

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING PHIL FRIEDMAN ON RECEIVING PROJECT LEGACY'S U.S. GODED JUBILEE VISIONARY AWARD

HON. MIKE JOHNSON

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Phil Friedman for his distinguished career and philanthropic contributions to our country. As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of American independence, Mr. Friedman received the United States Golden Jubilee Visionary Award at Project Legacy's America 250 Gala at the Library of Congress on July 14, 2026. He was recognized for 50 years of entrepreneurship and business leadership in the United States.

A man of humble origins, Mr. Friedman arrived in the United States in 1976—our Nation's bicentennial year—after 12 tiresome years laboring in the electronics industry of the former Soviet Union. He and his wife left behind the discrimination and antisemitism of the embattled Soviet state to settle in New York City. Phil was driven, ambitious, and determined to chart a new destiny for his family, qualities he no doubt learned from his parents who survived the horrors of the Holocaust and the Gulag.

Upon arriving in America, Phil found his talents well-suited to this land of limitless opportunity and success soon took root. By 1984, Phil had launched Computer Generated Solutions with a team of just five employees. Under his dedicated leadership, the company grew into an IT empire, employing over 8,000 professionals and serving customers in 50 countries across North America, South America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Today, he continues to steward this organization as Founder and Executive Chairman.

Throughout his career, Mr. Friedman has matched his entrepreneurial success with a steadfast commitment to giving back to the Nation that has been his home for half a century. His contributions to the U.S. economy have twice been recognized by the United States Congress, as well as by the New York City Council. He is active in civic and philanthropic life as a member of the Economic Club of New York, the Washington Post Intelligence Council, and the Wall Street Journal CEO Council, and he serves on the Executive Committee of the Tom Lantos Institute in Budapest. He also serves as Vice Chairman and Trustee of Yeshiva University, which awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in 2011.

As our Nation marks 250 years of independence, Mr. Friedman's receipt of the United States Golden Jubilee Visionary Award is a fitting tribute to a life that embodies the American ideals of opportunity and free enterprise. His story is a testament to America's promise, and on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to congratulate Mr. Phil Friedman for his distinguished career and his enduring commitment to our Nation.

NATIONAL SECURITY, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2027

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 8595, the Fiscal Year 2027 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill. I opposed the bill when it was reported out of the House Appropriations Committee and urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the bill on the House Floor. Before I address underlying issues with the base bill, I would like to address one amendment offered by Mr. Massie.

I have long been a vocal opponent of the way the United States provides a blank check to Israel. For the last nine years, I have carried a bill, the Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation, which would put limits on how all US assistance to Israel may be used. My bill would ensure that not one penny of taxpayer dollars is used to violate the human rights of Palestinian children. Further, I am a proud cosponsor of other legislation, like the Block the Bombs Act, that would place additional limits on U.S. assistance to Israel. These are the legislative proposals that the House should be taking up to condition assistance to Israel.

Instead, the House is considering Mr. Massie's Amendment which would strike all \$3.3 billion in Foreign Military Financing to Israel. I support the goal of Mr. Massie's Amendment to cut the same funding that has helped Israel commit human rights violations in Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon. However, this amendment does nothing to limit the assistance we provide to Israel under the defense appropriations bill, nor does it condition future assistance that the U.S. is due to provide Israel under the existing Memorandum of Understanding between our two countries that is not set to expire until FY2028. I will vote present on Mr. Massie's Amendment as I have serious concerns with the way it is so broadly written. As drafted, other foreign assistance—including vital assistance to Palestinians—could be cut off as well. For Mr. Massie, this amendment is just another way to carry out President Trump's isolationist agenda to limit and, in some cases completely cease, U.S. foreign assistance.

With that, I would like to express my concerns with the underlying bill. It is deeply unfortunate that this legislation continues President Trump's retreat from strong American diplomacy in the world and supporting development assistance. We know what happens when America withdraws from the developing world: poverty, malnutrition, and disease take hold, transnational terrorism spreads, and our adversaries like Russia and China move in to

fill the void. This bill is \$2.7 billion dollars below last year. It is a staggering \$12 billion below where the bill was two years ago. 20 percent. Gone. In two years.

I am particularly heartbroken by what has happened to funding for global health initiatives, which used to be a source of bipartisan pride. Democrats and Republicans used to stand together and say: America saves lives, and we do it because it reflects our values. But this bill cuts \$532 million from global health programs.

Here is what will happen: fewer mothers will survive childbirth in sub-Saharan Africa. Fewer children will be vaccinated against highly contagious, dangerous diseases like tuberculosis—and we know that disease does not stop at any border. It means HIV clinics in Zambia, in Uganda, and in the Philippines shut their doors. Make no mistake—even if America disengages from the world, global problems will still land on our doorstep—they will just be harder to manage.

These programs save lives, and they improve our national security in the process. We can and must do better.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this bill.

HE COULD HAVE BEEN ME

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Emmett Louis Till. Emmett Louis Till was born July 25, 1941. I was born September 6, 1941—just forty-two days later. Had Emmett lived, he would be turning 85 years old today. I turn 85 in September. We are the same age. We came into this world together, and that truth has never left me.

In the summer of 1955, when Emmett was murdered in Mississippi, I was 14 years old—living in Parkdale, Arkansas, and visiting my grandfather in Mississippi every summer, just as Emmett visited his great-uncle. When that news reached us, it terrified every Black family in the South. The thought that formed in my mind at 14 years old has stayed with me every day of my life: that could have been me.

Emmett's mother, the incomparable Mrs. Mamie Till-Mobley, turned unimaginable grief into the most courageous act in American history. She opened that casket and said: "Let the people see what I've seen." That decision ignited the Civil Rights Movement. Rosa Parks said she thought of Emmett Till before she refused to give up her seat. I was privileged to know Mrs. Till-Mobley personally, and I carry her courage with me in everything I do.

In her honor, I introduced legislation to establish the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Historic Site in Illinois—because their story must be protected, taught, and never forgotten.

Tonight we celebrate what would have been Emmett's 85th birthday. He should be here—

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

gray-haired, surrounded by grandchildren, full of stories. The distance between his fate and mine was not character or worth. It was chance. And that is why I will never stop working to ensure that no mother ever has to do what Mamie Till-Mobley did.

I wish Emmett a Happy Birthday. We carry him. We remember him. We will not rest until the justice he never received in life is fully honored in history.

EMPOWERING WOMEN-OWNED
SMALL BUSINESSES

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the so-called “Ending Discrimination in Government Contracting Act,” legislation that would more accurately be described as the “Ending WOSB Participation in Government Contracting Act.”

This latest attempt to attack small business entrepreneurs and women’s participation in the federal marketplace is transparent, misguided, and cruel. The intent of this bill is specific and the result is predictable: it will depress contracting opportunities for women-owned small businesses, unlevel the playing field to reduce competition, and further the underrepresentation of women-owned firms in federal contracting across all sectors and industries.

Mr. Speaker, starting and growing a small business is already incredibly difficult for most current and aspiring entrepreneurs. The challenges can be immense, from accessing affordable capital and hiring qualified staff to maintaining or growing sales while integrating new tech. Successfully navigating the landscape requires persistence, determination, and flexibility. Competing for government contracts adds another layer of complexity, especially for small firms without the resources of corporate giants or the ear of this President.

The Small Business Administration (SBA)’s Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program is designed to help level the playing field for women-owned small businesses in the federal marketplace. It was not established solely to remedy the very real discrimination and bias that women-owned firms faced then and still face today. Congress established the WOSB Program to address how the systematic, well-documented underrepresentation of women-owned firms in specific industries was undermining the government’s objectives.

Like the WOSB federal contracting goals, the government’s objectives remain unmet.

In 1994, Congress established a goal of awarding 5 percent of federal contracting dollars to women-owned small businesses government-wide, providing “a target that will result in greater opportunities for women to compete for federal contracts.” Recognizing the obstacles that female entrepreneurs faced when entering and competing in the federal market, Congress identified this as an uphill battle: “Given the slow progress to date . . . this goal may take some time to be reached.”

Over three decades later, this remains an understatement. The government has only met the goal twice, most recently in 2019.

At the time the goal was enacted, women-owned firms were awarded less than 2 percent of federal contracts. The dollars and percentages have climbed slowly and steadily but progress is inconsistent. In recent years, WOSB contracts have made up almost 5 percent of eligible small business spending, meaning the goal has helped to grow WOSB market share by roughly 1 percent each decade. We knew it would take time, but this progress has been insufficient for those of us who believe strongly in equal opportunity and a level playing field.

It appears that for supporters of the “Ending WOSB Participation in Government Contracting Act,” more than 95 percent of federal contract awarded to non-women-owned small businesses is insufficient for their goals as well. Apparently, the “discrimination” that non-WOSBs face as a result of receiving only more than 95 percent of federal contracting dollars must be remedied with legislative efforts designed to reduce the market share of women-owned firms—from its current 4.5 percent to zero.

The motives behind this bill are transparent but we do not need it to pass to know the result. We are now seeing the impact of a government that retreats from policies empowering women-owned firms. As the SBA recently announced, in Year One of the Trump Administration:

The value of contracts awarded to all small businesses dropped by \$4.5 billion, while women-owned firms saw a decrease of \$2.3 billion. That is a staggering amount: WOSB contracts make up 16 percent of all small business contracts but took half the total losses for all small businesses last year.

The number of small businesses participating in the industrial base also tanked, while WOSBs were again disproportionately impacted. The government awarded contracts to 6.9 percent fewer small businesses than the year before, yet 7.4 percent fewer women-owned firms received a contract.

The disproportionate impact of this Administration’s policies on women-owned small businesses previews the predictable and foreseeable consequences of the “Ending WOSB Participation in Government Contracting Act.” It further highlights why the goals and tools are needed now more than ever.

In 2000, I wrote, and successfully shepherded into law, legislation that created the WOSB Program. Rather than relying only on a goal, we gave federal agencies the tools to bring women into the market and level the playing field for them to compete. Like other small business procurement programs, contracting officers are permitted to use small business only competitions and direct awards to SBA-certified firms, when certain conditions are met.

We knew at the time that any federal contracting program assisting women-owned firms had to pass constitutional scrutiny. We built in strong legal protections that have enabled the program to remain operational today.

As a result of the details and complexity of these protections, however, the WOSBs tools remain underutilized, and contracts awarded using these tools are few. The less than \$2 billion in contracts awarded through the WOSB Program makes up: just over 6 percent of contracts awarded to women-owned small businesses, roughly 1 percent of all small

business contracts, and barely a fraction—only 0.3 percent—of total government contracts.

That bears repeating, as supporters of efforts like this bill conveniently leave it out: the overwhelming majority of contracts awarded to WOSBs are awarded competitively. Firms owned by men are not discriminated against or left out of these competitions, women-owned firms are winning them. In Fiscal Year 2024, WOSBs won \$12 billion in competitions among other small businesses and more than \$8 billion in competitions against other than small firms.

This context helps clarify the motives behind this bill: to stigmatize the WOSB Program and eliminate the market share that currently results from WOSBs winning competitively-awarded contracts.

For those of us who believe strongly in equal opportunity and a level playing field, the unmet goal and underutilization of the procurement tools show the government is not properly implementing the WOSB program—and therefore not addressing needs of the women business owners it is designed to serve.

In a recent Small Business Committee hearing on the defense industrial base, Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP) summed it up bluntly: “It is not a shortage of capable women-owned firms ready to bid and win. . . . The goal is the government’s to meet, and the reasons it goes unmet are structural and within the government’s own control.”

It appears however that for supporters of the “Ending WOSB Participation in Government Contracting Act,” more than 99.97 percent of federal contracts open to competition from non-WOSBs does not meet their needs either.

This bill and similar attacks on small business programs often imply that the government simply hands out contracts to unqualified and unvetted companies. This ignores the fundamental nature of government procurement, and is both inaccurate and insulting.

In my years leading the Small Business Committee, I have yet to meet a small business who says the government’s requirements are too lax, winning contracts is easy, and compliance is not burdensome. Even before last year’s exodus of small businesses from the federal market, estimates showed the government has almost half the number of small businesses in its ecosystem than a decade ago. The shrinking industrial base usually sets off bipartisan alarms. The Department of Defense calls it a national security risk.

Therefore, recruiting and retaining small businesses into the public sector, ensuring they have contracting opportunities, and bolstering the resiliency and competitiveness of the industrial base should be our priority. As women entrepreneurs increasingly venture into diverse industries, the WOSB Program can help us do that. In fact, women-owned small businesses are the industrial base’s growth opportunity.

I hope all of my colleagues will join me in opposing this extremist bill to eliminate the WOSB program and any legislation that rolls back the hard-fought gains women have made in the workplace, the business community, and the federal market.