

have created jobs and economic opportunities for countless Americans.

Small business owners are the backbone of our nation's economy. Representing more than 99.7 percent of all U.S. employers, small businesses are the number one job creator in this nation. They employ more than half of all private sector employees and generate 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually. In Houston, 98 percent of the more than 350,000 businesses are small businesses.

Funding for this program was eliminated for FY 2005 and the cost of it was shifted to small businesses and community-based lenders. This has caused small businesses to be charged with high upfront fees which keep many from being able to obtain the financing they need. In fact, small business lending has declined every quarter for a total of half a billion dollars so far this year.

As policy-makers, we have a responsibility to the communities we represent to help them achieve economic strength. Therefore, we must provide small businesses with the resources they need to grow and flourish. One of the most effective ways to do this is to reinstate funding for the 7(a) loan program. If we fail to do this, the 9th Congressional District of Texas and Congressional Districts all over the country will suffer negative impacts.

For these reasons, I support the restoration of funding for the 7(a) loan program to its FY 2004 level of \$79 million. I also urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the Velázquez amendment.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS HOME-OWNERSHIP ACT

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce crucial legislation with my colleague from Hawaii, Congressman NEIL ABERCROMBIE, reauthorizing the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act of 2000. Our bill simply reauthorizes the program for FY 2006 through FY 2009.

Established in 2000 through Title VIII of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA), the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act provides affordable housing opportunities to Native Hawaiian families living on the Hawaiian Home Lands of Hawaii.

The Hawaiian Home Lands program, authorized by the federal government under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, is currently being administered by the State of Hawaii's Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The Department receives over \$9 million annually from Title VIII of NAHASDA. The rest of its funds come from the State of Hawaii as well as revenues derived from its own assets and commercial activities.

Funds provided through the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act, which is the first significant infusion of federal housing for Native Hawaiians assistance since the Hawaiian Home Lands program began in 1921, have been well-utilized and administered through the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to service our under-served Native Hawaiian

communities across the state. Funds have been used for: Infrastructure construction of approximately 200 residential lots; Technical assistance for 110 families constructing their homes using the selfhelp method or with the assistance of Habitat for Humanity; Homeownership counseling for over 300 families; Assistance to community associations to construct or renovate community facilities; and Downpayment assistance and low interest loans to families.

As the housing needs of all of our Hawaii grow more and more critical, particularly given our small land base, any improvement to Native Hawaiian housing needs helps not only our Hawaiian community but all communities in our state.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate, where a companion bill was introduced by Senator DANIEL INOUE, on passage of this important legislation. Mahalo!

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBROY INDUSTRIES COMPANY'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of Robroy Industries Company, which is the privately held parent company of Stahlin Non-Metallic Enclosures, a large and progressive employer since 1935 in Belding, Michigan, which is in the Third Congressional District of Michigan.

On June 18, Robroy officials will be celebrating their centennial with an event at their Belding facility. The company was founded as the Enamelled Metals Company in 1905 by Scottish immigrant Peter McIlroy in Etna, Pennsylvania. The company's headquarters were relocated to Verona, Pennsylvania in 1958, and in 1977 the renamed Robroy Industries acquired the Stahlin operation in Belding. Today, the company's five plants in Pennsylvania, Texas and Michigan and its headquarters employ about 350 workers.

Stahlin Enclosures is a widely recognized leader in the electrical products industry, making fiberglass electrical enclosures that are used worldwide. The nearly 90 Stahlin officials and employees are very active in their community, contributing to the Belding Public Schools band and athletic programs, the Belding scholarship program, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Special Olympics and other charities. The company also was named one of "West Michigan's 101 Best & Brightest Companies to Work For" by a local publication.

I hope you join me in congratulating Robroy Industries Company on their century of business and their subsidiary, Stahlin Enclosures, for their 70 years of business in Belding, Michigan.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR HISTORY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the first racially integrated civil rights movement in this country: the Underground Railroad. I recognize the author of the first highly regarded and well researched book on this topic to be written in 100 years, Fergus M. Bordewich. In "Bound for Canaan: The Underground Railroad and the War for the Soul of America," Fergus Bordewich has revealed the truth behind the myth of the Underground Railroad. I was privileged this evening to host with Senator CHARLES SCHUMER of New York a reception to recognize the contribution this new book is making to a greater awareness and understanding of the history of slavery and racial oppression in this Nation and of the heroic efforts of brave Americans to resist these evils.

The myth which generations of Americans have believed is that the Underground Railroad was a monochromatic narrative of high-minded whites assisting terrified helpless blacks to freedom. This myth disintegrates in the powerful true stories of the heroes of the Underground Railroad. The railroad was not a system of tracks. The railroad consisted of people along routes in rural areas and forested areas in cities and on plantations: people who for political and spiritual and religious reasons had one goal: to free human beings from slavery.

In "Bound for Canaan," Mr. Bordewich delivers a powerful message in the gripping personal stories of the heroes who were the Underground Railroad, the slaves and the free. Mr. Bordewich writes in his introduction: "Only recently have African Americans begun to be restored to their rightful place at the center of the story. But the Underground Railroad is no more 'Black history than it is White history': it is American history, and it swept into its orbit courageous Americans of every hue. It was the country's first racially integrated civil rights movement in which whites and blacks worked together for six decades before the Civil War, taking great risks together, saving tens of thousands of lives together and ultimately succeeding together in one of the most ambitious political undertakings in American history."

This political undertaking has not ended; it has continued. Blacks and whites worked together in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s; some paying the ultimate price to bring the freedom that had not yet been fully realized in the South because Blacks could not vote. On June 13, 2005, jury selection began in Philadelphia Mississippi in the Civil Rights case against Edgar Ray Killen for the slayings of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, three young civil rights workers, white and black, brutally killed in 1964. Together with thousands of others, Black and White, took great risks in the tradition of the people who were the Underground Railroad, ultimately bringing the vote to the descendants of the slaves the Underground Railroad saved. They are not forgotten. People of good will have kept their memories alive and their