

and medicine sales to Cuba. Unfortunately, they prevailed, and the amendment was struck from the conference report.

That was last year. What about this year? We've had two important developments.

On the Senate side, the Agriculture Committee included sanctions reform in the FY 2001 Agriculture Appropriations bill, which was reported out in May. It is the section of the bill entitled the "Food and Medicine for the World Act." I would like to acknowledge the work of my colleagues on this important legislation, especially Senators DODD, DORGAN, ROBERTS, ASHCROFT and HAGEL.

It is very similar to the amendment the Senate passed last year. I would note that it contains a new provision which weakens the sanctions reform effort. This provision requires one-year licenses for sales of food or medicine to governments on the State Department's terrorism list. Currently this list covers seven countries, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Sudan, North Korea and Cuba. I believe that this provision is an unnecessary restriction on our agricultural exporters.

But I am much more concerned about recent developments on the House side.

In late June, House members struck a deal to accommodate the same small group which fights against sanctions reform every year. Those members now have one main target: Cuba.

This recent House deal is billed as a move to lift unilateral sanctions on food and medicine. In fact, it does just the opposite. Let me explain.

First, it would outlaw all finance and insurance of food sales to Cuba, even sales to private groups. This would essentially prohibit all U.S. exports. In today's world, nobody trades without some sort of finance. It takes at least a letter of credit. What is the alternative? Only to ride along on the cargo ship to exchange your wheat for cash in Havana harbor. Everybody requires some sort of commercial insurance. In fact, the House agreement is so broadly written that it might even make third-country finance illegal. This is very bad legislation.

Second, the House agreement would impose even stricter licensing requirements than are in effect today on sales of food and medicine. These new restrictions would apply not just to Cuba, but also to Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria and North Korea.

Third, it would make it harder for U.S. exporters to travel to Cuba to explore the market.

Fourth, it would prohibit any food assistance, such as Food for Peace, to Cuba, as well as to Iran.

Accepting these provisions would be a major setback for the Senate.

The House agreement goes beyond sanctions for food and medicine. It includes provisions on travel to Cuba, an

entirely unrelated issue. It would remove all flexibility from the current travel regulations in two ways. First, it would make them statutory. They could only be changed in the future by new legislation. Second, it would deny the Treasury Department any discretion in issuing travel licenses.

I understand that the current House plan is to strip this bad legislation from their version of the FY 2001 Agriculture Appropriations bill, and then bring it up in conference. We must not let a small group of House members prevail again this year. I firmly oppose the House agreement, and I urge my colleagues to do likewise. We should work to ensure passage of the Food and Medicine for the World Act.

Last year, the Senate took action that was correct and sound. We should continue to press forward.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Friday, July 7, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,664,950,120,488.65 (Five trillion, six hundred sixty-four billion, nine hundred fifty million, one hundred twenty thousand, four hundred eighty-eight dollars and sixty-five cents).

One year ago, July 7, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,627,556,000,000 (Five trillion, six hundred twenty-seven billion, five hundred fifty-six million).

Five years ago, July 7, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,929,459,000,000 (Four trillion, nine hundred twenty-nine billion, four hundred fifty-nine million).

Twenty-five years ago, July 7, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$528,168,000,000 (Five hundred twenty-eight billion, one hundred sixty-eight million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,136,782,120,488.65 (Five trillion, one hundred thirty-six billion, seven hundred eighty-two million, one hundred twenty thousand, four hundred eighty-eight dollars and sixty-five cents) during the past 25 years.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, each year the American Immigration Law Foundation and the American Immigration Lawyers Association sponsor a national writing contest on immigration. Thousands of fifth grade students across the country participate in the competition, answering the question, "Why I'm Glad America is a Nation of Immigrants."

In fact, "A Nation of Immigrants" was the title of a book that President Kennedy wrote in 1958, when he was a Senator. In this book, and throughout

his life, he celebrated America's great heritage and history of immigration as a principal source of the nation's progress and achievements.

As one of the judges of this year's contest, I was impressed by the quality of writing that was presented and the great pride of these students in America's immigrant heritage. Many of these essays told the story of their own family's immigration to the United States.

The winner of this year's contest is Kaitlin Young, a fifth grader at St. Anne Elementary School in Warren, Michigan. She wrote about her diverse immigrant background and how this diversity enriches her life. Other students honored for their creative essays were Shayna Walton of Arizona, John Klaasen of Washington, Allison Paige Sigmon of North Carolina, and Christa Conway of Connecticut.

I believe that these award winning essays from the "Celebrate America" contest will be of interest to all of us in the Senate, and I ask that they may be printed in the RECORD.

The essays are as follow.

##### IMMIGRATION & ME

(By Kaitlin Young, Warren, MI, grand prize winner)

If it weren't for immigration, the diversity in me

I might be a Who-not on my family tree.

English, Irish, Dutch, American Indian too

Italian ancestry in the mix, a family tree in bloom.

America welcomed my ancestors—a promise to be free

Ellis Island & the Statue of Liberty are symbols dear to me.

Our country's promise, the freedom to worship here

Practice our family customs and belief we hold dear.

The promise of America rings throughout me  
The Torch of Freedom helped shape my family tree.

My Grandmas and Grandpas are from here and there

So when Mom married Dad, I came from everywhere.

I eat different foods from across the world  
Irish stew, potatoes and pasta that is curled.  
Salmon steak, pot roast, and Dutch Apple pie

Egg rolls, pizza, a menu diversified.

Soccer, Bocce Ball, and Cricket too.

Without immigration, you might not play the sports you do.

Without immigration what would you hear?  
The same old sounds filling your ear.

If it were not for immigration, what would we see?

All the leaves the same on my family tree.

That is why I am so happy for diversity,

Because of Immigration—I am me!

##### WHY I'M GLAD AMERICA IS A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

(By Shayna Walton, Tucson, AZ, finalist)

Hooray Hooray for the U.S.A.

Life is good the American Way.

Immigrants come from far and near

To have a much better life right here.

They come in hopes of a freer life.

Sometimes they come to leave their strife.