

If we are to return to the path of a peaceful settlement after the events of the last two weeks, we must first end the violence. A cessation of hostilities can only be accomplished if all sides demonstrate leadership by condemning the violence. I am sorely disappointed in Arafat and the Palestinian Authority and in the fact that they have allowed violence to be carried out without restraint or comment.

Preferring instead to blame the violence on what he terms Israeli provocations, Arafat has refused to publicly and unequivocally call for an end to violent protests and confrontations. Palestinian police have failed to control mob violence. And efforts at re-establishing negotiations have been rebuffed. The result is despicable violence that has cost far too many innocent lives.

Rather than being unable to control the violence—as Chairman Arafat claims—his silence leaves the impression that he condones it. The on-again off-again cooperation with Israeli security forces suggests that Arafat prefers using violence and the threat of wider war as a negotiating tool. Such tactics are cynical, dangerous and stand in stark contrast to the Oslo process that brought the region to brink of a comprehensive peace just two short months ago.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Barak has remained committed to negotiations and the Oslo Process. He took great risks at Camp David in July. He offered remarkable concessions on issues that go to the very core of his country's history and identity—compromises that no one had considered possible before President Clinton convened the Camp David talks.

Despite subsequent violence provocations, Barak has repeated his interest in restoring calm, ending the violence and returning to the negotiating table. When he was approached by President Clinton to join an emergency summit, he readily stated his interest and willingness in participating.

And unlike Arafat, Barak has clearly denounced violence. He implored Israelis not to participate in the violence when he said, "I urge our Jewish citizens to refrain from attacking Arabs and their property under any circumstances."

Time is short in the Middle East, Mr. President. The risk of a wider regional conflict is very real. The first step toward assuring that the situation improves is a strong public statement from Chairman Arafat calling for an end to the violence.

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR CONNIE MACK

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a friend and an outstanding public servant who is retiring from the United States Senate this year after 18 years in public service, Senator CONNIE MACK of Florida.

I have had the privilege of serving with Senator MACK in both houses of

Congress. And I know him as a man deeply committed to the finest ideals of public service, as well as the beliefs he so passionately holds.

Perhaps no one believes more fervently in the inherent potential of each and every individual than Senator MACK. For him, it is not government that creates wealth or success or personal fulfillment. It is the American people. To give people opportunity—to give them the skills they need to compete and reach their greatest potential—is for Senator MACK perhaps the greatest end that government can serve.

I have also known Senator MACK as a staunch proponent of fiscal responsibility, back to the days when it often seemed that talk of balanced budgets was only slightly more fashionable than actually balancing the budget. I have to believe he must share my sense of wonder as to how far we've come, and it is thanks in no small part to the efforts of Senator MACK and those like him who have fought for years to make the current surpluses a reality.

Senator MACK has been a strong voice for the Sunshine State in the United States Senate. Most recently, his tireless efforts in helping to shepherd through the Senate the historic Everglades restoration plan, the Restoring the Everglades, an American Legacy Act, leaves a positive and lasting mark on Florida and one of our nation's true natural treasures that will be appreciated for generations to come.

One could argue, however, that Senator MACK has pursued no other goal with a higher degree of dogged determination than increasing our federal investment in medical research. He rightly sees this issue as a matter of national importance, knowing no political, social, financial, or racial boundaries.

He recognizes that disease touches every American family. Certainly, it has had a profound impact on his own family, including his wife, daughter, brother, and both parents—as well as affecting his own life.

Characteristically, Senator MACK and his wife, Priscilla, who is a courageous breast cancer survivor, met these challenges first with courage and dignity, and then with an unyielding determination to do something about them.

Both have been extremely active in spreading the word on the importance of early detection. As co-Chair of the bipartisan Senate Cancer Coalition, Senator MACK has provided outstanding leadership on matters relating to our fight against cancer, and in particular I have been honored to work with Senator MACK on providing greater funding for breast cancer research.

The depth of Senator MACK's concern when it comes to this dread disease cannot truly be measured. Certainly, having worked on this issue throughout my tenure in Congress, I was honored and thankful for Senator MACK's participation in a breast cancer hear-

ing, or "breast cancer summit", we convened in 1996, but I was not surprised that he would be there to contribute his wisdom and his support.

From that summit came legislation to establish a national data bank of information on clinical trials involving experimental treatments for serious or life-threatening diseases. It also mandated that a toll-free number be instituted for patients, doctors and others to access this information.

Senator MACK has literally been instrumental in securing increased funding for medical research in general, and indeed for the fiscal year 2000 fought for the inclusion of a \$2.3 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health. And he has rightfully called for funding to NIH to be doubled from \$12.75 billion to over \$25 billion over the next five years.

Finally, Mr. President, to quote a piece from the St. Petersburg Times from last year, "the Senate will lose one of its nicest members." And that is absolutely true. Senator MACK has strongly held beliefs on the issues, let there be no doubt.

But he has always understood the fine but certain distinction between disagreeing and being disagreeable. He has been a credit to the Senate, to Florida, to the nation, and to his family. I wish him well as he returns to his beloved state and embarks on a new chapter in his life—one that I hope will be filled with happiness and good health for him and his wife, Priscilla. He will be missed by all those fortunate enough to have worked with him.

CONSIDERATION OF IMMIGRATION MATTERS

Mr. LEAHY. I would like to commend Senator REED for allowing us to proceed on several important immigration matters even though the Republican majority has refused to act on his compelling legislation to do justice for Liberians. Senator REED has been a persistent advocate for the Liberian nationals who have fled the strife in their nation for the United States. He has recognized that the U.S. has a special relationship with Liberia's citizens and has sought to respect and enhance that relationship. But his efforts have been resisted by the majority, which has consistently denied his requests to take up his bipartisan bill, which would allow Liberians who fled here and meet certain criteria to become legal permanent residents of the United States. I hope that we will change course and address this issue before we adjourn. I commend the Administration for its commitment to insist on action.

Meanwhile, I am pleased that we were able to pass H.R. 2883, a bill that will confer automatic citizenship upon foreign-born children who are adopted by the American parents. Given the severe curtailment of noncitizens' rights under the immigration laws we passed in 1996, it is all the more important to

extend this right to American parents and their adopted children. Everyone in the Senate supports adoption, and we should make sure the law expresses that support.

Many Senators on both sides of the aisle worked hard to see this bill become law, and I would like in particular to commend Senator LANDRIEU for her efforts. She and her staff were dedicated to this bill and were instrumental in its passage.

I hope that we are able today to move forward on a number of pieces of legislation. First, I hope we can pass the bill that extends the program under which religious workers can obtain visas to enter the U.S. Senator KENNEDY has championed this legislation, it has significant bipartisan support, and there is no reason not to act quickly to pass it. We should also pass the bill benefiting Syrian Jews that Senator SCHUMER has advocated, as well as legislation benefiting the Hmong people, which the late Congressman Bruce Vento did so much to promote. Although many of the larger immigration issues that should have been addressed in this Congress—from reforming expedited removal to restoring due process rights for legal permanent residents—may regrettably remain unresolved, we can at least take these more limited steps and demonstrate some commitment to immigrants and a sound immigration policy.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to explain my vote against the Boxer amendment No. 4308 to the FY01 VA/HUD Appropriations bill.

This amendment addressed two issues which are very important to Michiganders: clean air and clean water. Unfortunately, whatever the intentions of the author, the amendment would have done more harm than good. I particular, I was troubled by the attempt to strike language which will prevent the EPA from designating Michigan counties as being in nonattainment, or not meeting clear air requirements.

On May 14, 1999, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, in *American Trucking Association v USEPA*, ruled that the 8-hour ozone standard as proposed by EPA be remanded to EPA for further consideration. The 8-hour standard was therefore suspended. The court specifically noted that USEPA retains the power to designate areas as nonattainment under a revised national Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS), however, there must be a legal standard in place before USEPA makes such designations. Since the 8-hour standard was remanded, it is not legal NAAQS.

In response, EPA announced its intention to reinstate applicability of the one-hour ozone standard. However, in determining which communities were in nonattainment under the one-hour standard, EPA intended to make air

quality designations based on the designations of these areas at the time the 1-hour standard was originally revoked, rather than rely on the most recent air quality data.

Under this proposed action, six Michigan counties would have been in nonattainment even though all six have monitoring data measuring attainment—Midland, Bay, Saginaw, Genesee, Muskegon, and Allegan. These are counties that were previously designated as nonattainment of the 1-hour standard. Although they were previously designated as nonattainment, only Muskegon was “classified” under the classification scheme of the Clean Air Act. Thus, only Muskegon County was subject to the major ozone control programs, but all nonattainment counties are subject to tougher permit and offset requirements.

Even though these counties are now in attainment, tougher permit standards would have been required for new major stationary sources just because these counties were previously designated as nonattainment for the 1-hour standard. Additionally, offset requirements for major stationary sources would have applied. In addition, these six counties would have had to resume doing transportation and general conformity for projects receiving federal funds. Under the revocation, conformity was not a requirement. Conformity was a continuing requirement for redesignated areas.

Shortly after the announcement, I made clear to USEPA that in my opinion there was no rational basis for intentionally jeopardizing economic development and the construction of much-needed road projects in areas that are meeting attainment levels for the 1-hour ozone standard. Further, I noted that EPA should not disregard air quality improvements made in several areas of the state and should base any non-attainment designations under this rulemaking on the most current air quality monitoring data available.

To date, I have not been satisfied with the response from USEPA and for that reason, I supported the language included in the FY01 VA/HUD Appropriations bill. This language will prevent EPA from designating any Michigan county as nonattainment for the next 12 months or until the courts have settled the pending matter, whichever happens first. In fact, I understand that EPA actually agreed to this language in a compromise with the house.

It was unfortunate that the Boxer amendment also sought to permit EPA to move forward on a new arsenic standard. This is an issue which I believe merits independent consideration. I understand the arsenic standard has not been updated in almost 60 years. However, I am concerned that the push to lower the standard to 5ppb from the current 50ppb may be too extreme. While large water systems may be able to comply with such a strict requirement, I am not at all certain that smaller systems which serve a great

percentage of the Michigan population would be able to comply with that standard. They would therefore be subject to penalties for their inability to comply with yet another unfunded mandate. In any event, I look forward to the opportunity to consider this issue on its own merit, and urge the EPA to base whatever standard it eventually proposes on sound science and even then only after extensive peer review.

NATIONAL HISPANIC MONTH

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I join many of my colleagues in commemorating National Hispanic Heritage Month. The nationwide celebration of Hispanic heritage was initiated by the 90th Congress in 1968, which designated National Hispanic Heritage Week. Twenty years later, the 100th Congress transformed this week into a month, designating the period of September 15 to October 15 as a time to recognize the Hispanic influence in and contributions to our culture and society.

For over 400 years, Hispanic Americans have played a fundamental role in the history of the United States. The first European expedition in recorded history to land in what is today the continental United States was led by the former Spanish Governor of the Island of Puerto Rico, Juan Ponce de Leon.

America's diverse and vibrant Hispanic population has made an enormous contributions to the building and strengthening of our nation, its culture, and its economic prowess. As we cross the threshold of a new century, we look to the outstanding contributions of Hispanic Americans for inspiration and leadership. My hometown, Detroit, was made great in the twentieth century in part by immigrants who went there to find work and provide for their families. This great dream lives on today as thousands of immigrants come to Detroit every year from countries like Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Cuba. In fact, Southwest Detroit, known as Mexicantown by its residents, is the fastest growing part of Detroit. Hispanics who have come to Detroit have opened businesses, bought homes and turned a once neglected urban neighborhood into a thriving community that has become one of the centers of the city.

One woman, Maria Elena Rodriguez, has had a lot to do with this turnaround. Her hard work as president of the Mexicantown Community Development Corporation has helped to provide the spark needed to reinvigorate a community. Ms. Rodriguez is currently in the process of helping to build a welcome center for people coming into Detroit across the Ambassador Bridge, an effort she hopes will fulfil her mission to bring more business and visitors to her neighborhood.