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Senate

HONORING LIE-NIELSEN TOOLWORKS INC.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, American entrepreneurs often make their mark by honing their skills to meet a public demand. Today I wish to recognize Lie-Nielsen Toolworks Inc., a small business in my home State of Maine, that saw a need in specialty toolmaking, and moved quickly to fill it.

As a boy, Thomas Lie-Nielsen spent many hours in his father's workshop as seasoned woodworkers practiced their craft, absorbing their techniques. An English major in college, Mr. Lie-Nielsen always maintained a fondness for woodworking, and later worked for a mail order woodworking tools business. When larger manufacturers began to drop specialty tools from their lines, he moved to the small Maine town of West Rockport, where he opened his shop in 1981 to fill the specialty tool niche. In 1988, as the business grew, Mr. Lie-Nielsen moved the company to the neighboring town of Warren, where he later opened a 13,000-square-foot facility for its day-to-day operations. In 1998, Lie-Nielsen acquired the Independence Tool Company, further growing the company's size.

Starting out producing just two tools in 1981, Lie-Nielsen today manufactures almost 100 different tools, from planes to spokeshaves to special inlay tools. The company now employs more than 60 Mainers, crafting woodworking tools from a variety of native American hardwoods found mostly throughout New England. Lie-Nielsen ships its tools to customers abroad, as far away as Europe, Japan and Australia. The company also teaches the craft of woodworking through its training DVDs

which feature how to get the most out of their specialty, hand-crafted Lie-Nielsen tools.

Mr. Lie-Nielsen remains personally committed to the success of his business, particularly through increased production and the development of new and sturdy products. He is particularly responsive to comments and suggestions from his company's customers in designing new tools they would like Lie-Nielsen to make. Additionally, Mr. Lie-Nielsen frequently travels throughout the United States and Canada discussing the woodworking and toolmaking trade at informational talks and presentations. He is also an accomplished author, having written "Taunton's Complete Illustrated Guide to Sharpening," as well as co-authoring "Taunton's Complete Illustrated Guide to Woodworking."

On April 17 of this year, Maine Governor John Baldacci presented Lie-Nielsen, along with five other excellent Maine companies, with the 2009 Governor's Award for Business Excellence. Lie-Nielsen was selected for the company's innovative spirit and for its strong record of community service and dedication to investing in its workforce. I extend my congratulations to Lie-Nielsen Toolworks for this outstanding recognition.

Carving out a specialty niche in the woodworking world, Lie-Nielsen has excelled as a leader in the craft of toolmaking. It is the passion, drive, and innovation of entrepreneurs like Thomas Lie-Nielsen that will shape our economic future. I wish Mr. Lie-Nielsen, founder and CEO, and everyone at Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, Inc. a successful year.