



September 4, 2012

The Honorable Dean Heller (NV)
United States Senate
316A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Heller,

On behalf of the Association of the United States Navy (AUSN), we applaud and support your introduction of S. 3405, the Veterans' Small Business Protection Act of 2012, which would treat small businesses bequeathed to spouses and dependents of servicemembers killed in the line of duty, as small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans; for purposes of Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) contracting goals and preferences.

Today, through the VA, small businesses owned and operated by servicemembers and veterans are able to receive preferential treatment, in terms of contracting and loans. Unfortunately, as the law currently stands, these businesses would no longer be able to receive those preferential treatments if the veteran/owner is killed in the line of duty, and that servicemember's spouse decides to continue ownership/operation of the business.

In the difficult time following the combat death of a loved one, spouses of those deceased need as much help as possible. By introducing this legislation, you have ensured that veterans' small-business benefits get passed on to the spouses and children of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. This bill would also help ease the hardship on the families of servicemembers killed in the line of duty by allowing them to not only continue to earn for their families, but also continue the legacy of their loved ones.

Thank you for taking an active role in such an important issue to the veteran community, with legislation which eases the hardship of families of servicemembers killed in the line of duty. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 703-548-5800.

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Wallis
Legislative Director, AUSN