

CONSERVATION AND  
REINVESTMENT ACT

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I come to the floor to say a brief word about an extraordinary and very positive statement that the President of the United States made in the last 45 minutes as he gathered on the south lawn of the White House with a group of supporters of another very important bill—an issue we have actually debated for many hours and helped to usher through called the Conservation and Reinvestment Act.

The President, just this morning, called on us, in a bipartisan fashion, not to miss the opportunity to push forward on this very important piece of legislation—one which his administration has supported and helped to design. The Conservation and Reinvestment Act is really Congress's way of responding to a need that the American people have and have expressed themselves clearly on over and over, from the South to the North, from the East to the West, in meetings, through polling information that we have, through calls made to this Congress, through letters written, through e-mails sent—to say to us that now is the time to set aside a small but significant portion of the surplus that we have to invest—not for 1 year, or 6 months, not occasionally when we can, but to invest permanently a stream of revenue for conservation programs in our Nation.

I guess I can speak so passionately about this issue because the money we are speaking about investing is coming from offshore oil and gas revenues, 85 percent of which are produced off of the coast of Louisiana. We are proud of that production. We are doing it in a much more environmentally sensitive way and have been doing it for 50 years. But all of the revenue generated off of that oil and gas production has gone to the Federal Treasury. It is hard to account for how they have been spent, and they have not been spent for environmental investments for our Nation—a promise that was made 30 years ago but not kept.

So the Conservation and Reinvestment Act, which the President spoke about and continues to urge us to move forward on, is a way for us to redirect appropriately and in a very fiscally responsible way some of those revenues back to our States and local governments to help with the expansion of our parks and recreation areas in both rural and urban areas, for the preservation and restoration of our coastlines.

We in Louisiana feel strongly about getting some help from Washington to restore an eroding coastline, helping us to invest in wildlife conservation and preservation and, in many ways, including historic preservation. I will give to the staff a list of the 63 Senators, Republicans and Democrats, who are supporting this legislation, to ac-

knowledge again in the RECORD the great work that the House leadership did—Congressman DON YOUNG, Congressman JOHN DINGELL, and Congressman GEORGE MILLER, leaders in the House.

It has truly been a bipartisan-bicameral effort.

I will submit for the RECORD the names of 63 Senators who the President mentioned in his remarks this morning, thanking us for our support and joining with him in this effort, and finally shaping this bill in such a way that both parties can be proud, for which we in Louisiana can be grateful, and that Governors and mayors and elected officials and leaders all across our Nation can be happy to work on in partnership with the Federal Government to make a significant, meaningful, reliable investment now as we begin this century—something our children and our grandchildren can count on for a more beautiful nation in 2025 or 2050. We can't wait. This is the year to make it a reality.

I thank the Chair. Again, I thank Senator LOTT and Senator DASCHLE for their excellent leadership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair. I thank the Senator from Louisiana for her excellent work. I just had three members of the department of natural resources of Minnesota in my office today encouraging me to support this measure. It is very important legislation.

NATIONAL HISTORICAL BLACK  
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY WEEK

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, this week is a week that we take out to celebrate, to honor, and to acknowledge the great contributions that 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities have made to our Nation.

In Louisiana, I am very proud to represent four of the greatest of these institutions—Grambling State University, Southern University System, Xavier University, and Dillard University—and to recognize their great contributions in making our Nation stronger, and as we enter the new century to reassert my commitment and to acknowledge their great and significant place in the educational framework of our Nation.

On September 14, 2000, President Clinton proclaimed this week as National Historical Black Colleges Week and asked the country to join him in honoring the tremendous contributions these institutions have made not only to the lives of the students they serve but also to the history of this country. As a Senator from Louisiana, I am proud to have four HBCUs in the State of Louisiana: Dillard University, Grambling State University, Southern University System, and Xavier University.

For too many years in our Nation's history—HBCUs were the sole source of higher education for African Americans. Today, HBCUs confer the majority of the bachelor's and advanced degrees awarded to African American students in physical science, mathematics, computer science, engineering, and education. There are now 105 HBCUs in existence, providing an array of disciplines at both public and private medical schools, four-year institutions, community and junior colleges. Without their courage and commitment, this country would have been deprived of generations of African American educators, physicians, lawyers, scientists, and other professionals. In fact, a few of this country's cabinet members are alumni of HBCUs: Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman—Xavier University; Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Togo West—Howard University; Former Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary—Fisk University; and Former Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Espy—Howard University.

Like the President, I am proud to say that several members of my staff are graduates of historically black colleges and universities. Alicia Williams, Grambling State University; Tari Bradford, Southern University; Tony Eason, Grambling State University; Former Legislative Director, Ben Cannon, Xavier University and Southern University Law School; Kaira Stelly, Southern University at New Orleans; and Roderick Scott, Southern University.

In addition to educating many of our Nation's most distinguished African American professionals, HBCUs have remained steadfast to their commitment to improving the communities in which they reside and preserving America's history. Through countless forms of community service, including tutoring programs, head start, senior citizen programs, they teach their students to use their education to be men and women for others. Their libraries and colleges continue to serve as living repositories for the writings, artifacts, and photographs representing generations of African American history.

If one wants to estimate the effect that the Historically Black Colleges and Universities have had on the history of America, ask yourself what would the field of education be without the contributions of Booker T. Washington, or science without George Washington Carver, or Mathematics without Dr. Nan P. Manuel, or Engineering without Dr. Lonnie Sharp. This list is endless. Each year hundreds and thousands of students graduate from these vital institutions and are helping to shape the new century.

HBCUs have accomplished this enviable record of achievement despite numerous challenges. Even with limited financial resources and serving a relatively high number of disadvantaged