

he could in seeing the farmers and ranchers of the region through this difficult time. Mike was one of the principal organizers of the historic Bucket Brigade on May 7, 2001, which raised the visibility of the crisis and brought the plight of the Klamath Basin to living rooms across America.

Since the crisis first arose in the Klamath Basin, Mike has been at the forefront of the effort to bring diverse groups together to achieve a workable solution. Mike understood that the future of agriculture in the Klamath Basin—and throughout the United States—laid in finding a balanced, workable solution to the conflict between farming and species protection. When this problem is solved and a practical resolution is agreed to by the many parties involved, it will be because of the patience and dedication of people like Mike Byrne.

Mr. Speaker, I take enormous pride in Mike's ceaseless efforts on behalf of his fellow ranchers and farmers. The perseverance he and others like him have demonstrated during this crisis has literally made the difference between despair and hope for so many of the farmers in the Klamath Basin. Mike Byrne represents the best of what citizenship in America means. I offer him both my praise and my most sincere gratitude for working on behalf of the people of the Klamath Basin, who have faced such significant trials. Many hurdles remain in the path of Klamath farmers, and I am grateful that I'll have Mike Byrne by my side throughout the challenges that lie ahead. Happy 50th birthday, Mike.

Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to share with my colleagues the extraordinary service of this outstanding American.

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#### INTRODUCING THE VISA INFORMATION SECURITY ACT OF 2001

### HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 5, 2001*

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Visa Information Security Act of 2001 (VISA Act)—legislation that increase the security of the American people by closing some of the loopholes within our visa application system. This legislation requires that all non-immigrant visa applicants submit a biometric fingerprint as of the routine visa application process.

Specifically, it would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to require that non-immigrant visa applicants provide a biometric identifier, such as a fingerprint, that is machine readable, to be contained the visa or other documentation required for admission at their port of entry into the United States.

The recent terrorist attacks have highlighted the need to review the visa application process and we call improve the screening process used by U.S. Consular offices abroad. Usually, visa applicant names are checked against the State Department database for admissibility. However, some individuals use false information from their country of origin when they apply for a visa or use stolen visas to enter the U.S. As the Washington Post reported today, in the last few years, one country lost approximately 60,000 visas.

While it is impossible to screen every single individual who enters our country, with advanced technology and better coordination with the intelligence community we can better secure our nations border. However, in order to effectively authenticate individuals, we need a method based on inherent characteristics of a person that cannot be lost, changed or duplicated. Through biometric fingerprints, we would have an accurate and clear idea of who is entering our country.

This process is quick and efficient and can be run through our national criminal database to see if the applicant should or should not be allowed into the country. Additionally, when the individual enters the country through the port of entry, his fingerprints will be scanned to verify authenticity. Adding this technology requirement would not add significant time to the visa application process. But it would certainly prevent known terrorists and criminals from entering the country, while at the same time decrease fraudulent visa requests.

In addition, this legislation authorizes the Attorney General to impose a new fee on all visa applicants to cover the costs of implementing this important program. I want to note that my legislation will not apply to NAFTA participating countries and actually allows the Attorney General maximum discretion to decide what methods to utilize for those types of border crossings.

Mr. Speaker, we need to collect more information about the individuals trying to enter this country, but we must do it in a way that does not overburden our consular offices and still allows for visitors to enter the United States. My legislation is an economical first step in increasing our national security and I intend to work tirelessly for its passage.

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#### INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3049, AFGHANISTAN FREEDOM ACT OF 2001

### HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 5, 2001*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have today introduced the "Afghanistan Freedom Act of 2001", H.R. 3049.

This legislation is intended to underscore to the American people and to the international community our unequivocal commitment to the war on terrorism that was thrust upon us by the barbaric September 11th terrorist attack on our nation. This legislation further underscores that the enemy in this war includes not only the terrorists who attacked us, but also the regimes that harbor those terrorists.

One such regime is the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Since 1996, the Taliban has harbored Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda organization, who were the authors of the September 11th attack on our nation. The Taliban cannot claim that they were unaware that Osama bin Laden was plotting war against our nation from the refuge they afforded him in Afghanistan.

Osama bin Laden and a number of his associates were indicted for orchestrating the

1998 bombings of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the United Nations Security Council joined our nation in demanding that the Taliban surrender them to stand trial for their crimes. The Taliban refused. As a result, the United Nations Security Council imposed mandatory sanctions on the Taliban in 1999.

Following this action, the Taliban chose to continue harboring Osama bin Laden rather than take the steps necessary to end the United Nations sanctions. Because the Taliban chose to place the interests of Osama bin Laden over the interests of the Afghan people, he was able to orchestrate from his base in Afghanistan the September 11th terrorist attack on our nation that claimed approximately 6,000 lives.

In view of these facts, there can be no doubt that the Taliban shares responsibility for the September 11th terrorist attack on our nation. In waging this war that has been thrust upon us, our objectives must include not only the capture of Osama bin Laden and the destruction of his terrorist organization, but also the removal from power of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

This legislation gives the President important authorities that he can use to help our nation succeed in this effort. It authorizes him to provide up to \$300 million in military assistance to resistance organizations in Afghanistan that are today fighting to overthrow the Taliban. It affords the President wide latitude in selecting which organizations should receive this assistance. In addition, the legislation authorizes \$300 million in humanitarian assistance to refugees and other victims of the conflict in Afghanistan. And it mandates the establishment of a Radio Free Afghanistan to broadcast a message of hope to the people of Afghanistan.

Finally, the legislation seeks to put teeth in the existing United Nations sanctions on the Taliban. It requires regular reports to Congress regarding whether any governments are violating those sanctions, and it authorizes the President to impose severe penalties on any governments that he determines are endangering our U.S. military personnel or other U.S. citizens by aiding the Taliban in defiance of United Nations mandates.

By this legislation, we do not declare war on the Taliban. Rather, we recognize that the Taliban has declared war on us, and we seek to equip the President with some of the tools he will need to prevail in this conflict.

H.R. 3049

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Afghanistan Freedom Act of 2001".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The rise to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan has caused a drastic decline in the human, political, and civil rights of the Afghan people, particularly among women, girls, and ethnic minorities.

(2) In the year 2001, millions of Afghans are on the verge of starvation, the largest such group in the world.

(3) The United States is the single largest donor of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, totaling more than \$185,000,000 in fiscal year 2001.