regulate them would result in the total collapse of state and local economies, the loss of countless jobs and the irrevocable loss of business to all those companies that are in any way dependent upon this industry. Maybe that's why the cigarette manufacturers find it advantageous to keep this topic partisan and adversarial ('us' against 'them') when the truth of the matter is, that it is not.

This is a 'we' issue that in all probability has, in one form or another, already touched the lives of each of us. How many of us have lost a parent, relative, friend or neighbor to a smoking-related illness like cancer or emphysema? How many of us know someone who has tried to quit smoking but has failed? Is smoking really 'an adult choice', or are there other factors involved in this 'habit' that make smoking less of a 'free choice' than the industry would like us to know?

I often wonder what the tobacco company CEOs, their board of directors and attorneys say to their families and especially to their children when they're asked about what they know about nicotine, addition or smoking and health?

Who is really being fooled by this, and why are we still arguing about it?

The only conclusion that I can reach, is that we are in the midst of a national tragedy; a crisis of indecision and lack of appropriate action that has crippled our nation for far too many years, although one hopes that the recent initiatives taken by President Clinton, Dr. Kessler and the FDA will mark the beginning of a new and more responsible era.

We cannot continue to allow ourselves to be repeatedly engaged in the fruitless, repetitive and transparent rhetoric of the tobacco industry given the extraordinary numbers of smoking-related deaths and illnesses that we know occur each year. Where else in the history of our society have we failed so thoroughly to act on such a critical and immediate topic of public health even when the data were far more scarce, the impact of the situation a mere fraction of what we see today, and the cause-and-effect relationships much more obscure? We've taken faster, more affirmative action in the past when we just thought that a red dye in our food might adversely affect our health or, when an artificial sweetener that was already on the market was suddenly suspected of being a big less safe than we had originally believed.

The bottom line is that we have allowed ourselves to be lulled into complacency and manipulated by the politics, semantics and financial wealth of this industry in much the same manner that it has manipulated information about smoking and the content of its products these past 20–30 years.

We've appealed to the cigarette manufacturers to become proactive partners to help implement solutions, but they have only further tightened their circle of resistance.

On top of that, the cigarette industry would like us to continue to believe that any attempt to regulate them would be illegal and if implemented, would result in certain ruin for tobacco workers, tobacco farmers, the tobacco states, the industry itself, its advertisers, the grocery store next door, the nation as a whole, everyone!

But once again, that is not true.

Regulation of tobacco products will be a difficult at first, but not impossible. It will also not be anywhere near as injurious to the nation as the tobacco manufacturers and their allies would have us believe. There are even those who think that it can be beneficial. To be successful, however, it will take a concerted effort on the part of each and every one of us and possibly for some, temporary sacrifices. It is not a personal agenda item or political issue, but one of the safety and well being of the public for generations to come.

Regulation of the tobacco industry by the FDA is totally consistent with what our country originally intended this agency to do—to protect us—and it is clearly in the best interests of this nation, its businesses and most importantly, its people.

The sad fact is, that much of the misery, frustration and fear that we are witnessing today could have been avoided if we had only acted earlier. I sincerely hope that the members of this congress can put aside their differences and join together if for no other reason than to save the lives of the children who have not yet begun to smoke.

Thank you.●

COMMENDING THE SENTEL CORP.

● Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the SENTEL Corporation of Alexandria, VA for its designation by the Small Business Administration as the Subcontractor of the Year for Region III, which encompasses the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Under the leadership of President James Garrett, SENTEL has become a leading firm providing software used to deconflict the electromagnetic spectrum in military operations. SENTEL was also selected by NASA to reengineer the space shuttle quality assurance inspection process to a paperless, wireless environment. Furthermore, SENTEL developed the Navy's first chemical-biological detection system and was one of the many small contractors whose systems performed so well during the Desert Storm operation in Iraq.

The SENTEL Corp. represents the best of what the Section 8(a) program was designed to achieve. Although SENTEL has 2 years remaining in the 8(a) program, SENTEL's services are contracted not because it is a minority organization but because it provides top-notch products and services. In fact, SENTEL is ranked by Technology Transfer Business Magazine as one of the top 500 fastest-growing technology companies in the United States and by Washington Technology Magazine as one of the 50 fastest-growing companies in the Washington metropolitan area for the fifth consecutive year.

To point out the growth of high technology industries in Virginia, Gov. George Allen has referred to Virginia as the Silicon Dominion. SENTEL represents the best of these great Virginia businesses. On behalf of the people of Virginia, I am proud to express my admiration and congratulations to SENTEL for its designation as Subcontractor of the Year.●

POSSESSIONS TAX CREDIT

● Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, on July 9 the Senate passed H.R. 3448, the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996. Before this bill was reported out of conference, I spoke concerning the provision relating to section 936 of the Internal Revenue Code, the possessions tax credit. The Senate passed version of this legislation had created a long-term wage credit for the 150,000 employees working in Puerto Rico. I supported this provision because it represented a major step forward for those working Americans in our poorest jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the House-passed bill contained no such long-term incentives for the economy of Puerto Rico and the conference agreement did not preserve the Senate position on section 936. Under the law as passed a wage credit for companies currently doing business in Puerto Rico was created. We need to carefully examine this wage credit to make sure it addresses the economic development needs of Puerto Rico. Mr. President, I am here today to express my interest in addressing the important issues of economic growth, new jobs, and new investments in Puerto Rico at the earliest opportunity. Growth in this region is very important and should be a concern to us all.●

MISCELLANEOUS TRADE AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT OF 1996

● Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I rise to notify my colleagues that, yesterday, the Committee on Finance completed a markup of H.R. 3815, respecting trade technical corrections and other miscellaneous trade measures. I'm pleased to inform the Senate that the committee favorably reported out the bill unanimously.

I want to emphasize to those Members who expressed concern about the inclusion of controversial items on this legislation, that we were careful to craft a non-controversial bill. Any items that turned out to be controversial, including items I strongly supported, were either not included in this bill or were removed from the draft markup document. What we have ended up with on this bill are many worthy miscellaneous trade items that are of interest to many of the Members on and off the Finance Committee.

Since time is obviously short, Senator MOYNIHAN and I will seek Senate passage of this bill by unanimous consent as quickly as possible. We have been working closely with the Ways and Means Committee, and hope that the House could accept the current version of the bill by unanimous consent. With a number of additional items, the Finance Committee version of the bill contains all of the provisions that were in the House version with the exception of the hand tools marking provision that had considerable opposition in the Senate.

Mr. President, in closing, I just want to emphasize that if Members seek to put any controversial provisions on this bill, we will not have time to get this bill done. Therefore, any help Members can offer to assure speedy passage of this meritorious, non-controversial, and bipartisan bill before

the end of this Congress will be greatly appreciated.●

NAHRO AWARDS OF MERIT

● Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, each year the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) honors low-income housing and community development agencies nationwide through the NAHRO Agency Awards of Merit in Housing and Community Development. This awards program recognizes the efforts of agencies that have demonstrated a clear commitment and ability to address the unique and special needs of their communities. I would like to take a moment to recognize the three recipients of this award from the State of Oregon for their dedicated efforts.

The first Oregon recipient is the Housing Authority of Washington County for their Claire Court project. Recently purchased and renovated by the Authority, Claire Court is an apartment residence that was built in 1945 with a substantial amount of war surplus materials. While the housing complex had an excellent framework, the extensive use of lead-base paint, asbestos insulation, and outdated plumbing and wiring had created a significant hazard for residents. The renovation of Claire Court not only removed and replaced hazardous materials with safe, energy-efficient products, but also maintained neighborhood architecture and adapted two of the eight units to ADA and UFAS accessible living standards.

The Housing Authority of Portland, for the Fairview Oaks and Woods Interpretive Nature Trail, is the second Oregon recipient of the NAHRO Award of Merit. This 3,000-foot trail was created as a part of the new 328-unit Fairview Oaks and Fairview Woods housing complex, and utilized the cooperative efforts of high school students, apartment residents, and other local agencies. The interpretive nature trail, which features detailed markings and is handicapped accessible, serves as an excellent example of an innovative solution to balancing the growing need for affordable housing, while also preserving natural wildlife areas.

The final award recipient from Oregon is the Housing Authority of the City of Salem for their Family Stabilization Program. While many agencies of this kind are successful in helping individuals in the community, the Salem Housing Authority devised this program in an attempt to bring community providers together and transfer their success with individuals into success for their families as well. The Family Stabilization Program has helped coordinate the efforts of programs dealing in drug prevention, family self-sufficiency, and parenting—among others—and has resulted in increased participation by families in all areas.

The State of Oregon is truly fortunate to have such dedicated and innovative housing and community development agencies working in our communities. I am honored to recognize these groups for their efforts, and to congratulate them on receiving the NAHRO Award of Merit.●

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE EPA LONG ISLAND SOUND OFFICE

● Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to note the critical importance of this legislation, the Water Resources Development Act, to the future of Connecticut's most valuable natural resource, Long Island Sound.

Included in the bill is a provision reauthorizing the EPA's Long Island Sound Office [LISO], which was established by legislation I was proud to sponsor 6 years ago, and which is now responsible for coordinating the massive clean-up effort ongoing in the Sound. Quite simply, the LISO is the glue holding this project together, and I want to express my deep appreciation to the chairman and ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee—Senators CHAFEE and BAUCUS—for their help in making sure this Office stays open for business.

Mr. President, the Long Island Sound Office has been given a daunting task—orchestrating a multibillion dollar, decade-long initiative that requires the cooperation of nearly 150 different Federal, State, and municipal agents and offices. Despite the odds, and the limited resources it has had to work with, the LISO is succeeding. Over the last few years, the EPA office has developed strong working relationships with the State environmental protection agencies in Connecticut and New York, local government officials along the Sound coastline and a number of proactive citizen groups. Together, these many partners have made tremendous progress toward meeting the six key goals we identified in the Sound's long-term conservation and management plan.

The plan's top priority is fighting hypoxia, which is caused by the release of nutrients into the Sound's 1,300 square miles of water. Thanks in part to the LISO's efforts, nitrogen loads have dropped 5,000 pounds per day from the baseline levels of 1990, exceeding all expectations. In addition, all sewage treatment plants in Connecticut and in New York's Westchester, Suffolk and Nassau counties are now in compliance with the ''no net increase'' agreement brokered by the LISO, while the four New York City plants that discharge into the East River are expected to be in compliance by the end of this year. And the LISO is coordinating 15 different projects to retrofit treatment plants with new equipment that will help them reduce the amount of nitrogen reaching the Sound.

The LISO and its many partners have made great strides in other areas, such as cracking down on the pathogens, toxic substances, and litter that have been finding their way into the Sound watershed and onto area beaches. A major source of toxic substances are industrial plants, and over the last few years the LISO has helped arrange more than 30 ''pollution prevention'' assessments at manufacturing facilities in Connecticut that enable companies to reduce emissions and cut their costs. Also, New York City has recently reduced the amount of floatable debris it produces by 70%, thanks to the use of booms on many tributaries and efforts to improve the capture of combined sewer overflows.

With Congress's help, the LISO will soon be able to build on that progress and significantly broaden its efforts to bring the Sound back to life. This week the House and Senate approved an appropriation of the $700,000 for the Long Island Sound Office, doubling our commitment from the current fiscal year. These additional funds will be used in part to launch an ambitious habitat restoration project. The States of New York and Connecticut have been working with the LISO and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a long-term strategy in this area, and they have already identified 150 key sites. The next step is to provide grants to local partnerships with local towns and private groups such as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, which would focus on restoring tidal and freshwater wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation, and areas supporting anadromous fish populations.

The funding will also be used for site-specific surveys to identify and correct local sources of non-point source pollution. This effort will focus on malfunctioning septic systems, stormwater management and illegal stormwater connections, improper vessel waste disposal, and riparian protection. All of these sources contribute in some way to the release of pathogens and toxic compounds into the Sound, a problem that is restricting the use of area beaches and shellfish beds and hurting our regional economy.

Finally, the LISO will continue to build on the successful public education and outreach campaign it initiated last year. In New York, the LISO has already been in contact with public leaders in 50 local communities, held follow-up meetings with officials in 15 key areas, and scheduled on-the-water workshops for this fall. The LISO is planning to conduct a similar effort to reach out to Connecticut communities in 1997.

All of this could have been put in jeopardy, however, if we had not acted to extend the LISO's authorization, which is set to expire next week. The clean-up project is a team effort, with many important contributors, but it would be extremely difficult for those many partners to work in concert and keep moving forward without the leadership and coordination that the LISO has supplied. So I want to thank my colleagues, especially my friends from Rhode Island and from Montana, for