Republicans have made clear are off the table, if our colleagues want a truly bipartisan bill. I mentioned the government plan option which kills bipartisanship because Republicans cannot support a policy that will lead to a Washington takeover of our health care system. There are better alternatives, alternatives which empower individuals and preserve the individual choice each of us has to make health care decisions, in consultation with our physician or family doctor, in the best interest of our families. Empowering people rather than government is a much better solution than this proposal we see under the Kennedy bill.

Innovators in both government and the private sector have learned that by empowering patients and providing them some incentives, they can actually see costs lowered.

There are a lot of good ideas out there. Unfortunately, the partisan proposal we have from the HELP Committee is not one of them. We hope we can continue to work together, on a bipartisan basis, toward a successful outcome.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). The majority leader.

TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT OF 2009—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 71, S. 1023, the Travel Promotion Act of 2009, and I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 71, S. 1023, the Travel Promotion Act of 2009.

Byron L. Dorgan, Tom Udall, Patrick J. Leahy, Barbara Boxer, Kay R. Hagan, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Roland W. Burris, Benjamin L. Cardin, Bill Nelson, John D. Rockefeller, IV, Daniel K. Inouye, Blanche L. Lincoln, Ron Wyden, Bernard Sanders, Sheldon Whitehouse, Ben Nelson.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, June 16, following a period of morning business, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1023 and there be 1 hour of debate prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed, with the time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate proceed to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed, with the mandatory quorum waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the legislation described by my colleague, the Travel Promotion Act, is legislation I wish to discuss. The Travel Promotion Act is a bipartisan piece of legislation I have introduced with Senators ENSIGN, INOUYE, MARTINEZ, KLOBUCHAR, REID, and many others. I believe in the last session of Congress, when we introduced this, we had over 50 cosponsors. Let me describe what its purpose is.

Who can be against travel promotion? Here is what has happened to our country with respect to the jobs and economic growth that comes with a decline in foreigners traveling to the United States. Measures put in place quickly after the 2001 attack on 9/11 had a significant impact on travel to the United States by foreign travelers.

We, obviously, wanted to be careful about whom we allowed into our country. We still do. But what happened following that is, instead of reaching out to the world to say: Visit the United States, this is a great place, we encourage you to come here, to vacation here, to see what the United States is all about, we backed away from that. Other countries have not. Here is what we have experienced. I have a chart here showing overseas travel between 2000 and 2008.

Since 2000 and 2008, there has been a 3-percent decrease in foreign visitors to the United States. At the same time, there has been a 40-percent increase in visitors to other countries around the world. Think of the consequences of that to our economy. A foreign visitor, overseas visitor, coming to our country spends on average $4,500 per visit—that is a lot of economic activity, a lot of economic growth and jobs. But inbound travel has decreased in our country and substantially increased in others. Why is that the case?

The rest of the world is very anxious to attract destination visitors to their country, international travelers, to say: We want you to come to our country as a destination for your trip. Take India—one special reason to visit India is this advertisement saying:

''Incredible India, any time is a good time to visit the land of Taj, but there is no time like now.''

Not unusual to see this. It is not only India.

Australia's says: ''Arrived looking for an experience to remember. Departed with adventure we will never forget. Australia, come to Australia.'' If you are an overseas traveler, deciding where to visit, be sure and come to Australia.

Ireland says: ''Go where Ireland takes you.''

Pretty straightforward—makes you want to go to Ireland. Great Britain, Italy, Spain, France, Australia, India, Ireland, they say: Come to our country. Travel to our country. See what our country is about.

We are not doing that.

As a result, in the last 8 years, we have seen a 3-percent decrease in travel by foreign visitors to the United States, while the rest of the world has had a 40-percent increase in travelers destined to those other areas. It makes a big difference. It is very negative in terms of our country's economic opportunity that comes from travel and tourism.

I showed the examples of what other countries are saying in their very explicit campaigns around the world, to say to people: If you are traveling abroad, if you are planning a vacation, a trip, come to our country. Come and see Italy, Great Britain, Ireland, India.

Let me show you what is happening with respect to our country. Headlines such as these: The Sydney Sunday Morning Herald: ''Coming to America Isn't Easy.'' From The Guardian: ''America: More Hassle Than It's Worth?'' From The Sunday Times in London: ''Travel to America? No Thanks.''

There is a perception that it is difficult to come to our country, hard to get a visa, and tourists will experience long waiting lines. Many of these problems have been corrected or improved. In the construction of this legislation, we address the need to better communicate our entry and exit procedures and their improvements. We don't want these negative headlines to be the message to the rest of the world—in fact, quite the opposite.

What a large group of us in the Congress want is for our country to be engaged internationally, to say to people around the world: Come to our country. To see the United States is to understand the wonder of this great country. Come here. Stay here. Vacation here. Understand what America is about.

I can't think of anything better, in terms of our position in the world and how people think of this great country, than to invite them and encourage them to come here. That is why we have introduced this bipartisan piece of legislation called the Travel Promotion Act of 2009.

Interestingly enough, the Congressional Budget Office has said this piece of legislation will reduce the Federal budget deficit by $425 million between 2010 and 2019. We don't bring many pieces of legislation to the floor of the Senate in which the Congressional Budget Office says:

This will make money. This is a net positive. This will reduce the Federal budget deficit. That is what this bill is about.

Let me explain, for a moment, what we are trying to do with the legislation. The Travel Promotion Act will attempt to create international travel opportunities for people from all around the world to come to this country. It will set up a nationally coordinated travel promotion campaign run in a public-private partnership to communicate to the world our country's travel policies and, more importantly, communicate to the world: We want you here. We want you to explore what this great country has to offer. This public-private partnership is an ideal

method for us to improve any negative perceptions out there, particularly as we work on visas and any remaining delays in entry procedures which we have corrected, in large part. This combines public sector accountability with private sector enterprise.

This bill establishes a Corporation for Travel Promotion, an independent, nonprofit corporation, with an 11-member board of directors appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. It creates an Office of Travel Promotion in the Department of Commerce to work with that nonprofit corporation. It sets up a travel promotion fund, financed by a public-private matching program. Federal contributions will be financed by a $10 fee paid by foreign travelers from visa waiver countries and collected in what is called the Electronic System for Travel Authorization.

Many other countries impose fees for people coming and going: Australia, $37 departure fee, an entry fee of $19 to $70; Mexico, an $11 departure fee, up to $38; New Zealand, $16 to $19 on the departure fee; United Kingdom, $80 to $160. There are a lot of fees around for people traveling internationally. We propose to fund this with a very modest fee of $10.

This is very simple. It should be noncontroversial. There are many of us who have worked on this and worked very hard.

My colleague from Minnesota is here, Senator KLOBUCHAR, who has worked with us on this legislation. This is a piece of legislation Senator REID has worked on. Senator ENSIGN is the lead Republican cosponsor. Other cosponsors include Senator MARTINEZ and Senator NELSON of Florida. We have cosponsors across the political spectrum because this issue of asking people from around the world to come to America is not controversial and benefits every State. It cannot possibly be partisan, and it certainly is job creating.

Now here is what some newspapers around the country have said about the legislation.

The Sacramento Bee:

> This country needs to reclaim its status as a global magnet for visitors . . . and Congress can help by passing the Travel Promotion Act.

The Los Angeles Times:

> Considering that the U.S. spends hundreds of millions of dollars on public diplomacy with dubious results and nearly nothing on promoting tourism, we might do well to invest a little money in wooing travelers.

The Detroit Free Press:

> Doesn't it make sense to encourage—at no cost to taxpayers—foreign visitors to come here and leave us some money? There's no good reason not to pass this bill.

The Dallas Morning News:

> The Travel Promotion Act is a sensible first step toward putting the welcome mat back on America's doorstep.

And the list goes on.

I do not come from Hawaii or Florida or California, I come from the northern Great Plains. And we have a lot of tourist destinations: the Badlands in North Dakota, some of the most beautiful areas in our country. Tourism is North Dakota's second largest industry. There are so many destinations with such wonder to attract people to our region of the country.

It is where Lewis and Clark, in their epic adventure, decided to spend the winter in area about 40 miles north of Bismarck, ND. We celebrated the 200th anniversary, the bicentennial, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and we had a lot of people come from around the world to see that.

The fact is, every State in this country has something it is anxious to show the world, to say: Look at us. Look at what we are doing here. Look how beautiful this part of America is.

So what has happened is, we have been unilaterally disarmed since 9/11, to say: Well, we are worried about who is going to come into this country. We certainly want to keep terrorists out. We sure do, absolutely. But that message ought not be mixed with a message that we do not want to encourage foreign travelers to come to this country to vacation and to experience America.

So at long last a group of us, Republicans and Democrats, have said: If we disagree on so much, how about if we agree on tourism? Can we agree on promoting travel? To say to the English, the Italians, the Spaniards, the French, the folks from India and Thailand and China and elsewhere: You are welcome in this country. We want you to come to this country. We want you to see what our country is about?

To experience this country is to have a sense of wonder about the greatest democracy, the most significant and longest surviving democracy on Earth. We want them to go home with that understanding of what a great country this is. That is what we want.

By the way, we do not believe our nearest neighbors—Mexico and Canada—are irrelevant. We have a lot of people coming from Mexico and Canada, and God bless them. They are great neighbors. We welcome them. We are told they spend, on average, about $900 per trip.

The foreign travelers from overseas, by contrast, spend about $4,500 per trip. That is why this is such an unbelievable job generator. People who come here and spend significant money and purchase the hotel rooms and the rental cars and go to the tourist attractions and do the things people who want to experience America routinely do not only create a lot of jobs and boost economic activity, but their travel also gives us the opportunity to show the rest of the world this is an extraordinary place where they can go home and tell their neighbors they just went to one of the greatest places on Earth.

So as to the Travel Promotion Act of 2009, my hope is—after having battled here on so many different issues, and having cloture votes on everything, and then 30 hours post-cloture while we all stand around with our hands in our pockets and shuffling our shoes—my hope is, perhaps this is the issue, this is the one time, this is the occasion where everybody might say: Do you know something. There is something we can agree on that is noncontroversial, that makes sense. It creates jobs, it expands the economy, and represents the best of sending American values abroad; and that is, the Travel Promotion Act.

If, perhaps, next week we get to that point, I think the American people will have believed we have done something good. So I am pleased to be the lead sponsor. We introduced this in the last Congress and did not get it passed. In this Congress I believe we will.

I give my commendation to the majority leader and thank him for putting this on the agenda. I give my thanks to Senator ENSIGN as the lead cosponsor on the Republican side. But so many Republicans and Democrats have said: Yes, this makes sense. Count us in. We want to be part of expanding this economy and creating jobs and giving an opportunity for the people in the rest of the world to understand we welcome them here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am here today to speak in support of the Travel Promotion Act, which is bipartisan legislation. I first want to thank Mr. DORGAN, the Senator from North Dakota. I have visited the Teddy Roosevelt Park, and I want to thank him for his great leadership on this bill over many years. I also want to thank Senator ENSIGN for his leadership. I believe this legislation will help our economy to do better, to create jobs without any taxpayer expense.

As the chair of the Commerce Subcommittee that includes tourism, I recently held a hearing—a well-attended hearing—with many Senators and people there to examine the state of our tourism industry during these troubled economic times. I want to thank my ranking Republican member, Senator MARTINEZ. We did it together. I also held a field hearing in Duluth, MN, to highlight the importance of tourism to midsize and smaller towns in the United States.

During the hearings, we heard about the importance of tourism and travel to our economy and the urgent need to increase international travel to the United States.

As the Presiding Officer, Senator UDALL, knows, coming from Colorado, America has so much to offer our travelers: whether it is the mountains of Colorado or—Senator KAUFMAN is here—the beaches of Delaware or the stunning national landmarks, such as the Grand Canyon, Mount Rushmore, and the Statue of Liberty or the oceans, lakes, and rivers or our mountains, forests, and beaches or our scenic country towns or the bright lights of the big cities or centers of fun and

entertainment such as Las Vegas or Disney World or Duluth.

From the heartland to the coasts, every State has an economic stake in the tourism industry, which is now a major part of the American economy. Throughout the United States, many communities have discovered and developed the economic potential of travel and tourism.

I keep using the example of Duluth because at some point in the 1970s, the economy was so bad there they actually had a billboard, so when you drove out of town, it said: The last one to leave, please turn off the lights.

Well, that billboard is not there anymore, as tourism is the biggest part of their economy, on beautiful Lake Superior, with beautiful museums and an aquarium and a children's museum. It has changed the life of that town. Tourism creates good jobs that cannot be outsourced.

Mr. President, one out of every eight Americans is employed in our travel economy. Each year, travel and tourism contribute approximately $1.3 trillion to the American economy. International visitors, as Senator DORGAN just noted, spend an average of $4,500 per person.

In economic terms, international tourism to the United States counts as an export. Instead of shipping our product to a customer overseas, the customer is coming here to spend money on our goods and our services.

Last year, travel and tourism exports accounted for 8 percent of all U.S. exports and 26 percent of all U.S. services exports. In fact, tourism is one of the few economic sectors where we enjoy a substantial trade surplus.

Travel is a part of the fabric of our State and our country. But over the past decade, we know it has been stretched to the brink. While more people around the world are traveling, a smaller percentage of them are visiting the United States.

This is not just about our troubled economy right now. This was going on long before that. It actually started after 9/11, where, for good reasons, security measures were put in place. But some of those good reasons have turned into very difficult times for tourists to come to this country, and that needs to be fixed. That is part of this bill: to make it easier for tourists to visit our country.

Since 2000, the U.S. share of the world travel market has decreased by nearly 20 percent, costing us hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in revenue.

Last year, nearly 200,000 travel-related jobs were lost. The Commerce Department predicts we will lose another 247,000 jobs this year. Remember, this is not about airport CEOs. This is about the janitors who work at the airports. This is about the maids who are doing the beds. This is about the waitresses who are working at the restaurants. This is about the people who do the flowers for the hotels and for the banquets and for the business travelers. These are real jobs in America.

This has always been a country that has opened its arms to people from around the world. That is why we are so great. We have to bring that back. We have to bring people in to visit this country.

The Travel Promotion Act will do just that. By boosting travel to the United States it will also give a boost to our economy. So it is a win-win for the tourism industry, for jobs for America, and for the American people.

Senator DORGAN went through the bill. I do want to emphasize that not only will this consist of travel promotion and promoting our country, like other countries have been doing for years that have been leapfrogging us in this market, additionally, this legislation will establish the Office of Travel Promotion in the Department of Commerce to work with the Corporation for Travel Promotion and the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to encourage travel and to make sure international visitors are processed efficiently.

It does not cost taxpayers a cent, as Senator DORGAN pointed out, and economists expect it to generate billions for our economy.

According to an analysis by Oxford Economics, this tourism program is estimated to attract 1.6 million new international visitors annually and create $4 billion in new spending in our country, creating 40,000 new jobs.

We know we need to bring back business travel. We should not let a few bad actors influence the decisions of good companies around this country. We know we have to look, this summer, for affordable deals for our families, and people are staying close to home. We want our Minnesotans to go fishing in Minnesota.

I say to the Presiding Officer, I would love to ask you if you know how much money people spend alone in Minnesota on bait and worms every year. I will tell you the answer. It has probably never been uttered before in this Chamber: $50 million a year. Minnesotans and visitors to our State spend $50 million a year on bait and worms for recreational fishing—just to give you an idea of what we are talking about when we talk about tourism spending.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation. I am proud to be a cosponsor. I look forward to working on this bill on the floor in the days to come.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 25 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss President Obama's nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to be an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Judge Sonia Sotomayor has impeccable legal credentials and a record of excellence and integrity. Equally important, she has the experience not only to make an excellent Justice but also to have a significant impact on a Court that today reflects too narrow a slice of America.

Judge Sonia Sotomayor's deep appreciation for how the law affects the lives of ordinary Americans is born from her compelling personal background, as well as her time as an assistant district attorney, a commercial litigator, and later as a judge.

Once confirmed, she will become the first Hispanic Justice, and just the third woman, to serve on the Nation's highest Court.

What are we to make, then, of the assaults on the character and record of this seemingly exemplary nominee?

Unfortunately, they seem to be a remnant of more than two decades of ''culture wars'' over Supreme Court nominees.

As someone who was present for the beginning of these wars, I have seen them develop into elaborate political dances, where both sides trade charges that are predictable and often baseless.

Some of these attacks, such as charges of racism and bigotry, deeply undermine our national dialog.

I am encouraged to note that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have chosen not to join in these attacks, and many, in fact, have condemned them.

Other attacks are equally predictable, from the general charge of ''extremist'' to particular instances of political ''gotcha''—wrenching statements out of context in order to paint a distorted picture of the nominee's record.

At some level, partisan assaults are expected in the Supreme Court nomination process. But in the case of Judge Sotomayor, they are especially divorced from this body's good-faith exercise of its duty to advise and consent.

It is one thing to attack a nominee's judicial philosophy when the President is trying to reshape the Court based on judicial philosophy, when the balance of the Court is at stake, or when the Senate and the President are deeply divided.

None of those situations apply to this nomination.

Judge Sotomayor is a well-qualified, mainstream jurist who does not threaten to tip the balance of the Court and