

As President Obama said Tuesday:

To those people who put so much hope and energy and optimism into the political process, I would say to them that the world is watching and inspired by their participation, regardless of what the ultimate outcome of the election was.

This resolution is not about the election in Iran. Rather, it is about the fundamental right to free speech, free press, and free expression of the Iranian people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

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

TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the business of the Senate, now that we have had the final vote on the supplemental here in the Senate, will be the Travel Promotion Act. That is a piece of legislation that is widely bipartisan. We have passed it by unanimous consent through the Senate Commerce Committee and brought it to the floor of the Senate with very substantial Republican and Democratic support. I am an original author of the legislation called the Travel Promotion Act, but a good many Republicans are cosponsors and colleagues on the Democratic side are as well. It should not be controversial. Yet getting that bill to the floor of the Senate required the filing of a cloture motion, which means, just on the motion to proceed, we had to wait 2 days and then have a vote on whether we could actually proceed to the motion to proceed to the legislation itself. That passed, I believe, 90 to 6. Then we had 30 hours postcloture.

We have been in a waiting position to try to determine can we get to this bill. Let me make the point that this is a piece of legislation that is almost unique, in the sense that, No. 1, it is very bipartisan and, No. 2, the Congressional Budget Office says it is going to reduce the Federal budget deficit.

Let me say that again. The Congressional Budget Office says this legislation will actually reduce the Federal budget deficit by very close to \$500 million over 10 years. There ought not be substantial controversy about this legislation.

What we are working on and have been working on for some hours is to try to determine how we get, now, on the bill and agree on amendments. We have had lists back and forth of what amendments might or might not be of-

fered. We have not been able at this point to agree on the list. We are not asking for a finite list, just a list on how to begin. There have been so many amendments that have been proposed that have nothing at all to do with the legislation, so we are working back and forth. It appears we are not going to be able to reach agreement on a list of how we begin with these amendments this evening, but my hope remains that perhaps tomorrow we will be able to have some kind of agreement on a list that would allow us to proceed to the Travel Promotion Act.

Let me mention briefly that this legislation is not controversial. Travel promotion means that our country would begin to address a problem. What is that problem? The fact is, we have many fewer visitors from abroad to this country, in terms of international tourism, which is very job creating, strongly supportive of economic growth because international tourists spend a lot of money. On average I believe they spend somewhere around \$4,500 per trip when they come to this country, for hotels and car rentals and airplanes and tourist attractions and so on. It is very job creating.

The fact is, we have far fewer tourists coming to this country from abroad than we had in the year 2000. That is a very serious problem; we have fallen substantially behind other countries that are aggressively marketing their countries for destination by international travelers. Italy, France, Great Britain, Spain, Australia—the list goes on and on of countries that say come to our country, travel here, visit here, be part of the experience in our country. Our country is not involved in that. It is as if there is a competition and we are not competing.

We put together a piece of legislation that would create and promote international destination travel to our country because it will surely create jobs and certainly be beneficial to our economy. As I said, it has wide support throughout the industry, throughout this Chamber, with Republicans and Democrats, and it actually reduces the Federal budget deficit. It is pretty hard to find a piece of legislation such as that.

Despite all that broad support and the fact it passed out of the Commerce Committee unanimously, we are having trouble getting it to the floor in a way that has amendments offered and in the regular order we consider this legislation.

As of tonight we are not able to reach an agreement on a list, but I remain hopeful. As we continue to exchange and have discussions about beginning this process and agreeing to amendments that can be debated, my hope remains that perhaps tomorrow we will be able to agree to such a list.

I believe others will have additional comments tomorrow as these discussions continue. My hope is we will be successful.

I have a number of unanimous consent requests I wish to offer.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

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

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN ALBANIA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I am proud to cosponsor S. Res. 182, recognizing the democratic accomplishments of the people of Albania and expressing the hope that the parliamentary elections on June 28 maintain and improve the transparency and fairness of democracy in Albania. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I am aware of what Albania has accomplished since its first multiparty elections in 1991, but I also know what a struggle it has been. Albania was under a ruthless and isolationist communist regime for decades. While not part of the former Yugoslavia, it was also impacted by the conflicts in neighboring and nearby Balkan countries in the 1990s, which was a setback for the entire region.

The promise of NATO membership did much to encourage progress in Albania in recent years. While problems relating to the rule of law and fight against corruption persisted, we supported Albania's NATO membership with the understanding that reforms will continue. The State Department in particular emphasized that other NATO members continued the reform process after joining the Alliance. That is our hope for Albania as well.

This resolution more actively expresses our hope as well as expectation that Albania live up to international standards it has accepted, in particular as they relate to the holding of elections. There are concerns about these elections, especially in regard to new voter identification cards and their distribution in time to allow citizens to vote. Even if Election Day does go smoothly, it is unfortunate that there was a delay in preparations—which causes confusion, frustration and suspicion among the Albanian electorate.

Albania is a good friend of the United States, and by passing this resolution we are investing in that relationship to make it grow. We want Albania to succeed, and this resolution will hopefully encourage Albania to hold successful elections on June 28. I believe the resolution is balanced, raising concern while noting progress and clearly favoring no particular political party. While those currently in power may have the additional responsibilities that come with governance, all parties have a role to play in order to make these elections meet international standards.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT EDMOND LO

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay special tribute to U.S. Army SSG Edmond Lo of Salem, NH.

Tragically, on June 13, 2009, this brave 23-year-old gave his life for this Nation when an improvised explosive device detonated while his explosive ordnance disposal team courageously worked to neutralize the threat near Samarra City, Iraq. At the time of this hostile action, Sergeant Lo, a member of the 797th Ordnance Company based at Fort Hood, TX, was serving his second tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Edmond demonstrated a willingness and dedication to serve his country from an early age. A 2004 graduate of Salem High School, Edmond was a member of the Air Force Junior ROTC Program and commander of the drill team, color guard, and operations squadron. He was well known and liked by his teachers and fellow students and earned himself a full scholarship to a top engineering school upon graduation. However, sensing a call to duty, and because of his desire to protect his country, Edmond instead chose to join the Army.

Just as many of America's heroes have taken up arms in the face of dire threats, Edmond dedicated himself to the defense of our ideals, values, freedoms, and way of life. His valor and service cost him his life, but his sacrifice will live on forever among the many dedicated heroes this Nation has sent abroad to defend our Nation's freedom.

A beloved member of the Salem community, Edmond was respected and admired by all those around him. As a loyal member of the U.S. Army, he continually performed above and beyond all expectations. Because of Edmond's efforts, our liberty is more secure.

Kathy's and my thoughts, condolences, and prayers go out to Edmond's parents, David and Rosa Lo, his brothers and sisters, and his other family members and many friends who have suffered this most grievous loss. All will sorely miss Edmond Lo, a true patriot who was proud of his family, proud of where he lived, and proud of what he did. In the words of Daniel Webster—may his remembrance be as long lasting as the land he honored. God bless Edmond Lo.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

CELEBRATING WEST VIRGINIA DAY

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise to recognize that 146 years ago today, West Virginia became the 35th State to join the Union. The only State to have seceded from a Confederate State, West Virginia's birthday shines as an anniversary which commemo-

rates the spirit, perseverance, optimism, and hard work of its people.

West Virginia is unique in countless ways; and her history is just the beginning. For almost 200 years, West Virginians have played a significant role in the development and advancement of our nation. From the Battle of Philippi in Barbour County, which was the first organized land battle of the Civil War, to John Brown's historic raid on the Arsenal in Harpers Ferry, we recognize the role our State has played in the making of America's history.

The only State to lie entirely within the borders of Appalachia, we remain incredibly diverse; our geography, population, and heritage are what have led to our identity as the "Wild and Wonderful" State. From the renowned Greenbrier Hotel and Resort in White Sulphur Springs, to the New River Gorge in Fayetteville, which houses the longest steel-arch bridge in the United States, it is no wonder that we draw tourists here from all over the globe.

But it is not the many historical sites or beautiful landscapes that capture the fortitude of West Virginia, but rather, her people—people who continue to inspire with pride and honor, and overcome challenges with a resolve like no other.

Early last month, flash flooding devastated families throughout southern West Virginia, damaging at least 1,500 homes with the worst flooding the area has seen for quite some time. The humanitarian response within the State has been profoundly moving; with people traveling hours to donate their time and energy to assist their fellow West Virginians, and some 300 National Guard troops posted in the area—proving that goodwill is alive and well in West Virginia. Seeing this outpouring, I was reminded of serious flooding in our State when I was Governor. I opened National Guard armories to house displaced families but none showed up—because their neighbors had taken them in. That is a shining example of our Mountaineer spirit.

In addition to serving the people of our State, the West Virginia National Guard is committed to global security, with 38 active units serving around the world, including in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Our State motto, "Mountaineers are always free," can be found resonating not only in all corners of the Mountain State but across the globe. And it is a motto that West Virginians have stood up for time and again—as our State's veterans are among the bravest, most selfless, and most devoted in the entire Nation.

West Virginians have the amazing ability to make sure our culture—which we are so proud of—is also part of our future. Ours is a State wrapped in age-old traditions, but also a State with a readiness to adapt to its younger generations; a veritable melting pot of both old and new world. The Ramp Eating Capitol of the World is found in Richwood, where international crowds

gathered in April for the annual Ramp Eating Contest to delight in this West Virginia favorite. And artists across our State are finding more innovative ways to market our cultural heritage, from Blenko Glass and amazing woodwork, to folk-art, quilts and Appalachian music.

Our schools, colleges and universities have inspired some of the best and brightest young leaders. West Virginia University and Marshall University have produced some of the greatest minds in some of the toughest fields worldwide, and have played an integral role in supporting the communities they inhabit. The Promise Scholarship, which pays instate collegiate tuition fees for those high school graduates with qualifying academic records, has helped thousands of students afford college since its inception. Thanks to this measure, admission to institutions of higher education in West Virginia has steadily increased, drawing students from across the Nation to study subjects such as biometrics, forensics, and defense.

Native West Virginians often joke that telephone calls placed to God are local, as our State is "almost" heaven. We love and are so proud of our awe-inspiring scenery and our towering mountains, and we can't wait to show them off to anyone who visits. And what those visitors also find when they come to our beautiful State is a population well-versed in humility and good-nature. It is indeed the people who pay the greatest tribute to our Mountain State, and it is my honor and privilege today to wish you on their behalf, the happiest of birthdays, West Virginia.●

INDIRECT LAND USE

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a lingering issue that could have serious detrimental effects on our nation's ethanol industry.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 increased the renewable fuels standard—commonly known as the RFS—to 36 billion gallons annually of ethanol and other biofuels by 2022.

I support the RFS . . . Always have. The RFS simply means more domestic energy production, less imported oil from unfriendly nations, and more jobs in rural America—both on and off the farm.

The 2007 law requires EPA to come up with new rules to determine greenhouse gas emissions throughout the lifecycle of renewable fuels. Simply put, EPA must calculate how much greenhouse gas is emitted from the time the seed is produced to the time drivers use the fuel in their cars, with every step in between. These steps include production, transportation, distribution, and blending, just to name a few.

Under the 2007 law, renewable fuels must emit anywhere from 20–60 percent fewer greenhouse gases than petroleum.