

small business in the country. Our rapidly rising energy costs only serve to underscore the urgency with which we must address these environmental challenges.

I also continue to be concerned about the lack of small business inclusion in Federal contracts. In an effort to level the playing field, Congress set forth specific procurement goals in law, including goals for women, veteran, and minority owned businesses, but the Bush administration has proven unwilling to work quickly to meet these goals. The Women's Procurement Program is a troublesome example of a larger trend. In 2000, this program was created to ensure the Federal Government sets aside at least 5 percent of all procurement opportunities for women-owned businesses. More than 7 years later, only 3.4 percent of Federal contracts are reaching those businesses.

Janet Ceddia, president of a security and fencing company in Hudson, Massachusetts, is just the type of business owner who would benefit if the Federal Government improved its efforts at reaching out to all types of small businesses.

A small, disadvantaged, 8(a) certified, woman-owned company, Security Construction Services, Inc. in Hudson, Massachusetts, has grown enormously in recent years, doubling its workforce and expanding its services as the company has received \$15 million in government contracts. Today, Janet's business has completed contracts for the Air Force, Army Reserve, Coast Guard, and Veterans Administration, among other agencies, and Janet was honored as the 2008 Region I Prime Contractor of the Year for her success. As Janet has proven, when given the chance, small businesses prove to be excellent partners in Federal projects.

I would also like to highlight the work of Maria Gooch-Smith, who is being honored for her work as the Executive Director of the South Eastern Economic Development, SEED, Corporation in Taunton, Massachusetts. Over the last eight years, SEED has made an average of 150 loans each year, and has operated as the largest SBA 504 and Micro Lender in Massachusetts. Last year alone, SEED granted or leveraged over \$105 million, which directly contributed to the creation of 637 new jobs, and, in doing so, demonstrated the vast capability of SBA 504 Certified Development Companies. It is imperative that these small business loan programs receive the necessary resources for them to maintain quality, effective programs and services to support small businesses and our local communities in a positive way.

I am proud of all of the hardworking Americans who face the challenges of opening and running a small business, and I encourage us all to take this week of special recognition to reflect on the possibilities for further improving the operating climate for small business owners and to reaffirm our re-

solve to fight for the necessary resources to assist small businesses. I applaud the dedication, innovation, and achievements of America's entrepreneurs, and I pledge to continue to advocate on their behalf.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, as we celebrate National Small Business Week, which runs April 21 through April 25, 2008, I rise in support of a Senate Resolution—which I introduced along with Chairman KERRY, and other members of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship—that honors the entrepreneurial spirit of our Nation's nearly 27 million small businesses and the tremendous contributions they make to our economy.

Small businesses are the driving force behind our nation's economic growth and job creation. Representing 99 percent of all employers, small businesses create nearly ⅔ of all net new jobs and generate more than 50 percent of the Nation's nonfarm gross domestic product. They are the foundation, the engine, the core of our economy. Clearly, the greatest source of jobs in this country are the small businesses that are constantly responding to new challenges with innovations and creativity.

As Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I have made it one of my top priorities to be an advocate for small businesses, and to help raise the needs and concerns of our countries' job creators. With more than 600,000 small businesses having opened in 2006, this is clearly a sector that deserves our accolades, recognition, and support.

Indeed, hope embodies the spirit of the 26.8 million small business owners. They are willing to take risks that others don't, they transform their ideas and dreams into realities, their hobbies become their professions, and their entrepreneurial spirit can be seen in the products and services that make up America. Frankly, this week as we celebrate our Nation's entrepreneurs, we will undoubtedly fall short of fully recognizing what our country's small businesses truly add to our economy.

Given the sluggish state of our economy, it is all the more imperative that we fully equip our small businesses, our true job generators, and provide them with the tools—not just to mitigate and stem this crisis—but to be a catalyst for helping to address and ultimately solve it. We must take advantage of the opportunities to help our small businesses thrive. We in Congress should reduce their tax burdens, ensure they receive the business counseling they deserve, and that they have affordable and reliable health insurance options for their employees.

One of our most valuable assets for ensuring the success of small businesses is the Small Business Administration, SBA. The SBA is pivotal in overseeing the delivery of financial and business development tools for millions of aspiring entrepreneurs and existing small businesses across the United

States. With the SBA being the only Federal agency with the mandate to foster small business growth, we must work to provide the agency with the resources needed to help our nation's entrepreneurs right this economy.

So as we celebrate our Nation's small businesses, we must be mindful of Congress's responsibility to ensure that each business has the opportunity to flourish. When accounting for inflation the SBA has seen its core lending and business development program budget cut by 28 percent since 2001, and this trend must simply be reversed. While the SBA touts its "doing more with less," the agency's resources, programs, and employees are stretched too thin, which in the end negatively impacts our Nation's small business and the economy as a whole. As we look ahead, rest assured, I will not hesitate to take action and ensure that this vital sector continues to have the valuable resources it deserves.

The SBA has been, and will continue to be, a critical partner to millions of small enterprises as well as aspiring entrepreneurs as they embark on the path to prosperity and job creation. The least we can do is strengthen, not erode, the SBA's core loan and technical assistance programs that have proven time and again to be the keystone in aiding the efforts and dreams of America's entrepreneurs.

Today we celebrate our Nation's entrepreneurs and honor America's small businesses. I urge my colleagues to show their support for the small businesses in their states and support this resolution. We must remember that this country's future will be determined by today's small businesses, and the faster we can help them create more jobs, the quicker the economy will rebound, and the stronger its foundation will be.

SENATE RESOLUTION 525—RECOGNIZING THE PROGRESS MADE BY STATES PARTIES TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE

Mr. BIDEN (for himself and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 525

Whereas, on April 24, 1997, the Senate gave its advice and consent to the ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, with Annexes, done at Paris January 13, 1993 (commonly known as the "Chemical Weapons Convention" and the "CWC") (T. Doc. 103-21);

Whereas, the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force on April 29, 1997;

Whereas, since the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force, more than 27,000 metric tons of chemical weapons have been destroyed, representing over 35 percent of the declared chemical weapon stockpiles worldwide;

Whereas 11 chemical weapons destruction facilities are currently in operation in 5 countries;

Whereas none of the 65 chemical weapons production facilities declared by 12 States Parties are producing chemical weapons, and all but 4 of the facilities have been either verifiably destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention;

Whereas, on July 11, 2007, Albania became the first State Party to completely eliminate its entire stockpile of chemical weapons, with assistance from the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program;

Whereas membership in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons now stands at 183 states, encompassing 98 percent of the world's population, up from 87 States Parties when the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force;

Whereas the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention was opened on April 28, 2003, and 113 States Parties participated in the First Review Conference; and

Whereas the Second Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention opened on April 7, 2008, in The Hague, Netherlands: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms its support for the purposes, operations, and undertakings of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which have served the interests of international peace and security and the national security interests of the United States;

(2) notes the progress that has been made by States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention toward the elimination of stockpiles of deadly chemical weapons in possessor states, and urges continued progress toward that goal;

(3) calls on all States Parties—

(A) to continue their compliance with their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention to permit the monitoring and verification of the inactivation, and later destruction or conversion, of all chemical weapons production facilities, as well as the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles;

(B) to submit and allow verification of the consistency of industrial chemical declarations; and

(C) to allow the effective monitoring of the non-diversion of chemicals for activities prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention; and

(4) calls on all States Parties to adopt the necessary laws, regulations, and enforcement practices to ban chemical weapons activities, pursuant to Article VIII of the Chemical Weapons Convention and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), and to afford appropriate legal and regulatory assistance to other countries so as to achieve full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, 11 years ago this month, the Senate gave its advice and consent to U.S. ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention, or CWC. Those of us who were here then remember all too well how contentious and difficult a task that was.

Eleven years later, I have no doubt in my mind that the Senate did the right thing. The CWC clearly serves the national security interests of the U.S. It continues to enhance international peace and security.

Since the CWC entered into force, 183 States have signed on to the treaty's commitment to forgo poison gas forever, and have subjected themselves to the treaty's verification procedures. States Parties to the CWC have de-

stroyed over 27,000 tons of chemical weapons—over a third of the world's declared stockpiles—and 11 destruction facilities around the world are working to destroy even more. Sixty-five chemical weapons production facilities that, without a Chemical Weapons Convention, could have churned out still more poison gas are no longer carrying out that horrible work, and all but 4 of those former weapons production facilities have been verifiably destroyed or converted to peaceful purposes. Most importantly, there has been no use of chemical weapons by any country in the last 11 years, and no international support for the use of such weapons by terrorist groups.

Under the able leadership of its Director-General, Ambassador Rogelio Pfrirter, the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons runs a tight ship. It works with all States Parties to improve national declarations, to mount effective inspections, and to secure the adoption of effective national laws, regulations and procedures that criminalize and guard against the production or stockpiling of chemical weapons.

The States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention are gathering over the next 2 weeks in The Netherlands for the Convention's Second Review Conference. Senator LUGAR and I have introduced this resolution during the Review Conference in order to reaffirm the Senate's commitment to the goals of the CWC. We are proud of the progress that has been made so far, and we call upon all States Parties to continue to meet their commitments under the CWC and to do all they can to further the noble aims of the Convention.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 526—DESIGNATING APRIL 20 THROUGH 26, 2008, AS “NATIONAL COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE, COMMUNITY HEALTH PRACTITIONER, AND DENTAL HEALTH AIDE WEEK”

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. STEVENS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 526

Whereas Alaska experienced one of the most extreme tuberculosis epidemics in recorded history in the 1950s;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program in Alaska was created during the 1950s, in response to the unique health care needs of remote Alaskan communities;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program, which currently consists of 550 Community Health Aides and Community Health Practitioners and 40 Dental Health Aides, serves 178 isolated Alaskan communities to provide emergency, primary health care, and oral health care;

Whereas Community Health Aides, Community Health Practitioners, and Dental Health Aides have proven their dedication to serving Alaskans and their ability to work in some of the most challenging and diverse settings in the world;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program is the only program of its kind in the United States, and other countries have modeled their delivery of rural health care after this program;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program has proven to be effective, efficient, and essential in improving the health of the inhabitants of rural Alaska;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program is a patient's first contact within the network of health care professionals in the Alaska Tribal Health Care System and is one of the most effective means of delivering health care services to Alaskan communities;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program was created with a focus on tuberculosis, meningitis, and other infectious diseases, but now successfully cares for other common diseases such as diabetes and heart disease;

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program also serves the oral health needs of Alaskans, and is in the process of adding services to address the behavioral health needs of rural Alaska; and

Whereas the Community Health Aide Program has successfully adapted over the last 50 years to the ever-evolving health care landscape of Alaskan communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates April 20 through 26, 2008, as “National Community Health Aide, Community Health Practitioner, and Dental Health Aide Week”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 527—DESIGNATING APRIL 23, 2008, AS “NATIONAL ADOPT A LIBRARY DAY”

Mr. WEBB (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 527

Whereas libraries are an essential part of our communities and our national system of education;

Whereas the citizens of the United States benefit significantly from libraries that serve as an open place for people of all ages and backgrounds to make use of books and other resources that offer pathways to learning, self-discovery, and the pursuit of knowledge;

Whereas the libraries of the United States depend on the generous donations and support of individuals and groups to ensure that those who are unable to purchase books still have access to a wide variety of resources;

Whereas certain nonprofit organizations facilitate donations of books to schools and libraries across the country to extend the joys of reading to millions of people in the United States and prevent used books from being thrown away; and

Whereas several States and Commonwealths that recognize the importance of libraries and reading have adopted resolutions commemorating April 23 as “Adopt A Library Day”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 23, 2008, as “National Adopt A Library Day”;

(2) honors organizations that help facilitate donations to schools and libraries;

(3) urges all people in the United States who own unused books to donate those books to local libraries;

(4) strongly supports children and families who take advantage of the resources provided by schools and libraries; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.