I voted for NAFTA. I support free trade. But there are provisions in the underlying bill that I think could keep the U.S. from keeping its commitment under NAFTA.

I also believe the Department of Transportation regulations are not quite strong enough to assure that we will have inspections of every truck. I don’t think we have been able to fix this yet. I hope we will be able to work together on language that will assure that we will have real inspections, that will ensure safety on our highways, and comply with our commitments under NAFTA. I don’t think we are there yet, but I think we are working on it.

I ask everyone to come to the table. Senator STEVENS has been a leader on this issue. Senator MCCAIN, chairman of the Commerce Committee, certainly is a leader on the President, and Senator MURRAY as the chairwoman and ranking member of the Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee as well as the Commerce Committee. But mostly I am a person who is going to be on highways where there is going to be a lot of NAFTA traffic. When we are looking at 8,500 Mexican commercial trucking companies having the authority to operate in commercial zones today, I think we are talking about a lot of Mexican traffic on our freeways. We want a lot of Mexican and Canadian commerce, as long as the trucks meet our standards. We have to assure that those inspection stations are there to make sure it happens.

In 1999, both United States and Mexican commercial motor vehicles made an estimated 4.5 million crossings on the border. Seventy percent of those were in Texas.

This debate is not merely hypothetical to Texas, nor to the other border States. The added burden of overweight and potentially unsafe trucks is a daily reality in south Texas.

The current inspection statistics is the lack of adequate space to conduct safety inspections. Currently, the only permanent inspection facilities at the United States-Mexico border are at the State facilities in Calexico and Otay Mesa, CA. At the other border crossings, Federal and State inspectors have limited access to the existing U.S. Customs lots.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration inspectors do not have the equipment nor the space they need to do the job. Those inspectors have space to inspect only one or two trucks at a time. The construction of dedicated motor carrier safety inspection facilities at or near the existing Federal border crossings would improve inspection statistics.

Working with the Department of Public Safety in Texas, we have identified funding needs of $100 million to construct safety inspection stations. So it is very important that all of us focus on this issue and that we all look for a solution to this issue.

I think we are very close, but we are not there yet. I hope everyone will come together either to fashion an answer right now in this bill before it goes out of this Chamber or agree that we will not do that now, that we will work something in conference, but most certainly we would not stand on the language that is in the underlying bill nor the language that is in the House underlying bill that was passed that would prohibit Mexican trucks from coming into the United States at all.

I think we can come up with language that will be acceptable to the administration and acceptable to our Mexican counterparts. But the bottom line is, we are not going to have unsafe trucks on our highways as long as I have a voice in the Senate, because we have standards. The whole concept of NAFTA was that we would have parity of our truck standards with the truck standards of Canada and Mexico. That means there would be a level playing field in trucking company competition, so that there would not be an unfair advantage to another country and, secondly, so that there would be safety on all of our highways, to make sure we are not in any way discriminating against any country nor are we lowering the standards that we have in our country.

So I intend to be very active in this debate. I intend to be very active in bringing the groups together to try to come to that compromise. My bottom line is only one and that is the there is parity, safety, and a level playing field for the truckers of our country and the countries in NAFTA with whom we trade.

ILSA EXTENSION ACT

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the CBO cost estimate with respect to S. 1218, a bill to extend the authorities of the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, be printed in the RECORD.

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

By extending the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, the ILSA Extension Act of 2001 would impose a private-sector mandate as defined by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). The President would be required to impose certain sanctions of U.S. entities or foreign companies that invest over a specific amount of money in developing the petroleum and natural gas resources of Iran or Libya. Among the sanctions available under the act, the President could impose certain restrictions on U.S. offices of a sanctioned company or on entities and financial institutions engaged in business transactions with a sanctioned entity. The act does, however, allow the President to make exceptions in applying such sanctions. Since passage of ILSA, no such sanctions have been imposed. Consequently, CBO expects that the sanctions are not imposed under the extension and that the direct cost of the mandate would fall below the annual threshold established by UMRA for private-sector mandates ($113 million in 2001, adjusted annually for inflation).

The ILSA Extension Act of 2001 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

CBO prepared two estimates for the House companion bill, H.R. 1954. The first estimate was for H.R. 1954 as ordered by the House Committee on International Relations on June 20, 2001. The second estimate was for H.R. 1954 as ordered by the House Committee on Ways and Means on July 12, 2001. The International Relations Committee versions of H.R. 1954 is similar to the Senate bill. The Ways and Means Committee version would require the President of the Congress on the effectiveness of actions taken under ILSA within 18 months after enactment, and it would provide for the early termination of that report after submission of the report. CBO estimated that implementing either version of H.R. 1954 would not significantly affect discretionary spending and that the private-sector mandate would fall below the annual threshold established by UMRA.
MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY RESEARCH

Mr. BURNS. Madam President, S. 805, introduced on May 1, is a vital step toward the day when advanced research will find ways to halt, and even cure, life-threatening muscular dystrophy.

Muscular dystrophy is a genetic disorder, actually a number of separate disorders, that are characterized by weakening and eventual wasting of muscles throughout the body. A quarter of a million Americans of all ages are affected by these gene defects, Duchenne, striking young boys and usually takes their lives before they reach their twenties. Other forms that affect adults are also severely debilitating and can be devastating to the victims and their families.

Since 1966, entertainer Jerry Lewis has hosted the annual Muscular Dystrophy Labor Day Telethon, calling the Nation’s attention to the muscular dystrophies and seeking help for individual families affected by these diseases. Jerry Lewis is the National Chairman of the Muscular Dystrophy Association which, through its Telethon and year-round fund raising activities, has raised hundreds of millions of dollars for programs of direct patient services, research and summer camp. The MDA program supports a nationwide network of 230 clinics, which are affiliated with hospitals and universities, sends more than 4,000 youngsters it serves to MDA summer camps, which help pay for wheelchairs, braces, and various therapies for people with muscular dystrophy.

In addition to providing these direct patient and family services, MDA expends about $30 million per year to support scientific research. Over the past half-century, MDA has funded research that was vital in developing the protocols that resulted in groundbreaking discoveries in genetic mapping. This extraordinary organization has played a key role in identifying the gene defects that cause virtually all of the forms of muscular dystrophy. The Muscular Dystrophy Association is to be commended for its work and can be justifiably proud of the very positive role it has in assisting those affected by neuromuscular disease. In fact, the implications of their research extend to all of the estimated 5,000 genetic-based diseases affecting all of mankind. With all of the research insights and opportunities made available by this organization to us, the next critical phase in muscular dystrophy research is to apply these basic scientific discoveries to the development of effective therapies. That will require substantial Federal funding. Authorizing such a vigorous Federal effort is the purpose of S. 805. The bill calls upon NIH and the Centers for Disease Control to establish Centers of Excellence in which intensified clinical research can be conducted which will speed the discovery of treatments and cures for the various forms of muscular dystrophy.

S. 805 provides the Director of the NIH and the Directors of the several institutes within NIH that conduct muscular dystrophy research with the authority and responsibility to concentrate and intensify that research effort. The bill also authorizes the funds needed to conduct essential clinical trials. In short, it gives NIH the organization and the mandate to exploit recent advances in the medical care. The goal is the swiftest possible rescue for children and adults whose lives will otherwise be lost or badly damaged by muscular dystrophy.

Mr. President, the Congress has responded generously and often to the demands for research funding aimed at other diseases that shorten or impair the lives of Americans. It is time to add muscular dystrophy to the list of those diseases. I commend my colleagues for introducing S. 805, and I regret that I am just now getting the opportunity to deliver this statement, two weeks after my name was added to this important legislation as a cosponsor.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Madam President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator Kennedy in March of this year. The Local law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred October 23, 1994 in Buena Park, California. Two men parked near a gay bar were slashed by a group of men who shouted anti-gay epithets and threatened them. I believe that government’s first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE FOR WORKERS, FARMERS, COMMUNITIES, AND FIRMS ACT OF 2001

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I rise today to lend my full support to the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers, Farmers, Communities, and Firms Act of 2001, which I introduced today in coordination with Senators Bingaman, Baucus, and Daschle. I particularly want to congratulate Senator Bingaman on all the hard work and dedication that he has shown on this issue over the past several months in crafting this piece of legislation, which is so critical to American workers and their families.

Improving and expanding TAA is a priority for us, and we hope it will become a priority for Congress and for the President as well. This bill is not just a reauthorization but an improvement to our current TAA program—and not a moment too soon. Earlier this week, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve told us our economic outlook remains uncertain. That means there will be more and more workers and families who will need to turn to TAA for help to rebuild their futures.

In addition to reauthorizing TAA for an additional five years, this bill makes substantial improvements to the TAA program as a whole. The bill extends possible TAA benefits for an additional 26 weeks, provides wage insurance for many displaced workers over 50, and expands coverage for secondary workers and workers whose jobs were lost when companies shifted their operations overseas. Given the massive legacy cost issue facing our steel companies, I particularly wanted to take action to provide health care and child care benefits for workers who have lost their jobs due to imports. At my urging, the bill contains several health care provisions, including a refundable tax credit for 50 percent of COBRA benefits and a provision that links TAA benefits to child care and health benefits that they are entitled to under TANF.

As we expand coverage and benefits available under TAA, however, we still have to remember what’s really important in this debate: TAA cannot substitute for a good job, and too many good jobs are being lost due to our current trade policies. That’s what we really need to focus on, although we still need TAA because there will always be workers who need it.

As Governor of West Virginia in the 1980’s and later as a U.S. Senator, I have seen firsthand the devastation that import surges have wrought on manufacturing communities. I have walked the streets of Welch, knowing that one in four people I met that day were unemployed. I have been to Weirton and Wheeling and seen the impact of the recent surge of dumped and subsidized steel imports on the economic landscape and the collective psyche of those communities as thousands of steelworkers, as well as workers whose jobs depend on those steel companies staying open, have been laid off and lost their health care and child care benefits. The TAA program as a whole.

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