

This innovative approach transformed advertising and marketing for the LVCVA.

Rossi was part of the effort to bring professional sports to Southern Nevada and he convinced the Triple-A baseball affiliate in Spokane, WA, to move to Las Vegas. He worked in partnership with other communities to bring NASCAR and the NBA All-Star Game to Southern Nevada. When the National Finals Rodeo outgrew Oklahoma City, Rossi helped persuade the event to make Las Vegas its new home.

By the 1990s, Rossi was overseeing incredible growth in Southern Nevada's tourism industry and changing the face of Las Vegas from a regional gaming market into an international resort destination. Rossi was part of the team that developed the most successful tourism ad campaign in history. Today, Las Vegas is synonymous with "What happens here, stays here." Rossi was named Co-Brand Marketer of the Year by Brandweek magazine for his work with this advertising campaign.

Every resident of Clark County has benefited from Rossi's successful marketing and branding effort. Tourism supports jobs for 370,000 Southern Nevada residents and generates more than \$41 billion for the local economy. Today, 20 of the world's 27 largest hotels and resorts are located on Las Vegas Strip. And our resorts count on Rossi and the LVCVA to help fill rooms. Under Rossi's leadership, Las Vegas has also transformed itself from a weekend destination into the number one trade show destination in North America for 18 consecutive years. With the slogan "Vegas means business," Rossi and his team have attracted and signed multiyear contracts to host major conventions from the Consumer Electronics Show to the International Apparel show known as MAGIC.

Rossi's magic touch and marketing brilliance caught the attention of national leaders in the tourism industry. Last year, Rossi became the chairman of our Nation's largest tourism group, US Travel. He was appointed to the Commerce Department's Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and serves as a delegate to the White House Conference on Tourism. The American Marketing Association and the Travel and Tourism Research Association have both presented Rossi with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

While everyone knows that "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas," it is my honor to make sure that what has happened on Rossi's watch is properly recognized. On behalf of the U.S. Senate, I am proud to congratulate Rossi Ralenkotter on 40 years in the tourism industry. All Nevadans have benefited from his leadership at the LVCVA and I look forward to many more years of working together.

S. 415, THE SMALL BUSINESS DISASTER RECOVERY ACT

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join the Senator from Lou-

isiana in introducing the Small Business Disaster Recovery Act. The purpose of this bill is to streamline certain burdensome procedures for small businesses that are affected by a Presidentially declared disaster. This bill would complement provisions adopted by this body and enacted into law earlier this year that the Senator from Louisiana and I sponsored to improve FEMA procedures. Like the bill we are introducing today, we derived these provisions from our States' experiences with Hurricane Katrina. They will not cost anything, but they will improve government services at times when they are most critical.

Through two budget-neutral provisions, this bill continues to improve the way we respond and recover from disasters using the lessons that we have learned from past disasters. Current practice dictates that small business owners can only use their homes as collateral for a post-disaster loan. The legislation's first provision clarifies that the collateral requirement for SBA disaster loans can include business assets of actual value other than a primary residence. This removes a key obstacle to small business owners who want to restart operations after a disaster but are unable or unwilling to use their homes when they could conceivably provide sufficient business assets as collateral for the loan.

The bill clearly states that these assets should be of equal or greater value to the amount of the loan and ensures that the Small Business Administration is responsive to the needs of small businesses seeking disaster loans less than the maximum allowable. I encourage the Small Business Administration to ensure that the asset requirements for collateral are established in a way that minimizes any potential waste, fraud, and abuse. This bill will maintain the traditional standards for appropriate collateral assets, which includes commercial real estate, machinery and equipment, business inventory, and furniture and fixtures.

The second provision included in this legislation addresses assistance provided by small business development centers, or SBDCs, to out-of-State businesses. It seeks to repeal processes that discourage SBDCs to work across State lines when doing so actually makes good sense. Sharing resources and knowledge across State lines is essential when disasters overwhelm local capacity or expertise. This legislation has the support of the Association of Small Business Development Centers and the International Economic Development Council because it encourages such information and resource sharing.

I am pleased to join the distinguished Senator from Louisiana in encouraging States and SBDC networks to formalize partnerships across State lines before disasters strike. We are both aware that any action or decision that takes place prior to a disaster is an action that does not waste time or resources during a time of crisis. The

Emergency Management Assistance Compact system shows how well this can work.

I thank the Senator from Louisiana and her staff for working with me and my staff to make sure that this legislation addresses the need for SBDCs to be properly reimbursed for work when they appropriately respond to concerns in another state.

The reforms in this bill represent commonsense lessons that we have learned from our constituents after experiencing the effects of some of the most severe natural disasters in our Nation's history. I urge serious consideration of this legislation and invite other Senators to cosponsor this bill.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

OBSERVING RARE DISEASE DAY

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, since 2009, the last day of February has been observed as National Rare Disease Day to raise awareness of and provide support for Americans living with a rare disease or disorder.

By definition, each rare disease or disorder affects a small patient population, less than 200,000 people. However, the combined 7,000 individual rare diseases affect nearly 30 million Americans. Sadly, children with rare genetic diseases account for more than half of the rare disease population.

Many of these rare diseases are serious, even life-threatening: epidermolysis bullosa; progeria; muscular dystrophy; sickle cell anemia; Tay-Sachs; cystic fibrosis; many childhood cancers; and fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva.

Patients with rare diseases face unique challenges. Too many of these conditions lack effective treatments and cures. And too often people with rare diseases experience challenges in obtaining an accurate diagnosis. In addition, there is often difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with the necessary expertise in rare diseases or disorders.

Great strides have been made in research and treatment as the result of the Orphan Drug Act, legislation passed in 1983 to encourage pharmaceutical companies to bring treatments for rare diseases to market.

This year, the Rare Disease Day Resolution also pays tribute to the 30th Anniversary of the Orphan Drug Act and calls for us to reflect upon the successes of that Act and the challenges to be addressed in the future to prevent, identify, combat, and treat rare diseases.

Rare Disease Day is also an important opportunity to honor lifesaving advances in science and research that continue to transform the diagnosis, treatment, and standard of care for many orphan diseases, thanks in no small part to the advocacy efforts of the National Institutes of Health, the medical community, patients and their