

million of the bill's funding is directed to provide grants to make polling places physically accessible to those with disabilities. This funding ensures that for the first time in our Nation's history, the Federal Government will contribute our share to the cost of administering elections for Federal office.

I hope that this legislation completes our Nation's journey to ensuring that all eligible Americans are able to cast their vote fairly, accurately, and without interference. To some, this legislation may not be perfect, but I can assure my colleagues that it is the result of reasoned compromise and is a balanced response to all that our Nation has learned from the 2000 elections. I hope that when my colleagues and I return in January, we can work with the Senate leadership to ensure that bringing this legislation to the Senate floor is one of our top priorities.

EXPIRATION OF TRADE PROVISIONS

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, in the whirlwind of activity that always accompanies the end of a legislative session, many critical legislative decisions are made and critical legislation passes. Often it takes some time to tote up the wins and losses and arrive at a final evaluation of what has been achieved and what remains to be done.

Despite the efforts of those in the Senate, one of the losses for the session is the expiration of three key trade programs, the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), the Andean Trade Preferences Act (ATPA), and Trade Adjustment Assistance program.

What is surprising about the expiration of these programs is all three of them have nearly universal support. They expire not because of a legitimate difference in policies and not because the programs have served their purpose. They expire because of political maneuvering in the House.

In my view, it always reflects poorly on the Congress when needed programs expire due to political machinations or simply lack of attention. It sends poor signals to those that depend on these programs. In this case, the U.S. companies that import products under GSP and ATPA and the foreign countries we are attempting to aid through these programs can hardly avoid the impression that these programs are a low priority for Congress.

In the case of ATPA, there are those that believe that expiration will spur a rapid move to expand ATPA. I support an expansion of ATPA, but I believe such brinkmanship is far more likely to result in a long break in ATPA than it is a quick expansion.

Fortunately, in the case of both GSP and ATPA it is possible to extend these tariff benefits retroactively. If the U.S. importers are able to shift funds and

wait, there is a good chance they will ultimately receive the promised benefits from these programs.

Sadly, this is not the case with the expiration of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. This program provides income support and training benefits to workers who have lost their jobs due to trade. It provides them the opportunity to train for a new job and rebuild their lives. Given that they are unemployed, they are generally not in a position to absorb a three month or a six month break in benefits.

I understand that the Department of Labor plans to advise the state agencies that work with them to administer TAA plan to advise those agencies to keep paying benefits because they expect the program to be reauthorized. The Department of Labor's advise is sound; indeed, I hope to win passage for a considerable expansion of TAA.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that state agencies will keep operating based upon this federal promise and borrow money from other programs to support TAA. In fact, in at least 5 states, state law prohibits such fund shifting.

This raises the prospect that some of the 35,000 TAA recipients around the United States will receive a very nasty Christmas present—the unexpected halt of the benefits on which they depend to rebuild their lives and support their families.

Mr. President, I believe Congress is sometimes criticized unfairly. Sometimes, however, the rush of events diverts attention from some of the glaring errors we make.

The stubborn obstinance of some of the other body to extend TAA is, in my view, a shameful example of playing politics with the interest of those citizens that can least afford it. I hope this example is not lost on journalists, editorial writers, and, ultimately, voters. Someone should be held accountable.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. 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 in May 1995 in West Palm Beach, FL. A gay man was robbed and brutally murdered. The attacker, Ronald Knight, 27, was convicted of first-degree murder, armed robbery, and a hate crime in connection with the incident.

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 En-

hancement 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 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss legislation that establishes the National Museum of African American History and Culture Presidential Commission. On Monday, December 17, 2001, the Senate passed, with my support, H.R. 3442 which establishes the National Museum of African American History and Culture Presidential Commission. The Presidential Commission will develop and recommend a legislative plan of action for creating a national museum on the National Mall that recognizes the unique historical and cultural legacy of African Americans. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the legislation, introduced by Representative JOHN LEWIS, on December 11, 2001 by voice vote.

The African American legacy is one of gradual steps that have moved this group of Americans from slavery to full partnership in our society and culture. African Americans have played a central part in the development of our country's democratic institutions and our commitment to individual freedom and equal rights. Despite this history, there is currently no national museum located in Washington, D.C. on the National Mall devoted to telling the African American story. I believe this museum is the next stage in recognizing the burdens born by African Americans and celebrating their unique contributions to our nation.

Many notable African Americans have made contributions in the areas of science, medicine, the arts and humanities, sports, music and dance. It is right to honor this legacy on a national level. I believe that by establishing this museum this nation will be able to finally honor the legacy of African Americans properly. By placing this museum on the National Mall, we will finally place the history of African Americans in a national light, where it belongs.

The legislation creates a 23 member commission made up of individuals who specialize in African American history, education and museum professionals. The commission has nine months to present its recommendations to the President and Congress regarding an action plan for creating a national museum honoring African Americans. The Commission will decide the structure and make-up of the museum, devise a governing board for the museum, and among other action items, will decide whether to place the museum within the Smithsonian's Arts and Industries Building, which is the