry has partnered with conservation organizations to keep forested lands forested as development pressures have grown.

In addition to National Forest Products Week, this week also marks the fifth annual Montana Forest Products Week. There is no better time to say thanks to the folks who work in Montana's forest products industry.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to speak today about the many contributions of the forest products industry, as we recognize their important work during National Forest Products Week.

Wood products play a significant role in our economy. The U.S. wood products industry employs more than 548,000 people in manufacturing and forestry, and U.S. private forest owners support 2.4 million jobs and \$87 billion in payroll. In Maine, there are a number of wood products manufacturing facilities, including sawmills, millwork, and treatment plants, engineered wood and panel product facilities, and paper mills.

The environmental benefits associated with wood products—from renewability to responsible forest practices to a light carbon footprint—are helping

to strengthen markets for wood products, in turn stabilizing the wood industry's ability to create jobs and support local economies. Moreover, sustainable forest management practices in the United States maintain important forest values such as biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Strong markets for wood products provide a financial incentive for landowners to invest in their forests and keep them healthy for future generations.

Design and building professionals are increasingly recognizing wood's environmental attributes and helping to create strong markets for wood products. Over the past several years, a number of tall wood projects have been completed around the world, demonstrating successful applications of next generation technologies. Today, the concept is gaining traction in the United States where more architects are opting for a sustainable solution for attaining safe, cost-effective, high-performing tall buildings, particularly in urban dense settings. As the only renewable building material, wood requires less energy to transport, construct, and produce than other building materials.

In closing, I encourage my colleagues to support policies that maintain and grow strong markets for wood products. As we celebrate National Forest Products Week, I thank the employers and employees of the forest products industry for their contributions to Maine and the Nation.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, in support of National Forest Products Week, I would like to recognize the more than 25,000 hard-working men and women employed by the forest products industry in the great State of South Carolina. With an annual payroll of almost \$1.7 billion and an estimated value of products manufactured in the State exceeding \$9 billion, the forest products industry is among the largest manufacturing sectors in my State and the largest valued agricultural crop.

This is the 55th consecutive year that we are recognizing the forest products industry for its contributions to our economy and to sustainable manufacturing. The world has changed a lot since the first National Forest Products Week in 1960 and so has the industry.

Over the last few years, with new advancements in lumber and mass timber technologies, the U.S. has begun innovative projects to build tall wood buildings. Over 17 tall wood buildings with over seven stories or more have been built around the world, which served as demonstration projects. Due to the success of these tall wood buildings, contractors and consumers are more confident than ever in the safety and high performance of these buildings. Additionally, with the right safety measures, tall wood buildings can be designed to meet and exceed fire safety requirements.

Wood buildings are durable and can be designed to last a lifetime. Years of

real-life experiences and research have shown that wood buildings can also withstand effects of major wind and seismic events. When designed and constructed properly, these structures are high performing and provide the necessary strength and ductility to preserve building function and provide life safety protection.

Similarly, paper and packaging products have grown with the demands of a 21st century global economy. Made from a recyclable and renewable resource, paper and paper-based packaging transport food, medicine, and manufactured goods faster, further, safer, and more environmentally friendly than ever before.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating National Forest Products Week and reflect on the sustainable uses of America's forests and the important contributions they make to our economy and our national life.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I wish to honor National Forest Products Week. I would simply like to express my support for newly available and continuously evolving opportunities to build with wood.

In the State of Idaho, the forest products industry makes significant contributions to our local, State, and national economies. In Idaho alone, we have 19 sawmills, millwork, and treating facilities and 4 facilities making engineered wood and panel products. These products are increasingly used in buildings all around the globe.

As we all know, U.S. and global populations are rapidly growing. Over the past several years, a number of tall wood projects have been completed around the world, demonstrating successful applications of next generation lumber and mass timber technologies.

Today, the concept is gaining traction in the United States. More architects are opting for a sustainable solution to attain safe, cost-effective, high-performing tall buildings in urban dense settings—many of these projects already do or will use engineered wood products.

With more than 17 tall wood buildings of seven stories or more having been built around the world serving as demonstration projects, building officials, designers, contractors, and consumers are more confident than ever in the safety of these buildings.

Thank you for this opportunity to recognize the many forest products facilities and employers in my home State that are helping make these tall wood building projects become a reality.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO OTTO MERIDA

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate Otto Merida on his retirement after nearly 40 years of service to the Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce. It gives me great

pleasure to recognize his years of hard work and dedication to Las Vegas' Hispanic business community. I am proud to call Otto a friend.

Otto was born in Havana, Cuba, and came to the United States in the early 1960s through a historic U.S. mission in Cuba known as Operation Peter Pan. He attended high school in Wilmington, DE, and received an associate degree from North Florida Junior College and a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Florida. After graduating, he worked with Volunteers In Service to America, VISTA, in Massachusetts as a community organizer and social worker. He then left VISTA and worked for the Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce.

He later came to Las Vegas in 1974 and began working for Nevada's Department of Education and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Program. As someone who has traveled to Cuba and spent time with the people, I recognize the importance of normalizing some relations with this country. This is why I support lifting travel restrictions to and from Cuba. I am proud to see Otto represent his country in such a positive manner within our Nevada community. Beginning in 1976, Otto helped organize Las Vegas' Latin Chamber of Commerce, LCC, and in 1978 became the executive director. In 2005, he was named president and chief executive officer of the LCC and the LCC Community Foundation. This successful body now has over 13,000 members and is the premier Latin chamber serving the great State of Nevada. I am grateful that our State has had someone like Otto leading this incredible organization for so many years. He is one of a kind and will be missed.

Without a doubt, Otto's work has had a great impact on Las Vegas' Hispanic businesses both large and small. Through his unwavering commitment, the Hispanic business community continues to grow and prosper. Otto has not only worked to build Las Vegas' Hispanic businesses in times of economic stability, but also helped to keep hard-working southern Nevada businessowners on their feet in times of great downturn. Along with his work to support local businesses, he has also focused on philanthropic work, helping foster young Hispanic leaders through the Latino Youth Leadership Conference since 1993. In addition, he has contributed greatly in helping to grow scholarship funds to go towards higher education for Las Vegas' Hispanic youth. This community is fortunate that Otto has served as an ally and leader for decades. To say he has had a positive impact on Las Vegas' Hispanic business community would be an understatement. The strong foundation he has built will be felt for years to come.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Otto for his dedication to both Las Vegas' Hispanic business community and the LCC and

in congratulating him on his retirement. He exemplifies the highest standards of leadership and service and should be proud of his long and meaningful career. I wish him well in all of his future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO WALTER GALVIN

● Ms. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize and thank Walter Galvin for his years of service with Emerson, a great employer for 125 years in the State of Missouri. Walt joined Emerson in 1973 and has had an enormous impact on the company and the St. Louis community.

Walt's service with Emerson began as the controller at the Ridge Tool subsidiary. In 1993, he was named chief financial officer of Emerson and served in this role for 17 years. During his time as CFO, he served as a management member of Emerson's Board of Directors and as vice chairman. Walt retired from Emerson in February of 2013, but worked for Emerson for another 2 years to lend his expertise and knowledge to the next generation of company leaders.

Walt's experience working at Emerson provided him with the insight necessary to influence positive change in U.S. lawmaking. In 2004, he was directly involved in the passage of the American Jobs Creation Act, which included many provisions intended to incentivize and expand domestic manufacturing. He appeared as a witness many times before committees in the House and Senate, shedding light on the struggle American companies face in such a competitive international environment and lending his expertise to discussions of our Tax Code and comprehensive tax reform.

He served as a member of the Board Of Directors of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and as vice chairman and later, chairman of the Chamber's tax committee in Washington, DC. He also served on the board of the National Association of Manufacturers, NAM, and, for a time, as the chairman of NAM's tax committee. Other companies such as Ameren Corporation, F.M. Global Insurance, and Aegion Corporation also count Walt as a director.

In addition to his service to Emerson and broader policy discussions, Walt was active in charitable endeavors in the St. Louis community. He served on the board of Interco Charitable Foundation, the United Way of Greater St. Louis, and is the past president of the Saint Louis Zoo Association and Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital.

St. Louis and the entire State of Missouri are very lucky to have such a dedicated community leader making a difference on a local, State, and national level. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing Walter Galvin's impact on American businesses and leaders nationwide.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:04 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3116) to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:46 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3116. An act to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program.

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

At 10:54 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1362. An act to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs).

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

H.R. 692. An act to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States.

At 1:42 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 10. An act to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2193. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2200. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to strengthen equal pay requirements.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-3238. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,