

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