

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

INNOVATIVE CONTRACTING FOR TECHNOLOGY AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

• Mr. COHEN. Mr. President, this morning I rise to commend the National Institutes of Health and its leadership for changing the way the Government buys technology.

Earlier this year, the Information Technology Management Reform Act, which I authored, became law. ITMRA fundamentally changes the rules governing how the Government purchases and uses technology. It eliminated overly bureaucratic and cumbersome procedures that resulted in the Government's failure to get what it needed and frustrated vendors who were unable to provide government with the optimum solution. ITMRA sets the stage for Federal agencies to emulate successful organizations and break up large computer projects into smaller more manageable segments—a strategy that up to now had been hindered by a procurement system that encourages large complex contracts.

Despite passage of this major reform, the Government must also overcome a culture that arose from the antiquated and cumbersome way of doing business. While the full impact of this reform may take a little time to be felt, some agencies have seized the opportunity to become leaders in innovation consistent with the spirit and intent of the legislation. While I have witnessed recent innovations within the Department of Defense, General Services Administration and a number of other agencies, one effort stands out as exemplifying the spirit behind ITMRA and is particularly well developed based on the intent behind ITMRA.

The chief information officers solutions and partners contract at the National Institutes of Health is an excellent example of how government, under ITMRA, will be able to meet its technology needs in a reasonable time frame and obtain optimum solutions. By comprehending the possibilities presented by recently enacted procurement reform, NIH has provided a contracting vehicle that will allow Federal agencies to buy goods and services in a manner that is competitive, easy to use, fair and timely.

Although the ultimate success of this program will depend on NIH's ability to properly administer the task orders it receives, the innovation demonstrated in the early phases of this procurement deserves special mention. In particular, the leadership and hard work of two NIH employees, Manny DeVera and Gale Greenwald, deserve special attention.

Both Mr. DeVera and Ms. Greenwald quickly recognized the potential of ITMRA and procurement reform, allowing them to award a flexible contract in record time. Both the Government customers and the vendor community are quite excited about the

prospects for obtaining needed services in a timely and efficient manner. Government clients will be able to obtain the technology, services, and solutions they need under ITMRA via competitive task orders. Agencies will not have to bundle their requirements into large contracts that take years to award and often end in protest and litigation. Under the new law, an agency can look to the growing number of multiple award task order contracts or the GSA schedule to fulfill information technology requirements. Agency chief information officers can then focus on the return on investment from information technology rather than on finding ways to overcome obstacles in the Federal procurement system.

Mr. President, while this contract must still prove itself, this effort represents a milestone in innovation. The two Federal employees most responsible for this innovation, Manny DeVera and Gale Greenwald, deserve our thanks and appreciation. •

HIGHWAY FUNDING FAIRNESS ACT OF 1996

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today I proudly join with the distinguished ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator BAUCUS, to correct a serious accounting error that will cost my home State of Delaware millions of dollars in badly needed Federal highway assistance.

Federal-aid highway funds are for the creation and maintenance of our Nation's interstate highways—literally the lifelines of our economy. The east coast's largest, most important interstate, I-95, runs through the northernmost part of Delaware, carrying hundreds of millions of tons of goods and products from Maine to Florida and beyond. Tens of thousands of Delawareans commute daily on I-95.

In fact, the Delaware Department of Transportation is just now beginning a massive, \$73 million project to repave and resurface key parts of I-95. This undertaking is vitally important not only to the people of Delaware, but to commuters and businesses across America.

Yet, next fiscal year, Delaware—partly because of a 1994 bureaucratic snafu—is going to receive approximately \$8.2 million less than it received in 1996. That is an 11-percent cut.

This will occur even though the Federal Government will spend a record \$18 billion on Federal highway assistance—roughly \$455 million more than the current year.

During consideration of the Transportation Appropriations bill this past July, Senator BAUCUS successfully offered an amendment that I supported to correct this miscalculation and restore the needed funding. Yet despite the strong vote in support, and the best efforts of Senator LAUTENBERG, conferees dropped the Baucus amendment, thus preserving the slip-up and cutting funding to 28 States.

Because of this fundamental unfairness, and the egregious, short-sighted cuts in Amtrak funding, I voted against the Transportation Appropriations conference report.

The legislation introduced by Senator BAUCUS that I am cosponsoring today, the Highway Funding Fairness Act of 1996, corrects the 1994 highway fund credit mistake and gives the 28 affected States their rightful allocations.

This 1994 accounting error skims the surface of the issue, however. The root cause of the \$8 million cut in funding to Delaware is the skewed allocation formula put in place by the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act [ISTEA], which fails to accurately reflect highway needs. This formula, particularly the so-called 90 percent of payments guarantee, unfairly rewards selected States at the expense of smaller, less populated States, such as Delaware.

I intend to work hard next year during consideration of the ISTEA reauthorization bill to correct this fundamental unfairness, and ensure that States, like Delaware, receive their proper share of highway funds.

I hope my colleagues representing the other 27 affected States will seriously consider cosponsoring the Highway Funding Fairness Act of 1996, and I commend and thank Senator BAUCUS for all of his work. •

JOE MARK ELKOURI

• Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a great American and a great Oklahoman, Joe Mark Elkouri, who passed from this earth September 26, 1996. Joe Mark was born February 28, 1950, in Altus, OK, and was a respected long-time resident of Oklahoma City.

An alumnus of Oklahoma State University, the Oklahoma City University School of Law, and Southern Methodist University Law School, where he specialized in tax law, Joe Mark utilized his education to the betterment of society.

Joe Mark tirelessly involved himself in civic causes such as the Red Andrews Christmas Dinner, Toys for Tots, the Aids Support Program, and the Winds House, an assisted living center in Oklahoma City. Throughout his life, Joe Mark gave of himself for the benefit of countless others, endearing friends and loved ones for life.

He is survived by two loving daughters, Brie and Lee Elkouri of Oklahoma City; two sisters, KoKo Sparks and family of Oklahoma City, and Sharon Massad of California; his mother Dorothy Weinstein of Dallas, TX, and Jim Roth of the home.

Joe Mark served his community as a distinguished member of the State bar of Oklahoma and served as an Administrative Law Judge for numerous State agencies and as a Special Judge for the city of Oklahoma City. Joe Mark's professional accomplishments are many, but he will be remembered most for his