

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To make the pilot program for employment eligibility confirmation for aliens permanent and to improve verification of immigration status of employees)

On page 72, strike lines 8 through 14 and insert the following:

SEC. 545. Section 144 of the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2009 (division A of Public Law 110-329; 122 Stat. 3581), as amended by section 101 of division J of the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-8; 123 Stat. 988), is further amended by striking “September 30, 2009” and inserting “September 30, 2012”.

SEC. 546. Section 401(b) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (division C of Public Law 104-208; 8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended by striking “Unless” and all that follows.

SEC. 547. The head of each agency or department of the United States that enters into a contract shall require, as a condition of the contract, that the contractor participate in the pilot program described in 404 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (division C of Public Law 104-209; 8 U.S.C. 1324a note) to verify the employment eligibility of—

(1) all individuals hired during the term of the contract by the contractor to perform employment duties within the United States; and

(2) all individuals assigned by the contractor to perform work within the United States the under such contract.

SEC. 548. (a)(1) Sections 401(c)(1), 403(a), 403(b)(1), 403(c)(1), and 405(b)(2) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (division C of Public Law 104-208; 8 U.S.C. 1324a note) are amended by striking “basic pilot program” each place that term appears and inserting “E-Verify Program”.

(2) The heading of section 403(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 is amended by striking “BASIC PILOT” and inserting “E-VERIFY”.

(b) Section 404(h)(1) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-208; 8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended by striking “under a pilot program” and inserting “under this subtitle”.

Mr. SESSIONS. This is an amendment to make permanent the E-Verify system that is supported by Secretary of Homeland Security Napolitano and would require that all governmental contractors who do work for the Federal Government use it before they hire people to ensure that the individuals they hire are Americans and not illegally in the country.

At a time when our unemployment rate is now 9.5 percent, this is more important now than ever.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

SENATOR-ELECT AL FRANKEN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, today, a new Senator from Minnesota is being sworn in. It is my honor, along

with former Vice President Mondale, to escort AL FRANKEN as the new Senator from our State. I think it was AL who told me the third year of his campaign would be the best, and he was right.

I did want to thank my staff, first of all—some of them, many of them, are here—for the hard work they did in the past 6 months doing double duty. They never complained, they did it without extra resources, and they are as happy as can be this has finally been resolved.

I also wanted to say something about Norm Coleman. Last week, he made a difficult decision. He had the right to pursue a legal challenge, but he did what was right for Minnesota. Norm was my Senate colleague for 2 years. We often worked together on issues for Minnesota, and we all wish him and his family the best.

So despite a little delay, to be exact, 246 days since election day and 183 days since the Senate convened—why would I know that—AL FRANKEN now joins me in representing the State of Minnesota. I have gotten to know AL very well over the past few years. I know he will be getting acquainted with his fellow Senators in the coming weeks and the coming months. This is a special place with special people. I know AL looks forward to working with every Member of the Senate.

I also know AL arrived in Washington ready to get to work and ready to serve the people of Minnesota. He brings with him that same high energy and passion and idealism of our friend Paul Wellstone.

I was telling AL when I first came to the Capitol I was stunned at how many people would come up to me, when I said I was a Senator from Minnesota, and say: That is where Paul Wellstone was from. It was not just other Senators, it was people such as the tram operators, the secretaries at the front desk, the cops who work on the front line. They remembered Paul because of his dignity and how he treated people. And AL, I know, will do the same.

Before seeking elected office, AL had a full career. Among other things he was an Emmy Award-winning television writer and producer, a best-selling author with three of his books going to the very top of the New York Times Bestseller List. He was the host of a national radio show and a Grammy Award-winning satirist, who, with the USO, has gone overseas several times—seven times in fact. He went four times to Iraq to entertain our troops and to visit our wounded soldiers.

We all know AL spent some time in comedy, but during this long campaign, he has demonstrated to Minnesotans that he takes his job very seriously. I know he is taking his new job as a Senator incredibly seriously.

AL's heart is with middle-class families who work hard, live responsibly, and follow the rules. He knows their hopes and fears, their dreams and their struggles. He knows it because he has lived it.

When AL was 4 his family moved to the town of Albert Lea in southern

Minnesota. AL always tells the story about that move. His dad never graduated from high school and never had a career. But his mom's father owned a quilting business out East, and he gave AL's dad a chance to start up a factory in Albert Lea. After about 2 years the factory failed, and AL's family moved to the Twin Cities. Years later, AL asked his dad: Dad, why Albert Lea?

His dad said: Well, your grandfather wanted to open a factory in the Midwest, and the railroad went right through Albert Lea.

So then AL asked: Why did the factory fail?

His father said: Well, it went through Albert Lea, but it didn't stop in Albert Lea.

Eventually the family, including AL and his older brother, settled into a two-bedroom, one-bathroom home in the Minneapolis suburb of St. Louis Park. His father became a printing salesman and his mom was a homemaker and worked as a real estate agent. Because of the security and opportunity his family enjoyed living in America, he says he felt like the “luckiest kid in the world.”

While AL likes to tell jokes, and he has some good ones, he is not one to make fun of family values because there is no husband or father who is more devoted to his family than AL is.

He met his wife—I see her right now up there in the gallery—Franni during his first year at college. They have been married 33 years, and together they have raised two children.

AL often tells the story about Franni's family. Her dad, a decorated World War II veteran, died in a car accident when she was 17 months old. Her dad left her mom suddenly widowed and alone with five children.

It was a lesson for the family, and it was an example of how one family pulled themselves up with help. He knows how difficult it is for so many families who are struggling to make it, squeezed over high health care costs, college costs, housing costs.

During the past 2 years, AL has traveled to every corner of Minnesota, from the Iowa border to the Canadian border. He has had coffee at the Main Street cafes, and he has spoken at local bean feeds. He has toured homegrown businesses, and he has stood with workers. He has been to veterans halls, and he has gone to college campuses.

He has been there day in and day out listening to the people of Minnesota. Now he has the honor and the responsibility to serve them in the U.S. Capitol. The Senate is an old and established institution. For any newcomer, it takes some getting used to the arcane rules and unique customs, but I am confident AL can adapt.

This is a big moment for Franni and their kids as well. AL and his friends and relatives have been waiting for a while. The State has been waiting. The Senate has been waiting. But, most importantly to me, Franni has been waiting.

My favorite image from the last few months was this idea that Franni had actually packed a bag with her toothbrush in it; that she had it right next to her bedside in case at any moment the court would come with a decision and she and AL would have to rush to Washington so he could take a critical vote.

Well, today the time has come and AL will cast his first vote. If there is any silver lining to the past 8 months, it is that AL has had time to prepare for this moment. The times are tumultuous, the stakes are high, and history will forever judge whether we fail or succeed, whether we are courageous or timid.

AL FRANKEN is ready for this job. It is time to get to work, and, AL FRANKEN, there is a desk waiting for you in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION AND CREDENTIALS

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair lays before the Senate the certificate of election for a 6-year term, beginning January 3, 2009, for the representation of the State of Minnesota. The certificate, the Chair is advised, is in the form suggested by the Senate. If there is no objection, the reading of the certificate will be waived, and it will be printed in full in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATE OF MINNESOTA
Executive Department

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION FOR SIX-YEAR TERM
To the President of the Senate of the United States:

This is to certify that on the fourth day of November, 2008, Al Franken was duly chosen by the qualified electors of the State of Minnesota a Senator from said State to represent said State in the Senate of the United States for the term of six years, beginning on the 3rd day of January, 2009.

Witness: His excellency our governor Tim Pawlenty, and our seal hereto affixed at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 30th day of June, in the year of our Lord 2009.

By the governor:

TIM PAWLENTY,
Governor.
MARK RITCHIE,
Secretary of State.

[State Seal Affixed]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

The VICE PRESIDENT. If the Senator elect will present himself at the

desk, the Chair will administer the oath of office as required by the Constitution and prescribed by law.

The Senator elect, escorted by Mrs. KLOBUCHAR and former Vice President Walter Mondale, advanced to the desk of the Vice President; the oath prescribed by law was administered to him by the Vice President; and he subscribed to the oath in the Official Oath Book.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Congratulations, Senator.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. GILLIBRAND). The majority leader.

MAJORITY PARTY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have a resolution at the desk, and I ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 208) to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Eleventh Congress, or until their successors are chosen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the resolution is considered and agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 208) was agreed to, as follows:

S. RES. 208

Resolved, That the following shall constitute the majority party's membership on the following committee for the One Hundred Eleventh Congress, or until their successors are chosen:

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY: Mr. Leahy (Chairman), Mr. Kohl, Mrs. Feinstein, Mr. Feingold, Mr. Schumer, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Whitehouse, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Kaufman, Mr. Specter, and Mr. Franken.

Mr. DURBIN. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Madam President, under the authority granted pursuant to S. Res. 18, I announce that Senator FRANKEN has been assigned to the following committees: the Committee on Indian Affairs, the Select Committee on Aging and, as was just agreed to, the Committee on the Judiciary. As soon as the markup is completed in the HELP Committee on the health care bill, he will go on to the HELP Committee.

RECESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that we recess 10 minutes early today.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:20 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 1371

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to Senator SESSIONS' amendment to the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. The Sessions amendment would make E-Verify permanent and would immediately mandate all Federal contractors and subcontractors to use E-Verify.

First of all, obviously, legislating on and delaying a critical appropriations bill, which is necessary for us to pass quickly to secure our borders, ports of entry, and our interior points of vulnerability, is a delay we do not need. But, secondly, and more importantly, despite claims that this amendment only seeks to reauthorize E-Verify for 3 years, which I do not oppose, the actual language of the amendment of my distinguished colleague would make E-Verify permanent and mandatory.

There would be nothing wrong with that if the system actually worked, but it does not. The distinguished Senator from Alabama and I agree upon one of the main seven principles for immigration reform which I issued 2 weeks ago; namely, that an employer verification system with tough enforcement and auditing is necessary to significantly diminish the job magnet that attracts illegal aliens to the United States. The bottom line is that they mainly come for jobs, and until they are tough on employers, wave after wave is not going to stop.

As we speak, even under the E-Verify system, any individual who steals a Social Security number—and that is easy these days—and has access to a credible fake ID can get a job in the United States. What is more, nothing about E-Verify stops a U.S. citizen from "loaning their identity" to their friends and family to get a job. In either of these cases—an illegal immigrant stealing a Social Security number and getting a fake ID done or some citizen, an employer or whatever, giving a Social Security card to the person—it doesn't do the job because that illegal immigrant can enter into the system. Once they are in the system, they stay in it, never to be removed. So E-Verify, frankly—and I know many in the immigrant community object to it because it only affects immigrants. But there is also another objection, and that is that it is just not tough enough, it is not strong enough. If we are going to make a system permanent, it really ought to work.