

offer health insurance as a workplace benefit. In stark contrast, health insurance is nearly universally offered at larger businesses.

A key provision in this bill would establish a 4-year, pilot grant program to provide information, counseling, and educational materials to small businesses, through the well-established national framework of SBDCs. Recent research conducted by the non-partisan Healthcare Leadership Council found that with a short educational and counseling session, small businesses were up to 33 percent more likely to offer health insurance to their employees. My proposal is based on the Small Business Health Education and Awareness Act, which I introduced in the 109th Congress with Senator BENNETT, and plan to reintroduce this session with Senators KERRY and BENNETT.

Most American workers are employed by small and medium sized enterprises. It is these businesses that account for nearly 98 percent of the growth in exporter population—and are among the major beneficiaries when foreign barriers are reduced. Additionally, 97 percent of exporters are small businesses. Over the last decade, the number of exports from small businesses increased by more than 250 percent. Small businesses account for almost \$300 billion of yearly export sales—nearly one-third of total U.S. exports.

This bill establishes an Associate Administrator for International Trade, and expands the trade distribution network to include the United States Export Assistance Centers USEACs. In addition, this section ensures that all our Nation's small exporters have access to export financing. This provision establishes a floor of international finance specialists at level SBA had in January 2003. Finally, this provision increases the maximum loan guarantee amount to \$2.75 million and specifies that the loan cap for international trade loans—ITLs—is \$3.67 million, as well as sets out that working capital is an eligible use for loan proceeds. The bill also makes ITLs consistent with regular SBA 7(a) loans in terms of allowing the same collateral and refinancing terms as with regular 7(a) loans.

The SBA's entrepreneurial development programs provide tremendous value for a relatively small investment. I am committed to ensuring that Americans have the necessary resources to start, grow, and develop a business. I believe that it is our duty to do everything possible to sustain prosperity and job creation throughout the United States. I urge my colleagues to support this vital piece of legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 240—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 21 THROUGH OCTOBER 27, 2007, AS “NATIONAL SAVE FOR RETIREMENT WEEK”

Mr. SMITH (for himself and Mr. CONRAD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 240

Whereas the cost of retirement continues to rise, in part, because people in the United States are living longer than ever before, the number of employers providing retiree health coverage continues to decline, and retiree health care costs continue to increase at a rapid pace;

Whereas Social Security remains the bedrock of retirement income for the great majority of the people of the United States, but was never intended by Congress to be the sole source of retirement income for families;

Whereas recent data from the Employee Benefit Research Institute indicates that, in the United States, less than 2/3 of workers or their spouses are currently saving for retirement and that the actual amount of retirement savings of workers lags far behind the amount that is realistically needed to adequately fund retirement;

Whereas many employees have available to them through their employers access to defined benefit and defined contribution plans to assist them in preparing for retirement;

Whereas many employees may not be aware of their retirement savings options and may not have focused on the importance of and need for saving for their own retirement;

Whereas many employees may not be taking advantage of workplace defined contribution plans at all or to the full extent allowed by the plans or under Federal law; and

Whereas all workers, including public- and private-sector employees, employees of tax-exempt organizations, and self-employed individuals, can benefit from increased awareness of the need to save for retirement and the availability of tax-advantaged retirement savings vehicles to assist them in saving for retirement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 21 through October 27, 2007, as “National Save for Retirement Week”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Save for Retirement Week, including raising public awareness about the importance of adequate retirement savings and the availability of employer-sponsored retirement plans; and

(3) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, universities, non-profit organizations, businesses, other entities, and the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate programs and activities with the goal of increasing the retirement savings of all the people of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 241—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD REAFFIRM THE COMMITMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE 2001 DOHA DECLARATION ON THE TRIPS AGREEMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND TO PURSUING TRADE POLICIES THAT PROMOTE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE MEDICINES

Mr. BROWN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

Whereas the World Trade Organization (WTO) administers and enforces the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (in this preamble referred to as “the TRIPS Agreement”) to safeguard access to essential drugs;

Whereas, in 1999, the World Health Assembly, by consensus including the United States, adopted Resolution 52.19 on the World Health Organization's Revised Drug Strategy, which expressed concern “about the situation in which one third of the world's population has no guaranteed access to essential drugs, [and] in which new world trade agreements may have a negative impact on local manufacturing capacity and the access to and prices of pharmaceuticals in developing countries,” and urged member states to “ensure that public health rather than commercial interests have primacy in pharmaceutical and health policies and to review their options under” the TRIPS Agreement;

Whereas, in 2001, the member states of the WTO, by consensus including the United States, adopted the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, in which member states agreed that “intellectual property protection is important for the development of new medicines”, but also expressed “concerns about its effects on prices”;

Whereas the Doha Declaration further states that the TRIPS Agreement “can and should be interpreted and implemented in a manner supportive of WTO Members' right to protect public health and, in particular, to promote access to medicines for all”;

Whereas Article 31 of the TRIPS Agreement allows each member state the flexibility to issue compulsory licences which permit the use of the subject matter of a patent, and gives member states broad latitude for such use;

Whereas the World Health Organization's 2006 Report of the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health emphasized the need for innovation in medical technologies and access to such innovation, and the report also—

(1) states that the Doha Declaration clarifies the right of governments to use compulsory licensing as a means of resolving tensions that may arise between public health and the protection of intellectual property rights, and to determine the grounds for using compulsory licensing;

(2) recommends that developing countries provide for the use of compulsory licensing provisions in legislation as one means to facilitate access to affordable medicines through import or local production;

(3) recommends that bilateral trade agreements not seek to impose obligations to protect intellectual property rights that are greater than those required under the TRIPS Agreement, because such obligations could potentially reduce access to medicines in developing countries; and

(4) recommends that developing countries should not impose restrictions for the use of,