large companies, small business exporters cannot pack up their bags and relocate operations overseas to take advantage of foreign equivalents to OPIC. There are 36 nations that have export credit insurance programs like OPIC. Just like OPIC, most of these nations have local content requirements. If forced to, larger U.S. multinational corporations can pick and choose from one of these other foreign export credit insurance programs. But the work and the jobs, then, are transferred overseas. Small business exporters do not have this luxury. OPIC is needed to maintain the competitive edge of these small business exporters in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, let me give you one concrete example from the hearing last month. Jane Dauffenbach, President of Aquarius Systems, located in North Prairie, Wisconsin, testified how foreign governments constantly try to undermine her small company’s export prospects, even to the point of competing against free donations of similar equipment. Aquarius Systems manufactures aquatic weed harvesters. In Asia, Aquarius Systems lost a large equipment sale when the Canadian government gave a “free” aquatic weed harvester to the monarch of the country. In Kenya, Ms. Dauffenbach also testified about how the Japanese and the Israeli governments almost snatched another huge export sale from her company to clear water hyacinths clogging Lake Victoria. It was only because she had a World Bank contract, backed by OPIC political risk insurance, that she was able to win and complete the sale. She said, “Simply put, Aquarius Systems is not competing with foreign companies. We are competing with foreign governments. . . . It is imperative that the financing and insurance programs from OPIC exist so that we have the necessary tools available to accomplish our goals.”

Second, the legislation reaffirms the importance of Trade Development Agency (TDA). This small 43 person agency, which develops feasibility studies in American specifications so that U.S. exporters can win major contracts in developing countries and emerging economies later down the road, has generated $12.3 billion in exports since its inception in 1981. Every $1 in spending for TDA projects has led to the export of $32 in U.S. goods and services overseas. The Export Enhancement Act requires, to the maximum extent possible, the imposition of “success fees” on companies who win export deals thanks to the groundwork laid by a feasibility study conducted by the TDA.

Third, the bill eliminates the three export promotion arms of International Trade Administration (ITA) at the Commerce Department—the U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service, which as its armed motion arms of International Trade Administration, which monitors trade development in key industries and supports the United States Trade Representative in key industrial sector trade negotiations; and Market Access and Compliance, which ensures that U.S. companies obtain market compliance with existing trade agreements with various countries of the world. The Export Enhancement Act makes a few changes to these programs to make sure that the ITA keeps its focus on helping more small businesses export, particularly to underrepresented regions of the world, like Africa, in the most efficient way possible.

Finally, the Export Enhancement Act proposes to make a few changes to the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) to insure that the 19 federal agencies that are involved in trade promotion operate more in tandem together.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support the Export Enhancement Act of 1999.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to honor the work of the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The National Weather Service is essential to the safety of the American people by providing weather, water and climate forecasts and warnings for protection of life and property. We saw that service first-hand in Oklahoma just a short two weeks ago.

Without the warnings by the National Weather Service, the number of personal injury and deaths would undoubtedly have been higher. Warnings by the National Weather Service prompted the closure of roads and highways that lead into the path of the slow-moving tornado, saving an untold number of lives. I have heard countless stories of people who, at the prompting of the National Weather Service warnings, took shelter in the center of their homes or fled their homes for the safety of a storm shelter and survived, while their homes were destroyed. I and numerous other Oklahomans are indebted to the service of the National Weather Service.

Yet the ability the Service demonstrated was not an accident; they have been preparing for times such as this for many years, through planning, training, and research and development. New technologies pioneered by NOAA research allowed warnings to be issued up to 30 minutes before the tornadoes struck in Oklahoma. Contrast this with the 6 minute average lead time before the technology was available. Partnerships forged between the National Weather Service, media, law enforcement officials, and emergency managers, and their seamless response to this disaster was critical to the successful warning process that saved countless lives in Oklahoma.

I applaud the work of the National Weather Service, Mr. Speaker, and support the continued generous funding of the Service through this appropriations process.

A TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK CUBAN FOUNDATION

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 7, 1999

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to commend the Black Cuban Foundation for its decade of service to the Afro-Cuban community in exile. Over the past ten years, it has pursued a goal of improving relations between Afro-Cubans and our varied communities.

The Black Cuban Foundation was founded on July 30th, 1989 and promptly began to promote its important and unique role in Cuban and American culture through educational workshops, cultural events, and works of charity. Their success has been recognized by various groups, including the United Negro College Fund, Florida Metropolitan, the Cuban Municipalities in Exile, the Human Rights Commission, and the City of Miami.

Currently the Black Cuban Foundation is working harder than ever to highlight Afro-Cuban contributions within our community, including fostering a sense of belonging as new American citizens. This group has also allied itself with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations.

In recognition of its lofty goals, I would like to applaud the fervent work of Lucia Rojas, president; Oscar Martinez, vice president; and Ladiies Moraleza, treasurer and secretary. The work of Felipe Gonzalez, Juan A. Woods, and Regla Fernandez should receive equal praise in the Black Cuban Foundation.

HONORING RETIRING FENTON HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL DR. KEN WENSEL

HON. DEBBIE STABENOW
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 7, 1999

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, this week Principal Ken Wensel will retire after a 30-year career at Fenton High School. During those years, Dr. Wensel touched the lives of countless young people—encouraging, advising, inspiring and serving as a role model.

I would like to thank Dr. Wensel personally for his commitment to young people and education. Today I join Fenton Area Public Schools in declaring June 12, 1999 Ken Wensel Day. In addition, I would like to read the following resolution into the Congressional Record on behalf of the Fenton Area Public Schools:

Whereas Dr. Wensel served the Fenton Area Public Schools with distinction and honor for 30 years and;
Whereas Ken Wensel has served in the positions of community education director, athletic director, assistant principal and, for 12 years as principal of Fenton High School and;
Whereas Ken Wensel has been an unwavering advocate for young men and women throughout this tenure as an administrator and;