

More broadly, the Commissioner of Customs heads a bureau of over 40,000 employees. Those Government employees are on the front line for enforcing laws related to over 40 agencies. At the same time, they process \$1.7 trillion worth of imports and collect about \$28 dollars in duties and fees. This trade is critical to our economy. For example, the 10-day strike at the port of Long Beach a few years ago is estimated to have cost our economy between \$1 billion to \$2 billion each day. That illustrates why maintaining an appropriate balance between trade security and trade facilitation is so important.

As chairman of the Committee on Finance, with jurisdiction over customs and international trade, I look forward to working with Mr. Basham to advance a robust customs and trade agenda now that he's taken over as Commissioner of Customs.

DARFUR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, while the Senate, with the encouragement of a White House in full campaign mode, debates a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage—a debate which will consume days of the Senate's time and is all about scoring political points in an election year—the disaster in Darfur rages on.

It has been nearly 4 weeks since a peace agreement was signed between the Sudanese Government and one of the rebel groups, but violence, hunger and disease continue to claim innocent lives.

Jan Egeland, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, recently described the humanitarian situation in Darfur as being on the verge of collapse.

In the midst of this calamity, the Senate is focused on other matters. Gay marriage. Next it will be flag burning. And then full repeal of the estate tax, to benefit the wealthiest of the wealthy. Solutions in search of a problem, while whole villages burn, their inhabitants are slaughtered, and relief organizations in Darfur struggle to cope without adequate resources.

Between a quarter of a million and half a million people have perished in Darfur—mostly civilians whose villages have been reduced to ashes. Many, who escaped being shot or hacked to death, have died from hunger and disease.

The Sudanese Government has obstructed the deployment of a U.N. peacekeeping force in Darfur. The African Union has done its best, but with only 7,000 troops, inadequate resources, and a weak mandate to patrol a vast area with few roads, it has been unable to provide civilians with the protection they need.

I am so very proud that two high school students in Vermont are setting a moral example for all Americans.

Ben Rome and Brian Banks, seniors at Essex High School, outraged over the tragedy that is unfolding half a world away, felt compelled to do something about it. They have organized a public rally in Burlington, VT, for this coming Sunday to bring Vermonters together to speak out about one of the worst human disasters in recent memory. I look forward to joining Ben and Brian and other concerned Vermonters this weekend.

The supplemental appropriations bill for Iraq, Afghanistan, Hurricane Katrina recovery, and Sudan, which should be completed this week—and I hope we can find the time to pass it—contains additional funds to support the current level of peacekeepers in Darfur through the remainder of this year. This will help, but twice that amount is needed.

The supplemental also provides additional funds for food and other humanitarian aid. It should shame the White House and the Congress to reflect on the fact that we know we are not doing enough.

We also provide funds to support a Presidential special envoy for Sudan, to work in pursuit of peace in Darfur and stability throughout Sudan, northern Uganda, and Chad. We need someone of the caliber of Senator Danforth to be working continuously to help solve the Darfur crisis.

A tragedy like this is bigger than any of us as individuals, but it is not too big if we join together in constructive action—as individuals, as private relief organizations, and as nations.

America is a great and good nation with the power to help stop this. But it will take sustained attention, and it will take the efforts of committed citizens like Brian Banks and Ben Rome who, one by one, are opening the world's eyes to a tragedy that must be stopped.

NATIONAL HUNGER AWARENESS DAY

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today is National Hunger Awareness Day, and it is an opportunity for all of us to pledge a greater effort to deal more effectively with this festering problem that shames our Nation and has become even more serious in recent years. Surely we can all do more to care for neighbors and fellow citizens who fall on hard times.

The number of Americans living in hunger or on the brink of hunger now totals 38 million—5 million more than when President Bush took office. That total includes almost 14 million children, 972,000 more since 2000.

America's Second Harvest, the nation's largest network of emergency food providers, recently conducted a series of interviews with its clients, and the report is astounding. Its emergency food providers serve 4.5 million dif-

ferent people a week—and 24 to 27 million people a year.

Over 36 percent of its clients are children under 18 years old, and 10 percent are elderly. Another 36 percent of its clients live in households with at least one employed adult.

These statistics are shameful. Our Nation's neediest individuals should not be forced to choose between paying for food and paying the rent or paying for medicine.

In Massachusetts, the Greater Boston Food Bank serves over 320,000 people a year—34 percent of them are under 18. All of us in the Commonwealth are grateful that we have food providers like the Greater Boston Food Bank, but they should not have to wage the battle alone. Government can't stand idle in the face of this great tragedy. We have programs in place to fight hunger, but they continue to be underfunded and underused.

Day in and day out, the needs of millions of Americans living in hunger are ignored, and too often their voices have been silenced. Their battle is a constant ongoing struggle. It undermines their productivity, their earning power, and their health. It keeps their children from concentrating and learning in school. We all need to do more to combat it. Government, corporations, communities, and citizens must work together to develop better policies and faster responses.

In 1996, the Clinton administration pledged to begin an effort to cut hunger in half in the United States by 2010, and the strong economy enabled us to make significant progress toward that goal. Hunger decreased steadily through 2000. We now have 4 years left to fulfill that commitment.

The fastest, most direct way to reduce hunger in the Nation is to improve and expand current Federal nutrition programs. Sadly, the current administration proposes to change proven and effective programs such as food stamps and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. The administration also proposes to eliminate the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which provides modest food packages to low-income seniors and to mothers with children up to age 6.

It is time to do more for the most vulnerable in our society. National Hunger Awareness Day is our chance to pledge to eradicate hunger in America—and to mean it when we say it.

HOLD ON S. 2012

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, up and down the coast of Oregon, fishermen, their families and communities are suffering from the actions of the Secretary of Commerce in curtailing the Klamath salmon fishery without offering the assistance they need to cope