

So the three of us—Senator COCHRAN, Senator LANDRIEU, this Senator—have filed this bill setting up a national commission under law appointing specific designees that are a broad representation of the industry, of the problem, to come back to the Congress and to the executive branch within 90 days with their recommendation that then we can deliberate the work product thereof to see if we can have some solution as to these dire economic conditions that our people, that our States, and, in fact, private industry are facing as we now face another active hurricane season.

I conclude by saying that we are very happy that the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, that organization that represents all 50 insurance commissioners of our States, plus the District of Columbia, plus the Virgin Islands, plus Puerto Rico, have all come together and unanimously endorsed this concept.

We cannot get consensus here because everybody has a different idea, including the industry, but we can take what happened successfully in Florida and use that model to build consensus so that we will know what to do and then can pass appropriate legislation.

Mr. President, I wanted to share this right as the winds are hitting the State of Florida from the first named storm of this hurricane season, the storm named Alberto.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Florida for his initiative in bringing this issue in this form to the Senate. I am pleased to cosponsor the legislation with him, Senator LANDRIEU, and others who may cosponsor this legislation.

We are reaching out to the industry and to experts in related business activities who have experience, a depth of understanding about this challenge we face to give us the benefit of their advice and their counsel.

There are specific recommendations, if they can come to a consensus, on how Government can more responsibly address this critical issue. In our State of Mississippi right now, there are people in limbo trying to decide whether they take on the burden of increased costs of insurance, of chances that they may not get insurance they can afford. So rebuilding is slow. Recovery is slow. Businesses are reluctant to embark upon expansion or remodeling, refurbishing, rebuilding, reconstructing from slabs the businesses they had in the gulf coast region.

This is a real dilemma, and it is an economic challenge that no one State can really overcome using the resources of a State government or a national blue ribbon commission, such as the one brought together by Haley Barbour of Mississippi. Our Governor has reached out to the business community and individuals who have experience who could be of help in recov-

ering from the disaster that hit our State.

This is bigger than one State, bigger than our State's commission that Governor Barbour has appointed and that is working hard and making a big difference and making us believe that we can recover, and we will recover. That is a very important part of this situation and this challenge.

I think this is a very important step to take, and it comes at a time when we have laid before the Senate now a conference report making supplemental appropriations to the Departments of State and Defense for the war on terror, but as far as our current domestic challenges are concerned, \$19 billion to help sustain the recovery and rebuilding that is underway, recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that were so devastating to our gulf coast region.

Mr. President, I commend the Senator.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On June 10, 2006, gay performance artist Kevin Aviance was severely beaten in New York City. According to reports, Aviance was walking home from a local bar when four teens began shouting obscenities and attacked him from behind. During the attack Aviance was kicked and punched while the attackers yelled sexually derogatory slurs at him.

An officer with New York's Hate Crimes Taskforce reported that four men were arrested and charged with a hate crime in connection to the attack.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### FLORIDA CITRUS-CANKER QUARANTINE

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I rise to call on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to reconsider its recent decision to ban Florida's citrus industry from shipping fruit to other citrus-producing States, as this decision could adversely affect a major segment of my State's economy.

Specifically, the Government ban lacks adequate scientific backing and

could even harm Florida's ability to trade with other citrus-producing countries.

This industry has long played an important role in my State's economy, and the Government has often been supportive and helpful, including after the past two hurricane seasons that were devastating to the industry and spread canker extensively, making eradication no longer possible.

While the Department of Agriculture has helped the industry recover from the storms and with combating canker in the past, I am hopeful it will do so again in a way that does not cause more harm than good.

#### WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, yesterday was the annual commemoration of the International Labor Organization's, ILO, World Day Against Child Labor, the day we set aside to speak out against the fact that millions of children around the globe continue to be trapped in forced and abusive labor, often in extremely hazardous conditions.

The good news, this year, is that child labor is in decline across the globe. According to the recent ILO report, "The End of Child Labor: Within Reach," released on May 4 of this year, between the years 2000 and 2004, the number of child laborers worldwide fell by 11 percent, from 246 million to 218 million. Even better, the number of children and youths aged 5-17 trapped in hazardous work decreased by 26 percent, declining from 171 million in 2000 to 126 million in 2004. Among younger child laborers, the drop was even sharper at 33 percent.

This is remarkable progress in just 4 years' time. And looking to the future, the ILO report cautiously predicts that, "if the current pace of decline is maintained, and if global efforts to stop child labor continue." We have a real opportunity to eliminate child labor in its worst forms within 10 years' time. However, difficult challenges lie ahead, especially in agriculture, where 7 out of 10 child laborers work. I know this firsthand from my work trying to end child labor in the cocoa industry. Child labor is deeply entrenched in cocoa plantations in Ivory Coast and elsewhere. But, with the cooperation of the chocolate industry, we are making progress in fighting it.

Likewise, in the broader fight against child labor, the ILO report verifies that we are on the right track to eliminating abusive and exploitative child labor. The great work of the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor, IPEC, really vindicates the confidence I placed in this program early on. I secured the first Federal appropriation for the IPEC program back in 1996, and over the last decade, I have secured a total of more than \$323 million for the program. Clearly, that money has made a