

an end to the violence in Darfur. Now we need to act upon these intentions and pressure the Government of Sudan to cooperate in efforts to improve prospects for peace throughout Sudan and the greater east Africa region.

FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, which passed the Senate last week.

This is an important bill that will bring badly needed transparency to Federal spending. The bill creates a user-friendly website to search all Government contracts, grants, earmarks, and loans, opening up Federal financial transactions to public scrutiny. By helping to lift the veil of secrecy in Washington, this website will help make us all better legislators. It will help make reporters better journalists. And it will help make all Americans more informed voters and more active citizens.

I am heartened to see that Government transparency can be a bipartisan issue. This bill has been cosponsored by more than 40 of our colleagues and has the support of more than 100 outside groups from all parts of the political spectrum. It has been endorsed by dozens of editorial boards across the country from the Wall Street Journal, to the Chicago Sun-Times and The Oklahoman. Most people I speak to in Illinois or here in Washington or anywhere else wonder why a public website of all Federal spending does not already exist. To them, this is just common sense.

Whether you believe the Government ought to spend more money or spend less, you should certainly be able to agree that the Government ought to spend every penny efficiently and transparently. Transparency is the first step to holding Government accountable for its actions and is a prerequisite to oversight and financial control. We can't reduce waste, fraud, and abuse without knowing how, where, and why Federal money is flowing out the door. This bill will provide that transparency, and not just to Members of Congress. Anybody with access to the Internet will be able to see how Federal funds are being spent. If Government spending can't withstand public scrutiny, then the money shouldn't be spent. The American people deserve no less.

I want to express my appreciation for the hard work that went into getting S. 2590 passed. I would like to thank the majority leader and minority leader, as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, for their assistance in moving this important legislation forward.

I would also like to thank the organizations that helped create a grassroots

movement in support of Government transparency and in support of this bill. Without the hard work of OMB Watch, the Project on Government Oversight, and Citizens Against Government Waste, to name just a few supporters, this bill would not have been considered and passed so quickly.

And most importantly, I would like to thank my colleague, Senator COBURN, and his outstanding staff for their diligence and dedication. Since Senator COBURN and I first met during freshman orientation, we have developed a close personal bond that has translated into a close working relationship to bring more transparency and accountability into the way that Government spends taxpayer money. I have been impressed by the commitment and tenacity with which he stands up for his principles and beliefs, and it is these qualities that enabled this bill to get passed.

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on this bill later this week, and I am confident that our bipartisan and bicameral collaboration will quickly become law. It is not often that two Senators from different parties are able to bridge the partisan divide in this town and get something accomplished. But the American people demand greater transparency and accountability, and it is our honor and privilege—indeed, it is our duty—to provide the tools to help make that possible.

TRIBUTE TO SORIN DUCARU

Mr. BROWNBACK. I commend the Romanian Ambassador to the United States for his service as a diplomat, a civil leader, a transatlantic thinker, and a friend of the United States.

Sorin Ducaru has served as Romania's principal diplomatic spokesman for the last 5 years. He played a key role in the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the first head of the Division for NATO and Strategic Issues and was deeply involved in events leading to Romania's membership in NATO—ratified with the unanimous support of the U.S. Senate.

Once Romania joined NATO, Ambassador Ducaru was a part of the Romanian team that helped pave the way for the establishment of U.S. military facilities in Romania. The agreement was signed in 2005, ratified this past summer, and is currently in its implementation phase.

On this fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in particular, it is important to recall our partners in the war on terrorism. In 2001, just days after 9/11 terrorist attacks, Ambassador Ducaru helped facilitate Romanian-American political dialogue that resulted in Romania's offer to put its military and logistical facilities, air corridors, and troops at the disposal of the United States in the war on terrorism. Even before Romania was a NATO member, it participated with troops and logistical support in the war on ter-

rorism. Now, Romania is the fifth largest contributor of troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ambassador Ducaru has been a strong supporter of Romania's participation in the process of democratic and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, pointing to the lessons learned of his own country's dramatic and sometimes painful transformations in the last 16 years. He has been a constant advocate of cooperation between American businesses and the business potential of coalition countries.

His support for democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq is not surprising because Ambassador Ducaru is a long-time advocate of democratic values. He is a member of the new generation of leaders that transformed Romania to an open free society following the revolution of 1989. He has been at the forefront of a new generation of Central European leaders whose countries have evolved from nondemocratic and closed societies to countries that preserve freedom, security, and economic opportunity.

As he departs his current post to become the Romanian Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, I express my gratitude for his efforts to build a strong and vibrant relationship between Romania and the United States. I look forward to working with him to continue efforts to expand political, diplomatic, economic, and military cooperation and stability through NATO. Ambassador Ducaru is a true friend of the United States, and I wish him well in his new capacity.

REDUCING FOREIGN ENERGY RELIANCE

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to request that my remarks, delivered in the keynote address to the Richard G. Lugar-Purdue University Summit on Energy Security, at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, on August 29, 2006, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

I am honored to address this assembly, which will explore an aggressive agenda to reduce our nation's dependence on foreign energy sources. I appreciate the opening words of my good friend, Governor Mitch Daniels. He and his administration have given priority to energy issues in Indiana. They are attempting to maximize the opportunities that our state has to become a leader in a broad gamut of energy technologies. I also want to thank our host, Purdue University, and President Martin Jischke for promoting this energy summit. President Jischke has provided brilliant direction to this university. His advice on energy, agriculture, education, and many other topics has been of great benefit to me personally. I will deeply miss his leadership at Purdue when he steps down as President next June, but I look forward to a very productive year immediately ahead and many mutual endeavors in years to come. I am also delighted that Congressman Pete Visclosky, will address the summit conference this noon. Pete has been a great partner on numerous issues,