

VISIT TO THE SENATE BY THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it is a privilege for me today to call to the attention of the Senate the very good relations the United States has with the country of Argentina.

We are honored to have as our guest the Vice President of Argentina, Daniel Scioli, who, in his capacity, has the privilege of the floor because, as under the Argentine Constitution, so, too, under our Constitution, the Vice President of the country is also the President of the Argentine Senate. Since we have parliamentarians of the various parliaments of the world who have the privilege of the floor, it is my privilege to bring Daniel Scioli, a personal friend, to see the greatest deliberative body in the world, the United States Senate.

Argentina has had quite an economic revival. Under Vice President Scioli and President Kirchner, they have had an economic turnaround in the course of the last couple of years, particularly evident within the last year because we have seen a number of their economic problems start to come under control. We have seen a lessening of their inflation. We have seen them attempting to deal with their debt that is owed to international institutions as well as to other countries. As a matter of fact, there are very significant negotiations going on now with Argentine bondholders that are held around the world as to whether there will be some kind of forgiveness. Of course, you can imagine the bondholders are resisting that enormously. But we do know this: For Argentina to increase its economic capacity as the leader that Argentina is in Latin America, as it is very reflective of an elected government and elected democracy, it is clearly in the interest of the United States that Argentina does well.

We see that the Kirchner administration has benefited from the results of that economic revival, for President Kirchner and, no doubt, Vice President Scioli, in fact, are very high in popularity in the polls in Argentina.

It is interesting that another country in Latin America that has had tremendous economic problems—Peru, under President Toledo—likewise, is coming up in their economy, but President Toledo does not enjoy the high standing in the polls in his country of Peru that the Kirchner administration is enjoying in the polls in Argentina. I think, over the course of time, we will see President Toledo begin to rise in the polls, but he has had a very tough time.

The Vice President and I just had a discussion about a number of topics that are of mutual interest to our country. On his border with Brazil and with Paraguay, the Argentine-Paraguay-Brazilian border, called the triborder area, there is a city called Ciudad del Este, a place about which we are concerned because there is a lot

of money laundering, there is a lot of fundraising for Muslim charities, there are a lot of knockoff goods that are being sold, contraband being sold. So those conditions are ripe for terrorists to infiltrate, and it is our hope that these countries in the triborder region, the three major countries, will continue to cooperate with us.

I can tell you that Argentina has clearly cooperated with us. In the recent trip I took with Senator DODD and Senator CHAFEE where we visited these areas, we were quite encouraged with the cooperation on terrorism getting a foothold in that region. We have seen terrorism move from the Middle East. We have seen it in Europe. We have seen it move into Africa. Our concern now is that terrorism is moving into Latin America.

Another topic of enormous mutual interest to our two countries is the question of the direction that Venezuela will take and the direction that President Chavez is taking it.

In a recent meeting with President Chavez with these other Senators, he was very friendly. He said that he was, in fact, clamping down on the FARC and the ELN, the guerrillas in Colombia coming across into Venezuela. He said, in fact, he had just returned nine FARC members to President Uribe of Colombia, and then, lo and behold, we find evidence to the contrary shortly thereafter.

I have spoken with Vice President Scioli, as well as President Kirchner of Argentina, to intercede to see if there is any common ground with the President of Venezuela because Venezuela and the United States have a mutual interest. They sell half of their daily production of oil to us. We import 15 percent of our daily consumption of oil from Venezuela. Who knows, it could be a leader just like the leader from Argentina who is visiting with us today who could be the intermediary to help improve the relations if President Chavez is sincere.

Mr. President, I wish to welcome our distinguished guest from Argentina, who has now become a personal friend of mine and my wife Grace, to this cradle of our democracy, this great deliberative body. Earlier today, he visited with our Vice President, Vice President CHENEY. We are now glad to have him come and see the body over which the Vice President of the United States sits as the President of the Senate.

Welcome, Mr. Vice President.

I thank the Chair for this opportunity. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

COMMENDING THE PEOPLE OF IRAQ ON DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 38, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 38) commending the People of Iraq on the January 30, 2005, national elections.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time until 5:30 will be equally divided between the leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I will be speaking as the designee of Senator REID, the Democratic leader.

I rise to speak to the resolution congratulating the people of Iraq for their historic elections which took place on January 30.

The Iraqi elections were an important step forward and a tribute to the courage of the Iraqi people. It was actually incredible to see them go to the polls literally as they heard explosions in the streets. The images that we saw were quite moving.

The election is only the first step in a long road filled with potentially lethal potholes, and the next months are going to be very critical.

If the elections are to be a true turning point in the history of Iraq, then it is critical, and I believe the administration fully understands, that the administration act with the urgency that is needed in several key areas to sustain this very positive momentum.

In my view, the first priority is to build Iraqi capacity. The election, hopefully, strengthened the political legitimacy of the Iraqi government, but it did nothing to build its governing capacity.

The Iraqi government is no more capable today than it was the day before the elections of providing law and order, defeating the insurgents, or delivering basic services like water, gasoline, and electricity.

We have squandered 2 years developing these capabilities, and now it is time to move into high gear, especially in training Iraqi forces that are able to operate independently and effectively. Our ability to draw down responsibly in Iraq depends on that happening.

Second, we must promote political power sharing. Because many Sunni Arabs stayed home or, quite frankly, were scared away, understandably I might add, from the polls, they may feel even more alienated and continue to support the insurgency.

I am encouraged by conciliatory statements by some Sunni-affiliated organizations that suggest they are willing to work with the new government in drafting Iraq's permanent constitution. We all should remember this election was primarily about electing people who are going to be the people who write the constitution. In a sense, it is a little bit like our Constitutional Convention that took place in Philadelphia. These folks are going to write

a constitution, then they are going to present it to the Iraqi people essentially in a referendum at the end of this year, next fall. If the Sunni Arabs are not in on the deal, it is not likely to be accepted.

We must use our influence with the Shi'a and the Kurds to reach out to those who were left out, that is the Sunni Arabs, who are willing to participate in the writing of that constitution. They also have to be well represented in the cabinet of this transitional government.

Finally, just as the international community appointed a first-rate representative to the independent Iraqi election commission, so, too, should it consider similar assistance as Iraqis begin to grapple with the complexities of drafting a constitution.

Thirdly, we have to make Iraq the world's problem, not just our own. Secretary Rice said before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee "the time for diplomacy is now." The proof will be the administration's efforts and success in getting more help to train Iraqi security forces and to build Iraq's infrastructure. The administration has to make a diplomatic full court press.

Our allies claim to be concerned about the plight of the Iraqi people. Well, now is their chance to prove it. The Europeans have to get over it. George Bush has been elected for the next 4 years. The fact is, they must get involved and stop shirking their responsibility. We also must help the Iraqi government develop positive relations with its neighbors and regional states. Our Presidential elections are over, the American people have spoken, and it is time for our allies to get over their past differences with the Bush administration and act in their own self-interest to promote a stable, unified, representative Iraq.

A week ago, several of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle had the chance to visit with President Chirac. I think it is fair to say we sensed a new willingness to work with us if France is given a seat at the table.

Similarly, Chancellor Schroeder, during Secretary Rice's visit last week, offered additional German assistance to train Iraqi security forces, build Iraqi ministries, and support Iraqi civil institutions.

We must not squander yet another opportunity to bring our key allies into the effort.

Last April, I called for the creation of a board of directors—a contact group—consisting of the major powers, the Iraqi government, and key regional countries to support Iraq's transition. It would meet on a monthly basis to coordinate diplomatic, political, economic, and security support for Iraq.

I urge the administration to reconsider creating a contact group. The President could use his forthcoming visit to Europe to launch the effort.

A broader group which includes other nations on the U.N. Security Council, the G-8, and the multinational force

can meet on a regular, but more infrequent basis to discuss ways to support the contact group's efforts.

Fourth, we must show reconstruction results. More than a year ago, the administration told Congress it urgently needed \$18.4 billion for Iraq's reconstruction.

Congress delivered but the administration has not: Less than 20 percent of that money has been spent. Electricity production in Iraq has fallen to below the level it was under Saddam. Lines for gasoline stretch for miles. Oil production is lagging behind targets.

The administration must develop a plan to spend the money efficiently, with clear benchmarks. We should emphasize small-scale, Iraqi-run projects that deliver quick benefits to the Iraqi people—at least 40 percent of whom are unemployed and on giving our military commanders more flexibility to spend money directly on reconstruction.

Finally, I know that I do not need to remind my colleagues that we must support our military.

Our troops in Iraq must be equipped and trained for the mission in Iraq. The troop rotation schedule must not degrade readiness or diminish retention.

Above all, the administration must do what it has consistently failed to do in Iraq: Level with the American people.

A week ago Sunday was a good day for democracy, but there are many hard days and more sacrifice ahead. The President must make that clear if he is to sustain the support of the American people.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I support this resolution, and I join in commending the people of Iraq for the inspiring step they have taken toward self-government and a democratic future.

We all share the goal of spreading freedom and democracy and ending tyranny around the globe. There is no disagreement about these goals, and the importance of these ideals. America has been a beacon of democracy and freedom for more than two centuries.

When America is at its best, our deeds match our words. But many of us feel we haven't done that in Iraq. We care about our country. Stephen Decatur famously said, "My country, right or wrong." But others through the years have said it better—"our country right or wrong. When right, to be kept right. When wrong, to be set right."

We've paid a high price for the invasion of Iraq. Saddam is gone, but there were no weapons of mass destruction. The cakewalk the administration predicted became a quagmire instead. We shifted our focus away from the real threat to our national security—Osama bin Laden. We shattered our alliances and lost our respect in the world. More than 1,400 American soldiers have given their lives. 150,000 of our soldiers are tied down in Iraq. Our military has been stretched to the breaking point, with other threats ever-present. The families of our military, and our guard

and reserves are suffering. The American occupation has fueled the insurgency.

We are all moved by the bravery of the Iraqi people who voted in the recent election, and we honor the courageous men and women of our Armed Forces who continue to risk their lives for a better future for the Iraqi people.

The election is an opening, if we are wise enough to seize it, to demonstrate to the Iraqi people that we have no long-term designs on their country.

I hope the administration's decision to withdraw 15,000 American troops from Iraq is a down-payment on a more enlightened policy, and that the administration will seize this opening.

Our men and women in uniform deserve more. We need to redouble our efforts to train the Iraqi security forces before the election of a permanent Iraqi government at the end of the year, so that a stable and free Iraq will be established and our troops can come home with dignity and honor.

I congratulate the Iraqi people and the men and women of our Armed Forces who made this election possible, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first, let me express my appreciation to the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. Senator BIDEN is someone who has knowledge of foreign affairs that is astounding. Having served on that committee when I was in the House of Representatives, I know it is a great committee. It is so important to the success or failure of what happens in this country in relation to our foreign neighbors. I feel so relieved, knowing he is there, leading us on this most important committee. I appreciate his statement today.

The resolution now before the Senate commends the Iraqi people for their courage during the election on January 30. I think it is important that we express our admiration for the Iraqi citizens. That is what this resolution does. Millions cast their votes on that day. They turned out at the polls in spite of threats to voters, candidates, election workers, and in spite of acts of violence by those seeking to undermine the election process. The acts of violence took place. Approximately 40 Iraqis were killed that day, and a number of American soldiers.

I think we should express our gratitude to our troops in Iraq. They are the ones who have allowed this election to go forward. The U.S. military was central to the success of the election on election day. Without them and the overwhelming security they provided, there would not have been an election.

The Iraqi Independent Election Commission and the United Nations also did a good job. They also should be commended. They took the daunting task of trying to hold a free and fair election in the most dangerous conditions.

But no one should underestimate the challenges that lie ahead, as outlined

by Senator BIDEN. The election was only one step in Iraq's long march toward peace and stability. With the violence unending and the insurgency showing no signs of weakness, the President needs to spell out a clear and understandable plan for success in Iraq. In his State of the Union Address, the President said only that U.S. troops will remain until Iraq becomes a representative democracy that can defend itself and is at peace with its neighbors. This is not a strategy for success; it is an open-ended commitment with no end or plan in sight. Our troops and the American people deserve better than that.

It was only yesterday that the Pentagon, through its Secretary, Mr. Rumsfeld, when pressed for details about the insurgency and about the plan for going forward in Iraq, said only that there is an assessment taking place. This is not leadership.

The President needs to level with the American people. Once and for all he needs to spell out his plan, No. 1, to crush the insurgency, No. 2, to build Iraq's capacity to defend itself and deliver basic services to its people, No. 3, to get the reconstruction process back on track, and, No. 4, to increase political participation by all parties, especially the moderates, and finally, No. 5, to increase international involvement. These are five concrete steps that must take place. Much more is being done, for example, to enlist the international community's help in the training of Iraqi security forces and in the development of the Iraqi political and economic systems.

Will the President finally reach out to the other nations to take some of the burden off our forces and off the U.S. taxpayers? The proof will be in the President's actions, not in his rhetoric. As the administration continues on month by month, without a firm course or direction, the situation in Iraq grows more complex and more dangerous. The President's own National Intelligence Council concluded that Iraq is now a magnet for international terrorism. We have to do better—for our troops, for the American people, and for success in Iraq.

I, again, compliment the people of Iraq for a successful election.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, it has been 1 week since 8 million Iraqis cast their historic vote for freedom. Already a new sense of optimism is infusing the Iraqi people. I refer my colleagues to a story in the Washington Post this morning on this rising tide of civic pride.

A young pharmacy owner tells the paper:

You can feel the situation is changed. People seem to linger on the street longer. You can feel the momentum, the sense of optimism.

A Baghdad bakery store manager said that he, too:

... feels very optimistic things will change for the better because of the strong turnout in elections that reinforced our faith.

The Post reports car stereos and storefront speakers proudly blare the anthem, "My Homeland," which was banned by Saddam Hussein. Neighbors have more trust for one another after years and years of forced fear and suspicion.

Most encouragingly, Iraqi police officers and national guardsmen are getting better tips and better information on the terrorist insurgents who are widely regarded by the Iraqi people as criminals.

History is not going to soon forget that extraordinary sight of 8 million Iraqis risking their lives for freedom. Amidst those terrorist threats and bomb blasts, Iraqi voters streamed to over 5,000 polling stations across the country to cast their ballots. Families brought their young sons and daughters so they, too, could be witnesses to history.

We also cannot forget the Iraqis who voted in over a dozen countries besides Iraq, including the United States. In fact, in my own hometown of Nashville, TN, we saw thousands of Iraqis voting in their first election in years. Election officials say they will have the total vote count by Thursday of this week. Whatever the outcome, January 30, 2005, marked the beginning of a new era in Iraq and the beginning of changes that will reverberate throughout the region.

In the words of the President: The world heard "the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East."

As we know, many Sunnis in the Baghdad region did not vote out of fear—probably it was more a mistaken belief that their actions would in some way delegitimize the electoral process.

Over the last several days we have heard encouraging reports that Sunni leaders want to play an active role in the drafting of the constitution; that they want to be a part of the process and not separate from it, not isolated from it. Equally inspiring is the news that Shiite leaders are reaching out to the Sunnis and other minorities, reaching out to include them in the process. They, too, want the Sunni Iraqis to be part of that constitutional process, a part of the new, free, and democratic Iraq.

What we saw on the 30th mirrors what many in Iraq told me and my colleagues who went to Iraq, now several weeks ago. They were right. Before we went over, and actually after we came back, you would hear again and again the doubts about the elections. Many watchers were humbled by the transformative power of these elections, similar to what we saw in Afghanistan last October.

The effect these elections can have on a people and on a government and on a nation is so powerful, and we saw it played out recently in these elections.

We saw it in the Ukraine, we saw it in the Palestinian Authority and, as I mentioned, in October in Afghanistan and now in Iraq. We hope to see it in

the broader Middle East in the months and years ahead.

Once oppressed by a brutal dictatorship, the Iraqis are inspiring people all over the world with their courage and determination. They now stand as a great, bright hope in a land that was too long shrouded by tyranny and by violence.

We still have a long road and a hard road ahead. We all recognize that. No one should expect the violence to end, but the election and its ripple effects confirm that the Iraqi people are on the right path; and it renews our confidence in the human desire for liberty and for self-determination.

The United States joins the President in his praise of the Iraqi people by the resolution we are about to pass here in the Senate. In a few moments, we will pass a resolution that expresses our support for the Iraqis as they move forward toward a free and full democracy that respects the rule of law and the rights of all its citizens.

I want to give my personal thanks and thanks on behalf of all our colleagues to Senators LUGAR, DOLE, and the Democratic leader, HARRY REID, for all their leadership on this particular resolution.

The Senate and the American people stand shoulder to shoulder with the Iraqis as they continue their remarkable journey toward freedom and democracy. Last Sunday's elections were the first of many momentous steps to come.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the resolution. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA), is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURR). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 4 Leg.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Bingaman	Cantwell
Allard	Bond	Carper
Allen	Boxer	Chafee
Baucus	Brownback	Chambliss
Bayh	Bunning	Clinton
Bennett	Burr	Coburn
Biden	Byrd	Cochran

Coleman	Inhofe	Obama
Collins	Inouye	Pryor
Conrad	Isakson	Reed
Cornyn	Jeffords	Reid
Corzine	Johnson	Roberts
Craig	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Crapo	Kerry	Salazar
Dayton	Kohl	Santorum
DeMint	Kyl	Sarbanes
Dodd	Landrieu	Schumer
Dole	Lautenberg	Sessions
Domenici	Leahy	Shelby
Dorgan	Levin	Smith
Durbin	Lieberman	Snowe
Enzi	Lincoln	Specter
Feingold	Lott	Stabenow
Feinstein	Lugar	Stevens
Frist	Martinez	Sununu
Graham	McCain	Talent
Grassley	McConnell	Thomas
Gregg	Mikulski	Thune
Hagel	Murray	Voinovich
Harkin	Nelson (FL)	Warner
Hatch	Nelson (NE)	Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Akaka	Ensign	Vitter
Burns	Hutchison	
DeWine	Murkowski	

The resolution (S. 38) was agreed to.
The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 38

Whereas on January 30, 2005, Iraq held its first democratic elections in nearly half a century;

Whereas after more than 3 decades of enduring harsh repression and lack of freedom, millions cast ballots on January 30, 2005, to determine the future of their country in an election widely recognized as a success by the international community;

Whereas the hard work, contributions, vision, and sacrifices of the Interim Iraqi Government in undertaking major political, economic, social, and legal reforms and, in conjunction with the efforts of the Iraqi Independent Electoral Commission, in ensuring that Iraq held nationwide elections on January 30, and in not being intimidated by terrorist and insurgent forces resulted in the successful elections of January 30;

Whereas on January 30, President George W. Bush stated that the election in Iraq was a “milestone” in Iraq’s history and that the “world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East”;

Whereas the January 30 election is another step in the process of developing a free and democratic Iraq;

Whereas the people of Iraq cast votes to freely choose the 275-member Transitional National Assembly that will serve as the national legislature of Iraq for a transition period, name a Presidency Council, and select a Prime Minister;

Whereas the Transitional National Assembly will draft the permanent constitution of Iraq;

Whereas the election establishes a credible process for governing Iraq under a mandate from the majority of the people of Iraq for a new Iraq in which all communities are represented, minority rights are respected, and violence is not tolerated;

Whereas an estimated 14,300,000 Iraqis were registered to vote at more than 5,000 polling stations across Iraq and in 14 other countries;

Whereas, with 256 political entities composed of 18,900 Iraqi candidates standing for election in 20 different elections (the national election, 18 provincial elections, and Kurdistan Regional government election), voter turnout demonstrated widespread enthusiasm for self-determination;

Whereas Iraqi security forces joined with United States and Coalition forces in providing security for the elections;

Whereas despite these efforts, many Sunni Iraqis in some provinces did not vote because of fear and intimidation;

Whereas the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division and other nongovernmental organizations provided technical support and assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq and the Iraqi Interim Government;

Whereas the people of Iraq will again exercise their popular will through a national referendum in October 2005, when the Transitional National Assembly presents a draft constitution for Iraq;

Whereas national elections based on that constitution are then to be held in December 2005 to choose an Iraqi government in a manner prescribed by the constitution;

Whereas it is in the interest of Iraq, the Middle East, the United States, and the international community that Iraq successfully transitions to a functioning democratic state, as this may serve as a catalyst for peace and stability in the region; and

Whereas the Iraqi government needs assistance from the broader international community to further develop governing capacity, train effective security forces who can defeat the terrorists and insurgents and maintain law and order, improve economic conditions, and maintain essential services, such as the delivery of electricity, gasoline, and water; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the people of Iraq on the successful nationwide elections held in Iraq on January 30, 2005, and recognizes the elections as another step in developing a free and democratic Iraq;

(2) recognizes the desire for freedom and liberty of all individuals who served as candidates, campaign workers, United Nations and Iraqi election officials, and voters in the January 30, 2005, elections in Iraq and congratulates the new members of the Transitional National Assembly and the leaders of the provincial and regional governments;

(3) urges the new leadership of Iraq to move forward with drafting the constitution, upholding the law, and holding a referendum on the new constitution in October 2005;

(4) encourages participation of all groups and communities in the drafting of a new constitution and the formation of a permanent government for Iraq;

(5) recognizes and honors the sacrifices made for freedom and liberty in Iraq by the people of Iraq;

(6) commends the Iraqi security forces, and the U.S. armed forces and Coalition forces, who ensured the elections could be conducted in a relatively safe, secure, and credible manner;

(7) condemns and deplores all acts of violence and intimidation against the people of Iraq by members of the former Iraqi regime, insurgents, and other extremists and terrorists;

(8) supports the establishment of a fully democratic Iraqi government that respects the rule of law, promotes ethnic and religious tolerance, respects the rights of women and all minorities, provides security and stability for the people of Iraq, and has the capacity to maintain basic services such as the delivery of sufficient electricity, gasoline, and water;

(9) believes that it is in the interest of the people of Iraq, the Middle East, the United States, and the international community that Iraq transitions to a fully democratic state, and that doing so may serve as a catalyst for peace and stability in the region;

(10) calls on the international community, particularly Arab states, countries with predominantly Muslim populations, and all North Atlantic Treaty Organization member states, to provide military and police per-

sonnel to train and assist Iraqi security forces and to otherwise assist in the political and economic development of Iraq;

(11) encourages the newly-elected transitional government of Iraq to ensure that all Iraqis, including members of the Sunni religious community, are represented in the Constitution-writing process and in the new Iraqi cabinet to improve the prospects for national unity and consensus; and

(12) looks forward to welcoming Iraq into the world community of democratic nations.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES
SERGEANT JAVIER MARIN, JR.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a fallen Army soldier, SGT Javier Marin, Jr., of the A Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division. Sergeant Marin died on the 24th of January, 2005, in Mohammed Sacran, Iraq, when his military vehicle overturned into a nearby canal. He had just turned 29 years old on the 21st of January. Sergeant Marin is survived by his mother, Leslie Marin, and his sister, Evalina Marin, who live in Storm Lake, IA, as well as his father, Javier Marin, Sr., and many more family members and friends.

This simple tribute does not do justice to the immense courage and patriotism exemplified by SGT Javier Marin, Jr. In times of war and conflict such as this, it is often difficult to appreciate the gravity of a single loss in the midst of the increasing numbers of those who have given their lives. However, it is important that we take the time to reflect upon the lives of each of the men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the peace and freedom of the United States and the world. Today we honor the life of Sergeant Marin as we contemplate the ideals of liberty and democracy for which he fought and sacrificed. SGT Javier Marin, Jr., and all the men and women who have lost their lives in service to their country will have our eternal gratitude. My prayers are with Javier’s family and friends and my most heart-felt appreciation goes to the late SGT Javier Marin, Jr.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate