

the communities in which they live. This bill authorizes lower levels for the microloan program than the Administration requested. Of course, I would prefer to have full funding because I believe it is important to expand the program so that it is available everywhere. But, compromise is part of the legislative process, and a moderate increase is better than none at all. Nevertheless, I will be monitoring usage of microloan technical assistance and have told Chairman BOND that the Senate Committee on Small Business should revisit the issue before the end of the three-year reauthorization period if the level authorized is inadequate to meet program needs.

In addition to funding, our managers' amendment also makes important changes to the microloan program. We have heard from intermediaries and economic development activists around the country that with some administrative and legislative changes, this program could have a greater impact. This bill takes some important steps in the right direction. Right now we have 156 microlending intermediaries. This bill will permit the program to grow to 250 in FY 2001; to 300 in FY 2002, and to 350 in FY 2003. It also increases loan levels and technical assistance levels over three years. With more technical assistance, we will be able to increase the number of intermediaries, and therefore reach more borrowers in rural areas or large states. I also support the provision to raise the cap on microloans from \$25,000 to \$35,000, making it adequate to help micro-entrepreneurs in states and urban areas where operating costs are more expensive. Senator SNOWE's provision to establish \$1 million for peer-to-peer training for microlenders is also included. I strongly support this concept because it will help the program grow while maintaining its high quality and low loss rates.

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) are also reauthorized under this legislation. SBDCs serve tens of thousands of small business owners and prospective owners every year. This bill takes a giant step to retool the formula that determines how much funding each state receives. This is an important program for all of our states and we want no confusion about its funding. Without this change, some states would have suffered sharp decreases in funding, disproportionate to their needs. I appreciate and am glad that the SBA and the Association of Small Business Development Centers worked with me to develop an acceptable formula so that small businesses continue to be adequately served.

This legislation also reauthorized the National Women's Business Council. For such a tiny office, with minimal funding and staff, it has managed to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the impact of women-

owned businesses in our economy. It has also done pioneer work in raising awareness of business practices that work against women-owned business, such as some in the area of Federal procurement. Recently, they completed two studies that documented the world of Federal procurement and its impact on women-owned businesses.

According to the National Foundation for Women Business Owners, over the past decade, the number of women-owned businesses in this country has grown by 103 percent to an estimated 9.1 million firms. These firms generate almost \$3.6 trillion in sales annually and employ more than 27.5 million workers. With the impact of women-owned businesses on our economy increasing at an unprecedented rate, Congress relies on the Council to serve as its eyes and ears as it anticipates the needs of this burgeoning entrepreneurial sector. Since it was established in 1988, the bipartisan Council has provided important unbiased advice and counsel to Congress.

This Act recognizes the Council's work and reauthorizes it for three years, from FY 2001 to 2003. It also increases the annual appropriation from \$600,000 to \$1 million. The increase in funding will allow the council to: support new and ongoing research; produce and distribute reports and recommendations prepared by the Council; and create an infrastructure to assist states develop women's business advisory councils, coordinate summits and establish an interstate communication network.

The Historically Underutilized Business Zone, or "HUBZone" program, which passed this Committee in 1997, has tremendous potential to create economic prosperity and development in those areas of our Nation that have not seen great rewards, even in this time of unprecedented economic health and stability. This program is similar to my New Markets legislation in that it creates an incentive to hire from, and perform work in, areas of this country that need assistance the most. This bill would authorize the HUBZone program at \$10 million for the next 3 years, which is \$5 million above the Administration's request.

Additionally, the managers' amendment included very important provisions to include those areas which were inadvertently missed when this legislation was crafted—namely, Indian tribal lands. I appreciate the willingness of the Committee on Indian Affairs to work with our Committee to create HUBZone opportunities in the states of Alaska and Hawaii, and in other Indian tribal lands.

The HUBZone section does not contain any provision addressing the interaction of the HUBZone and 8(a) minority contracting programs. I believe that the 8(a) program is an important and necessary tool to help minor-

ity small businesses receive access to government contracts. The Chairman and I agree that there is a need to enhance the participation of both 8(a) and HUBZone companies in Federal procurement. It is my intention that the Senate Committee on Small Business consider the issue of enhancing small business procurement in the next Congress.

The Senate managers' amendment also includes a provision relating to SBA's cosponsorship authority. This authority allows SBA and its programs to cosponsor events and activities with private sector entities, thus leveraging the Agency's limited resources. The managers' amendment extends the authority for three additional years. This provision also adds "information and education" to the types of assistance that can be provided to small businesses by public and private sector organizations working with the SBA. This provision was recommended by the SBA as an effective change to training programs that are jointly run by the SBA and partner organizations.

Mr. President, let me conclude by reminding my colleagues that all of our states benefit from the success and abundance of small businesses. This legislation makes their jobs a little easier. I ask my colleagues for their support of this important legislation.

REFERRAL OF S. 1840

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Committee on Indian Affairs reports S. 1840, a bill to provide for the transfer of public lands to certain California Indian tribes, it then be referred to the Energy Committee for a period not to exceed 7 calendar days. I further ask consent that if S. 1840 is not reported prior to the 7 days, the bill then be discharged from the Energy Committee and placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2000

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it recess until the hour of 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 3. I further ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then begin final remarks on the H-1B visa legislation under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KYL. I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess for the weekly party conferences to meet from 12:30 to 2:15 p.m.