

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member and the chairman for the very strong support of small businesses.

Let me say that I rise to support this authorization act because of the Microloan Program, the supporting of the National Women's Business Council Program, and as well the fact that we are not disturbing the 8(a) programs that help create jobs in America. Let me compliment my own small business regional office and Mr. Wilson, and I hope that we will continue to stand on the side of small businesses.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to yield if the gentleman wants a little more time. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE].

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to thank the chairman of our committee, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT], for all of the kindnesses that he has shown me in his position. He has proven himself to be an excellent chairman, certainly one that has been a pleasure for me to work with. He has the ability to be both gentle, cooperative and firm all at the same time, and I am sure that he is going to go on to great things in life, not only in the House of Representatives, but perhaps even higher.

I also want to extol our staff. My tremendous staff, both Tom Powers, Jeanne Roslanowick and others, but also the majority staff. They have tremendous expertise and dedication; they have worked together as one staff in order to produce the best possible bill, regardless of politics, regardless of partisanship. So it has been a pleasure for me to work with all of them on this reauthorization bill.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to echo the remarks of the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE], except in reverse. It has been a great pleasure this year to work with him. We all know that the gentleman knows how to be firm; he also does know how to be, and has been consistently, cooperative, and I have been very grateful to him for that.

Also, I want to recognize the great depth of his knowledge in this field. We are passing, I hope and believe today, yet another reauthorization bill, and it will reflect yet again his great influence and his great expertise in this area.

I want to thank also the members on both sides of the committee. The House has heard many of them today, and I am proud to chair a committee with so many committed and dedicated individuals.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is the product of bipartisan and bicameral efforts to reauthorize the Small Business Administration through fiscal year 2000. It reflects the efforts of many in-

dividuals and committees and their staffs. I would like to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER], the chairman of the Committee on Science; and the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN], his ranking member, for their work on H.R. 2429, which has in large part become section 501 of this legislation. I would also like to express my appreciation to their staff who worked on this.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP], the chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], the chairman of the Committee on Rules, along with their staffs, for their help in working on title VII of this legislation. As I have already said, I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE], the committee's ranking member, for his help in crafting this legislation.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Committee on Small Business staff who worked on this bill: Emily Murphy, Mary McKenzie, Kiki Kless, Paul Denham, Charles "Tee" Rowe, and Harry Katrichis for the majority, and Jeanne Roslanowick, Steve McSpadden and Tom Powers for the minority.

I urge my colleagues, in closing, to vote for this important piece of legislation.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concerns regarding S. 1139, the Small Business Authorization Act. I will vote for this bill because it is essential for the continuation of programs which assist small businesses in this country. However, I have serious concerns regarding a specific provision included by the Senate, which could impact the current 8(a) program for minority- and women-owned businesses.

S. 1139 establishes a new program to increase access to Federal contracts for small businesses in economically distressed areas. While the goal of this new HUBZone program seems laudable enough, I have strong reservations regarding its potential impact on the existing and successful 8(a) program for minority- and women-owned businesses.

It is no secret that many in the majority want to get rid of the 8(a) program and other forms of affirmative action. I fear that the establishment of these HUBZones is a backdoor attempt to weaken 8(a) and affirmative action.

The 8(a) program is specifically targeted to assist businesses owned by minorities and women, which have historically had difficulty in obtaining contracts and subcontracts from the Federal Government. The new HUBZone program would be open to all small businesses within these zones, not just those which are disadvantaged in any way. And these businesses within the HUBZones will compete with the 8(a) businesses for the limited number of Federal contracts.

Also of concern is that under this provision Federal agencies would be allowed to use sole-source contracts in HUBZones which cuts out the competitive nature of Federal contracting altogether, and further erodes opportunities for 8(a) businesses.

The Senate has failed to provide enough funding for the administration of this new program. The Congressional Budget Office esti-

mates that \$12 million is needed annually to implement the HUBZone program. The bill provides only \$1.2 million. This raises concerns regarding adequate oversight and evaluation of this new program. If we are to accurately assess whether this new program is affecting the 8(a) program we need to have the appropriate monitoring systems in place. The lack of funding causes concerns in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, I have discussed these concerns with the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, who assured me that the Administration will closely monitor this new program and its impact on the 8(a) program. She also indicated that in administering the HUBZone program, they would take steps necessary to assure that 8(a) was not adversely impacted.

Mr. Speaker, had this bill come up under regular order, and not under the expedited suspension procedures we would have had the opportunity to address many of our concerns through the amendment process. As we are in the last 2 days of the congressional session this year, I understand the need to utilize expedited procedures to assure that critical small business programs are funded.

Therefore, I will support this bill. I note for the RECORD that I will watch closely the development of this program and monitor its impact on the 8(a) minority- and women-owned business program.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT] that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the House amendment to S. 1139.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment to the House amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 1139, the bill just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

#### MICROCREDIT FOR SELF-RELIANCE ACT OF 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1129) to establish a program to provide assistance for programs of credit and other assistance for micro-enterprises in developing countries, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1129

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*