

the chief executive officer of Precise Software Solutions—an innovative information technology company that is based in Rockville, MD. Dr. Huang is also a professor of information systems at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, where he is training future leaders in Maryland's technology sector.

Small business owners like Dr. Huang are the cornerstone of Maryland's economy, and their deep roots in the community help to shape the culture and character of our State. I thank Dr. Huang for bringing dynamism and ingenuity to Maryland's economy, and I wish him and his colleagues continued success.

I have met with countless small business owners like Dr. Huang as I have traveled across my home State of Maryland, which we proudly call "America in Miniature" due to our diversity. From bustling metropolitan areas like Baltimore City and the DC suburbs to rural communities on the Eastern Shore and in Mountain Maryland, small businesses are not just where we buy products and services; they are the building blocks that make up our communities.

That is why I requested a seat on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee when I began serving in the Senate in 2007. I wanted to make sure small businesses in Maryland and across the country were receiving the support they needed from Washington. Nationwide, small businesses account for 99.9 percent of all businesses, with there being a total of nearly 31 million small businesses that employ 60 million Americans.

According to the Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, small businesses created 1.8 million net jobs in 2016, the most recent year for which data is available. Of those jobs created, more than 1.2 million were created by small businesses with fewer than 20 employees. It is clear that small businesses are the growth engine that power our economy, so it is on us in Congress to ensure that they receive the support they need to overcome the unique challenges they face.

When I meet with small businesses across Maryland, one of their top concerns is often their access to capital. Capital is the lifeblood of small businesses. So, for many small businesses, an SBA-backed loan is a lifeline that is the difference between success and failure in the early, fragile stages of a small business's life.

I see the benefits of SBA-backed loans every time I drive past Under Armour's headquarters in Baltimore. Without an SBA-backed loan, Under Armour may not have been able to grow from a small business being run out of a basement to the global brand, with thousands of employees in Baltimore, that it is today. Last year alone, SBA-backed financing helped nearly 75,000 small businesses access more than \$36 billion in capital, and it supported more than 725,000 jobs.

The SBA's finance programs are models of public-private partnerships and do a lot of good in this country, but some of the programs are not adequately reaching underserved communities, especially those of minorities, women, and veterans. I do note that the SBA's Microloan Program and the 7(a) Community Advantage Pilot Program do punch above their weight in reaching underserved borrowers. We can learn from how those programs are being operated to help underserved communities in order to help modify loan programs such as the 7(a) and 504 so they may be able to reach more of the underserved communities.

The chronic shortfall of SBA loans reaching the minority communities is especially important in Maryland, which I am proud to say has the highest average number of minority-owned businesses in the country. Minority-owned firms are two to three times more likely to be denied credit, more likely to avoid applying for loans based on the belief that they will be turned down, and more likely to receive smaller loans and pay higher interest rates on the loans they do receive.

Last September, I held a field hearing in Baltimore at Morgan State University—a revered HBCU—to learn more about the struggles minority entrepreneurs face in their accessing of capital.

One of the key takeaways from the hearing was that minority small business owners need SBA to fill the gaps when private lenders often fall short. Additionally, access to capital must go hand in hand with entrepreneurial development training. The entrepreneurial development programs at the SBA provided mentorship, business advice, and training to more than 1.2 million entrepreneurs during fiscal year 2018.

These programs are invaluable. Data show that small businesses created by entrepreneurs who receive at least 3 hours of SBA counseling have higher success rates than small businesses created by entrepreneurs who have not received that amount of counseling.

Knowing that small businesses, especially minority-owned small businesses, need more support from the SBA, not less, is why I remain deeply troubled by the administration's efforts to make vital business counseling and SBA-backed loans more difficult to access.

The administration's fiscal year 2020 budget proposed more than a quarter of a billion dollars in new fees for SBA-backed loans. Simply put, this is a \$255 million tax on American small business owners. Additionally, instead of investing in entrepreneurial development programs, the administration's recent budget proposed \$67 million in cuts to these programs.

The administration's efforts to undermine the SBA are even more concerning considering the current lack of leadership at the Agency. Since the resignation of Administrator Linda

McMahon, the President has not sent Congress a nomination for a new Administrator. I also remain concerned about the administration's failure to nominate a Deputy Administrator—a position that has been vacant for more than 12 months.

We hear from the administration that we haven't acted on their nominees. We don't have the nominees to act on. As I speak, there are thousands of small business owners from across the country who are visiting Washington, DC, in order to participate in the National Small Business Week events that have been scheduled, and many more are participating in events across the country.

Let us honor them and their contributions by giving the SBA the tools and leadership it needs to help entrepreneurs build successful small businesses. I look forward to continuing to work with Chairman MARCO RUBIO and our colleagues in the House, in a bipartisan fashion, to support American small businesses so they can continue developing innovative products and services and creating jobs.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order of the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

#### REMEMBERING ROBERT PEAR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to pay tribute to a revered and distinguished member of the press corps, Robert Pear, a longtime reporter for the New York Times. He spent four decades in the corridors of this U.S. Capitol.

I often say that journalists are the watchdogs of democracy, and I really believe that—policing their beats to inform the public and, more importantly, to hold wrongdoers and especially our big government accountable. That makes them very valuable to preserving our representative system of government. These journalists serve as the eyes and ears of the American people—reporting on issues that impact the daily lives and livelihoods of our neighbors. From crime to education, healthcare, and foreign policy, journalists serve as guardians of the First Amendment.

That brings me to Robert.

On Tuesday, the healthcare beat lost a legendary reporter. The death of Robert Pear will be mourned for many years to come. As the dean of the national healthcare reporters, he established a reputation for hard-nosed reporting. For decades, he carried out a noble mission to inform the public, and he did it with integrity and fairness. He leaves behind a legacy of unmatched institutional knowledge, particularly in the area of healthcare policy.

As a policymaker and history buff myself, I read as much news as I can possibly get my hands on. On weekends, I catch up on my reading when traveling to and from Iowa. For every year I have served in the U.S. Senate, Mr. Pear's byline has appeared in the New York Times. I am told that it appeared more than 6,700 times. It is a byline that I made sure not to miss.

His work put meat on the bones of public policy. Even those of us who study legislation closely could learn a lot and did learn a lot from his writings. Substantive and crisp, his exceptional reporting delivered a thorough analysis of complex issues and then without a doubt influenced the policy conversation on healthcare.

His prolific pen sharpened the minds of readers, including staff and lawmakers who wrote legislation here on Capitol Hill. It even informed lobbyists who worked to penetrate and influence the debate. His work carried weight with those who implemented healthcare policy from the executive branch, including the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the National Institutes of Health, and the Food and Drug Administration.

Now that he has passed away, his absence on the healthcare beat here on Capitol Hill will be missed profoundly. His understanding of the mechanics of health policy were without equal. He was able to wade through the weeds of our archaic Federal spending formulas for Medicare and Medicaid and decipher their impact on the delivery of care in my rural communities but also urban America. Mr. Pear deftly communicated how proposed changes would affect patient care, from the point of service to the pharmaceutical counter and the pocketbooks of consumers. Policymakers, providers, patients, and the taxpayers have been well-served by this giant of journalism.

Unlike many of his peers, Mr. Pear shunned the spotlight by just doing the old-fashioned shoe-leather reporting. Unassuming and understated, Mr. Pear let his published work speak for itself.

I am sure you are going to hear from Ranking Member WYDEN shortly, and he knows Mr. Pear very well and would agree with some of these things I say.

Before holding a press conference to unveil a bill dealing with healthcare, any Senator, including this one, had to be sure to have all their ducks in a row. No lawmaker wanted to be a sitting duck with Robert Pear in the front row of the press gaggle.

I will miss his bylines, particularly the extent to which they helped to educate me, helped me to understand policy that other Members of Congress were promoting and maybe even learning from his criticism on some stands that I took.

Today, I extend my condolences to his family, friends, and peers. I salute his lifelong contribution through exemplary service on behalf of the American

people—most importantly, policing the process of representative government and making sure that government and those of us who serve in government are accountable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I just want to thank the chairman of the Finance Committee. I think the chairman said: Well, the ranking member might agree with some of my comments. I agree with every one of the chairman's comments.

I think, Madam President, how I would begin—and I think the Chairman would agree on this—we can have some pretty spirited debates about healthcare in this Chamber and in the Finance Committee, but, as the chairman indicated, there isn't an inch of difference with respect to our views on Robert Pear. We all thought he was a true professional, and he was the gold standard of journalism as it relates to healthcare.

I thought about yesterday, Chairman GRASSLEY, because we had a hearing on a topic relating to reimbursement of physicians. I think the chairman and I would be of like mind—it probably wouldn't be inherently fascinating in every coffee shop in Iowa and Oregon, but it is incredibly important, for example, for the survival of rural hospitals and so many concerns that I know the Presiding Officer of the Senate has and the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee has. I looked over at the press table, Chairman GRASSLEY, and the seat for Robert Pear was missing.

Robert Pear—and that was what this special man was all about—never jumped to sit in front and say: Well, I am from the New York Times, so I should count more. As the chairman remembers, he always sat in the back.

I thought we missed him so much yesterday. The chairman and I had just gotten the news. What we were talking about yesterday was what Robert Pear was all about—taking a very complicated issue that probably was not inherently fascinating and putting it in very simple, understandable, thoughtful words for the American people. As the chairman correctly said, that was what everybody would wait for when there was a complicated issue. You would hear it among Republicans, the chairman's staff, and my staff. People would hear about an issue, and very often, the first thing they would say was "Did Robert Pear write about it?"

If Robert Pear wrote about it, it was important. In fact, one of the most noteworthy aspects of the incredible outpouring of affection and admiration for Robert Pear yesterday—and the chairman and I talked about it in committee—is the New York Times had a slug called "Pear on Health," and all over the country, my guess is—the Des Moines Register; the Oregonian, my paper, a big paper in Oregon—they

would all wait for the Robert Pear slug because they knew that was a very important issue.

The fact that Robert Pear wasn't at the witness table yesterday after all these years broke our hearts and brought back a lot of memories. I actually was stunned over the years—and the chairman touched on it—by his encyclopedic knowledge of healthcare. He remembered the amendment to the amendment to the amendment that somebody offered 10 or 15 years ago.

When I came to the Congress, he went and studied the history of the Gray Panthers. I was codirector of the senior citizens group. My little one still wonders if they are the Pink Panthers. Robert Pear knew everything about that.

When he was up on the Hill—and the chairman probably remembers this—he had a little notebook in which he scribbled Chairman GRASSLEY's remarks or my remarks or whoever he was talking to, but he also had bigger notebooks, and he kept an exhaustive set of files.

In a town where, particularly at important post-hearing or post-legislation events, all the reporters are shouting one above another, Robert Pear was the most soft-spoken voice in the room. In fact, I was at some events—my guess is that the chairman was as well—where it got kind of loud and frantic. They were throwing microphones and the like at you. When Robert Pear raised his hand and was called on, the room hushed. It went quiet because everybody understood that the question Robert Pear would ask was the right one.

Senator GRASSLEY and I were talking yesterday about how we particularly appreciated and felt—Republicans and Democrats—that Robert Pear was fair to all sides, and he held us all accountable. The general sense was that if you were a legislator and you were going to be interviewed by Robert Pear, you better go out and do some serious prep work because he would know the subject inside-out and in that soft-spoken way would just stay at it until he excavated the real effects. That was part of the Pear "tell the right story in the right way" approach to ensure that if you read a Robert Pear health story, you learned something. I think most Senators would agree that is not always the case with every single story, but that was the standard Robert Pear set.

I think what I would like to say is that there are going to be a number of Senators who over the years had a chance to work with Robert Pear. We are going to hear their own accounts of their relationships, but we are not going to hear one single Senator—not one—say that Robert Pear tried to make them look bad, took a cheap shot, or tried to say something flashy in order to get a headline. They are going to say just the opposite. They are going to say: That is what journalism is supposed to be all about.

I am a journalist's kid and very proud of it. My dad was a first-generation Jewish kid. He taught himself English and was a journalist. He always said: "Ron, the journalist's job is to ask the tough questions—the tough questions that really matter."

Robert Pear asked the tough questions, no doubt about that, but he always did it in a very unique way, a fair way, a thoughtful way, a way that embodied the gold standard for journalism that I have described.

So yesterday was particularly sad. We got the news in the morning. We had that healthcare hearing, which started about an hour after we got the news. The first thing I thought of as I came into the room was how hard it is going to be—and it is not going to stop hurting for a long time—to imagine that seat at the end of the press table not having the thoughtful, informed Robert Pear sitting there so he could get the facts to the American people.

So I just want to close today—we have had a number of colleagues speak already—to say, Robert, Robert Pear, you were the consummate professional. You were fair to the bone. It was an honor—an honor to get to work with you over the years in healthcare. We say goodbye to someone who was a true mensch, and this afternoon with heavy hearts, we think of Robert Pear and want the country to know what an extraordinary person he was.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I recognize the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to speak on another matter, but I want to thank Senator WYDEN for the kind words he had to say, as well, about a very distinguished journalist.

ATTORNEY GENERAL BARR

Madam President, yesterday, the House Judiciary Committee voted to hold Attorney General Barr in contempt of Congress. Mr. Barr has been transparent. He made the Mueller report available to them—99 percent unredacted in the obstruction section of that report. Instead of reading it, the Democrats, who voted for contempt, moved like lightning straight to the charge of contempt. To me, that is not good-faith negotiation.

In a similar situation, now a few years ago, in a Democratic administration, with a Democratic Attorney General, with a House of Representatives held by Republicans, the House only held Attorney General Holder in contempt after many months of negotiation over documents that were withheld on bogus grounds; and just for connecting that to an issue, that was the Fast and Furious investigation that I was involved in as well. We had a very good case against Holder. We attempted to negotiate with Holder for a long period of time before the other body held him in contempt.

This particular issue of contempt of this Attorney General is not a good case. I would like to say, as a person who promotes congressional oversight

of every Democratic and every Republican President to make sure they faithfully execute the law, that what the House Judiciary Committee did yesterday, just a few days after Mr. Barr didn't do exactly what they wanted him to do and comparing that with the negotiations we had with the executive branch of the Obama Attorney General on Fast and Furious, is going to make it very difficult in the future for Congress to conduct its constitutional role of oversight because future Presidents are going to use this as an example of a bad-faith attempt to negotiate with the executive branch of Government to get what you want. Maybe what they want isn't real information or real congressional oversight; they may be trying to make political points.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday, the Judiciary Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration that I chair held a hearing on the humanitarian and security crisis along the southern border. One of the witnesses we heard from was Border Patrol Chief Carla Provost, who leads the dedicated law enforcement officers who safeguard our Nation's borders every day. She has been with the Border Patrol for 25 years, and she has witnessed firsthand the ebb and flow of border crossings during that entire quarter century.

Chief Provost announced the most recent data that shows how dire the situation along our southern border is. She described these numbers as off the charts, which I think is a gentle way of putting it.

Before I get to the numbers, let me provide some context. In October 2018, the start of the fiscal year, Customs and Border Protection encountered nearly 61,000 migrants at the border. That is higher than any month in the previous fiscal year. At the time, we were all alarmed by the increase, but last month's numbers completely eclipsed those levels. Chief Provost announced at our hearing yesterday that in the month of April, CBP encountered more than 109,000 illegal immigrants along the southern border. From October to April, we jumped from roughly 61,000 to 109,000 per month, a 78-percent increase over just the 6-month period.

In addition to that enormous monthly total, she told us about the record-breaking daily total last week. Border Patrol apprehended 5,200 people in a single day—the highest number on record. The problem is that we can't

simply send these migrants home under the current state of the law. So the more individuals we apprehend, the more detention space we need. If we don't have the detention space, these individuals would simply just be released into the American population. We will never hear from most of them again, unless they commit some other crime.

But the fact of the matter is, we are overtaxing the capabilities of the Border Patrol, of Customs and Border Protection, of the local communities, and of the nongovernmental organizations that try to assist these migrants while they are in our country and in our custody. On certain days over the last month, CBP has had more than 14,000 people in custody, far greater than the capacity they are able to hold.

People may ask: Why do we have to detain people? Why can't we just let them go and tell them to show back up for a future court date?

We know from sad experience that the majority will not return for that court date, even if they have legitimate claims for asylum. We now know that there are more than 700,000—I think approaching 800,000—backlog immigration cases waiting to be heard by an immigration judge. This, again, is overwhelming our capacity to deal with these on an individual basis.

Back to the numbers, earlier this week the Rio Grande Valley Sector announced that their stations and processing centers were holding more than 7,000 illegal immigrants, and that is just one Border Patrol sector. In a recent television interview, Acting DHS Secretary Kevin McAleenan accurately described these facilities as being similar to police stations. Suffice it to say that CBP does not have the facilities or resources to manage that many people in a police station-like environment.

If you think that sounds pretty grim, just wait because it gets worse. We aren't only overwhelmed by the number of individuals coming across the border but by the types of people who are arriving. I am talking about children and families who are mostly from Central America. We were told that, all told, Border Patrol encounters, in a given year, individuals from 140 different countries.

Since the criminal organizations that smuggle people into the United States are open for business, they are more than happy to take a Bangladeshi, a Yemeni, somebody from Iraq or from Afghanistan or, for that matter, from Iran and bring them across the border into the United States.

When our detention facilities were built, they were designed to hold single adults for a short duration, which used to account for the majority of people apprehended. That is simply not the case anymore. The human smugglers and criminal organizations that charge \$5,000, \$6,000, \$7,000 a head to bring people into the United States have studied our laws and have learned how to exploit the loopholes and the gaps. That