

operating a National Laboratory or facility has policies and procedures, including an employee benefits program, that do not create disincentives to the transfer of scientific and technical personnel among the contractor-operated National Laboratories or facilities.

(b) EXTENSION.—The Secretary may delay implementation of the policy in subsection (a) if the Secretary—

(1) determines that the implementation of the policy within two years would be unnecessarily expensive or disruptive to the operations of the contractor-operated National Laboratories or facilities; and

(2) recommends to Congress alternative measures to increase the mobility of technical personnel among the contractor operated National Laboratories or facilities.

(c) STUDY OF WIDER MOBILITY.—Not later than two years after the enactment of this act, the Secretary shall recommend to Congress legislation to reduce any undue disincentives to scientific and technical personnel employed by a contractor-operated National Laboratory or facility taking a job with an institution of higher education, nonprofit institution, or technology-related business concern that is located in the vicinity of the National Laboratory or facility.

SEC. 8. OTHER TRANSACTIONS AUTHORITY.

Section 646 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7256) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g)(1) In addition to other authorities granted to the Secretary to enter into procurement contracts, leases, cooperative agreements, grants, and other similar arrangements, the Secretary may enter into other transactions with public agencies, private organizations, or persons on such terms as the Secretary may deem appropriate in furtherance of functions now or hereafter vested in the Secretary, including research, development, or demonstration projects. Such other transactions shall not be subject to the provisions of section 9 of the Federal Nonnuclear Energy Research and Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5908).

“(2)(A) The Secretary shall not disclose any trade secret or commercial or financial information submitted by a non-federal entity under paragraph (1) that is privileged and confidential.

“(B) The Secretary shall not disclose, for five years after the date the information is received, any other information submitted by a non-federal entity under paragraph (1), including any proposal, proposal abstract, document support a proposal, business plan, or technical information that is privileged and confidential.

“(C) The Secretary may protect from disclosure, for up to five years, any information developed pursuant to a transaction under paragraph (1) that would be protected from disclosure under section 552(b)(4) of title 5, United States Code, if obtained from a person other than a federal agency.”.

SEC. 9. AMENDMENTS TO THE STEVENSON-WYDLER ACT.

(a) STRATEGIC PLANS.—Section 12(a) of the Stevenson-Wydlar Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a(a)) is amended by inserting after “joint work statement” the following: “or, if permitted by the agency, in an agency-approved annual strategic plan.”.

(b) FEDERAL WAIVERS.—Subsection 12(b) of the Stevenson-Wydlar Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(6) The director of a government-operated laboratory (in the case of a government operated laboratory) or a designated official of the agency (in the case of a contractor-operated laboratory) may waive any license retained by the Government under paragraphs

(1)(A), 2, or 3(D) in whole or in part and according to negotiated terms and conditions if the director or designated official, as appropriate, finds that the requirement for the license would substantially inhibit the commercialization of an invention that would otherwise serve an important federal mission.”.

(c) TIME REQUIRED FOR APPROVAL.—Section 12(c)(5) of the Stevenson-Wydlar Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a(c)(5)) is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (C);

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (C);

(3) by striking “with a small business firm” and inserting “if” after “statement” in subparagraph (C)(i) (as redesignated); and

(4) by adding after subparagraph (C)(iii) (as redesignated) the following:

“(iv) Any agency that has contracted with a non-Federal entity to operate a laboratory may develop and provide to such laboratory one or more model cooperative research and development agreements, for the purposes of standardizing practices and procedures, resolving common legal issues, and enabling review of cooperative research and development agreements to be carried out in a routine and prompt manner.

“(v) A federal agency may waive the requirements of clause (i) or (ii) under such circumstances as the agency deems appropriate. However, the agency may not take longer than 30 days to review and approve, request modifications to, or disapprove any proposed agreement or joint work statement that it elects to receive.”.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

NATIONAL BUSINESS WOMEN'S WEEK

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the more than 9.1 million women business owners nationwide on the occasion of National Business Women's Week. This week marks the celebration of the 71st annual National Business Women's Week.

On this occasion, advocates for women business owners may have a well-deserved sense of pride. I am pleased to be able to report that between 1987 and 1999, the number of women-owned businesses increased by 103 percent nationwide, employment increased by 320 percent, and sales grew by 436 percent. Today, women business owners across the country employ more than 27.5 million people and generate in excess of \$3.6 trillion in sales. These businesses account for 38 percent of all U.S. businesses.

In my home State of Maine, there are more than 48,200 women-owned businesses, employing 91,700 people and generating \$10.2 billion in sales. For Maine's economy, this represents growth of more than 85.3 percent between 1987 and 1996.

Mr. President, this data demonstrates just how vital women and women-owned businesses are to the health of the U.S. economy. Although women-owned businesses have grown at an astronomical rate, we must continue to ensure that women have access to the knowledge and capital necessary to start their own businesses.

That is why I ask that, as we celebrate the tremendous accomplishments of women during National Business Women's Week, my fellow colleagues join me in supporting opportunities for women to become entrepreneurs.

As a member of the Senate Small Business Committee, I am proud of the role the Committee and the Small Business Administration have played in providing access to assistance from women entrepreneurs, because many of the businesses in this rapidly growing sector are small businesses. Just last month, the Committee reported legislation, the Women's Business Centers Sustainability Act, that would significantly increase funding for the Women's Business Centers Program, which provides women with long-term training and counseling in all aspects of owning and managing a business—fostering the growth of women's business ownership and providing a foundation of basic support to women business owners.

This program promotes the growth of women-owned businesses by sponsoring business training and technical counseling, access to credit and capital, and access to marketing opportunities, including Federal contracts and export opportunities. Over the past 10 years, the program has served tens of thousands of women entrepreneurs by providing them with consulting, training, and financial assistance as they seek to start or expand their own business. As a result, women are starting new firms at twice the rate of all other business, and employ roughly one in every five U.S. workers. Today, the program is comprised of nearly 70 centers in 40 States.

In my view, creating new opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups, such as women and minorities to help provide tangible opportunities for economic independence must remain a top priority, and National Business Women's Week is a perfect opportunity to focus attention on the importance of such efforts.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation to the Business and Professional Women/USA organization, which has played a pivotal role in making the celebration of National Business Women's Week possible.

Since its creation in 1928, National Business Women's Week has been sponsored by Business and Professional Women/USA for the purpose of recognizing and honoring the achievements of working women.

Business and Professional Women/USA local organizations across the country, and in my state of Maine, will take this week to honor outstanding business women and employers of the year, and I would like to congratulate them and thank them for their important contributions.●

TRIBUTE TO IKUA PURDY

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, this past Sunday, eight rodeo stars were inducted into the Rodeo Hall of Fame at