

just north of the Cody City limits. Part of this land is currently leased to a number of light industrial corporations including a gypsum wall board manufacturing facility, a meat processing facility, a trucking company, an oil company, a concrete company, and a lumber company. The property is also currently used as a utility corridor and is encumbered by a natural gas pipeline, several electricity and oil and gas pipeline rights of way, and a railroad easement held by the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad.

This proposal offers a needed shot in the arm for an economy that has not been able to attract a diversity of new jobs based on a shortage of available industrial property. This shortage was created by a strong federal presence—82 percent of the land in Park County is owned by the Federal Government, with 52 percent of that land designated and managed as Wilderness. This high concentration of federal land drives up the price on available private land making industrial development very difficult.

In conclusion Mr. President, I hope my colleagues can join with me in support of this legislation and together we can provide the Cody area with a wonderful community building opportunity.

INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to discuss the amendment offered by Senator DOMENICI, Senator ABRAHAM, and myself to raise the minimum wage. I cosponsored this proposal because I believe it represents a fair, sensible compromise.

In raising the minimum wage, it is imperative that we do not hurt the very people we are trying to help. Increasing the minimum wage always carries the risks of hindering job growth, cutting off opportunities for entry level workers, or displacing current workers. These risks are a real concern to me. In my view, any increase in the minimum wage must be accompanied by measures that will negate possible unintended negative effects on workers and businesses.

I believe the Domenici amendment offers a reasonable way to help workers and businesses by coupling the wage increase with tax relief that will help small businesses offset the additional costs. I would like to highlight a few of the ways this amendment creates a win-win situation for workers and small businesses. First, our amendment provides a one dollar increase in the minimum wage, which will be phased in incrementally over the next three years. Currently, the federal minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour. Our amendment raises the minimum wage to \$5.50 per hour in 2000, to \$5.85 per hour in 2001, and to \$6.15 per hour in

2002. It also includes reforms to expand pension coverage, particularly for employees of small businesses. These provisions enhance fairness for women, increase portability for plan participants, strengthen pension security and enforcement, and streamline regulatory requirements. Likewise, our proposal permanently extends the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which gives employers an incentive to hire people receiving public assistance. This program helps people who have fallen on hard times to move back into the workplace. A section of our proposal that I am particularly proud of allows self-employed individuals to deduct 100 percent of their health insurance costs as early as next year. Under current law, hard working men and women must wait until 2003 before they can fully deduct their health insurance costs. This measure puts small business owners, farmers, and other hard working men and women struggling to get their businesses off the ground on a level playing field with large corporations, who already enjoy full deductions for healthcare. I have fought for this parity throughout my tenure in Congress, and I thank Senator DOMENICI for including it in this amendment.

Mr. President, our amendment is a compromise package. It is a good faith attempt to help low-income workers without penalizing their employers or causing unintended job displacement. We believe the tax relief and pension reforms in this bill will help small businesses and mitigate possible adverse effects of raising the minimum wage.

Once again, I thank Senator DOMENICI for his hard work on this amendment.

THE MANUFACTURED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am pleased to offer my support and cosponsorship to S. 1452, the Manufactured Housing Improvement Act. Rural America, and my state of South Dakota in particular, is in the midst of an affordable housing crunch. In South Dakota, approximately four of ten new single family homes are manufactured homes, and with an average cost of around \$42,000, manufactured homes enable many individuals, young families, and retired South Dakotans to enjoy the benefits of homeownership. Nearly one-quarter of the new homes nationwide are manufactured homes, and an estimated 8% of the American population lives in manufactured homes.

Despite the increasing number of manufactured homes, the Federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act has not been updated since its creation in 1974. Over the past twenty five years, manufactured homes have evolved from being predominately

mobile trailers to permanent structures that contain the same amenities found in site-built homes. The inability of regulations to keep pace with changing technology and the nature of manufactured housing frustrates manufactured housing builders and consumers alike.

S. 1452 establishes a consensus committee that would submit recommendations to the Secretary of HUD for revising the manufactured housing construction and safety standards. In addition, the bill authorizes the Secretary of HUD to use industry label fees to administer the consensus committee and update the regulations. I applaud this unique provision that costs taxpayers nothing.

There is no question that construction codes for manufactured homes are woefully outdated and in need of revision. For example, the manufactured housing industry is running six years behind the most current electrical codes. Changes in the height of ceilings in manufactured homes since 1974 have also outpaced codes regulating the location of smoke detectors in the home. As a result, some smoke detectors in manufactured homes are several feet from the top of vaulted ceilings. Another trend in the industry is for more manufactured homes to be placed on private lots with basements. Unfortunately, out-of-date HUD regulations require water heaters to be placed on the main floor of a manufactured home, thereby prohibiting the more logical placement of water heaters in the basement and near a floor drain.

By updating construction safety regulations, this bill will benefit many South Dakotans and others who own manufactured homes. The AARP has raised valid concerns with portions of this legislation that I am hopeful can be addressed. I am confident that the concerns AARP has with the composition of the consensus committee can be worked out to ensure proper representation from consumers, industry experts, manufacturers, public officials, and other interested parties. I also commend AARP for raising the issue of warranties, and as a cosponsor of this legislation, I look forward to working with my colleagues, the manufactured housing industry, and AARP to ensure consumer access to warranties.

Another important issue that needs to be addressed in this discussion concerns installation standards that 33 states, including South Dakota, currently have. Differences in geography, soil composition, and climate make a uniform set of installation standards difficult to implement. However, I would like to see consumers in those states that currently do not have installation standards for manufactured homes receive the same level of assurance South Dakotans have that their homes will be installed correctly.

I would like to thank Senator SHELBY for introducing S. 1452 as well as