

On the precipice of the American Civil War, Utah's delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, William Henry Hooper, recognized that "A great band of Union throughout the family of man is a common interest." Hooper petitioned Congress in his belief that "a Central Road would unite that interest as with a chain of iron, and would effectually hold together our Federal union with an imperishable identity of mutual interest."

William Henry Hooper's letter to Congress would take several months to reach Washington, DC, as any westward travel beyond the Mississippi River required wagon, stagecoach, or horseback.

The U.S. Congress would, however, approve such an undertaking, and soon, a National Central Railroad began to manifest from the worn hands of laborers to execute a vision of national unity, a feat that would propel American power and change the course of our history.

These hands belonged to men of differing national origins and creeds, who labored together under one banner, often fleeing significant hardship in pursuit of economic opportunity in the American West. Roughly 15,000 Chinese immigrants, 10,000 Irish immigrants, and 4,000 Latter-day Saints joined the national effort to complete the most remarkable and ambitious engineering project of the 19th century.

On May 10, 1869, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads formally met at Promontory Summit, UT, and the 17.6-carat golden spike officially linked the East and West Coasts, marking a watershed moment for American trade, commerce, and population.

A 6-month journey across the continent was reduced to 1 week. Within a decade of the railroad's completion, Salt Lake City's population more than doubled, further boosting Utah's significance in the national economy.

Brigham Young recognized the enormous opportunities that global trade would bring to Utah and the country and the abundant and yet untapped resources of iron, coal, stone, and timber.

In pursuit of a national railroad project, Brigham Young recognized that "mineral resources of California, and these mountains, will never be fully developed to the benefit of the people of the United States, without the construction of such a road, and upon its completion, the entire trade of China and the East Indies will pass through the heart of the Union; thereby giving our Citizens the almost entire controls of the Asiatic and Pacific trade."

Indeed, the Transcontinental Railroad would transform the American economy in profound ways. This achievement revolutionized communications, global trade routes, and allowed for the movement of people across the country at an unprecedented scale.

On the sesquicentennial of the completion of the Transcontinental Rail-

road at Promontory Summit, let us remember the sacrifice of those laborers who would not live to see to its conclusion, but whose contributions helped transform the Nation and the world.

The 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike is also a celebration of the limitless American imagination, spirit of ingenuity, and industry that made this incredible project a success.

Let us not forget the example these pioneers set for us as we go forward in a new era of challenges and opportunities.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ZZ TOP

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I recognize and congratulate the Texas blues rock band ZZ Top on their 50th anniversary. It is only fitting that this group kicks off their anniversary tour in their home State of Texas.

With plenty of gas in the tank, Dusty, Billy, Frank, and the rest of their crew will be traveling to more than 60 cities across 14 countries in their commemorative tour. An appropriate reminder of ZZ Top's history, this tour clearly shows they have been able to reach millions of fans across the globe for decades.

In 1969, two rival blues rock bands in Houston, TX—Billy's Moving Sidewalks and Frank and Dusty's American Blues—coalesced into one band, ZZ Top. Two years later, they dropped their first album, aptly titled, "ZZ Top's First Album."

Bandmates Billy Gibbons, Frank Beard, and Dusty Hill have been writing songs and creating a musical fusion between blues and southern rock since their formation and have never looked back. Though they draw inspiration from music greats like Jimi Hendrix, BB King, Cream, George Jones, and Texas blues guitarist Freddie King, all of their influences transform into one singularly unique sound.

In 1973, the band released its third album "Tres Hombres," which catapulted them to the national spotlight with the hit song "La Grange," still one of ZZ Top's signature songs.

ZZ Top's momentum and success built during its first decade culminated in the legendary 1976 tour entitled the World Wide Texas Tour, a production that included a longhorn, a buffalo, buzzards, rattlesnakes, and a Texas-shaped stage. If their tour wasn't proof enough that things are bigger in Texas, then maybe their record sales will convince you otherwise.

The band has sold over 50 million records worldwide, and their 1983 album "Eliminator," sold more than 10 million copies and included rock hit "Sharp Dressed Man."

"The Little Ol' Band From Texas" has played for millions of fans across the globe, Sweden to Australia, Japan to Germany. The band is among a select few to say they have toured the globe for half a century.

ZZ Top also lays undisputed claim to being the longest running major rock band with the original members intact. Their iconic beards, powerful rock anthems, dedication to music, and impressive artistic talent has sustained them as a perennial rock power, whose music will stand the test of time.

Over five decades of creating music, ZZ Top earned eight Top 40 hits on the Billboard Hot 100; six No. 1 mainstream rock hits; and ranked 44th on VH1's 2000 "100 Greatest Hard Rock Artists."

ZZ Top's accomplishments throughout the years culminated in their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004, where they are recognized as some of the greatest rock artists in the world.

I congratulate Billy, Frank, and Dusty on their 50th anniversary and wish them luck as they embark on their year of touring around the world. •

#### RECOGNIZING BRUNOW CONTRACTING, LLC

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my privilege to recognize a woman-owned small business that is dedicated to its customers, employees, and community. In honor of the U.S. Small Business Administration's National Small Business Week, it is my pleasure to name Brunow Contracting of Council Bluffs, IA, the Senate Small Business of the Day.

Brunow Contracting represents the story of a construction company with an unlikely founder. Tamara Brunow was a pre-law student at the College of Saint Mary who found herself working in construction. She began her career with an internship at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, in military contracting. It was in this role that she saw a future in construction and government contracts.

After her time at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, she proceeded to work for two other construction organizations, Oakview Construction and Lueder Construction. During her tenure with these firms, she realized that while she loved her jobs, she knew she wanted to be her own boss. This prompted her to launch Brunow Contracting in 2008. Shortly after her launch, Brunow Contracting acquired its first contract of \$1.3 million dollars to build a Presbyterian church.

Brunow Contracting specializes in government contracting and is certified by the Small Business Administration as an 8(a) and HUBZone business. Brunow Contracting has completed numerous contracts, ranging in value from \$800 to nearly \$5 million, and a client list which includes the City of Omaha, the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Southwest Iowa Planning Council, and the U.S. Coast Guard. These projects have included everything from churches, to water treatment plants, to data facilities for Facebook.