

law that affect some of the most downtrodden people on Earth who face oppression in other countries. She came to it with the heart of a lion and came through with some provisions that will give many of these asylees and refugees their chance to prove they need help and deserve help in the United States.

And Vaishalee Yeldandi and Stephanie Trifone, who sat through meeting after weary meeting putting together the provisions we needed to work out. I can't say enough for the staff people when they do this type of Olympic and heroic effort, as under this comprehensive immigration reform. I am fortunate to have an exceptional staff both in the State and back in Washington.

Those four deserve special recognition today for the extraordinary job they did.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I hate to interrupt the Senator. Would the Senator be willing to yield for 2 minutes so I can thank some people on the immigration bill? I promise I will take no more than 2 minutes.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, let me respond to the distinguished Senator. The answer is yes. I also see our distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee and his ranking member on the floor. I understand they have a colloquy they wish to engage in. Do they have an estimate as to how long they wish to engage in that colloquy?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, might I ask the Senator from Rhode Island how much time he wishes to speak?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I have about 15 minutes. What I propose to do—I do not know how long the Senators wish to take. What I propose to do is yield to Senator GRAHAM for such time as he may need.

Mr. GRAHAM. Two minutes.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. And then—

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I am fine. I think we should wait, let the Senator from Rhode Island proceed with his statement, and if the Senator from South Carolina wants to go ahead—

Mr. GRAHAM. OK. That is fine.

Mr. BAUCUS. Whatever the two Senators work out, great.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I yield the floor to Senator GRAHAM.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, to all my Senate colleagues, today was a good day, a historic day for the Senate. Thank you all, whether you opposed or supported the bill. It was a great debate.

To the staff, this bill could have died a thousand times. You would not let it.

To Matt Rimkunas, you are awesome. Sergio Sarkany and David

Glaccum of my staff, thank you for endless hours of work below minimum wage.

Mark Delich, in Senator McCAIN's office, thank you for working for Senator McCAIN. Your reward will be in Heaven.

Chandler Morse, you are awesome working for Senator JEFF FLAKE.

Enrique Gonzalez, you are one of the smartest people I have ever met. Jon Baseliace, Senator MARCO RUBIO was a game changer.

Leon Fresco was the star of the show. Stephanie Martz, you kept Leon and Senator SCHUMER from killing each other. Well done.

Joe Zogby, thank you for being a strong voice.

Kerri Talbot, for Senator BOB MENENDEZ, you always reminded us we are dealing with people.

And to Sergio Gonzalez, in Senator MICHAEL BENNET's office, you all were an incredible calming force.

To Senator HATCH, you came into the debate at a time when we needed a lift. ORRIN HATCH, I want to thank you profusely for jumping into the debate, adding to the momentum that was created by the so-called Gang of 8. You provided momentum in committee. It meant a lot.

To KELLY AYOTTE, you jumped on board at a time when people were talking about what was bad with the bill. You came out to give us a No. 5, along with Senator HATCH, to give it momentum. That was an act of tremendous political courage and you did the country a service by standing up and standing out at a time when it was tough.

To Senators HOEVEN and CORKER, you put us over the top. I have never enjoyed working with two people more. But Senator BOB CORKER and Senator JOHN HOEVEN, your efforts to come up with a new amendment, along with Senator HATCH and Senator AYOTTE, really made the difference.

I wanted to recognize these people—that they came along at a time when America needed them—and this bill is the result of the hard work of many people at the staff level, but key Senators who were not in the original bipartisan group came to the aid of the cause at a time we needed it.

I will yield.

Thank you very much for allowing me to say these words.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from South Carolina for his kind remarks. He is right, a lot of these folks came to the forefront on this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, let me also congratulate our friend Senator GRAHAM for his extraordinary leadership.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it has been an extraordinary day in the

Senate. It shows the kind of progress that can be made even on bedeviling issues when persistence and optimism are brought to bear. I hope my continued efforts on climate change will ultimately produce, with the same persistence and optimism, the same success we have seen today on immigration.

This is the 37th time that I will have come to the floor to urge my colleagues to wake up to the threats we face from climate change, to wake up and stop hiding behind the distortions that are spread by the fossil fuel interests, and to start heeding the warnings of scientists, of economists, of insurers, of businesses, of national security officials, of religious leaders. They all say something needs to be done, and fast, to stave off the harm of carbon pollution.

For the first time in this speech, I can say that something at last is being done. This Tuesday President Obama laid out a national plan to reduce carbon pollution and to prepare our country for the effects of climate change. His plan is a bold one, and it is going to challenge the status quo. Most importantly, the administration will regulate greenhouse gas emissions from new and existing powerplants. If we are going to be serious, we need to strike at the heart of the problem, and regulating these big powerplants is the best first step.

And let's face it, until now these big polluters were getting a free ride. They were harming all of us with their emissions and paying no price for it.

Carbon-driven climate change hurts our economy, damages our infrastructure, and harms our public health. Economists call this price we all pay the "social cost of carbon" because it represents the cost that polluting corporations offload onto the rest of us, onto the rest of society.

Earlier this month the Obama administration revised its estimate of the social cost of carbon to \$36 per ton of carbon dioxide emitted. This new estimate better captures the true harm of carbon pollution to our oceans, to our farmland, to ourselves, and I commend the President for strengthening our economic assessment of climate change.

The administration's measure still falls short of some experts' calculations, however, such as the comprehensive review that prompted far-reaching climate change legislation in the United Kingdom. I think our estimate should be still higher to accurately reflect the costs of climate change, and I think the best way to address the mounting social cost of carbon is a carbon fee.

If we start charging these corporations a fee, based on the social cost of their carbon pollution, that will factor those costs into their business models, and that is economics 101.

A carbon fee, in other words, makes the market work properly by putting the costs of carbon pollution into the price of the product, instead of letting