

its goals of being independent, of joining the community of free democratic nations, and of providing better lives—free lives—for the people of Georgia.

It is high time the Administration took a strong position on the subject of the Caucasus and of Georgia in particular. So far, it has not only failed to reign in Russian efforts against Georgia, but by this very failure, it has insured that the Russian-promoted destabilization efforts will continue.

Administrative apathy on this subject is best illustrated by the astonishing lack of urgency that the State Department ascribes to placing qualified and dynamic ambassadors in these countries. Georgia has been without a U.S. ambassador for well over six months. No candidate has yet been identified, let alone brought to the Senate for confirmation, despite persistent and forceful requests by President Shevardnadze and other key leaders in Georgia for such an appointment.

The Administration has also been supporting the Russian “mediation” of the Abkazi conflict; this policy must be reversed. Russian “mediation” consists of injecting Russian peacekeepers into the region to separate the Georgian and Abkazi combatants. Their behavior in the recent fighting in Abkazia shows their true intentions: the best case scenario shows that the Russian peacekeeping forces did nothing to interdict the flow of separatist personnel and heavy weaponry into the region where the fighting was taking place. The worst case scenario has them actually providing weapons to the Abkazi combatants. This is unacceptable.

Allowing continued Russian control over this situation is tantamount to inserting the fox’s first cousin as a mediator between the foxes and the hens. The current situation insures that Georgia can only lose. It is time for the Administration to demand the removal of the bogus Russian peacekeepers, and to insist on their replacement by an independent force of peacekeepers. To do less is to acknowledge implicitly that Georgia remains within Russia’s sphere of control.

This matter also raises the issue of the continued presence of Russian military bases in Georgia. They are there despite the overwhelming opposition of Georgian citizens. These bases were established at a time when Georgia was in no position to repulse Russian advances. Russia has no legitimate national security claim on Georgia. Russia is no less safe—indeed it is safer—with a Georgia that is free, independent, democratic and with free markets close to its southern border. These bases—from which the perpetrators of the assassination attempts on President Shevardnadze are reported to have fled—must be closed. The United States must not accept the notion that Georgian independence can only be secured by Russian power. Nothing could be more alien to the truth and to our national values.

Mr. President, it is time for the Administration to state unequivocally that the stability and survival of an independent Georgia is a fundamental U.S. interest. That Russia’s collusion with the Abkazi is nothing less than Moscow’s effort to maintain control over sovereign Georgia and will not be tolerated; and that it is time to put an end to Russian Trojan horses in Georgia—the phony Russian “peacekeepers” and the military bases that provide Russia with the means to threaten Georgia’s future and to put U.S. interests at risk.●

#### TRIBUTE TO LAHAINALUNA HIGH SCHOOL OF MAUI, HAWAII

● Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the students from Lahainaluna High School from Lahaina, Maui, who recently came to Washington, D.C., to participate in the national competition of We the People . . . The Citizens and the Constitution.

As you may know, We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution is a civic education program which seeks to develop young students into enlightened and capable citizens who understand and promote responsible participation in our democratic process. Students learn the history and principles behind our constitutional democracy through the use of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

These young students competed against 49 other classes from across the Nation, demonstrating a youthful and enthusiastic interest in the fundamental ideas that are imperative for gaining a better understanding of our government. We the People is not only a competitive event, but it is also the most extensive civics program to reach more than 26 million students from elementary, middle, and high schools across the country.

I would like to recognize these fine students for their accomplishments: Iao Eisenberg, Tiffany Fujiwara, Jasmine Hentz, Erin Lockhard, William Myers, Leah Nakamura, Ryan Ott, Michael Prieto, Julie Reed, Sal Saribay, Justin Serrano, Jeffrey Shelton, Yee Ning Tay, and Kerri Tsubaki. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of their teacher, Mrs. Ruth E. Hill, and the District and State Coordinators, Ms. Jane Kinoshita and Ms. Sharon Kaohi, respectively. Without their dedication and leadership, our students would be unable to participate in this important program.

Mr. President, I commend all the students and teachers who participated in this program, and particularly the students of Lahainaluna High School who represented Hawaii in the national competition. It is always heartwarming to see students actively engaged in the learning process. I wish the students and teacher of Lahainaluna High School the best as they continue to pursue their future endeavors.●

#### TRIBUTE TO THE MARSH BILLINGS NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, June 5, 1998, is a great day for Vermont and for the Nation as we open Vermont’s first, and the Nation’s newest, National Historic Park. On behalf of all Vermonters I want to welcome the National Park Service and express my deepest gratitude to Laurence and Mary Rockefeller for making this possible.

Vermonters have always drawn a special strength from the land. And as Vermonters, we have a responsibility to the land. I was proud to introduce for myself, Senator LEAHY and all Vermonters, the legislation that created this National Historic Park in 1991. A perfect “Vermont scale” National Park, its size fits our State’s landscape, incorporating many of the most significant attributes about Vermont: our stewardship of the working agricultural and forest landscapes, our dedication to conservation, and our commitment and respect for our towns and communities.

Mr. President, the beauty and significance of this site will now forever receive the same recognition as our other great National Parks, such as Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and Gettysburg.

George Perkins Marsh, Frederick Billings, and Laurence Rockefeller’s devotion and commitment to the issues of conservation, forest management, and agriculture have helped develop this nation’s attitudes for how we treat and respect our lands. Private land owners throughout the country have followed the example of these distinguished leaders. Today, those who work and own the land, and hold true to the ideals of Marsh and Billings, are this Nation’s most important stewards. The preservation and conservation of the Nation’s working landscape, and historic and natural resources are increasingly important and yet are becoming more difficult to maintain. The Marsh Billings National Park will forever serve Vermont and the Nation as a model for conservation.

I salute Mary and Laurence Rockefeller for their vision in providing this park to the people of Vermont and the United States. The Rockefeller family has given future generations of Vermonters, indeed all Americans, access to a truly historic and beautiful site. This is only the most recent accomplishment in Mr. Rockefeller’s more than 50 years of conservation leadership. Laurence Rockefeller was the first person ever awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for conservation work, and that award was richly deserved. I am proud to have been an original cosponsor of the legislation that granted him the award.

Mr. President, the people of Woodstock and the entire State of Vermont have lived a long time in harmony with the landscape. Our first national park not only recognizes the two founders of the American conservation movement,

it is a tribute to all Vermonters and to the Vermont way of life.●

IN MEMORY OF MABEL VIRGINIA  
JEWES

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the life of Mabel Virginia Jewes, a dedicated mother and a great educator who passed away on May 23, 1998. As we work to strengthen our Nation's families, I hope we can all find inspiration in the life of this remarkable woman.

In 1934, Mrs. Jewes graduated from then Morgan State College and followed her undergraduate studies with a Masters degree from the former Salisbury State College in the 1960's. She lived most of her life on Maryland's Eastern Shore where she dedicated herself to education, both in her classrooms and in the life of her son, William Jewes, Jr. As a teacher, Mrs. Jewes taught English and home economics in junior high and high school where her patience and kindness taught students to feel comfortable about learning. In addition to her service as a schoolteacher, Mrs. Jewes also worked as hospital administrator, Pentagon employee and property manager.

Mabel Jewes believed in getting behind our kids, making her son and his education her top priority. Mrs. Jewes focused her life's work on helping young Bill build an educational record that would give him the opportunity to attend any school in the country. I'm pleased to say he chose Maryland's Johns Hopkins University. As many of my colleagues know, Bill Jewes is now the president of CareFirst Inc. and chief executive officer of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Maryland. We can imagine how proud Mrs. Jewes was of her son's success. She was a model mother who espoused the values we work to promote in our country's families.

Mr. President, I am honored today to pay special tribute to such an inspirational and important Marylander. Throughout her lifetime, Mabel Jewes made vital contributions to the successful life of her son Bill, as well as to the lives and lessons of those who surrounded her. The great state of Maryland is fortunate to have been home to such a great woman.●

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS  
WEEK

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to mark National Small Business Week. This is the week when we honor, as we have for the past 35 years, the American entrepreneurs who have done so much to make ours a prosperous, thriving nation. America's 23 million small businesses employ more than half our country's private work force, create two of every three new jobs, and generate a majority of American innovations.

Mr. President, it would be impossible to exaggerate the contribution of small

business to America's economy. Small business is our engine of economic growth. Small business-dominated industries produced an estimated 64 percent of the 2.5 million new jobs created during 1996. Small businesses also account for 28 percent of jobs in high technology sectors—the sectors of our economy pushing us into the future and keeping us competitive in world markets.

Small businesses also serve as the training ground for America's workforce, providing 67 percent of workers with their first jobs and initial on the job training in basic skills.

Small business is especially important in my own state of Michigan, where almost half a million small businesses and sole proprietors created every net new job in our economy from 1992 to 1996.

How did Michigan's small businesses accomplish this? Ask Pamela Aguirre of Mexican Industries in Michigan and Cheryl Hughes of C&D Hughes. Both these women are being honored by the Small Business Administration for their efforts in expanding their small businesses against great odds through hard work, perseverance and devotion to quality.

Ms. Aguirre has taken the eight employee leather and soft trim automotive products manufacturer she inherited from her father and turned it into a 1,500 employee eight plant corporation with 1996 sales of \$158 million. Her company had plants in Detroit empowerment zones before they were empowerment zones. Hundreds of local residents have found training, skills and careers thanks to her.

Cheryl Hughes started running her highway construction company in 1980 out of her home. Now, after weathering reductions in federal highway funding, C&D Hughes employs 60 people, has achieved annual sales of over \$7 million, and is recognized as one of the fastest growing privately held companies in Michigan.

Entrepreneurs like Pamela Aguirre and Cheryl Hughes deserve our respect, Mr. President. Their efforts make their communities and our nation better and more prosperous. By providing jobs they help people learn skills and build lives for themselves and for their families.

But they also need our help. If small business owners like Pamela Aguirre and Cheryl Hughes are to continue to grow and to provide good jobs to millions of Americans, they must be freed from excessive federal regulations and mandates, and from frivolous lawsuits that drive up the cost of insurance and can drive a small business owner into bankruptcy.

For example, Mr. President, current regulatory costs are staggering—\$647 billion in 1994 according to the General Accounting Office. Our small businesses cannot afford to bear this kind of burden. What is more, many small companies refuse to grow because doing so would subject them to a number of costly, unnecessary regulations.

The answer, in my view, is real-world cost benefit analysis. No one wants to put our families and children at risk from unsafe products or procedures. But the federal government must implement strict policies seeing to it that scientific data is used to determine whether any proposed regulation will cause more harm than good—to people, to the economy and to small business.

In addition, Mr. President, Washington too often imposes unfunded mandates on America's job creators. The benefits of government programs are there for all to see. But the costs imposed by these programs on workers, consumers, and small businesses are not so clear. Reduced wages, increased prices and stagnant growth all can result from unfunded federal mandates. That is why I believe it is crucial that we institute mandate reform legislation that would direct the Congressional Budget Office to study the effects of proposed private sector mandates on workers, consumers and economic growth, and provide a point of order allowing members to call Congress' attention to these costs.

Finally, Mr. President, entrepreneurs increasingly are being forced out of business, or deciding not to go into business for themselves, out of fear of lawsuits. One recent Gallup poll reported that fear of litigation has caused 20 percent of small businesses not to hire more employees, expand their business, or introduce new products. And that figure does not include those who have decided not to go into business at all.

The culprit is the frivolous lawsuit. The stories are well-known: A Northridge, California woman claims damages from a store after she pulled out the bottom box in a blender display stack and brought it down on her. A former smoker in Seattle sues a supermarket and Washington dairy farmers for failing to warn him that a lifetime of drinking whole milk might clog his arteries and cause him to have a heart attack. A teenager in Nashua, New Hampshire sues the manufacturer of a basketball net after he attempts a slam dunk and loses two teeth when they get caught in the net.

We must put a stop to this lawsuit abuse before it stifles our economic growth, innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. Ideally, we would pass legislation discouraging all frivolous lawsuits. Unfortunately, while we have tried several times to enact broad-based legal reform, the President has successfully opposed it. That is why I have sponsored the "small business lawsuit abuse protection act." For small businesses, this legislation will limit the punitive damages that can be awarded against the company. Punitive damages would be available only if the injured party proves convincingly that the harm was caused by the small business through at least a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights and safety of others. And punitive damages would be limited to the lesser of