

Carter to the U.S. Commission on Alcohol Fuels, where she served from 1979 to 1981.

I remember vividly Sharon bending my ear on ethanol. She once traveled to Washington—before she was on my staff—to advocate for increased ethanol production. I remember being late for a Capitol Hill press conference and Sharon literally dragging me by my shirtsleeves to make it on time. She was just like that—always on the move, always aggressive.

A former State Chair for the Montana Democratic Party, Sharon was very politically active. And she was a familiar face in Helena during many state legislative sessions.

Sharon joined my staff in Billings in 1981. Back then, we didn't have e-mail, no Blackberry on Palm Pilots. We didn't even have computers in my State offices when Sharon first started. Only an old roll-paper fax or two. This made it challenging for our State operation. But they worked hard to stay in touch with Washington.

Sharon served as my scheduler for 10 years. And she was tenacious in making sure I was on time, which is, as we all here in the Senate know, not an easy task—especially back then.

I once did a work day—I work alongside Montanans at least one day a month—at the Stillwater Mine in Columbus. I was having so much fun working in the mine, I didn't want to leave. Sharon, afraid of nothing and against the caution of mine workers, came down into the mine shaft to get me to my next meeting.

She once called the kitchen of a restaurant in Choteau and told the dishwasher to get me moving.

Sharon helped organize the 1989 Montana Cattle Drive celebrating Montana's bicentennial. Again, I was having so much fun I stayed out on the drive for several days longer than I was supposed to. Sharon drove out to camp and took me to a pay phone to call my Washington staff.

Sharon helped on my first Senate campaign, in 1978. She helped deliver Fergus County, which she later realized was a lot harder than one might think.

I appointed her my State director 1993. In this role, she was a key advisor to me. She was a strong voice for Montana on agriculture, transportation, rural health and education, trade and natural resources. She fought for rural communities and Main Street businesses.

She was a tireless advocate for farmers and ranchers, helping to pass numerous farm bills and helping producers through the drought of the 1980s.

She organized the first of many trade trips to foreign countries.

As State Director, Sharon took great pride in making sure our State operation ran smoothly and served Montanans well. She answered my toll free line for 22 years. That's the 800 number Montanans use to get in touch with

me. She was dedicated to case work. She personally helped thousands of Montanans.

For many years I have counted on Sharon to educate us on the realities of living in rural areas. She insisted we apply good Montana common sense to everything we do. She believes strongly in protecting the Montana values of doing what's right, common sense, faith, hard work, a strong connection to the land, and community.

Her Montana roots run deep. Long ago, we tried to get Sharon to move to Washington. She stayed for two weeks and went home. Montana is her home. She loves our State. I doubt she'll ever leave. Sharon's a rancher. She's a salt-of-the-earth Montanan.

When I asked Sharon what the best part of the job was she said: "The ability to help people and make Montana an even better place."

She did both.

I'll miss her. My staff will miss her. The Senate will miss her. And most importantly the State of Montana will miss her.

She truly made "The Last Best Place" even better. For that, we are eternally grateful. And we wish her and Garde all the best.

NOMINATION OF PAUL MICHAEL WARNER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of Paul M. Warner of Salt Lake City, who has been renominated by President Bush for the position of U.S. attorney for the District of Utah.

Paul Warner has had a remarkable career in public service. After graduating from the J. Reuben Clark Law School in 1976, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserve Judge Advocate General Corps, where he served as both prosecutor and defense counsel. From 1982 to 1989, Mr. Warner served in the Utah Attorney General's Office, where he did tremendous work on both civil and criminal matters. In 1983, he enlisted with the Utah Army National Guard, Judge Advocate Branch, where he has risen to the rank of colonel. Since 1989 he has served in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Utah, where he has worked on both civil litigation and criminal prosecution. He became the U.S. Attorney for the District of Utah in 1998 and has served ably in that office ever since.

I think it is important to have a career prosecutor with the reputation and ability of Paul Warner to lead the Federal law enforcement effort in Utah. He is a man committed to the rule of law and has a proven track record on the problems that affect Utah, notably methamphetamine proliferation and illegal reentry by criminal aliens.

Paul Warner has been able to be so effective because he has developed a great working relationship with Federal, State, and local law enforcement personnel. I believe that without excep-

tion he is respected and trusted as a skillful prosecutor and an able administrator.

Paul Warner has had several notable career achievements. Most notably he rose to the Olympic challenge of presiding over one of the largest peace time mobilizations of law enforcement personnel in United States history. I can't give him enough credit for facilitating the cooperation of Federal, State, and local law enforcement personnel that allowed the Salt Lake Olympic Games to run so smoothly. It was a tremendous undertaking, and the State of Utah, the United States of America, and the World Olympic Community owe a debt of gratitude to Paul Warner for negotiating the Herculean task of facilitating a safe environment that allowed the Salt Lake City Olympic Games to be enjoyed by so many throughout the world.

Paul Warner has also used his legal acumen and personal relationships to defuse several tense situations, including the controversies surrounding the Federal land use policies affecting Utah and the imposition of background checks at the Salt Lake International Airport following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Paul Warner has been honored on several occasions for his commitment to public service. He is the recipient of the United States Army Commendation Medal for meritorious service during Operation Desert Storm for legal work done in mobilizing members of the Utah Army National Guard. He later received two oak leaf clusters for meritorious service as Staff Judge Advocate. Mr. Warner was given a Special Achievement Award from the U.S. Department of Justice, and a Special Commendation from U.S. Attorney, District of Utah, for outstanding work as First Assistant U.S. Attorney. Finally, he has received the Community Relationship Award from the Salt Lake City branch of the NAACP.

Paul Warner is a man of integrity and honesty. He is a great American who has spent his career in public service. I can't say enough about this honorable and talented man. I have no doubt that he will continue to be an able U.S. attorney. He deserves a speedy confirmation by this committee and by the full Senate. I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting his renomination to be the United States Attorney for the District of Utah.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN MEXICO

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, on July 10, the Senate passed an amendment to S. 925, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, to authorize \$100 million for rural development programs in Mexico. This amendment authorizes funding for programs to promote microcredit lending, to promote small business and entrepreneurial development, to aid small farms impacted by the collapse of coffee prices,

and to strengthen private property ownership in rural communities.

I understand why Senator REID offered this amendment. Mexico is important to the United States, and it deserves our attention. But I voted against this amendment. Let me explain why.

A better way to improve Mexico's economy, including its rural economy, is not through foreign assistance from the United States, but through trade. As recently noted by the Ambassador of Mexico to the United States, Mexico has been transformed in recent years through trade liberalization, and in particular through the NAFTA.

Mexico's exports to the world grew from \$50 billion to \$160 billion between 1993 and 2001. Total trade between the United States and Mexico increased from \$88 billion to \$250 billion between 1993 and 2002.

Mexico's agricultural producers have shared in the benefits of NAFTA. Between 1993 and 2001, Mexican agricultural exports to the United States rose by almost 97 percent. Some 78 percent of all Mexican agricultural exports are shipped to the United States, and the United States is by far Mexico's largest agricultural export destination.

While well intentioned, increased foreign aid from the United States, such as through Senator REID's amendment, will make little difference to the Mexican economy. Clearly, Mexico's leaders recognize that the best means of achieving a healthier Mexican economy, including Mexico's rural economy, is through continued strong trade ties with the United States.

Regardless, some of these same leaders seem to be losing interest in maintaining strong trade relations between our countries. They are doing this by attempting unilaterally to renegotiate agricultural provisions of the NAFTA.

Mexico has imposed, or threatened to impose, restrictions on the importation of a variety of U.S. agricultural products. These products include pork, beef, corn, and high fructose corn syrup, all of which are major Iowa commodities. I spoke on this situation just last month on the Senate floor, so I will not go into the specifics on Mexico's trade restrictions on these commodities.

Given barriers imposed by Mexico on U.S. agricultural products, now is clearly not the proper time to increase foreign aid to Mexico. Mexico's trade policies are harming farmers in Iowa and other states. Providing more foreign aid to Mexico sends the wrong signal. I realize that Senator REID's amendment to increase foreign aid has already passed the Senate. But until such time as Mexico's agricultural trade barriers are removed, I urge Senators to keep them in mind when voting on any future legislation involving foreign aid for Mexico.

At the same time, I hope that Mexico will realize that by not abiding by its NAFTA commitments, and by thus threatening its trade relations with the United States, it is doing little to improve the lives of rural Mexicans.

In fact, any reduction in trade between our two countries would likely lead to increased economic hardship in Mexico. Such a situation would benefit neither Mexico nor the United States.

Once again, as I did last month, I urge officials in Mexico to consider the effects that Mexico's barriers to imports of U.S. agricultural products are having on overall trade relations between the United States and Mexico. Mexicans, including those living in rural areas, have much more to gain from closer economic ties to the United States than from increased foreign aid.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred in Medford, OR. On January 30, 2003, three Oregon National Guardsmen beat a homeless man then attacked a Medford motel owner whom they believed was an Arab. One of the men committed suicide after the attack and the other two pled guilty to hate-related charges.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

FAMILY FARMER BANKRUPTCY PROTECTION, H.R. 2465

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate is finally considering legislation to renew family farmer bankruptcy protection, which expired on July 1.

More than a month ago, on June 23, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2465 by an overwhelming vote of 379-3. This legislation will retroactively renew and extend family farmer bankruptcy protection until January 1, 2004. Senator FEINGOLD, Senator GRASSLEY and I have been urging for weeks that the Senate majority leadership bring up this House-passed bill to retroactively renew Chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code.

Senator GRASSLEY and I introduced S. 1323, the companion bill to this legislation to temporarily extend these protections that our farmers have come to rely upon. But this is just a short term fix. We need to stop playing politics and permanently reauthorize the Chapter 12 family farmer protections.

Too many family farmers have been left in legal limbo in bankruptcy

courts across the country because Chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code is still a temporary measure. This is the sixth time that Congress must act to restore or extend basic bankruptcy safeguards for family farmers because Chapter 12 is still a temporary provision despite its first passage into law in 1986. Our family farmers do not deserve these lapses in bankruptcy law that could mean the difference between foreclosure and farming.

In 2000 and 2001, for example, the Senate—then as now controlled by the other party—failed to take up a House-passed bill to retroactively renew Chapter 12. As a result, family farmers lost Chapter 12 bankruptcy protection for 8 months. Another lapse of Chapter 12 lasted more than 6 months in the previous Congress. At the end of June, Chapter 12 lapsed once again. Enough is enough. It is time for Congress to make Chapter 12 a permanent part of the Bankruptcy Code to provide a stable safety net for our nation's family farmers.

Last year, I strongly supported former Senator Carnahan's bipartisan amendment to make Chapter 12 permanent as part of the Senate-passed farm bill. The Senate unanimously approved the Carnahan amendment by a 93-0 vote. Unfortunately, the House majority objected to including the Carnahan amendment in the farm bill conference report and agreed to an extension of Chapter 12 only through the end of 2002. Thus, at the tail end of the last Congress, we had to pass yet another six-month extension of basic bankruptcy protection for family farmers.

In the bipartisan bankruptcy reform conference, we again tried to make Chapter 12 permanent and update and expand its coverage. During our conference negotiations, we adopted most of the Senate-passed provisions, including those authored by Senator GRASSLEY to make Chapter 12 permanent and those authored by Senator FEINGOLD to strengthen Chapter 12 to help our family farmers with the difficulties they face.

Unfortunately, the House majority again scuttled our bipartisan efforts by failing to pass the rule to consider the bipartisan conference report on the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act.

It is time to end this absurdity and make these bankruptcy protections permanent. Everyone agrees that Chapter 12 has worked. When this bill passed in the House, Chairman SENSENBRENNER praised Chapter 12, but then only proposed reauthorizing it for 12 months. He admitted that the only reason his bill, which we are finally passing today, did not permanently reauthorize Chapter 12 was because it is being used as leverage for the controversial larger bankruptcy reform bill. That is unfortunate.

I will continue to work hard with Senator GRASSLEY, Senator FEINGOLD and others on both sides of the aisle to pass legislation that once and for all