

which will benefit in the economic revitalization provided in the bill. Finally, it is a victory for the environment which will benefit from the significant increase of funding new programs to help restore wildlife habitat, reduce water pollution, and resolve conflicts over water.

Together with Senator LEAHY, I spent a lot of time working on the conservation provisions of the bill. It was only part of this massive bill which was led by Senator HARKIN of Iowa. The bill is over 1,000 pages. It has separate titles dealing with commodity programs, conservation, trade, nutrition, credit, rural development, research, forestry, and energy. Countless amendments were drafted to the bill, and many were offered. Work on the bill began in earnest more than a year ago.

When we complete a bill of this size, we often thank our staff for the work they put into such an effort, and rightfully so. Chairman HARKIN, ranking member Senator LUGAR, Senator DASCHLE, and Senator LEAHY's staff, in particular, put in a tremendous amount of work on this bill.

Sometimes, though, we forget to thank people who are essential to the success of this legislation. That is the Senate legislative counsel. They do tremendous work. The bill we passed is a product of numerous drafts, revisions, alternates, and many amendments. Our legislative counsel were responsible for ensuring that all those many drafts and amendments captured our interest. They had to do so under constant time pressure. They were a great help to me and my staff on the conservation provisions and on the water provisions in particular.

It may surprise some to know that only 5 attorneys were responsible for all the work that went into the 1,000-page bill. I personally would like to thank them, not only on my behalf but on behalf of the majority leader, Senator DASCHLE, Senator LEAHY, and Chairman HARKIN, for the great work on the bill. Gary Endicott and Darcie Chan were extremely helpful to me and my staff in drafting the important new provisions of this bill, provisions that have never been in a farm bill before. Together with Tom Trushel, Janine Johnson, and Heather Flory, they put in countless hours on the bill and have worked nearly around the clock since September as the pace of deliberations quickened.

Many also handled drafting for energy, environment, and Indian affairs at the same time. They were assisted by David Grahn and Pia Ruttenberg, attorneys for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of General Counsel. Mr. Grahn and Ms. Ruttenberg helped ensure the provisions we drafted would be interpreted and implemented by the Department as we intended.

I have lawyers on my staff, and I am an attorney also. But I can say, without the help of the people I have just mentioned, we would have been in very

difficult shape to accomplish what we did.

I particularly spread across the record of this Senate the tireless, countless hours that Lisa Moore spent on this legislation. We are so dependent as Senators on our staff. I have had the good fortune of being able to serve in the House of Representatives. In the House of Representatives, one's jurisdiction is much more limited. One is much more in tune with one's jurisdiction. We in the Senate have wide-ranging jurisdiction. We do not represent one party of our State, we represent our whole State, from the southern tip of the State of Nevada to the northern frontiers of the State of Nevada, one representing famous Las Vegas, the other representing places such as Gerlach and other small places that have totally different interests than Las Vegas. But I represent them all. I become a jack of all trades; some say a master of none.

That is the way the Senate is. We have to depend on our staff. I am so grateful for the work Lisa Moore put in on this case. Not only does our staff work a lot of time doing the things that have to be done, but they believe in these things in their heart. They convey their emotions to us. That is one reason I worked so hard on this and why I am so fortunate I was able to pass it. I would not want to disappoint Lisa, who worked so hard on this legislation.

We, too often, blame our staff for the things that go wrong. We take credit for the things that go right. Most of the time, it should be just the opposite. On this occasion, I make sure I express my appreciation to Lisa Moore and the many other people I mentioned who were so important in passing this legislation.

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. DAYTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DODD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EQUAL PROTECTION OF VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 2001—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 2898

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I offer an amendment, No. 2898, to S. 565, the election reform legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. DAYTON] proposes an amendment No. 2898.

Mr. DAYTON. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a pilot program for free postage for absentee ballots cast in elections for Federal office)

On page 68, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

SEC. —. REDUCED RATE ABSENTEE BALLOT POSTAGE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) PILOT PROGRAM.—The term "pilot program" means the pilot program established under subsection (b).

(2) POSTAL SERVICE.—The term "Postal Service" means the United States Postal Service established under section 201 of title 39, United States Code.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal Election Commission and the Postal Service shall jointly establish a pilot program under which the Postal Service shall waive the amount of postage, applicable with respect to absentee ballots submitted by voters in general elections for Federal office (other than balloting materials mailed under section 3406 of title 39, United States Code). Such pilot program shall not apply with respect to the postage required to send the absentee ballots to voters.

(c) PILOT STATES.—The Federal Election Commission and the Postal Service shall jointly select a State or States in which to conduct the pilot program.

(d) DURATION.—The pilot program shall be conducted with respect to absentee ballots submitted in the general election for Federal office held in 2004.

(e) PUBLIC SURVEY.—In order to assist the Federal Election Commission in making the determinations under subsection (f)(1), the Federal Election Commission and the Postal Service shall jointly conduct a public survey of individuals who participated in the pilot program.

(f) STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Federal Election Commission shall conduct a study of the pilot program to determine—

(A) the effectiveness of the pilot program;

(B) the feasibility of nationally implementing the pilot program; and

(C) the demographics of voters who participated in the pilot program.

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 90 days after the date on which the general election for Federal office for 2004 is held, the Federal Election Commission shall submit to the Committees on Governmental Affairs and Rules and Administration of the Senate and the Committees on Government Reform and House Administration of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program together with such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the Federal Election Commission determines appropriate.

(B) RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) include recommendations of the Federal Election Commission on whether to expand the pilot program to target elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities; and

(ii) identify methods of targeting such individuals.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2004 to carry out this section.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINGENT ON FUNDING.—The Federal Election Commission and the Postal Service shall not be required to carry out any responsibility under this section unless the amount described in paragraph (1) is appropriated to carry out this section.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, voting is an essential and indispensable right

of citizenship in a democracy. Throughout our Nation's history, a task of the Senate and the House has been to remove the barriers to this right to vote. We have made great progress beyond gender exclusion, poll taxes, literacy tests, and other historical barriers. Yet our society is ever changing, and this work is never complete. I applaud the authors of this legislation, Chairman DODD, Ranking Member MCCONNELL, and Senator BOND for their excellent leadership and their hard work to bring this important bipartisan legislation before us today. They have performed a great service to our Senate and to our Nation.

In our national election of the year 2000, only 51 percent of America's voting age population participated. Although this participation rate was a 2 percent improvement over the previous national election, it remains very troubling that only half the eligible citizens in our country took the time and made the effort to help choose their leaders.

I am always curious when people say their vote does not count. When possible, I like to ask, "Your vote counts one, the same as everyone else's. How much do you think your vote should count?" A democracy is a democracy because every person's vote counts the same as everyone else's. How much do you think your vote should count? They miss the essential point, that a democracy is a democracy precisely because every person's vote counts the same as everyone else's. When a society reaches a point where some people's votes start counting more than others, either officially or unofficially, a country is usually sliding toward rule by a political and economic elite. When only one person's vote counts, it is a dictatorship.

However, there are still real reasons why some people cannot vote. In Ely, MN, the City Clerk, Terry Lowell, recognized a problem which senior citizens and people with disabilities sometimes encounter. A mail-in ballot is frequently the only way a home-bound citizen can exercise the right to vote. Yet, something as simple as a postage stamp can stand in the way. While the cost of mailing a ballot may seem small, it can also become a matter of practicality—when a person has difficulty getting out of bed or going to the kitchen, just "running out to get a stamp" is not a simple task as for most of us.

There are also many senior citizens in Minnesota, and probably elsewhere, who literally watch every penny they must spend. With the costs of their prescription medicines ever rising beyond their control, they have not enough money left for food and utilities. Every additional expenditure, of any amount, is perceived as a burden.

Plus, the way they look at it and the way I look at it, it is a matter of principle. Voting should be free. Voting is free for able-bodied citizens. It should be free for everyone else, as well.

My amendment would create a one-time, pilot project in the 2004 national election, to be designed and implemented by the Postal Service with consultation with the Federal Election Commission. Postage-free absentee ballots would be provided in one State for that one election. This pilot project will measure the effect of postage-free absentee ballots on voting participation by elderly, disabled, and other citizens. We can then consider whether it would be worthwhile to expand their use in future elections.

This amendment's passage will also demonstrate that a citizen, anywhere, can have a good idea and through an elected representative, actually see that idea turned into law. For that, I salute Terry Lowell, in Ely, MN.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAYTON). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I commend the Presiding Officer who has just offered his pilot project amendment.

First, I commend him on the creativity in suggesting a pilot program. I know his concern would be—the question is obvious—the cost of this and how well it will work. I think by running a pilot program we can answer a lot of those questions.

I think the point he made in his remarks deserves repeating. We try to make, as Senator BOND said so often—I have repeated it, Senator MCCONNELL said the same thing on many occasions—voting easy, as user friendly as we possibly can in this country. Every eligible person who has the right to vote can walk into that polling place, whether it be in rural or urban America or poor or suburban communities, walk into that polling place on election day and know he or she is being received, encouraged and offered the means by which they can cast their ballot to choose the President of the United States, down to a local commissioner or board person in their own hometown.

That wonderful right we have that is so unavailable to billions of people on the face of this Earth still is something we need to make as easy as possible, as user friendly as possible. Of course, there are millions of Americans who are homebound, who are overseas, who are in the military. To make this as free and accessible to them as possible is something all of us ought to embrace. Therefore, the idea of making absentee ballots, by which millions of Americans cast their votes, as free as possible, is something I think is deserving of support, particularly as a pilot program.

Had the Senator offered this to require it in perpetuity, across the coun-

try, I would have some reservations about what the implications of that could be. But I think the framing of it in a pilot program idea for the 2004 election is an idea that is worthy of support.

I have submitted the amendment to my friend from Kentucky and his staff to take a look at it. They are going to be reviewing it. We don't have an answer yet. My hope is we can accept this and come to some agreement. I congratulate my friend from Minnesota for offering this idea to our colleagues.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. AKAKA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I am going to proceed to offer three individual amendments, and I will be asking to lay them aside. But this way they can be debated tomorrow or Monday when we come back on the 25th. They may be accepted or end up being part of a managers' amendment but disposed of somehow in order to have them before the Senate.

AMENDMENT NO. 2912

The first amendment is an amendment offered by Senator HARKIN, No. 2912. I offer that amendment on behalf of Senator HARKIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. DODD], for Mr. HARKIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2912.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide funds for protection and advocacy systems)

On page 28 of the amendment, after line 23, add the following:

(c) PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SYSTEMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any other payments made under this section, the Attorney General shall pay the protection and advocacy system (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)) of each State to ensure full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote and accessing polling places. In providing such services, protection and advocacy systems shall have the same general authorities as they are afforded under part C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15041 et seq.).

(2) MINIMUM GRANT AMOUNT.—The minimum amount of each grant to a protection and advocacy system shall be determined and allocated as set forth in subsections (c)(3), (c)(4), (c)(5), (e), and (g) of section 509 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.

794e), except that the amount of the grants to systems referred to in subsections (c)(3)(B) and (c)(4)(B) of that section shall be not less than \$70,000 and \$35,000, respectively.

On page 30, strike lines 23 through 25, and insert the following:

(b) **PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SYSTEMS.**—In addition to any other amounts authorized to be appropriated under this section, there are authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006, and for each subsequent fiscal year such sums as may be necessary, for the purpose of making payments under section 206(c).

(c) **AVAILABILITY.**—Any amounts appropriated pursuant to the authority of this section shall remain available until expended.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Harkin amendment be temporarily laid aside.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2913

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk on behalf of Senator HARKIN and Senator MCCAIN and ask for its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. DODD] for Mr. HARKIN, for himself and Mr. MCCAIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2913.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Congress that curbside voting should be only an alternative of last resort when providing accommodations for disabled voters)

At the end add the following:

SEC. __. VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) requires that people with disabilities have the same kind of access to public places as the general public.

(2) The Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ee et seq.) requires that all polling places for Federal elections be accessible to the elderly and the handicapped.

(3) The General Accounting Office in 2001 issued a report based on their election day random survey of 496 polling places during the 2000 election across the country and found that 84 percent of those polling places had one or more potential impediments that prevented individuals with disabilities, especially those who use wheelchairs, from independently and privately voting at the polling place in the same manner as everyone else.

(4) The Department of Justice has interpreted accessible voting to allow curbside voting or absentee voting in lieu of making polling places physically accessible.

(5) Curbside voting does not allow the voter the right to vote in privacy.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the right to vote in a private and independent manner is a right that should be afforded to all eligible citizens, including citizens with disabilities, and that curbside voting should only be an alternative of the last resort in providing equal voting access to all eligible American citizens.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be temporarily laid aside.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2914

Mr. DODD. Lastly, Mr. President, I offer an amendment on behalf of the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. DODD], for Mr. SCHUMER, proposes an amendment numbered 2914.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To permit the use of a signature or personal mark for the purpose of verifying the identity of voters who register by mail, and for other purposes)

Beginning on page 18, line 20, strike through page 19, line 24, and insert the following:

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—An individual meets the requirements of this paragraph if the individual—

(i) in the case of an individual who votes in person—

(I) presents to the appropriate State or local election official a current and valid photo identification;

(II) presents to the appropriate State or local election official a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, Government check, paycheck, or other Government document that shows the name and address of the voter;

(III) provides written affirmation on a form provided by the appropriate State or local election official of the individual's identity; or

(IV) provides a signature or personal mark that matches the signature or personal mark of the individual on record with a State or local election official; or

(ii) in the case of an individual who votes by mail, submits with the ballot—

(I) a copy of a current and valid photo identification;

(II) a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, Government check, paycheck, or other Government document that shows the name and address of the voter; or

(III) provides a signature or personal mark that matches the signature or personal mark of the individual on record with a State or local election official.

(B) **PROVISIONAL VOTING.**—An individual who desires to vote in person, but who does not meet the requirements of subparagraph (A)(i), may cast a provisional ballot under section 102(a).

On page 68, strike lines 19 and 20, and insert the following:

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this Act may be construed to authorize

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Schumer amendment be temporarily laid aside.

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

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I will not go into describing these amendments. We will leave that for the Members themselves when they find the time, probably either tomorrow or Monday on the 25th, to come and explain them.

In the meantime, again, I am going to suggest to Members that with the finite list of amendments we now have from both the minority and majority sides, we are going to make an effort to

accommodate as many of these amendments as we can, to try to see if we can accept them or suggest maybe modifications that would make the amendments acceptable; or if that is not possible, then certainly provide the time on Monday, the 25th, or tomorrow, for these amendments to be debated, with Tuesday, the 26th, being the day on which amendments would be voted upon, those that had not been resolved or accepted or made part of a managers' amendment.

That is the idea. That is the goal, so to speak, we are trying to achieve with all of this.

So with that, Mr. President, I do not know if I have any additional amendments at this point to submit. That being the case, I note the presence of my friend and colleague from Nevada. I see he has some big, white cardboard pieces in his hands, which usually indicate a chart and a speech. So I think we are going to hear some words.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. First of all, I say to my friend from Connecticut, what a great job you have done on the bill today. We have made tremendous progress. We have a list of amendments. I will be happy to work with the Senator tomorrow, and the days after that, and, hopefully, we can pass this bill Tuesday. That would be a great mark for the American people.

SENATOR DODD'S BABY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I also say to my friend, I had such a pleasant time about half an hour ago. I went back to Room 219 and saw Grace Dodd, his beautiful 6-month-old baby. As I said to Jackye, your lovely wife: She is a real person, little Grace. And I bet the Senator is very proud of her, as he should be.

Mr. DODD. Absolutely.

AMENDMENT NO. 2914, AS MODIFIED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Schumer amendment No. 2914 at the desk be modified with the language at the desk.

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

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To permit the use of a signature or personal mark for the purpose of verifying the identity of voters who register by mail, and for other purposes)

Beginning on page 18, line 20, strike through page 19, line 24, and insert the following:

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—An individual meets the requirements of this paragraph if the individual—

(i) in the case of an individual who votes in person—

(I) presents to the appropriate State or local election official a current and valid photo identification;

(II) presents to the appropriate State or local election official a copy of a current