These very small businesses represented 65 percent of all exporting companies in 1997.

Despite these encouraging statistics, there is still more work that needs to be done. Even though the number of small business exporters tripled, they form less than one percent of all small businesses in the United States. Even among these cutting-edge firms, nearly two-thirds of small business exporters sold to just one foreign market in 1997. In fact, 76 percent of small business exporters sold less than $250,000 worth of goods abroad. In other words, these are ''casual'' exporters. The key is to encourage more small businesses to enter the trade arena and then to prod ''casual'' small business exporters into becoming more active. If we were able to move in this direction, it could boost our exports by several billion dollars.

With the growth of the Internet economy, I am optimistic that we can move in this direction. However, we need to insure that all our government agencies are up to the challenge so they can help increase exports from the small business community.

While most of the trade focus in the Federal Government for small business is on export promotion, the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) can continue to play a vital role in formulating trade policy beneficial to small business. I saw this during the hearing my Small Business Exports Subcommittee held last May examining how Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) would help small business exporters. I heard first-hand from small business exporters how different aspects of the United States-China World Trade Organization (WTO) Accession Agreement, which was negotiated by USTR, would specifically benefit their company's prospects for growth.

The next ''round'' of global trade talks could even have more positive benefits for small business exporters, primarily in the areas of trade facilitation. Topics of discussion under this umbrella are streamlining trade dispute resolution procedures; reforming the documentation and filing procedures for patent and trademark protection; opening the public procurement process by foreign governments to small businesses; enhancing transparency in international tax, finance, customs procedures, and trade rules; and exploring means to internationalize the recognition of technical certification of professionals. How these issues get resolved will be of key interest to small business exporters.

In addition, this Assistant USTR for small business can play an outreach and advocacy role throughout the United States to solicit input from the small business community. Many small business exporters find our government bureaucracy very mystifying and complicated. Many times, small business exporters do not know who to ask a trade policy question. They get bounced or referred to one person after another. Having one person in charge who is empowered to go beyond the Washington Beltway to listen to small business may help alleviate this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Small Business Export Enhancement Act of 2000.

TRIBUTE TO MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER IN HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 11, 2000

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize tomorrow's 40th anniversary of the dedication by president Dwight Eisenhower of the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center.

Since the Marshall Center opened its doors for business under the direction of Dr. Wernher von Braun on July 1, 1960, it has played a pivotal role in our Nation's space program. Led by the von Braun Rocket Team, the Marshall Center developed the Mercury-Redstone vehicle that put America's first astronaut, Alan B. Shepard, into sub-orbital space in 1961. Building upon this firm foundation, Marshall and its partners boldly responded to President Kennedy's challenge to land a man on the Moon by pioneering the development of the colossal Saturn V rocket. The Marshall Center also designed and developed the Lunar Roving Vehicle, used to carry our Apollo astronauts on their journey around the then-unknown surface of our Moon. These and other pioneering accomplishments make up a strong heritage that has made Marshall world-renowned for transportation to, from, and in space.

At a time, Mr. Speaker, when the International Space Station is being constructed 250 miles overhead, it is proper to remember that the first American manned space station, Skylab, was managed at the Marshall Center. Lessons learned from Skylab about long-term human presence in space prove today to be invaluable as we enter an era of unprecedented discovery onboard the ISS. Continuing this tradition of excellence, Marshall and its industry partners have successfully designed, developed, assembled, integrated, tested, and delivered a number of critical U.S. pressurized ISS elements such as Unity, Destiny, and the Habitation and Node 2 modules.

In 1972, following the announcement by President Nixon of plans to develop America's reusable space shuttle, Marshall again accepted its Nation's challenge by designing the shuttle's main engines, solid rocket boosters and external tank. Today, Marshall is responsible for the management of these critical shuttle systems, and is committed to continually improving their reliability, safety, and performance.

Before becoming a reality, Marshall was visualized as ''the only self-contained organization in the nation, which was capable of conducting the development of a space vehicle from the conception of the idea, through production of hardware, testing and launching operations.'' They have exceeded these expectations by not only seeing vehicles through all stages of development, but also by broadening their activities through the scientific success of the Hubble Space Telescope, the Compton Gamma-Ray Observatory, and the Chandra X-ray Observatory three of NASA's great space observatories. The landmark discoveries made by their state-of-the-art scientific instruments have rewritten the science text-books that our children will use for years to come.

In addition to the many world-class facilities at Marshall that contribute to its dynamic engineering test environment, the Marshall Space Flight Center has the distinction of hosting five National Historic Landmarks as designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior. These Historic Landmarks serve as monuments to our cornerstone role in America's space program, and include the Redstone Test Stand, the Propulsion and Structural Test Facility, the Saturn V Dynamic Test Stand, the Neutral Buoyancy Simulator, and one of one three surviving Saturn V rockets.

Mr. Speaker, while I stand here today to commemorate the legacy of Marshall's historic past, I also stand to celebrate the promise of its bright future. As NASA's Center of Excellence for Space Propulsion, Marshall serves as a national resource for research and development of advanced, revolutionary propulsion technologies. Marshall has been tasked to develop propulsion systems that will lower the costs of access to space, opening the doors of space to our entire Nation. The Marshall Center's future vision includes propulsion technologies that will lead to rapid travel throughout and even beyond our solar system. And as NASA's lead center for the development of our nation's future space transportation systems, Marshall will vigorously pursue the research, technological innovations, design and integration of tomorrow's space transportation systems necessary to maintain the United States as a space, military, and economic superpower for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize the source of Marshall's success. It is the talented and highly motivated Marshall workforce, and its industry and academic partners spread across this nation, who have taken us down this path of exceptional achievement. And I believe that our nation's space program will enjoy many more successful missions of discovery while guided by the dedication, creativity, and professionalism of the Marshall's employees and partners.

So today, with enormous pride, I extend my sincerest congratulations to the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center, its employees, and its partners on an exceptional 40-year legacy that occupies a unique position in the history of our space program—a program that has profoundly positioned America first among nations as we begin this 21st century, and promises to enhance the quality of life for ourselves and those who follow us.

CHILD SUPPORT DISTRIBUTION ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2000

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I stand today in support of H.R. 4678, the Child Support Distribution Act. This bill would help poor children escape poverty, strengthen families, and enhance welfare reform by making improvements to the child support system.