

Congressman Mike Thompson

Representing California's 5th Congressional District

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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REP. MIKE THOMPSON ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION SBA BUSINESS LOAN FOR VJB VINEYARD & CELLARS

WASHINGTON D.C. – U.S. Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-5) today announced a \$1,009,000 Small Business Administration (SBA) business loan for VJB Vineyard & Cellars. The SBA loan was used as part of the project financing of the VJB Vineyard & Cellars' facilities, including final improvements that were completed in time for the summer tourist season.

“Low interest SBA loans help small businesses grow and create jobs,” said Thompson. **“In the Sonoma Valley, small businesses and our wine community are the backbone of our economy. I am proud to support these SBA loans and congratulate VJB Vineyard & Cellars on their success.”**

“This SBA loan helped our family complete a wonderful project that has been in the works since 2005,” said **Henry R. Belmonte, Proprietor and President of VJB Vineyards & Cellars**. “We thank Congressman Thompson for supporting these loans and for his steadfast support of the Sonoma Valley wine community.”

The loan comes through Bay Area Development Company, a privately funded company that is licensed by the SBA to assist local small and mid-sized businesses to expand. The type of SBA financing received by VJB Vineyard & Cellars is designed to target successful, locally owned companies that are seeking to make a substantial business expansion. Companies are provided with financing that has a fixed low interest rate and lower down payment than is available through conventional financing. As a result, the companies are able to grow faster and create more jobs.

VJB Vineyard & Cellars, located on Highway 12 in the heart of the village of Kenwood, began in 1999 as a partnership between two brothers, Victor and Henry Belmonte. Initially making wine for their family-owned restaurant, the concept evolved to a small production project focused on Italian varietals from California.

Congressman Mike Thompson is proud to represent California's 5th Congressional District, which includes all or part of Contra Costa, Lake, Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties. He is a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Rep. Thompson is also a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and chairs the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Wine Caucus.

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