

way she can break the cycle of poverty. She met with counselors at Granite State College and developed an educational plan. Although she is being careful in borrowing, the debt she is going to graduate with is more than she has ever earned in her working years in 1 year. While her education is going to prepare her for the job market, she knows the payoff isn't immediate. She will continue to struggle to make the payments on those student loans and to care for her family.

With a budget such as she is dealing with, any additional cost of those student loans is going to impact this woman and her family.

Similar to so many of us I have been moved by these students who have worked so hard to achieve their education goals and the jobs of their dreams. They recognize education is an investment and higher education is the path to middle-class success and economic opportunity.

I think higher education is one of the best investments we can make in our country. It is important not just to those young people who are getting those degrees to give them the jobs that make them prosperous in the future that they are going to be able to support families on, but it is critical for America to compete in the global economy. We should be doing everything we can to make America a magnet for jobs, to ensure our workers have the skills they need to compete, and to help Americans get ahead.

We have to do everything we can to make sure we keep higher education affordable for our young people. We must address those costs and not try to balance the costs of higher education on the backs of our students.

I am hopeful we will continue to work on how we address the student loan interest rate, that we will be able to come to some agreement on how to do that in a way that is not going to cost our young people their futures, is not going to cost America its future, and is not going to price families out of the cost of higher education.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNET. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

THANKING SENATOR COWAN

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I first wish to say how wonderful it has been to serve with you in the Senate. As you take your leave to go back to the real world in Massachusetts, we all wish you well and we thank you for everything you have done while you have been here, especially the good cheer you brought to our caucus. Thank you very much.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. BENNET. In the vein of thank-yous, I wanted to come down after this historic day, passing this historic bill, to say some thank-yous. I have already thanked my colleagues in the Gang of 8 and the other Senators who worked so hard on this bill, and there will be a time to do that on another occasion.

Sometimes people have asked me during the course of my checkered career: How did you get to do this? Why did they let you do this? How did somebody with no apparent skill or aptitude for public education, for example, get to run the Denver Public Schools, one of the most cherished things I have ever done.

My answer has always been the same, which is the key is to find a bunch of people who are better at doing their job than you would ever be at doing their job. Assemble them, organize them around a project, a challenge or an obstacle and let them do their thing.

The Presiding Officer spoke eloquently about this yesterday when he thanked his personal staff and the Senate staff on his way back to Massachusetts.

I ask unanimous consent to submit the list of staff for the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

Staff Thank Yous:
 Senator McCain: Mark Delich;
 Senator Durbin: Joe Zogby, and Mara Silver;
 Senator Graham: Matt Rimkunas;
 Senator Menendez: Kerri Talbot, and Molly Groom;
 Senator Flake: Chandler Morse

Mr. BENNET. Of all the staff in the Senators' offices who worked on this bill, I will take further time tonight to mention a few names. First, I thank people on my staff, Rachel Velasquez and Stefanie Aarthun, who did amazing work, both of them, over many months on this bill and not only here. Also, we worked on the Colorado Compact in the State of Colorado. This was what enabled us to be part of this conversation.

I have thought throughout this process how important the work was that we did in Colorado in preparation for this moment, to get to this moment. It simply would have been impossible to succeed at producing what we call the Colorado Compact, composed of six principles. They were so bipartisan that when we had the press conference, the person who came to read the first of these principles was actually my Republican opponent in the 2010 Senate race, Ken Buck. I want to thank him for that and the others who were part of the compact.

I especially thank my deputy chief of staff, Sarah Hughes, who did an amazing job of pulling everybody together. She has been with me longer than anybody on my staff. Nothing I could have accomplished in the jobs I have had before and certainly not in this instance could I have done without Sarah Hughes.

The same goes for Jon Davidson, who is my chief of staff and who is a model for what a chief of staff in the Senate should be—or anywhere else, for that matter, but particularly here, where the pressures can be so extraordinary. His ability to attract an incredibly talented team of people who work on all kinds of issues, from immigration, to health care, to education, is incredibly important in the constituent service we do both here and in Colorado. Simply none of it would have happened if somehow I hadn't been lucky enough to hire Jonathan Davidson, who has been around this place, actually, as a young person, for a very long time, having been, among other things, Paul Sarbanes' chief of staff when he was the chair of the Banking Committee.

By my side both before I came to the Senate and in the Senate on this issue has been Sergio Gonzales, who has worked tirelessly. "Tirelessly" doesn't even capture it—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, it has felt like. He certainly looks that way. He won't appreciate my saying that, but it is true, and people who know Sergio will know what I am talking about. He has done an amazing job with a sense of humor and has served not just me during this but the entire Gang of 8, and we will be forever grateful.

There were many times during this process that I have thought about Sergio's grandfather and his grandmother. His grandfather, Corky Gonzales—Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales—played such an important role in Colorado's history and the history of the West, and a library was just named for him last week. I have wondered what he would think about knowing we live in a country where his grandson has helped to shepherd across the line the most important immigration reform in this country's history. So I thank Sergio Gonzales for his leadership as well.

None of this would have been possible without CHUCK SCHUMER, whom I talked about earlier. None of it would have been possible without his incredible staff: Leon Fresco, Stephanie Martz, Mike Lynch, his chief of staff—all of whom did an extraordinary job of keeping us on track and keeping Chuck on track, and I deeply appreciate that.

The others I wanted to mention while on the floor today are the staffs of the people with whom we negotiated the agriculture provisions of this bill. DIANNE FEINSTEIN did a great job leading that effort, with Chris Thompson, Neil Quinter, and Kim Alton, who all work for her. I deeply appreciate their work.

From ORRIN HATCH's office, Matt Sandgren did an excellent job all the way through.

I particularly want to say thank you to MARCO RUBIO's staff and their efforts to bring Democrats and Republicans together on this issue. This is the first time we have had an immigration bill where the agriculture provisions in the bill are endorsed by both the growers and the farm workers union. That has