Every where I go people talk to me about natural gas—back home in Alaska, in Seattle, or here in Washington, DC. Everyone, from the President of the United States to Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan to the farmers of Iowa, know that we face serious problems in our natural gas supply.

With passage of this bill the Senate is telling consumers, farmers and natural gas dependent industries that help is on the way. That is good for American jobs, good for our families and their pocket books and good for the economy. The provisions contained in this bill will truly help us get the all important Alaska natural gas pipeline moving forward.

Experts predict that the U.S. will face a 20 billion cubic foot per day shortage of gas by the year 2020. In Alaska we have 35 trillion cubic feet of gas in Prudhoe Bay that has already been found, and we expect more than 100 trillion additional cubic feet to be found on the North Slope with relatively little effort. Alaska's natural gas can help close more than 25 percent of the expected 2020 gap, but we need to assure the markets that some of the risk associated with this project can be mitigated. If we can get it built it will be one of the largest privately financed projects in the history of the planet. It will employ over 400,000 people nationwide, with thousands of new jobs being created in my State of Alaska. Nationally the creation of 400,000 new jobs could reduce our unemployment rate by a whopping ½ of a percentage point. That is a huge shift from just one project. And it will mean a stable supply of gas for America for years to come. No other project I know can have that kind of positive impact on America—from either a gas supply, energy security or job creation perspective. It is imperative that we get this project moving now.

I would note that the Senate bill reported by the Energy Committee this year, and the accompanying tax provisions reported out of the Finance Committee this year, called for a marginal well credit that would have capped tax credits for the production of Alaska gas at 52 cents per thousand cubic feet of gas, should the price fall below $1.35 at the wellhead.

It also contained a loan guarantee for up to $18 billion of the project's cost and an accelerated depreciation provision.

The bill we are passing tonight reverts to last year's proposal that provides a gas line tax incentive to producers if the price of natural gas falls below $3.25 per thousand cubic feet delivered to the AECO hub in Canada. Producers, however, will have to pay the credit back in full whenever the price of gas exceeds $4.85 per unit.

The provision accepted by the Senate also includes a loan guarantee where the government helps to underwrite some $8 billion of the first $10 billion of the cost of the line, in the event that unexpected energy price drops occur.

It includes all the other provisions that passed the Senate last year, including: a prohibition against a northern route, guaranteeing the gas line will follow the Alaska Highway south through the Railbelt and Yukon to reach the Lower 48 States; a streamlined permitting and expedited court review process to speed construction; Provisions that allow Alaska to control gas to facilitate use for heating or construction of petrochemical plants in State; a guarantee that the gas line will accommodate an LNG plant to be developed at tidewater in Alaska whenever exports markets for the gas appear; provisions to guarantee that new gas producers in Alaska will be able to get their gas to market; and a provision that authorizes $20 million for worker job training and promotes Alaska-hire provisions in State.

The bill also includes a proposal that will provide up to $120 million in grant aid yearly for rural electric improvements in high-cost areas. These grants can go for power plants or to reduce power demands by other utilities.

The bill also includes a $35 million grant ($5 million per year for seven years) to Alaska to help fund its Rural Power Cost Equalization (PCE) program that subsidizes the high cost of electricity in rural Alaska.

The bill authorizes the Department of Energy to make a loan of up to $125 million to retrofit the Healy clean coal plant with new technology so it can produce power economically without causing air pollution problems. The loan should make the plant economic, provide vitally needed power to the Fairbanks area at reasonable cost and aid the Usibelli coal mine and its workers.

The bill includes a tax incentive equal to $3 per barrel to produce heavy oil from northern Alaska or to produce low-pollutant synthetic fuels from coal. The same provision also provides a tax credit to fuels produced before 2007 from biomass, tar sands, or brine. For heavy oil, Alaska's West Sak field contains 15 billion barrels of known heavy oil. The incentive should help make an additional 200 million barrels of production economic over the next decade.

This legislation reauthorizes the Arctic Science Research Act of 1984 and expands its power to make grants for scientific research.

Thankfully the bill also makes it a federal crime to damage any intrastate energy pipeline. The amendment specifically provides extra legal protection to the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.

This package contains language originally proposed by Senator TED STEVENS with Senator BYRD for the Barrow Arctic Research Center to support climate change research and scientific activities. The amendment includes $35 million for planning, design, support and construction of the Barrow facility. The goal is to develop technologies needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I am pleased the bill also contains the following important provisions: Tax credits for hybrid and fuel-cell vehicles; tax credits for alternative and renewable fuels use and development; tax credits for marginal oil producers to protect oil production from stripper wells; extra funding for the Low Income Home Heating Program (LIHEAP) and for low-income weatherization grants; funding for an Advanced Clean Coal Technology program; funding for a hydrogen energy act; provisions to increase the use of ethanol in clean burning gasoline; reauthorization of hydroelectric dam licensing provisions; reauthorization of the Price Anderson Act to permit nuclear power to continue; provisions on electricity restructuring; and provisions to require a sensible increase in automobile fuel efficiency standards.

Using last year's bill was the quickest way to get the bill off the Senate floor so that details of a final package could be worked out in a conference committee with the House. Without this action today it was unlikely we would have seen positive movement until the late fall. Now we can move forward quickly for America and Alaska.

I want to assure Alaskans that I will work to include in the conference report on this bill the provisions I secured during this year's debate in the Energy Committee. With those changes this bill will help us to address our energy problems even more.

I thank the fine Chairman of the Energy Committee for his effort and leadership and I applaud the work of both Leaders to get this bill done before the August recess.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Chile and Singapore free-trade agreements that are currently before this body. If these agreements were similar to earlier free-trade agreements voted on by this body—NAFTA, Israel, Jordan—I would have absolutely no difficulty whatsoever casting votes in favor of both. That, however, is not the case. These agreements are not your garden-variety free-trade agreements. In fact, these two agreements break new ground with the inclusion of specialized immigration provisions which weaken existing legal safeguards against U.S. employers displacing American workers with lower wage nonimmigrant visa holders.

I thank immensely the Presiding Officer who held a very worthwhile hearing just a day or so ago in the Judiciary Committee on one of these visa provisions, the L–1 visa issue. I thank him immensely for giving me an opportunity to address my concerns about some of the loopholes in that particular agreement.

I want to draw my colleagues' attention that I have rarely, if ever, voted

against a free-trade agreement. I have been a strong supporter of free trade, but I must caution my colleagues about what is in these two agreements that were never a part, as I understood it, of the trade laws but rather add immigration provisions which I think go far beyond what many of us intended to be the case.

My concern is, despite some very good provisions in both the Chile and Singapore agreements, we are breaking new ground which I think we will come to regret with some 30 other bilateral free-trade agreements pending before this body that will be voted up or down without any amendments being offered which is a result of the fast-track authority which this body endorsed only a number of months ago.

This is but one more example of the troubling pattern of insensitivity to the concerns of American workers that our trade representatives not negotiate away their jobs in the name of free trade. U.S. negotiators have, in effect, been doing so by ignoring the labor practices and policies of our trading partners in the context of including new trade agreements and by not addressing the linkage that exists between foreign labor markets and the ability of American workers to remain internationally competitive.

One year ago, the Senate voted to give the President trade promotion authority allowing him to negotiate additional trade agreements and limiting the Congress to an up-or-down vote on each trade agreement without the ability to amend them.

Breaking with my normal practice with respect to such legislation, I decided to oppose final passage of that bill. I did so because I did not think the legislation included adequate language making it crystal clear that a primary negotiating objective of future trade agreements must be to ensure that as a condition of the U.S. signing such agreements with other governments, those governments must live up to recognized international labor organizations' standards with respect to wages and other workers' rights.

During the so-called fast-track debate, I offered an amendment that would have required fast-track authority to be in parity with the Jordan standards, a trade agreement that passed 100 to 0 in this body only a few months earlier.

I thought, with Congress poised to renew Presidential fast-track authority, it was more important than ever that with the discretion being granted to the President to negotiate trade agreements, an obligation to uphold universally recognized labor standards in those agreements be part of the deal.

Because the language included in the Jordan Trade Agreement dealt effectively with that matter, it made perfect sense, since we had voted 100 to 0 to endorse it, to include similar language as part of future agreements.

The administration disagreed with that approach and my amendment was defeated. Under those circumstances, I had no choice but to vote against final passage of the permanent trade authority legislation, and did so with regret.

At the time of the vote, I urged the administration to take note of the vote by someone who was normally a strong supporter of free-trade agreements and understand it was an expression of deep concerns that poorly crafted free-trade agreements will undermine our economy and the prosperity of working American families.

I was amazed that the concerns expressed by the American workers during the debate of the permanent trade authority legislation had been so quickly confirmed with respect to the first two agreements that this administration had sent to Congress since the FTA became law. There are likely to be as many as 30 free-trade agreements negotiated utilizing this extraordinary authority.

I have been a strong proponent of entering a bilateral trade agreement with Chile for many years. I am extremely disappointed that provisions that should not be in this agreement have been included. In all the years the proposal for a free-trade agreement with Chile has been discussed, there was never, ever—never—any mention of nonimmigrant visa provisions being included as part of a final agreement.

I recognize there are many features of the Chile and Singapore agreements that will promote a freer flow of goods and services between the United States and Chile and Singapore. The agreements include comprehensive commitments by Chile and Singapore to open their agricultural, service, and overall markets to the United States. That is great news, indeed.

Were those the only provisions we were considering today, I would, with enthusiasm, endorse and support these two agreements. But there are other provisions in these agreements that my colleagues ought to pay attention to, which have gotten very little attention at all. It is those provisions I am concerned about because they are steps in the wrong direction with respect to protecting American jobs in my State and elsewhere across this country.

I would predict there are Members of this body who are unaware that these agreements will allow as many as 1,500 nonimmigrant visa holders from Chile and 5,400 from Singapore to be hired each year by U.S. employers, without those employers first having made a good-faith effort to fill the vacancies with American workers. These agreements will make it easy for U.S. employers to employ temporary workers from those two countries with little or no oversight by the Department of Labor. Moreover, once enacted into law, these provisions will have the effect of undermining the intent of our nonimmigrant visa programs—namely, that they be temporary in nature—by allowing Chilean and Singaporean visa holders to renew their visas for an indefinite period of time.

These provisions are not in the interest of hard-working Americans who currently find themselves out of work or in fear that they will find themselves unemployed at a moment's notice.

With the unemployment rate at 6.4 percent, and more than 9 million people in this country unemployed, I think we have a responsibility to enact policies that will bring about more job opportunities for U.S. workers instead of making it easier for additional workers to lose their jobs to lower-wage nonimmigrant visa holders.

The U.S. Trade Representative has not demonstrated, in my view, the inclusion of these provisions as central to the effectiveness of these agreements. There is absolutely no evidence whatsoever that laws governing the H–1B and L–1 visa programs pose barriers to trade or undermine our ability to meet our obligations in these trade agreements. I will never understand why the Bush administration used the opportunity of these trade agreements to actually weaken the laws with respect to those two programs, and doing so statutorily.

At the very time we are debating these pending agreements, critics of our existing H–1B and L–1 programs are crying foul. The root of their concerns is that current law contains insufficient safeguards against the misuse of those programs in ways that cause American workers to be displaced from their jobs. Yet the language in the bills before us today is even weaker than existing laws in these areas.

Last week I introduced S. 1452, the U.S. Jobs Protection Act. This bill increases the monitoring and enforcement authorities of the Department of Labor over the H–1B and L–1 visa programs, and closes loopholes in these programs to prevent unintended U.S. job losses. These agreements would prevent those reforms from being extended to H–1B and L–1 visa holders from Chile and Singapore. That is unacceptable, and ought to be to many of my colleagues.

I am extremely concerned unless those of us in this body speak out against the inclusion of these immigration provisions in the pending agreements, the administration will happily include similar language in the other remaining bilateral agreements that will come before this body, including the Central American free-trade agreement that is currently being negotiated. That would be a terrible mistake. In the best of circumstances, the CAFT agreement is going to have difficulty being approved next year. It will be dead on arrival, in my judgment, if the administration overreaches again in this area.

Mr. President, I regret the administration has chosen to overstep its authority in negotiating these agreements with Chile and Singapore. I strongly believe that trade—fair trade—creates new opportunities for America's manufacturers and our

workers. But as a Member of this body, I cannot support a bill that disregards the needs of American workers, allows immigrant legislation, migration legislation to be included so blatantly in a free-trade agreement, as we try to secure decent-paying jobs and keep our unemployment rates down, and offer Americans an opportunity.

It is hard enough to convince them that free-trade agreements are in the best interest of the American economy and for the creation of jobs, but when you give away, each year, under these two agreements, more than 8,000 jobs in this country, without ever having to face anything at all, that is wrong.

If we do not speak up tonight about it, believe me, as I stand here before you, you are going to see these provisions included in all of the remaining 30 bilateral agreements, and that would be a mistake, in my view.

In a perfect world, I would hope these agreements could be withdrawn and resubmitted to the Senate without the inclusion of these immigration provisions. However, that is unlikely to happen, obviously. For that reason, I am left with no choice but to cast my vote—with deep regrets, with deep regrets—in favor of protecting, as I must, American working families, who are under tremendous pressure and strain today, and against the implementing legislation before us.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold his suggestion?

Mr. DODD. Withdrawn.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I have long supported initiatives to expand foreign markets for American goods. Trade liberalizing agreements with other countries, if negotiated correctly, can benefit American farmers, ranchers and manufacturers. Likewise, strengthening economic ties with these countries can advance our foreign policy interests. The agreements pending before us today, the Chilean and Singaporean Free Trade Agreements, fit both of these criteria, and I intend to support them both.

The agreement with Singapore, our twelfth largest trading partner, is the first such FTA with an Asian nation. Singapore is a long-standing ally in this vitally important region and has worked closely with the United States in the war against terrorism. Currently, for instance, Singapore is building an aircraft carrier pier at its port, the largest in the world, specifically for U.S. vessels.

Under this agreement, Singapore will eliminate duties on all U.S. products and broadly open its service sector across a wide range of industries. These and other commitments, such as strong protection of intellectual property rights, will benefit American investors and exporters.

With regard to Chile, I am pleased that after years of much anticipation this agreement is finally complete. Chile has stood out as one of South America's economic leaders for some time, and this agreement will serve to solidify our support for its continued progress. Today, Chile has free trade arrangements with Canada, Mexico, and the European Union. This United States-Chile Free Trade Agreement will provide important parity for American exporters. This is very important for wheat growers who have lost substantial market share as a result of the Chile-Canada trade agreement. Our agreement should provide an opportunity to re-gain those exports.

The issue that has concerned me most is what will the impact be on our beef producers. The impact is more complex than the clear advantage for wheat farmers. Chile potentially is a consumer market for beef. Chile is a substantial importer of beef and the U.S. produces the finest beef in the world. The agreement takes important steps to open the Chilean beef market to U.S. producers, many of whom are from my home State of South Dakota.

My concern and that of many South Dakota farmers is that beef born and raised in Argentina will be sent to Chile for slaughter and be labeled as Chilean beef under the existing rules of origin law that only requires the product to be slaughtered in a country. After careful examination, it is my expectation, however, that the administration will prevent such transhipment for other countries in the region and protect our own farmers and ranchers from injurious imports from abroad.

Therefore, I believe that on balance the U.S. Chilean agreement is good for our beef producers. The agreement is good for our other exporters and it advances our foreign policy interests and I support it.

I support the agreements before the Senate today and will vote for their passage. I do want to take this opportunity, however, to raise my strong concern about a possible trade agreement with Australia.

Australia has long been one of America's staunchest allies. Our shared commitment to freedom and democracy is the foundation of a relationship that has grown even stronger since September 11. Indeed, Australia was among the first countries to offer its support in the wake of terrorist attacks on our country last year. Australia is an important American ally and one who we can and should work with closely within the WTO multilateral negotiations.

I am, however, deeply concerned about the effect that a potential free trade agreement with Australia could have on our own beef, lamb and wool producers.

Australia is increasingly involved in grain feedlots for cattle. Grain feed beef more directly compete with U.S. beef in the higher end beef market because of its higher quality. Australian farmers receive the benefit of a state trading enterprise, the Australian Wheat Board, which manages the supply of all grain in that country, and thus influences the price of grain. Ranchers in Australia receive assistance, not only from the wheat board, but also receive various other subsidies.

Australia is the world's largest beef exporter and with fewer people than cows, the country is not a significant import market. Finally, Australian live cattle are increasingly being exported. In fact USDA projects that over 900,000 head will be exported in 2003 using, among other means, huge ocean-going ships that can deliver up to 25,000 head per vessel. As a potential FTA with Australia progresses, I am hopeful that we will be able to address these very real concerns. Without some remedy, I will not be able to support the agreement.

With regard to lamb, there are not U.S. tariffs on lamb today. Currently one-third of our domestic lamb consumption is imported lamb and we are Australia's biggest export market for lamb. The U.S. currently takes in 20 percent of all of the lamb Australia produces. However, Australia's prices are well below our market, and rather than work to develop new markets, most often they come into our best markets, and underprice our domestic producers. In fact, I am told that they have even compensated supermarkets in the U.S. with advertising budgets on the condition that they sell only imported products.

With regard to wool, we need to protect the existing tariffs. Australia has a record of vastly over-producing for the market and negatively impacting our domestic prices. The current tariffs are important to keep in place. As a potential FTA with Australia progresses, I am hopeful that we will be able to address these very real concerns. Without some acceptable remedy, I will not be able to support the agreement.

A year ago, we worked on a bipartisan basis to pass Trade Promotion Authority. This law was employed to pass the two trade agreements before us. The administration is to be commended for the successful conclusion of these agreements and again I will support both.

However, it is clear that support for trade liberalization is fragile both in the Congress and around the country. I urge the administration to work with us and to take steps to build greater consensus and to avoid taking steps that undermine that consensus:

Trade Promotion Authority is a delegation of the Congress's authority. The administration jeopardizes future such delegations if it oversteps its bounds. This Congress did not vote last year to delegate the authority to make immigration policy. The administration must avoid such over reaching in the future.

I continue to have concerns about how rules of origin are applied. The Bush administration should insist on a strict standard for designating the country of origin of both live cattle

and beef. At a minimum, the ''born in country'' standard should be adhered to. Although I would certainly prefer that we work with our trading partners to obtain a ''born, raised, and slaughtered'' standard for designating the country-of-origin of beef. This latter standard reflects the current country of origin law in place in the United States. This tighter standard is advocated by the major farm organizations in our country in addition to cattle ranchers and consumer groups who all believe this is a better definition.

Last year, we put top priority on helping those Americans who are on the losing side of trade. The administration made an agreement with us, but to date the administration has not honored that agreement. TAA for Farmers was supposed to be operational 6 months ago, yet has still not gotten off the ground. The Health Tax Credit was to be made available and advanceable this month, yet only 22 States have made the appropriate steps. More importantly, a number of technical corrections to the program have been stalled in Congress and the administration has not helped advance them. These technical corrections are essential to ensuring that the targeted workers, which we agreed on, receive their much-needed health benefits. The wage insurance program for older workers has remained completely dormant and the administration has taken no steps to implement this program.

Since the beginning of 2001, more than two million manufacturing jobs have been lost. I strongly urge the administration to join with us and let's use the replacement of the FSC regime as an opportunity to promote U.S. manufacturing jobs.

We must recognize that there is no ''one-size-fits-all'' approach to dealing with labor and environmental standards in other countries. While I applaud the provisions included in these agreements, they should not, I repeat, should not, be perceived as some sort of template for future negotiations. The conditions of countries in Central America are significantly different than those in Chile or Singapore and should be treated as such.

We need to have strong enforcement of our trade laws. Currently, for example, the United States International Trade Commission is reviewing the section 201 tariffs in place against injurious imports of steel. So far, the temporary restrictions have provided some mills the time needed to make modest steps towards recovery. Repealing these measures now, however, would greatly undercut this moderate success, and I therefore urge the President to maintain these safeguards for the full three years.

Finally, today is a good day for relations between the United States and our friends and partners in Singapore and Chile. By strengthening our economic ties, we have benefitted the people of all our countries and encouraged a mutually supportive partnership that will benefit all aspects of our bilateral relationships.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I support swift passage of the U.S.-Chile and U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement Implementation Acts, S. 1416 and S. 1417, respectively. These are the first in what I hope will be a long list of trade agreement implementation bills necessary to enact trade deals negotiated and signed by the President under the authority granted him by Congress last year.

Stemming from the Trade Act of 2002, which included Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), agreements such as the two before us are helping to reestablish U.S. credibility in the area of trade. The President and his administration are now able to more freely negotiate, encouraging countries once reluctant to begin trade negotiations with the U.S. to come to the table. The U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement and the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement are prime examples of the United States' commitment to free and open trade. I hope they provide a launching pad for new trade agreements with key partners in every region of the world.

Our staunchest allies and most important trading partners have had reason to doubt our dedication to the free trade principles we have long advocated as a driving force of prosperity and stability. A series of short-sighted, protectionist actions in recent years has jeopardized our relationships with our most important trading partners. That makes enactment of these bilateral free trade agreements even more important.

These agreements may not have a dramatic economic impact in the United States, but they are sure to yield benefits to American consumers and businesses. Enactment of agreements such as those before us help us regain our credibility and leadership in championing free-trade principles around the world. I hope they set a precedent for more aggressive liberalization of our trade with other nations in Asia, Latin America, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

I commend Ambassador Zoellick for his efforts to bring these free trade agreements to fruition, as well as for his commitment to exhaustive consultations with Congress. Our agreement with Chile is one more step towards our goal of a Free Trade Area of the Americas, on which we all hope to see greater progress. Our agreement with Singapore, a key ally in the war on terror, will hopefully help propel future trade liberalization in Southeast Asia, one of the world's most dynamic regions.

As it stands now, Singapore is our 12th largest trading partner, and our largest trading partner in the strategic region of Southeast Asia. This agreement would eliminate many barriers to trade and investment, and improve market access and opportunities for U.S. goods and services. In addition, this agreement would provide regulatory reforms and transparency, two key components in establishing the strong ties and trust necessary for trade.

Implementation of the negotiated agreement with Chile would place us on an equal footing with the European Union and Canada, which already enjoy their own FTAs with Chile. Despite having to play market access catch-up, our farmers and ranchers will enjoy duty-free access to Chile's markets within 12 years; and computer and other information technology products, medical equipment, and other goods will gain immediate duty-free access.

Throughout the negotiating process, environmental and labor matters received considerable scrutiny. The FTAs address these concerns through provisions laid out in both agreements that call for Singapore and Chile to provide a high level of environmental protection, and require each nation to endeavor to improve upon their laws where necessary. Each nation is to reaffirm its obligations as part of the International Labor Organization and strive to make sure its laws reflect the labor principles therein.

These negotiations and the agreements they have produced are a good start towards accomplishing Congress' purpose for passing the Trade Act last year: an aggressive agenda to liberalize trade with key partners, producing comprehensive agreements which reduce barriers to trade, providing tangible benefits to American consumers and businesses, and reestablishing our credibility and leadership in championing free trade principles around the world.

I am, however, concerned that immigration provisions contained in these trade bills set a bad precedent. Although I support the spirit of these provisions, I strongly believe that changes to U.S. immigration policy should be thoroughly debated in Congress and such modifications do not belong in trade agreements negotiated between our government and other nations. I discourage their inclusion in future trade agreements.

Overall, these are fine examples of what Congress intended when we passed TPA. I hope we will soon see action on free trade agreements that are currently being negotiated with Australia, Central America, Morocco, Southern Africa, and others in the not too distant future. I also would like to see the Administration take concrete steps to liberalize trade in the greater Middle East, in effect operationalizing the President's call for a free trade area there within a decade.

Finally, I hope that the administration, with Congress's support, can make significant progress in the next round of global trade talks this fall. Global trade liberalization through the World Trade Organization is the most effective and efficient way to bring down barriers to trade, the best way to open the markets of key trading partners in Europe and Asia, and to enforce

free trade principles. The conclusion of economically meaningful bilateral trade agreements, coupled with an aggressive campaign for global trade liberalization, will reestablish our credibility and leadership on free trade and energize the American and global economies. America and the world will be better off as a result.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, a year ago, with the support of American agriculture, Congress approved legislation granting trade promotion authority to President George W. Bush. The President has demonstrated a strong commitment to expanding the American economy by actively engaging in an aggressive trade strategy. This strategy includes negotiations with Chile and Singapore, regional efforts with the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and the Central American Free Trade Agreement talks, and with the World Trade Organization.

Congress has had unprecedented access and consultation with negotiators, resulting in agreements without hidden compromises or concessions. Public hearings in the Senate and the House have enabled agricultural groups and others who have a stake in these negotiations to make their views and interests known.

Both the Chile and Singapore agreements passed the other body last week by a substantial margin. It is now time for the Senate to approve the agreements.

The U.S./Chile agreement provides important new opportunities for America's farmers and ranchers. Chile is a market of more than 15 million people with an open and progressive economy. Both the European Union and Canada already have free trade agreements with Chile.

Our negotiators were successful in their efforts to eliminate duties on more than three-quarters of American agricultural products within the first 4 years. The agreements also contain a safeguard provision which will help prevent surges in trade volumes. To discourage the use of nontariff barriers, a sanitary and phytosanitary working group will ensure that standards of inspection and food are based on sound science.

The U.S./Singapore agreement has the positive effects of freer and fairer trade and they make this agreement worthy of support as well. Singapore has become our 11th largest trading partner and provides the U.S. services sector with fair and immediate increase in market access.

I urge my colleagues to vote for both the Chile and Singapore free-trade agreements.

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, tonight the Senate passed implementing legislation for the Chile and Singapore Free Trade Agreements. These FTAs are comprehensive in nature and will serve well the interests of the United States. But they are not without flaws. I want the record to reflect my concerns and, more importantly, I want to make clear that I believe the direction the Bush administration is taking in the on-going negotiations over the Central American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas is unacceptable.

Chile is an excellent candidate for a free trade agreement. It has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The agreement the Senate has passed tonight should facilitate a general expansion of American exports, particularly in electronics and transportation equipment industries. This will create good work and good jobs here in America. More broadly, Chile is the first Latin American country to join in a free trade agreement with the United States, and that will allow the United States to more directly support economic and social reform in Latin America and will serve as a major stepping stone for enhanced hemispheric trade and job growth here at home.

Singapore is also an excellent candidate. Singapore is our 12th largest export market. The country provides a critical link between the United States and South East Asia and Singapore is the second largest Asian investor in the United States after Japan. Although the economic effects of the Singapore agreement are not likely to be great, this FTA would add a formal economic link to our significant security relationship with Singapore. It is an agreement that will ultimately build greater trade and create jobs here in America.

Chile and Singapore both have laudable records in financial regulation and transparency and have demonstrated a commitment to fundamental worker protections. For example, Chile has adopted several international labor rights conventions. The United States, by contrast, has adopted only two. The performance of these two countries in these areas, and their status as models of reform in their respective regions, make these trade agreements desirable. That is not to say these nations are not without problems or that further improvement is not needed. It is to make clear that these nations have made progress, are striving to improve, and that these agreements will only help them develop and enforce more advanced policies. And more importantly, these agreements will not put American workers at risk of unfair competition.

But, as I have said, there are flaws with these agreements. Over the past decade, the treatment of labor and environmental issues in trade agreements has evolved both in emphasis and enforcement. NAFTA represents an early stage in this evolution, addressing labor and environmental issues in the context of the agreement, albeit in side accords. The United States-Jordan Free Trade Agreement was the first FTA to include labor provisions in the actual text of the agreement and to subject those provisions to the same dispute settlement procedure as all other elements of the agreement.

Although the Chile and Singapore agreements should be the next step forward in this evolution towards strong and effectively enforced labor and environmental standards, they are in fact a step back. Unlike the United States-Jordan FTA, the only labor provision subject to dispute settlement is the requirement that each trading partner enforce its existing labor laws.

In addition, the Bush administration, specifically the United States Trade Representative, included provisions in this agreement related to immigration policy. The result is that America will allow the temporary entry of more than 6,000 foreign professionals for employment. This is not wise economic policy in good times and it is only worse economic policy in our current recession. Further, it amends unrelated immigration law, and I believe the Bush administration has abused fast track authority in doing so.

The final point I want to make this evening is, in my view, the most important. The Bush administration has made clear that it plans to use the Chile and Singapore FTAs as models or templates for future trade negotiations. I feel strongly that future negotiations must reflect the particular concerns and uniqueness of each trading partner. This seems obvious, but those who follow trade negotiations have warned that the Bush administration may claim that the standards of the Chile and Singapore agreements are universally applicable and, in particular, should apply to CAFTA and FTAA. Let me be as direct as possible: If the CAFTA and FTAA agreements do not include labor and environmental protections that are far, far stronger than the Chile and Singapore agreements I will oppose them as strenuously as I can.

The administration's one-size-fits-all approach will not work. Many of the nations considering inclusion in CAFTA and FTAA have no or low standards to protect workers and the environment and enforcement is nonexistent in some areas. Worker and environmental protections in the group of six Central American countries participating in CAFTA are not comparable to those in Singapore and Chile, for example. Some have not enacted or do not enforce basic labor standards that we take for granted, including bans on child and forced labor, non-discrimination and the right of workers to associate and bargain collectively. In Nicaragua and Guatemala employees cannot strike against poor working conditions, pay and benefits without government approval. And it is common for workers seeking better conditions to be physically intimidated and abused.

In CAFTA, the Bush administration is running a race to the bottom. Even basic rights, like the right to be protected from physical violence, are cast