

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.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PETER
BAUER DUNBAR

HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Peter Bauer Dunbar, a dedicated American, accomplished aviator, and distinguished veteran whose extraordinary service and devotion to family reflect the finest traditions of our Nation.

Born on January 29, 1936, at Epworth Memorial Hospital in South Bend, Indiana, to Irma and Willard Parker Dunbar, Sr., Mr. Dunbar spent his early years on the family farm near Crawfordsville, where he and his brothers, Willard and Samuel, worked daily caring for livestock and supporting the operations that sustained the family during and after the Great Depression.

After graduating from Crawfordsville High School in 1954, he earned a Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps scholarship to Harvard College, where he excelled academically and in leadership. He ultimately served as Battalion Commander of the Harvard NROTC unit. His summers included active-duty assignments aboard the USS *Albany*, USS *Purdy*, and at training sites in Virginia and Texas.

Mr. Dunbar graduated in 1958 with a Bachelor of Arts in Engineering and Applied Physics and immediately entered night training, where he further distinguished himself through rigorous instruction at Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola and NAS Corpus Christi. In 1960, he was assigned to Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One (VQ-1) in Japan. He served four years in highly classified operations as a pilot and navigator of the Airborne Radar Surveillance and Intelligence Plane (EC-121M), conducting missions across Asia and the Western Pacific, including involvement in Operation Dominic. His leadership culminated in his role as an Electronic Warfare Aircraft Commander.

After transferring to the Naval Reserve in 1964, Mr. Dunbar pursued graduate studies at Purdue University, where he earned his Master of Science in Industrial Administration as a Krannert Scholar. He continued to fly for the Navy Reserve, piloting the Douglas C-54 and C-118 aircrafts at Naval Air Station Glenview and Alameda, demonstrating ongoing commitment to military readiness and service.

On October 4, 1965, he began a new chapter as a pilot and navigator for Pan American World Airways, flying the Boeing 707 and teaching navigation to new aviators. Throughout the Vietnam War, he completed more than 400 transits into Vietnam, transporting troops, equipment, mail, and supplies. He later qualified on the Boeing 747, quickly rising to the position of Training Captain.

On February 7, 1966, Mr. Dunbar married Tomoko Furukawa at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. This marked the beginning of a life of partnership that brought them one daughter, Cynthia. The family later settled in Carmel, Indiana, after many years in California. In 1986, following the transfer of Pan Am's Pacific operations to United Airlines, he continued flying for another decade, mastering the 727, 757, 767, and serving for several years as a 747 Captain.

Mr. Dunbar completed six years of active-duty Navy service, followed by three years in

the Ready Reserve and five years in the Standby Reserve, ultimately achieving the rank of Lieutenant Commander. His exemplary service earned him a place on the retired list, marking the culmination of a life defined by dedication, skill, and honor.

Mr. Speaker, the life of Peter Bauer Dunbar stands as a remarkable testament to courage, excellence, and steadfast commitment to his country, his family, and the values that have long guided generations of Americans.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF OLEJNIK FARMS AND GREENHOUSES

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 100th anniversary of Olejnik Farms and Greenhouses. Reaching a century of operation is a truly remarkable milestone that reflects a hundred years of dedication to Michigan agriculture.

For five generations, the Olejnik family has demonstrated unwavering commitment to hard work, quality, and service. As the industry has evolved and new generations have taken over, these core values have remained constant.

Over the past century, Olejnik Farms and Greenhouses has not only sustained a proud agricultural tradition but has also played an important role in strengthening the local community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Olejnik Farms and Greenhouses on this historic anniversary and in wishing the Olejnik family continued success for generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SAMUEL
DYKES DUNBAR, SR.

HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Samuel Dykes Dunbar, Sr., a devoted Hoosier, veteran, engineer, and servant-leader whose 93 years of life exemplified duty, character, and love of country.

Born on September 17, 1931, in South Bend, Indiana, to Irma Claire Dykes Dunbar and Willard Parker Dunbar, Sr., he grew up surrounded by the values of hard work and family. He spent his youth on Dunbar Farms in Crawfordsville and proudly graduating from Culver Summer Schools' Woodcraft Camp before completing high school in 1949.

At just seventeen, Mr. Dunbar began his military service as a Private in the Service Battery of the Indiana National Guard, later enlisting in the United States Air Force in 1950, where he served honorably as a Radar Systems Specialist in the only F-86 Sabre jet unit stationed in England. Mr. Dunbar forged lifelong friendships during his deployments in Europe and Africa.

Following more than five years of active duty, he returned home to Indiana to complete his Electrical Engineering degree at Purdue

University. He subsequently joined the Air National Guard as an Air Electronics Officer and dedicated over thirty years to service in Group, Wing, and State Staff roles, retiring with the rank of Colonel in 1987.

Throughout his distinguished military career, Mr. Dunbar earned numerous honors, including the Air Force Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Sagamore of the Wabash, and recognition as a Kentucky Colonel. These honors reflect Mr. Dunbar's lifetime of exceptional leadership and commitment to the Nation.

On September 7, 1957, he married Barbara Ann Nadeo, and together they raised four children: Theresa, Samuel, Jr., Claire, and Mary. Simultaneously he continued his education, earning an MBA from Auburn University in addition to completing both Air Command and Staff College and Air War College in 1970.

Beyond military service, he built a respected civilian career in the defense and engineering sectors across several states. Mr. Dunbar then returned to Indiana, where he served as a professional engineer at Esterline Angus and later at Mallory Controls. One of his most significant contributions include serving as President of the Indiana Chapter of the Society of American Value Engineers.

Mr. Dunbar passed away on November 15, 2024, at Hoosier Village in Zionsville, Indiana. He left behind a legacy defined by integrity, service, and deep devotion to his family, his state, and the United States of America.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF JOHN PATRICK DWYER

HON. JAMES R. WALKINSHAW

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of John Patrick Dwyer, a devoted husband, father, Navy veteran, labor advocate, and longtime community leader whose service and dedication left a lasting impact on Northern Virginia and all who knew him.

Born in the Bronx, New York, John lived a life defined by service, hard work, and a deep commitment to the people and causes he cared about. He proudly served his country in the United States Navy from 1962 to 1966 aboard the USS *Mitscher* and continued his service in the Naval Reserves.

Following his military service, John pursued a career as an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration. A strong believer in the rights and dignity of working men and women, he became deeply involved in the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization and remained a steadfast advocate for organized labor throughout his life. His commitment to workers and unions reflected his broader belief that communities are strongest when people stand together in support of one another.

John later made Northern Virginia his home, where he established a successful printing business in Alexandria and became a familiar and respected figure throughout the community. Through his business and civic involvement, he built enduring friendships and earned the admiration of many for his integrity, generosity, and unwavering loyalty.