

the amendment, under the rules, be modified accordingly to reflect the pages and lines of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The modification is as follows:

On page 21, before the semicolon at the end of line 2, insert "or by the court sua sponte".

On page 21, line 9, strike "solely".

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

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.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ VOTES FOR FREEDOM

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the recent historic elections in Iraq—elections that had been anticipated by an anxious global community for some time.

This election is the story of true patriots who knew the odds and decided to beat them. This is the story of the millions of Iraqis who defied the threats and the intimidation of "terrorists to cast their votes for a brighter future in Iraq."

News reports are flush with firsthand accounts from observers. The reports paint a picture of a people acting on their innate desire to be free.

One such account details the determination of Samir Hassan, who at 32 lost his leg in a car bomb blast last October. Hassan said, "I would have crawled here if I had to. I don't want terrorists to kill other Iraqis like they tried to kill me. Today I am voting for peace."

The act of voting by ordinary Iraqis in the face of extreme danger confirms President Bush's belief that people around the globe, when given a chance, will choose liberty and democracy over enslavement and tyranny. Human beings crave freedom at their core.

Early estimates by Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission show that about 8 million of the nearly 14 million registered voters cast their ballot on Sunday—a turnout almost equal to the number of Americans who voted last November without the threat of snipers or suicide bombers.

In the words of Arkan Mahmoud Jawad, who came to vote with his

mother and younger brother, "This is the salvation for the Iraqis. I hate the terrorists, and now, I am fighting them by my vote."

These are people who were beaten down by the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. That is exactly why they want to reclaim their country through these elections. They know what the cost of failure would be.

And they know all too well that tyranny breeds isolation. Any dissent from Saddam Hussein's regime could result in torture or death. Neighbors couldn't trust neighbors. Families were torn apart. All this leaves scars on a nation that may take generations to heal.

I believe that voting is the first act of building a community as well as building a country. With the election we saw a peaceful majority reclaiming their birthright. We saw people gaining courage from realizing that they were not alone—that their friends and neighbors and relatives were going to vote—and that they could vote too. Together they are building their future.

Here is one description of how voting progressed:

The first Iraqis on the streets seemed tense as well, not smiling and not waving back. But as the day unfolded, and more and more voters took to the streets, a momentum seemed to gather, and by mid-morning Karada's main street was jammed with people who had voted and people on their way to vote. Some Iraqis, walking out of the polling places, used their cellphones to call friends and urge them to come. Some banged on their neighbors' doors and dragged them out of bed. Old men rolled up in wheelchairs. Women came in groups, lining up in their long, black, head-to-toe abayas. The outpouring, which filled Karada's streets with Shiites, Christians and even some Sunnis, surprised the Iraqis themselves. When Ehab Al Bahir, a captain in the Iraqi Army, arrived at Marjayoon Primary School, he braced himself for insurgent attacks. The mortar shells arrived, as he anticipated, but so did the Iraqi voters, which he did not.

Voting was an act of defiance against the terrorists and an affirmation that Iraqis control their own destiny through self-government. The people of Iraq realize that a stable, successful, democratic Iraq can only come about if average Iraqis are willing to sacrifice to build it.

On Sunday, they rose to the occasion. Some lost their lives, but their lives were not lost in vain. I am convinced that a country by the Iraqi people and for the Iraqi people will be built on the foundation laid down by the voters on Sunday. And having sacrificed to gain a democratic Iraq, they won't let it go easily.

Baghdad's mayor was overwhelmed by the turnout of voters at city hall where thousands were celebrating and holding up their purple ink-stained fingers with pride. The mayor said, "I cannot describe what I am seeing. It is incredible. This is a vote for the future, for the children, for the rule of law, for

humanity, for love." It is truly a new beginning for Iraq.

The election in Iraq clearly demonstrates that Iraqi people are like people everywhere. They desire to create a future in an environment that is safe and allows them to reach their full potential as human beings, whatever that potential may be. The election did not occur in a vacuum. It is the latest and most dramatic example of Iraqis taking control of their country's destiny.

In less than a year, the Iraqi Regular Army and Intervention Forces have grown from one operational battalion to 21 battalions, with six more scheduled to become operational over the next month.

Last month, the Iraqi National Guard was incorporated into the Army, making a total of 68 Iraqi battalions conducting operations.

Today, the Iraqi Police Service has over 55,000 trained and equipped police officers, more than double the amount of just 6 months ago. More than 38,000 additional police are on duty and scheduled for training.

As of last month, more than 108,000 local Iraqis had been hired to work on U.S.-funded reconstruction projects, using as many local subcontractors as possible.

Yes, things are, indeed looking up for Iraq and the Iraqi people. But there is still hard work ahead. It is a difficult process to transform a society that has never known democracy. One hopeful sign occurred earlier this week when influential figures from the Sunni community signaled their willingness to engage the new Iraqi government and play a role in drafting the constitution. Thirteen parties, including a representative of the powerful Association of Muslim Scholars and other parties that boycotted the vote, agreed Thursday to take part in the drafting of the constitution, which will be the transitional parliament's main task. The leading Shiite candidate to be Iraq's new Prime Minister welcomed these overtures and said he was willing to "offer the maximum" to involve Sunni Arabs in the new government.

Yes, change takes time, and only time will tell if the Iraqi election will go down as one of the most important dates in modern history. I'm inclined to believe it will. But between now and when the history books are written it was enough, for me, to stand in awe of the courage of a free people half a world away.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law,