

U.S. Senator Joni Ernst

U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Remarks Honoring Brunow Contracting, LLC

MS. ERNST. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my privilege to recognize a woman-owned small business that is dedicated to its customers, employees, and community. In honor of the U.S. Small Business Administration's National Small Business Week, it is my pleasure to name Brunow Contracting of Council Bluffs, Iowa as the Senate Small Business of the Day.

Brunow Contracting represents the story of a construction company with an unlikely founder. Tamara Brunow was a pre-law student at the College of St. Mary who found herself working in construction. She began her career with an internship at the U.S. Army Core of Engineers, Omaha District in military contracting. It was in this role that she saw a future in construction and government contracts.

After her time at the U.S. Army Core of Engineers, she proceeded to work for two other construction organizations, Oakview Construction and Lueder Construction. During her tenure with these firms, she realized that while she loved her jobs, she knew she wanted to be her own boss. This prompted her to launch Brunow Contracting in 2008. Shortly after her launch, Brunow Contracting acquired its first contract of \$1.3 million dollars to build a Presbyterian Church.

Brunow Contracting specializes in government contracting and is certified by the Small Business Administration as an 8(a) and HUBZone business. Brunow Contracting has completed numerous contracts, ranging in value from \$800 to nearly \$5 million, and for a client list which includes the City of Omaha, the United States Forest Service, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Southwest Iowa Planning Council, and the United States Coast Guard. These projects have included everything from churches, to water treatment plants, to data facilities for Facebook.

With dedication and determination, Ms. Brunow, successfully started a construction company as a single mother of three children in the middle of a recession. Now, she is the owner of one of the only woman-owned construction businesses in America, a recipient of the Midland Business Journal's 40 under 40, and a leader within her community. Today, Ms. Brunow has expanded her business reach to include serving as the head of H2W Apparel, a women's active wear company. Additionally, Ms. Brunow remains an active mentor for women entrepreneurs and advocate for female entrepreneurship.

Ms. Brunow embodies what it means to be an entrepreneur and small business owner. Despite those telling her that it is not the right industry or not the right time, Brunow Contracting quickly became a multi-million dollar business with an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau. Ms. Brunow showed that, while it certainly is not easy, it is possible to simultaneously build a businesses, be a great mother, volunteer

as a mentor, and remain committed to your community. It is my distinct pleasure to honor Ms. Brunow and the entire team at Brunow Contracting as the Senate Small Business of the Day. You make Iowa proud and I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.