BROWNBACK, Senator BIDEN, and Senator LEAHY who have worked with me for years to negotiate the bill's final language. As a result of these negotiations, the grant programs in the bill are focused and streamlined, and provide for the kind of accountability we need to ensure that the programs operated under the bill meet their goal of achieving real reductions in recidivism rates. I am pleased that the bill has the support of over 200 organizations from both ends of the ideological spectrum and is supported by the Department of Justice and the Department of Labor.

I thank my colleagues for their support of this important legislation. The Second Chance Act takes an important step toward closing the revolving doors of our prisons and keeping our neighborhoods and communities safe.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO POPE AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise before you today to express my sincere appreciation for the men and women of a C–130 Hercules crew out of Pope Air Force Base, NC.

MAJ Paul Pepe, 1LT Robert Davidson, 1LT Robert Gillis, Staff Sergeant Adam Monroy, Captain Kaly Godfrey, SSgt Kyle Anderson, SSgt Charles Jones, and CPT Jessica Kehren were responsible for transporting me and three of my congressional colleagues from Baghdad, Iraq, to Amman, Jordan, the night of August 30, 2007.

Approximately 5 minutes into the flight, I looked out of my window and noticed flashes of light coming from the ground—our aircraft was taking on surface-to-air rocket fire. The C–130 Hercules crew immediately began taking evasive maneuvers to successfully defeat the three rockets fired at the aircraft.

Throughout the incident, our crew remained calm and professional. I could not have been prouder of the way they worked together to safely avoid a very dangerous situation. Our warfighters face threats in Iraq and Afghanistan every day. While I know this type of danger was not new to them, the incident enhanced my already deep appreciation for the danger they face on a daily basis.

For their actions, the crew was recently awarded the Air Mobility Command's 2007 Field of Aeronautics and Astronautics Aviator Valor Award. The award is given for a conspicuous act of courage or valor performed during aerial flight during either combat or noncombat. Without question, the C–130 Hercules crew is most deserving of this high honor.

The training and extensive preparation that our crew undoubtedly went through at Pope Air Force Base has paid dividends. These men and women performed a stellar job without showing even the slightest bit of apprehension. I know my colleagues on the flight would agree; our military is fortunate to have this crew serving our nation in such a fine manner.

COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF THE REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish today to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the death of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. April 4, 2008, marks the 40th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an iconic leader of the American civil rights movement. In death, the legacy of Dr. King continues and so does his call for tolerance, justice, and equality.

April 1968 was a tragic time for the King family and for our Nation. Our cities erupted as people were overcome by rage and horror at his assassination. We all suffered in the knowledge that someone who had been an inspiration to millions had been taken from us by an assassin's bullet.

It has been 40 years since his murder, but his legacy remains with us as we continue to pursue his vision of equality, fairness, and justice. Today, we are a nation of 300 million people; a nation in which one out of three Americans is a member of a minority group. His vision is just as important and inspirational today as it was 40 years ago.

We must never forget that our diversity is one of our greatest strengths and one of our most important challenges. We must find a way to work and live together and to respect each other. Dr. King's legacy of social justice charted the path for us. As he once said: ''We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.''

We have not always succeeded in achieving that goal. Dr. King's work remains unfinished as we witness a resurgence of hate crimes and injustice and inequality still exist. We must always remain vigilant against those who preach hate and intolerance and believe that it is acceptable to deny others the rights that are guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution and bill of rights.

Dr. King stood up to violence, bigotry, and intolerance in our country to ensure that all of us can live free of prejudice and hatred. Today, on the 40th anniversary of his death, it is important that we remember his sacrifice and pledge to continue his fight for greater opportunities for all.

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, March is National Eye Donor Month. In fact, it's the 25th anniversary of that proud tradition.

Each March since 1983, the eye donor community has gathered to celebrate the gift of sight, to honor past donors and their families, and to raise awareness about eye donation.

I want to thank those who have given this amazing gift and to encourage more Americans to become eye donors.

Eye donation is an incredible thing. Precious corneas harvested from donated eyes can restore vision that's been lost to disease or injury or infection. Most of us take our vision for granted.

We read our books, watch our children grow, and find our loved ones in a crowded room—and don't give it a second thought. But what if you lost that ability, that gift of sight—or never had it at all. An estimated 11.4 million people have severe visual problems that are not correctable by glasses.

Eighty million people suffer from potentially blinding eye disease; 1.1 million people are legally blind. But there is hope. Through the miracle of transplantation, it is possible to restore sight.

Each year, 44,000 sight-restoring corneal transplants are performed.

Eye banks like the Central Ohio Lions Eye Bank change people's lives. Shirley Jacobs knows this first hand. Shirley was living with Fuchs dystrophy, a genetic degenerative corneal disease. The disease robbed her of clear vision. It limited her independence and her ability to do her job. Then she received a corneal transplant at the Central Ohio Lions Eye Bank. Her first words after the surgery were, ''This is a miracle! I can see you, I can see you!''

That is amazing. But so many more people are waiting.

In Ohio alone, 1,600 people each year could have their sight restored through corneal transplants. But there aren't enough organs available. We need to get the word out and reach people who would donate if given the choice. We must raise public awareness of the need for eye donors and the ways to sign up.

I encourage my colleagues to work with their local eye banks and the Eye Bank Association of America to promote the precious gift of eye donation. I also encourage Americans to consider designating themselves as organ donors on their driver's licenses. It is the best way to make your end-of-life wishes known and to give the gift of sight. I urge my colleagues and fellow citizens to consider becoming an eye donor. Thousands of people around the country are waiting for it.

PRESIDENT'S VETO OF THE INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, America is a great and good Nation that has been a beacon to the world on human rights. Nothing should be simpler than for a President of the United States to stand up and say, clearly, that this country does not engage in cruel and abusive interrogation practices such as waterboarding; that those practices are abhorrent and illegal. It saddens me greatly—but does not surprise me—that this President has, once again, refused to make that simple statement. By vetoing the intelligence authorization bill because of a provision that would reemphasize that waterboarding