

on Wall Street. He did not cook up this scheme. Yet here we are, 2 years later, finally coming to the aid and support of small businesses.

I heard many stories of this when I was at home, many small businesses that basically said I hope people on the other side of the aisle can set aside their differences and help get this legislation passed; that we need to do more. I know many of you may have seen today the report that was put out by the Joint Economic Committee, "Small Business Employment: Bank Lending Restrains Job Creation." Basically the summation of this, and I will read from the report, is that it found that as a result of "tight lending standards facing small businesses, hiring at small firms continued to decline in 2009 and the early part of 2010, while hiring by largest establishments, which had wider access to credit, began to pick up. . . ."

It is clear that small business hiring still remains flat. The question is what are we going to do about it? It is not about November 2, it is about whether you support giving access to capital to small businesses that had capital choked off from them because of the activities of Wall Street.

I clearly support and respect the engine of our economy that small businesses represent. I hope people will put their differences aside. I appreciate my colleague from Ohio, Senator VOINOVICH, for his leadership, for his advocacy, for listening to the facts on this issue and understanding that these are the people who will help us out of this situation and certainly were not the ones who got us into it.

I hope we will move forward on this legislation and this week we will pass it. I do not expect things to change overnight but I do expect this: for this Congress—for the Senate, for the House—to say where our priorities are and to say where leveraged access to capital can stimulate job growth in our economy.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INOUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONFIRMATION OF ELENA KAGAN

Mr. INOUE. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of Solicitor General Elena Kagan.

Solicitor General Elena Kagan is widely regarded as one of the Nation's leading legal scholars. Her public service and legal experience, work as a teacher, service as a White House and Senate aide, and representing the gov-

ernment as the Nation's Solicitor General, have contributed to Ms. Kagan's intellect, judgment, and independence.

As the first woman to serve as dean at Harvard Law School, Ms. Kagan was highly respected for her ability to build consensus among diverse groups. She diversified the political discourse on campus by hiring professors from a wide political spectrum. While working as a White House aide, Ms. Kagan was known to reach across the aisle to work with both Democrats and Republicans on issues like restricting tobacco companies from targeting ads at children. As the daughter of a public school teacher and a housing lawyer, Ms. Kagan understands that decisions made by the Supreme Court have an impact on the lives of Americans. As Solicitor General, she has argued cases to protect consumers, prevent elections from being taken over by special interests, and protect our national security. Ms. Kagan recognizes the extraordinary role of the Supreme Court to uphold the law and enable all Americans to receive a fair hearing and an equal chance at justice.

Solicitor General Kagan has my full support in her nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. INOUE. Madam President, I rise to speak on a matter of great importance to me. Recently, I met with Gil Kerlikowske, Director of National Drug Control Policy and his Deputy Director for Demand Reduction, David Mineta. In that meeting, they shared alarming information with me about the rates of prescription drug abuse among veterans and active duty military personnel. The Office of National Drug Control Policy, ONDCP, and the Centers for Disease Control have characterized the rate of prescription drug abuse in our country as an epidemic, with rates of unintentional drug overdose deaths having increased fivefold since 1990.

Our active duty military forces and veterans are not immune from this disturbing trend. In the 2008 Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors among Active Duty Military Personnel, prescription drug misuse was reported by one in nine personnel in the past month and nearly one in five in the past year. Further, the percentage of men and women reporting prescription drug misuse in all military services combined—11.5 percent—was more than twice that of the civilian population in the age group 18–64—4.4 percent.

Unfortunately, substance abuse remains a problem for newly returning veterans as well.

Data collected between 2002 and 2008 indicate that across all medical conditions of returning veterans, mental health disorders are the second most common—40 percent—

with both post traumatic stress and substance use disorders among the highest within this category.

Aggregated data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's annual household survey reveals that from 2004 to 2006, 7.1 percent of veterans—an estimated 1.8 million persons 18 or older—met criteria for a past-year substance use disorder.

The Army recently released a study highlighting the importance of suicide prevention. The Army experienced 239 suicide deaths across the total Army, including the active reserve members, in fiscal year 2009. This number does not include 74 drug overdoses in the same year. As the Army stated in its recently released report, "Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention," this is an issue that cannot be ignored. I urge ONDCP to pursue solutions, along with the Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense, to address the serious issue of prescription drug abuse in both the active duty military and among veterans of all service, including the Reserve Component.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the enactment of legislation that created real estate investment trusts, REITs. The development of real estate investment trusts is among the true success stories of American business. Moreover, REITs legislation enacted over the past 50 years presents a remarkable example of how Congress can create the legal framework to liberate entrepreneurs, small investors, and men and women across the country to do what they do best—create wealth and, more importantly, build thriving communities.

When REITs were first created in 1960, small investors had almost no role in commercial real estate ventures. At that time, private partnerships and other groups closed to ordinary investors directed real estate investments, typically using debt, not equity, to finance their ventures. That model not only served small investors poorly, it resulted in the misallocation of capital, and contributed to significant market volatility.

Since that time, REITs have permitted small investors to participate in one of our country's greatest generators of wealth—income-producing real estate—and REITs have greatly improved real estate markets by promoting transparency, liquidity, and stability. The growth in REITs has been particularly dramatic and beneficial in the past 15 years, as capital markets responded to a series of changes in the tax rules that modernized the original 1960 REIT legislation to adjust it to new realities of the marketplace.