has undermined the current system because employers find it increasingly difficult to establish the authenticity of documents presented by job applicants. As a result, too many employers have been either unable or unwilling to comply with the law.

Our legislation adds new features to the Social Security card to deter counterfeiting and make it easier for employers to determine whether a card is genuine by including a digitized photo of the cardholder on the card. The improved Social Security card will also be encoded with a unique electronic encryption code to allow employers to verify each prospective applicant's work eligibility status prior to hiring, through either an electronic card-reader or a toll-free telephone number. The Department of Homeland Security will be required to establish and maintain an Employment Eligibility Database with an individual's proof of citizenship data, work, and residency eligibility information, including expiration dates for non-citizens. This database will also include information from the Social Security Administration that the Commissioner determines necessary and appropriate for the purpose of verifying an individual's work eligibility status. Employers who hire an illegal immigrant or choose not to verify a prospective employee's work eligibility will face stiff federal fines of $50,000 and up to 5 years in prison. The employer would also be required to reimburse the government for the cost of deporting the illegal immigrant. Moreover, this bill provides that no officer or employee of Department of Homeland Security shall have access to any information contained in the Employment Eligibility Database for any purpose other than the establishment of a system of records necessary for the effective administration of this Act, and will impose penalties of $10,000 in fines and mandatory-minimum sentence of 5 years in prison on anyone who misuses information on the database.

With the improved Social Security card and national verification system, prospective employees will have no way of obtaining fraudulent identification documents. By improving the employment verification process, we can eliminate the supply of jobs for illegal workers and end the employment magnet that draws them here. Under this bill, legal workers will only need to update their Social Security card once to have their photo placed on the card and for other long-overdue anti-fraud measures to be applied. Moreover, a worker would only need the updated Social Security card when applying for a new job. I want to make it absolutely clear that this proposal does not represent the creation of a national identification card. This bill strictly prohibits the use of the Social Security card as a national ID card, and stipulates that the card not be required to be routinely carried on one's person. Because Social Security cards are already required to be provided to new employers, the changes proposing in this bill take us no further down the road of creating a national ID card. It should also be noted that the government already has the information that would be contained in the Employment Eligibility Database. An individual's eligibility to work under the law is dependent on whether they are a U.S. citizen, and if not, their immigration status. Finally, the Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act also puts teeth into the new enforcement procedures by calling for the addition of 10,000 new Homeland Security officers whose sole responsibility will be to enforce employer compliance with the law. These new agents will free up the rest of the Border Patrol to exclusively focus on border enforcement and terrorism prevention.

This bill is in no way meant to send a message that we intend to limit opportunities for the American dream to be fulfilled. However, we are a Nation of laws and if individuals wish to pursue opportunities in the United States, they must play by the rules and we must make clear that there will be no economic opportunity for anyone who enters this country illegally. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in this effort, and hope they will consider joining me as we take action on this vital national security priority.

I would like to thank the original co-sponsors of this legislation, including, Mr. REYES of Texas, who began his career in public service with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in the U.S. Border Patrol, where he worked for 26½ years. I would also like to thank the original co-sponsors from my home state of California, including Mr. ISSA, Mr. CALVERT, the author of the Basic Pilot Program, and Mr. BILBRAY, the Chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SHARK CONSERVATION ACT OF 2009

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today I have reintroduced a bill to amend the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to improve the conservation of sharks. In the 110th Congress, the House of Representatives passed this legislation, H.R. 5741 or the ''Shark Conservation Act of 2008,'' by voice vote under suspension of the rules. The Senate, however, was unable to take action on the bill received by the House or on its companion bill, S. 3231, before it adjourned. I have, therefore, reintroduced this bill today given the ongoing necessity for improved shark conservation and its benefits for ocean ecosystems.

Sharks are long-lived apex predators, which breed slowly, making it difficult for them to maintain populations under fishing pressure. Sharks have been increasingly exploited in recent decades, both as bycatch in the pelagic longline fisheries from the 1960s onward, and as targets in direct fisheries that expanded rapidly in the 1980s. The rising demand for shark fins over past decades has also led to increases in the particularly exploitive practice of shark finning, where fins of sharks are removed and the carcass is discarded at sea.

According to scientists, scalloped hammerhead, white, and thresher shark populations are each estimated to have declined by over 75 percent in the past 15 years due in large part to these fishing pressures. Removing these top predators drastically changes the food web structure, marine diversity, and ecosystem health. Addressing the practice of shark finning is an imperative step toward the conservation of sharks and marine ecosystems.

Congress recognized shark finning as an inherently wasteful practice in enacting the Shark Finning Prohibition Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–557). This Act prohibits U.S. fishermen from removing the fins of sharks and discarding the carcass at sea, and from landing or transporting shark fins without the corresponding carcass.

The Shark Conservation Act of 2009 includes several measures to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of that prohibition and would ensure that the intent of Congress is achieved. First, the bill eliminates an unexpected enforcement loophole related to the transport of shark fins by prohibiting vessels from having custody, control, or possession of shark fins which are not naturally attached to the corresponding carcass. This is intended to ensure that U.S.-flagged vessels are not traveling to the high seas and purchasing fins from fishermen engaged in shark finning and bringing them into U.S. waters in an attempt to skirt the finning prohibition. The bill further strengthens the enforcement of the existing ban on shark finning by calling for sharks to be landed with their fins naturally attached. This ''fins-attached'' landing strategy simplifies enforcement of the Shark Finning Prohibition Act. It is also consistent with the National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS, final rule, which took effect on July 24, 2008, and which implements the management measures described in the final Amendment 2 to the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and strengthens enforcement of existing law in U.S. Atlantic waters by requiring that sharks be landed with their fins attached.

Finally, the Shark Conservation Act of 2009 amends the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act to allow the Secretary of Commerce to identify and list nations that have not adopted a regulatory program for the conservation of sharks comparable to the United States. This amendment promotes the conservation of sharks internationally and in a manner that is consistent with the expectations placed on U.S. fishermen.

The bill is further consistent with the United States position in the United Nations relative to Resolution 62/177 that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 2007, and which calls upon nation-states to take immediate and concerted action to improve the implementation of and compliance with national measures that regulate shark fisheries, including management efforts to require that all sharks be landed with each fin naturally attached.

The Shark Conservation Act of 2009 reestablishes the intended protections for sharks under U.S. law. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to again pass this timely and important bill in the House of Representatives. I also hope it will receive favorable action and consideration by the other body in the 111th Congress.

TERRORIST REWARDS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2009

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Terrorist Rewards Enhancement