

stay is a court injunction which automatically arises whenever anyone declares bankruptcy. Earlier in this Congress, as part of the authorizing legislation for the Chemical Weapons Convention, I authored an amendment which gives the Government an exception to the automatic stay so that public health and safety regulations can be enforced. So, the philosophical question posed by my amendment is this: Which policy should win out, bankruptcy policy or public health and safety policy? For me, that choice is simple. I want to protect the American people from unsafe food and unsafe airlines. But many in the bankruptcy community believe that Congress should make the opposite choice.

When we begin the process of bankruptcy reform, I will be looking to find other instances in which the Bankruptcy Code harms the public so that Congress can make changes to protect the public.

The broad themes that I believe will dominate bankruptcy reform in the 105th Congress, include the following: Promoting personal responsibility; protecting consumers, debtors, and the public; promoting international commerce; and protecting States' rights where possible.

I look forward to coming before the Senate next year with a good bankruptcy reform bill which promotes these themes. I hope to do that in a bipartisan manner. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. KEMPTHORNE and Mr. CHAFEE pertaining to the introduction of S. 1180 and S. 1181 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each.

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

THE BOSNIAN ELECTIONS

Mr. BIDEN. Last weekend the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina went to the polls to elect municipal governments. These local elections had been postponed from last year because of tampering with registrations, chiefly by the Bosnian Serbs.

I am happy to report, Mr. President, that this year's municipal elections were a success. Despite dire threats of violence against refugees and displaced persons who wanted to cross over to their former homes to vote, over 2 days not one single incident of serious violence occurred in the entire country.

Why? Because SFOR, led by recently reinforced American troops, made clear to all parties that violence would not be tolerated.

Every single time over the past several years when the West has been forceful in its behavior, the ultra-nationalists in Bosnia have backed down.

The elections were carried out by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], in which the United States is an active member. The OSCE deserves a great deal of credit for its successful labors.

The results of the elections will not be known for several days. Already, however, some encouraging signs are emerging. In Tuzla, the Muslim Party for Democratic Action [SDA] conceded defeat by Mayor Selim Beslagic's multi-ethnic joint list. I met Mayor Beslagic last month. He represents just the kind of democratic, tolerant, pragmatic politician that can rebuild Bosnia.

Until now the three ethnically based parties that profess to represent the interests of the Muslims, Serbs, and Croats have dominated the airwaves and the patronage system. Tuzla—and perhaps other cities in both the federation and the Republika Srpska—show that if SFOR and the international community guarantee equal access, their monopoly on power can be broken.

Moreover, it is likely that thanks to absentee voting and to the protection offered by SFOR to returning refugees, the election may reverse the vile ethnic cleansing of the war. For example, the town of Drvar in western Herzegovina was 97 percent Serb until the town's inhabitants were driven out in the fall of 1995. Last weekend the Croats who displaced the Serbs did their best to harass returning Serb voters. International election officials from the OSCE, however, insisted that the Serbs be allowed to vote.

Several other towns like Jajce and Srebrenica, site of the largest civilian massacre in Europe since World War II, may see their former inhabitants, in these two cases Muslims, forming the governments.

The international community is now faced with the stark question of whether it will enforce the results of the elections by guaranteeing that the newly elected councils not remain governments in exile.

Enforcing the election results, of course, means that the right of refugees and displaced persons to return must be honored. In most cases that would be able to be accomplished only by the international community under the protection of SFOR.

Mr. President, I believe we have no choice in this matter. Both for moral and practical reasons we must move rapidly to enforce resettlement of refugees. This will be a difficult task, and time is short before the onset of the Balkan winter. Most likely we will have to begin with highly visible demonstration returns in one to two selected towns. But we must keep the democratic momentum going.

Rebuilding shattered Bosnia is an immense undertaking. Now for the first time in years, there has been a string of successes. The United States has been the prime mover in these, and we must continue our valuable and honorable work.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, September 15, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,388,983,472,859.37. (Five trillion, three hundred eighty-eight billion, nine hundred eighty-three million, four hundred seventy-two thousand, eight hundred fifty-nine dollars and thirty-seven cents)

Five years ago, September 15, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$4,033,874,000,000. (Four trillion, thirty-three billion, eight hundred seventy-four million)

Ten years ago, September 15, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,353,169,000,000. (Two trillion, three hundred fifty-three billion, one hundred sixty-nine million)

Fifteen years ago, September 15, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,113,183,000,000 (One trillion, one hundred thirteen billion, one hundred eighty-three million)

Twenty-five years ago, September 15, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$436,866,000,000 (Four hundred thirty-six billion, eight hundred sixty-six million) which reflects a debt increase of nearly \$5 trillion—\$4,952,117,472,859.37 (Four trillion, nine hundred fifty-two billion, one hundred seventeen million, four hundred seventy-two thousand, eight hundred fifty-nine dollars and thirty-seven cents) during the past 25 years.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I join with my colleagues in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.

Since 1968, we have formally recognized and celebrated the tremendous contributions of Hispanic-Americans to the history, strength, security, and development of our great nation. This year, we once again embark on this

month-long celebration. It is right to honor more than five centuries of contributions by Hispanics to the development not only of our great nation, but of the Western Hemisphere and the world.

As I look back on the history of my own State I see the many great contributions Hispanics have made to its development and progress. It was Father Escalante who first chartered the territory of what is now Utah and made way for the major trade routes that followed. It was through the determination, sweat, and dedication of Mexican-Americans and other Hispanics, working alongside nonHispanics that our railroads, great steel plants, and mining industries were established, making our State competitive in national and global markets. And our State is home to many great Hispanic-Americans, past and present, including Antonio Amador, former Vice-chair of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board; Judge Andrew Valdez, Maria Garciaz, the executive director of Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.; and John Medina, chair of Utah's Coalition of La Raza.

My experience has shown me that Hispanics are a strong and proud people, loyal, patriotic, courageous, and dedicated to their families, their country, and their communities. Hispanics have a strong work ethic and tremendous faith in the American dream. They have made great contributions to the advancement of all people in every area, to music, the arts, science, engineering, mathematics, and government.

I am thrilled to see so many wonderful Hispanic role models help light the way for Hispanic youth to attain the American Dream.

Jaime Escalante, the Garfield High School mathematics teacher, helped an unprecedented number of Hispanic students prepare for and pass the advanced placement tests in calculus. And, Amalia V. Betanzos, president of the John V. Lindsay Wilcat Academy, an alternative high school with tremendous success rates, has helped us all to see what faith and encouragement can do for the soul.

Such great recording artists as Los Lobos, the late Selena, Freddy Fender, and Gloria Estefan have brought joyous latin rhythms into our homes and our hearts. Great authors, like Luis Valdez, Victor Villasenor, and Nicholasa Mohr, and great screen artists like the late Raul Julia, Andy Garcia, Jimmy Smits, Edward James Olmos, and Rita Moreno have entertained while they inspired us. And the leadership and foresight of Permanent United Nations Representative and former Congressman Bill Richardson, and Carmen Zapata, director and co-founder of the Bilingual Foundation of the Arts, helps pave the way for our children as they enter the 21st century.

And, of course, Nancy Lopez, Chi Chi Rodriguez, Pedro Morales, Gigi Fernandez, and Trent Dimas are but

five of the great athletes who have shared with us the pride and success born of great sacrifice and a hunger for perfection. We are proud of their accomplishments. It is important that, when they win, all America cheers.

But for all their contributions to the strength of our Nation, many Hispanics have not yet fully shared in the dream. The national dropout for Hispanics exceeds 30 percent—for nonHispanics the rate is 11 percent, and for blacks, the rate is 12 percent—the highest for any ethnic group, and their educational attainment levels are among the lowest for any ethnic group. Hispanic children are most likely to be among America's poor, even though Hispanic males have the highest labor participation rates. Hispanics are most likely to lack health insurance and access to regular health care, yet suffer disproportionately from certain diseases. We must do better.

As the youngest and fastest growing minority community in the Nation, Hispanics must share equally in the benefits and opportunities of this great Nation, so that our country might grow stronger and compete in global markets.

For this reason, in 1987, Senator JOHN CHAFEE and I established the U.S. Senate Republican Conference Task Force on Hispanic Affairs, which now numbers 24 Senators. The task force provides a unique forum for Hispanic leaders to raise awareness and support on the national level for key issues facing the Hispanic community in the areas of education, economic development, employment, and health. The task force is aided by a bipartisan, volunteer advisory committee, for whose service we are very grateful.

We have made great strides and we continue to progress. But I long for the day when a task force on Hispanic affairs no longer exists because there is no longer a need; because Hispanics will have succeeded in full measure in joining the ranks of the public officials, the managers, the CEO's and presidents of corporations, the teachers, doctors, lawyers, the U.S. Senators, Congressmen, and Presidents of the United States. As we gather this month to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, let us celebrate the accomplishments of this year's Hispanic Heritage Awards: Andy Garcia, Nancy Lopez, Amalia V. Betanzos, Nicholasa Mohr, Bill Richardson, and Carmen Zapata.

And, let's also give a nod to those many, many other Hispanic-Americans, whose daily contributions often go unrecognized, but whose legacy continues to demonstrate the viability of the American dream.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, today I join my friend and colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, and other colleagues in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month and to offer a few remarks regarding the Hispanic tradition in my home State of Colorado and their many contributions to our great country.

To begin with, Colorado is the Spanish word for red, thus we owe the name of our State to Hispanics. The town where I live is Ignacio which is Spanish for Ignatius, and the county I live in is La Plata which is Spanish for silver. To the east you will find Alamosa, San Luis, Monte Vista, Antonio, Las Animas and La Junta, to name but a few towns in Colorado.

As you can see, Mr. President, in my State it is next to impossible to look in any direction without being reminded of Hispanic heritage and influence. More than two thirds of the territory of the 48 contiguous States was discovered, settled or governed by Spanish speaking people. The Hispanic tradition in the United States is as new as the families who enter every year in search of a better life and as old as 1513 when Ponce de Leon landed on the east coast of the peninsula he called La Florida.

Hispanics have enriched us with their cultural traditions and their commitment to la familia, the family. Their language, art, music, literature and food are today very much part of the American landscape. These contributions help make America stronger.

Let us not forget their contributions in defense of our country. Hispanic blood has been spilled in every conflict and war since the Civil War when John Ortega of the U.S. Navy was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor on December 31, 1864, and as late as May 24, 1970 when it was awarded to Louis Rocco of Albuquerque, NM, for service in Vietnam. In between these two distinguished soldiers, Hispanics have been awarded 36 more medals making them the most decorated minority in our history proportionate to their numbers. Jose P. Martinez of Ault, CO, is also a past recipient of this highest honor we can bestow on our fighting men and women.

Equality is a value central to the promise of America, and we must be conscious and proactive in insuring that equal opportunity is available to all who serve and contribute to the betterment of our country. Hispanics have fought for the idea and ideals of America and are deserving of an equal share of all of its rewards, not more, not less, but equal. That is the promise of America, and it is the promise we must make, and keep, to America's Hispanics.

Mr. President, throughout my life, both personal and public, Hispanics have honored me with their friendship and support. It is with great pleasure I honor them here on the floor of the U.S. Senate in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to speak today as co-chair of the Senate Republican Task Force on Hispanic Affairs about this month's festivities honoring Hispanic heritage. Although this special month has been celebrated every year at this time since 1968, Hispanics have been making

tremendous contributions to our Nation and to my State of Arizona for many generations.

American culture has been enriched by numerous Hispanic influences. Many Americans claim Hispanic culture as their own in everything from food to music, and even celebrate their holidays. This month, set aside by Presidential proclamation, marks several historical events including Independence Day for Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua and El Dia de la Raza.

It is important to recognize the rich variety of backgrounds that make up this burgeoning segment of society. All too often the various groups that make up Hispanics are lumped together and non-Hispanics forget the dynamic differences between Mexicans and Puerto Ricans or Salvadorans and Cubans, for example. But when Hispanics come together—tied by social and cultural similarities—they form a powerful group that we need to listen to closely.

With more than 22 million Hispanics living in the United States, their importance cannot be understated. The number of Hispanic children is only exceeded by the number of non-Hispanic white children. This generation of children will enter all sectors of public and private life and shape the course of the Nation. And our Nation will be a better place for it.

Their contribution to the economy is significant, with studies indicating that Hispanic businesses remain the fastest growing segment of the small business community. In Arizona alone, the current Hispanic buying power is approximately \$6.8 billion with an expected growth of 2.3 percent annually.

While these statistics are compelling, surprisingly, there is much more to be done. The Hispanic dropout rate has hovered around 30 percent for the past 20 years, and Hispanics are the minority least likely to have health insurance. The negative repercussions of these conditions are not acceptable and are detrimental to America's future.

To further the social and economic well-being of Hispanics we must address their needs with conscientious policy and remember these in all our legislative efforts. That is why I am co-chair of the Senate Republican Task Force on Hispanic Affairs. The task force helps ensure that the needs of the Hispanic community are represented in Federal policy. Through meetings and forums, I speak with Hispanics both in Arizona and from all over the country.

Some of the Hispanics we will be hearing from and recognizing this month include Sandy Ferniza, president of the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce [AHCC], who recently received the Exemplary Leadership Award. She is credited with turning AHCC into an agency that provides technical assistance and training to small businesses across the State. Also there is Mr. William Y. Velez, a mathematics professor at the University of Arizona, who this month received the

Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring Presidential Award. He recruits Hispanic and native American students to study mathematics. We thank them for their contributions to America's future.

During Hispanic Heritage Month we will learn about the colorful and proud heritage of the Hispanic people who are dedicated to their families, communities, and country. And when this month's celebrations have come to a close, let us not forget that the success of Hispanic Americans is critical to the future of the United States.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I am very pleased to join my colleagues here today in recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month.

Americans of Hispanic descent are in this country because they, their parents, or grandparents, or great-grandparents, or even more distant ancestors, made a choice. They were decisive, motivated individuals who made an act of faith in America.

They came here, much as my own great-great-grandfather, Denis DeWine, did back in the 1840's—because they wanted a chance at a brighter future. And in return, they were willing to work hard to build up this country.

That same spirit lives on in today's U.S. Hispanic community—and we ought to look at that spirit as an inspiration to ensure that America remains the kind of place people would want to come to.

There's one area of law I'm working on that is especially important in this context. I'm talking about the attempts to change America's immigration law and make it more restrictive. I read one article in which advocates of restriction repeatedly called new Americans “aliens”—not “immigrants” but “aliens,” as if they were a different kind of people from us, who come from someplace as strange as outer space.

I call these people something else. I call them Americans.

Now, we all know that there's nothing new about anti-immigrant movements. We've had them again and again, throughout American history. But we have established a proud tradition in this country of overcoming them, of resisting the temptation to turn inward to ourselves—of welcoming new people and new ideas, and choosing hope over fear.

When Franklin Roosevelt reminded America that even those who came over on the Mayflower were immigrants—when John F. Kennedy wrote a book called “A Nation of Immigrants”—when Ronald Reagan moved the Nation with stories about how the light from Liberty's torch was keeping hope alive for millions of people in oppressed countries—they were expressing something truly fundamental about what it means to be an American. And make no mistake about it—that same spirit is still alive and well in today's America.

Ohioans of Hispanic ancestry have helped build the Buckeye State into an

economic and cultural powerhouse. We are grateful to these fellow Ohioans, because they took the talents they or their ancestors were born with to a foreign land, and chose to bestow their benefits to us.

In fact, next week the Hispanic Youth Foundation [HYF], an organization that provides financial assistance to undergraduate and graduate students seeking degrees in areas of political science or other fields related to government of public service, will meet in Washington, DC, to distribute scholarships to only seven outstanding students. I am proud to announce that one of the seven students receiving this scholarship award is from the great State of Ohio.

I join all my fellow citizens in saying thank you—and saluting Ohio's Hispanic community on the occasion of Hispanic Heritage Month.

REPORT OF DRAFT LEGISLATION
ENTITLED “THE EXPORT EXPANSION AND RECIPROCAL TRADE AGREEMENTS ACT OF 1997”—
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 65

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit a legislative proposal entitled the “Export Expansion and Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act of 1997.” Also transmitted is a section-by-section analysis.

This proposal would renew over 60 years of cooperation between the Congress and the executive branch in the negotiation and implementation of market-opening trade agreements for the benefit of American workers and companies.

The sustained, robust performance of our economy over the past 5 years is powerful proof that congressional-executive cooperation works. We have made great strides together. We have invested in education and in health care for the American people. We have achieved an historic balanced budget agreement. At the same time, we have put in place trade agreements that have lowered barriers to American products and services around the world.

Our companies, farms, and working people have responded. Our economy has produced more jobs, more growth, and greater economic stability than at any time in decades. It has also generated more exports than ever before. Indeed, America's remarkable economic performance over the past 5 years has been fueled in significant part by the strength of our dynamic export sector. Fully 96 percent of the world's consumers live outside the United States. Many of our greatest economic opportunities today lie beyond our borders. The future promises still greater opportunities.