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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 2, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TED POE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

NEW MARKETS TAX CREDIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEAL. I rise today to speak about the New Markets Tax Credit program and the positive impact it has had on western Massachusetts.

I've been a leader of New Markets since its enactment in 2000 because it's a cost-effective way to create jobs and drive investment in low-income communities. Today, I want to highlight a few New Market Tax Credit initiatives in my State.

New Markets Tax Credit is designed to stimulate investment and economic

growth in areas that are traditionally overlooked by conventional capital markets. This program attracts capital to low-income communities by providing private investors with a 39 percent Federal tax credit for investments made in businesses or economic developments located in those areas.

In 2010, New Markets generated \$9.5 billion in capital for projects and businesses in low-income communities. This capital resulted in the development of 15 million square feet of manufacturing, retail, and community-related space throughout the country.

Last year, New Markets Tax Credits investments resulted in the creation or retention of 70,000 jobs, including 38,000 construction jobs.

Unfortunately, New Markets is a temporary program that expired on December 31. I am now and have been the lead Democratic sponsor of this legislation to extend the program for a predictable 5 years. I've now been calling on our colleagues to extend this initiative. So let me share with you a few successes from back home and explain why I think New Markets works so well.

Hot Mama's Foods in Springfield, Massachusetts, my hometown—it's a great success story. The company was created in the 1980s, and they manufacture and package fresh and frozen gourmet salsa and other spreads that are all natural and, indeed, organic. Hot Mama's was originally located in Northampton, but thanks to New Markets, they were able to purchase a larger USDA-certified food production facility on Avocado Street in Springfield. It has added 10 new jobs and retained 50 jobs in the current workforce.

Another success story is the River Valley Market in Northampton, Massachusetts, which moved into a former granite quarry. No one wanted this space because it was prohibitively expensive to renovate; but through New Markets and other financial support,

they opened a food cooperative that features local farmers and employs neighborhood residents.

Finally, let me highlight a more recent New Markets project that's currently under construction, the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Holyoke is a city in western Massachusetts with a population of about 40,000 people. From the late 19th century until the mid-20th century, Holyoke was known as the world's biggest paper manufacturer.

The High Performance Computing Center is a \$168 million technology hub that is being built at the former Mastex Industries site on Bigelow Street in the heart of Holyoke. Construction of the center began in the fall of 2010; and the two-story, 90,000 square foot complex is expected to be completed next year.

This facility will be New England's first high performance computing center. It will feature computers with high speed and the capacity to process extraordinary amounts of data. When it's complete, it will be among the 500 most powerful computer centers in the world.

The Holyoke Center is a partnership between local universities—University of Massachusetts, Harvard, MIT, Boston University, Northeastern University—and two private sector companies: the EMC Corporation, based in Hopkinton, and Cisco Systems.

The center also received a \$14.5 million New Market Tax Credit allocation, which is the critical component to financing this important project.

I believe the Holyoke Center will be a catalyst for economic development in Holyoke and in western Massachusetts. It will employ 13 permanent jobs and 130 research positions at various universities. It is expected to create 600 construction jobs.

Without New Markets and the leadership that I've tried to offer in this program, Hot Mama's Foods, River Valley

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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