

Mr. BROWN. I would add from what Senator WHITEHOUSE said that you can look another place and you can see how in very quantitative and very specific, giving example comparisons that Medicare versus private insurance—we know the cost of bureaucracy, the cost of marketing, the cost of future profits, and the cost of high executive salaries. Private insurance means they have a 15-percent absolute minimum, more than 20, 25, sometimes 30 percent administrative costs. Medicare has somewhere around 3 percent overhead, administrative costs. Medicare is a public plan. The private insurance companies really don't compete very well with Medicare in terms of measuring them for administrative costs.

Whether you look at workers' comp plans when there is a public option or you look at workers' comp plans in Wyoming where it is single-payer or you look at Medicare, you can see that this argument they make that the government can't do anything right is pretty wrongheaded, especially when they are afraid that government does things so efficiently, it is going to run them out of business.

We know public plans can coexist, side by side, with private plans and make the private plans a lot better. I argue the private plans will make the public plans perhaps more flexible too. It will help both.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. That is what competition is all about.

Mr. BROWN. That is what competition is all about.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I have to depart, and I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from Ohio. But before I go, I want to express my appreciation to him for convening us and for his energetic and constant advocacy on this subject. I think he has been a wonderful leader of our caucus, and I wish I could stay longer, but I have a plane awaiting me.

So I yield to the Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE, and I will wrap up too. I think this discussion is much better than a speech, frankly, from any one of us. I appreciate the contribution of the Presiding Officer, Mr. KAUFMAN, the Senator from Delaware, to this discussion, more than debate, as well as Senator MERKLEY, who was with us, and Senator UDALL of New Mexico.

As I close, let me run through a couple of these posters reflecting the monopoly that has caused so much hardship for so many people in State after State after State. In my State, two insurance companies have a huge part of the market. In parts of southwest Ohio—the Cincinnati and Dayton areas—two insurance companies have about 80 percent of the market. In Senator UDALL's State, it is very high. In some States it is even higher.

When you have that lack of competition in States, you can see what it brings to us after that. It brings huge profits. Having so little competition, it means these insurance companies get

larger and larger and push out smaller insurance companies and we end up with two or three companies. Without competing much with each other, what do you end up with? You end up with a 428-percent increase in profits over 7 years. You end up with the 10 top industry CEOs making \$118 million, headed by Aetna's CEO making \$24 million last year. So what happens? Forty-seven million Americans don't have insurance. Insurance premiums more than doubled in 9 years. If we do nothing—as many on the other side suggest, and certainly the insurance companies would like that—we will see insurance premiums double again in the next 7 or 8 years, putting such a burden on small businesses and making our big companies less and less competitive internationally. We all know what that means in terms of jobs for our people, especially in manufacturing.

Again, what fuels all this? What fuels all this and all these dollars they are making is the insurance company business model. The insurance company business model is to deny care—to deny insurance, to start with—by using very sophisticated sales practices to keep people from even buying insurance if they are sick, if they have a pre-existing condition that might be expensive. That is part of the business plan. The other end of the business plan is to deny care as often as they can for people who have insurance.

So we know what we need to do. We know a public option will make a huge difference in keeping the insurance industry honest. A public option will make a huge difference in providing competition. And a public option will make a huge difference in keeping prices down. That is why we are here tonight. That is why I appreciate the work of Senators KAUFMAN, UDALL, MERKLEY, and WHITEHOUSE, and why I believe come December, when this work is completed on this health insurance bill—which, frankly, our government has been working on for 75 years, since Franklin Roosevelt tried it—we are going to finish with a good strong plan, with a robust public option that will make a huge difference in people's lives.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, I thank my colleagues, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SSG MATTHEW KUGLICS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor SSG Matthew Joseph Kuglics, U.S. Air Force, who lost his life in service to our Nation.

Matthew's call to serve our Nation came immediately after his graduation in 2000 from Green High School in Green, OH, not far from Akron. That was when he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force.

In June of 2004, Matthew achieved the distinction of becoming a special agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

Sergeant Kuglics then volunteered to deploy to Iraq. There, he served with distinction by providing counterintelligence support to nearly 4,000 coalition forces at Kirkuk Regional Air Base in Iraq. Following his first tour in Iraq, Matthew volunteered for a second deployment in the combat zone.

On June 5, 2007, while in a convoy, Matthew was killed by an improvised explosive device. He gave his life for our Nation. He was 25 years old.

Throughout two tours in Iraq, Sergeant Kuglics executed the mission of identifying and neutralizing criminal, terrorist, and intelligence threats to the Air Force, to the Department of Defense, and to the United States of America. His service resulted in successful military operations and the increased safety of his fellow servicemembers. Sergeant Kuglics was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Air Force Combat Action Ribbon.

On Friday, October 23, 2009—tomorrow—at 11 a.m., there will be a street dedication ceremony at Barnes Memorial Park at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH, to honor the life and service of Matthew Joseph Kuglics.

Future generations of the Air Force will now forever honor Staff Sergeant Kuglics. He represents the best of Ohio, the best of the U.S. Air Force, the best of the United States of America.

INCREASING LOAN LIMITS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, since Congress passed and the President signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in February, more than 33,000 loans—nearly \$13 billion—have gotten into the hands of entrepreneurs, helping to give more small businesses the capital they need to stock their shelves and pay their employees while creating or saving 325,000 jobs at a critical time. But as President Obama said yesterday, we must do everything in our power to help our nation's innovators and job creators to ensure their success and our nation's economy and future competitiveness.

Ensuring that small businesses have greater access to capital is the first, and perhaps most critical, step. In hearings, roundtables and other meetings with small business owners and lenders, I have heard time and time again that the current small business loan limits do not adequately meet their needs. To answer their urgent call for help, I am here today to introduce S. 1832, The Small Business Access to Capital Act of 2009. Senate

Small Business Committee and Entrepreneurship members Senators JOHN KERRY of Massachusetts, TOM HARKIN of Iowa, BEN CARDIN of Maryland and JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire, along with Senators BARBARA BOXER of California and BOB CASEY of Pennsylvania, have joined me as cosponsors of this bill.

The Small Business Access to Capital Act of 2009 contains several of the initiatives President Obama highlighted in his speech yesterday, including raising the limits on SBA loans to as high as \$5.5 million. Coupled with lower-cost capital available to community lenders, these higher loan limits will further spur small business growth and aid in our nation's continued economic recovery.

I have made increasing access to capital for small businesses a top priority within my Committee since the day I became Chair, leading my first Committee event on this topic in January. Since that first roundtable, Senator SNOWE and I helped pass the Recovery Act's small business provisions that eliminated SBA loan fees for borrowers to make capital more affordable, increased the loan guarantees on SBA's largest loan program to reduce risk for banks and encourage them to lend when the economy was at its worst, and created initiatives to help unfreeze the secondary market for SBA loans so that banks would have more capital to lend small businesses. These provisions, as I mentioned earlier, helped some 33,000 businesses receive \$13 billion in capital, saving or creating 325,000 jobs.

I have also held four additional hearings and roundtables focused on increasing access to capital for entrepreneurs. Most recently, an oversight hearing on October 6 focused on what in the Recovery Act has been implemented and what additional steps Congress needs to take. Increasing loan limits was a main focus.

In addition to making greater access to capital a top priority since and prior to my becoming Chair, I have specifically supported increasing the loan limits for the past two Congresses, voting favorably for this increase in the last two SBA reauthorization bills out of the Senate Small Business Committee. My bill goes above and beyond these increases because in this recession small business needs are greater than ever before, and the programs have not been updated in many years.

The bill I am introducing today increases the maximum 7(a) loan from \$2 million to \$5 million, increases the maximum 504 loan from \$1.5 million to \$5.5 million, and the maximum microloan from \$35,000 to \$50,000. These are all provisions that have been championed by my colleague and Ranking Member, Olympia Snowe, in S.1615, the Next Steps for Main Street Act. Additionally, the bill includes a provision to allow businesses to use 504 loan guarantees to refinance existing business debt and allows microloan inter-

mediaries to have greater access to technical assistance grants. The bill also increases the amount that a New Market Venture Capital Company can invest in any one company, helping fast-growing businesses located in areas with chronic underemployment.

The Recovery Act included a controversial provision that exempts the National Institutes of Science (NIH) from participating in the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. This provision could cost small businesses as much as \$230 million in lost r&d work, impacting the development of needed military and medical technologies and therapies. In addition, it directly counters the goals of the Recovery Act to create high-paying jobs, spur innovation and boost America's competitiveness. This bill contains a provision to correct this unfair exemption by requiring NIH to obligate \$150 million of the Recovery funds it received to be used for SBIR and STTR projects.

Last, the bill amends the America's Recovery Capital (ARC) loan program, enacted as part of the Recovery Act, so that businesses with existing SBA 7(a) loans can access this financing. The temporary ARC program offers interest-free loans to viable small businesses, which carry a 100-percent guaranty from the SBA to the lender and require no fees paid to SBA. Loan proceeds are provided over a six-month period and repayment of the ARC loan principal is deferred for 12 months after the last disbursement of the proceeds. Repayment can extend up to five years.

With small businesses making up the largest source of employment in this country, and the national unemployment rate still too high, changes like these are vital to the success of our small businesses and the competitiveness of our nation. I look forward to working with President Obama and his Administration, Ranking Member SNOWE and my Senate and House colleagues to quickly pass this critical legislation and send to the President for signature.

RECOGNIZING CAMDEN AEROJET WORKERS

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I am joined with my colleague, Senator PRYOR, to recognize the Aerojet-General Corporation's Camden, AR, production facility. The Camden facility recently achieved the milestone shipment of its 5,000th MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor to Raytheon Missile Systems and the U.S. Navy. Aerojet is a world-recognized aerospace and defense leader principally serving the missile, space propulsion and armaments markets. This most significant milestone will be commemorated with a celebration ceremony held in Camden, AR, on Wednesday, October 28, 2009.

The MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor provides the main propulsion for the standard missile 2 (SM-2), the U.S.

Navy's primary surface-to-air air defense weapon. SM-2 is an integral part of the AEGIS weapon system aboard Ticonderoga-class cruisers and Arleigh Burke-class destroyers. The MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor also is the second stage propulsion for the Navy's newest defensive weapon, the standard missile 6 extended range active missile, SM-6, which will provide extended range anti-air warfare capability over both sea and land. The MK 104 also is utilized on the standard missile 3, SM-3, for aegis ballistic missile defense, BMD, from the sea missions.

Aerojet has manufactured the MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor since 1987 at its Camden facility. The Standard Missile family of products, which also includes the MK 72 booster and MK 125 warhead, are noteworthy elements of Aerojet's industry-leading tactical propulsion portfolio produced in Camden.

On the occasion of this milestone, Senator PRYOR and I are proud to join together and lend our voices to congratulate and honor the nearly 600 Aerojet workers in Camden, AR, on a job well-done. You have served our State and our Nation admirably for more than 20 years.

TRIBUTE TO CLARA KIRCHER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have been privileged to meet so many people in my 35 years in the Senate. One who will always stand out is Clara Kircher, who stayed with me in my office for over a quarter of a century, leaving as deputy chief of staff when she retired.

She is a remarkable woman who, on her own, raised her family, giving them the best example of a strong, talented, and loving woman. She did the same in my office, mentoring so many, and showing by example that she could keep a 50- to 60-hour week and still go back to college.

Marcelle and I consider her one of our dearest friends, and we were privileged to be with her when she was inducted into the hall of fame at Elizabeth Seton High School in Bladensburg, MD. I ask unanimous consent that the statement they made about her at that induction be printed in the RECORD as an example to everybody in the Senate family.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ELIZABETH SETON HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Clara Smiley Kircher was born on May 3, 1945 in Washington, D.C., the daughter of Ann and Golden Smiley. She grew up in Mt. Rainier, MD, and attended Saint James Elementary School. She was accepted into the first freshman class at Elizabeth Seton High School in 1959 and graduated from Seton in June 1963. At Seton, she was a member of the Glee Club, Masque and Gavel, basketball team, Future Nurses Club, Student Council, Louise de Marilacs and Honor Society. She attended Saint Joseph's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland, where she majored in business, from 1963-1965. She married Walter Kircher from Riverdale, Maryland, at Saint