

Bunning	Graham	Murkowski
Burns	Grassm	Murray
Byrd	Grassley	Nelson
Campbell	Gregg	Nelson (FL)
Cantwell	Hagel	Nelson (NE)
Carnahan	Harkin	Nickles
Carper	Hatch	Reed
Chafee	Helms	Reid
Clinton	Hollings	Roberts
Cochran	Hutchinson	Rockefeller
Collins	Hutchison	Santorum
Conrad	Inhofe	Sarbanes
Corzine	Inouye	Schumer
Craig	Jeffords	Sessions
Crapo	Johnson	Shelby
Daschle	Kennedy	Smith (NH)
Dayton	Kerry	Smith (OR)
DeWine	Kohl	Snowe
Dodd	Kyl	Specter
Domenici	Landrieu	Stabenow
Dorgan	Leahy	Stevens
Durbin	Levin	Thomas
Edwards	Lieberman	Thompson
Ensign	Lincoln	Thurmond
Enzi	Lott	Torricelli
Feingold	Lugar	Voivovich
Feinstein	McCain	Warner
Fitzgerald	McConnell	Wellstone
Frist	Mikulski	Wyden

## NOT VOTING—2

Cleveland Miller

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES—  
H.R. 2833

The PRESIDING OFFICER. With regard to H.R. 2883, under the previous order the Senate insists on its amendments, requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses, and the Chair appoints Mr. GRAHAM of Florida, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BAYH, Mr. EDWARDS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. KYL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. LUGAR; from the Committee on Armed Services, Mr. REED and Mr. WARNER, conferees on the part of the Senate.

Mr. ALLEN. 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.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to proceed as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## FOOD SAFETY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, earlier this week I introduced the Imported Food Safety Act of 2001. Food safety has long been a serious public health concern in America, but awareness of the vulnerability of our food supply has heightened since September 11.

I have long been concerned about the adequacy of our system for screening and ensuring the safety of imported food. In 1998, in my capacity of chairing the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, I began a 16-month investigation of the safety of imported foods. This investigation revealed much about the Government's flawed food safety net. Regrettably, in the intervening years little has changed, and now we must acknowledge that the systemic shortcomings can also be exploited by bioterrorists.

As part of the investigation, I asked the General Accounting Office to evaluate the Federal Government's efforts to ensure the safety of imported food. In its April 1998 report, the General Accounting Office concluded that "Federal efforts to ensure the safety of imported foods are inconsistent and unreliable." Just last month, the GAO reiterated that conclusion in testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management.

During the 5 days of subcommittee hearings that I chaired, we heard testimony from 29 witnesses, including scientists, industry and consumer groups, government officials, the General Accounting Office, and two individuals with firsthand knowledge of the seamier side of the imported food industry—a convicted customs broker and a convicted former FDA inspector.

Let me briefly recount some of the subcommittee's findings which make clear why the legislation I have introduced is so urgently needed.

First, weaknesses in the FDA's import controls—specifically, the ability of importers to control food shipments from the port to the point of distribution—make the system very vulnerable to fraud and deception, and clearly vulnerable to a concerted bioterrorist attack.

Second, the bonds required to be posted by importers who violate food safety laws are so low that they are simply considered by some unscrupulous importers to be a cost of doing business.

Third, maintaining the food safety net for imported food is an increasingly complicated and complex task, made more complicated by previously unknown food pathogens, such as Cyclospora, that are difficult to detect. Our recent experience with anthrax has taught us there is much that public health officials still need to know when dealing with such pathogens and bacteria.

Fourth, because some imported food can be contaminated by substances

that cannot be detected by visual inspections, grant programs are needed to encourage the development of food safety monitoring devices and sensors that are capable of detecting chemical and biological contaminants.

Fifth, since contamination of imported food can occur at many different places from the farm to the table, the ability to trace outbreaks of foodborne illnesses back to the source of contamination requires more coordinated effort among Federal, State, and local agencies responsible for ensuring food safety, as well as improved education for health care providers so that they can better recognize and treat foodborne illnesses. Again, our recent experience with anthrax underscores the need for better coordination and education.

Since the terrorist attacks that occurred just weeks ago, we have been living in a changed world. We are battling enemies who show no regard for the value of human life, and whose twisted minds seek to destroy those who embody democracy and freedom. It has never been as important as it is now to ensure that our food supplies are adequately protected against contamination, both inadvertent and intentional.

President Bush and his administration are acting swiftly and decisively on all fronts. Among the responsibilities of the Office of Homeland Security is the protection of our livestock and agricultural systems from terrorist attack. The administration has requested additional funding to beef up security at our borders and to add more inspectors to evaluate the safety of food imports. And the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson, has been working tirelessly to obtain the additional tools necessary to combat bioterrorism.

On October 17, 2001, Secretary Thompson appeared before the Senate's Governmental Affairs Committee, and testified about the Federal Government's efforts to ensure that the country is adequately prepared to respond to bioterrorist threats. He identified food safety and, in particular, imported foods, as vulnerable areas that require further strengthening. Similarly, at a recent hearing before the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, every single public health expert who testified before us expressed concern about the vulnerability of our food supplies.

Weak import controls make our system all too easy to circumvent. After all, FDA only inspects fewer than 1 percent of all imported food shipments that arrive in our country. Those shipments are sent from countries around the world, most of whom wish us no harm. Yet, because of the hard lessons we have had to learn since September 11, we must be more vigilant about protecting ourselves. It is vital that we