

Nebraska, South Dakota, Iowa, Oklahoma, Illinois, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Kansas, and California. Adding insult to injury, in those States where the agency declares drought disasters, it limits assistance to only farm-related small businesses. Take, for instance, South Carolina. A couple of years ago that entire State had been declared a disaster by the SBA, but the administration would not help all drought victims. Let me read to you from the declaration:

Small businesses located in all 46 counties may apply for economic injury disaster loan assistance through the SBA. These are working capital loans to help the business continue to meet its obligations until the business returns to normal conditions. . . . Only small, non-farm agriculture dependent and small agricultural cooperatives are eligible to apply for assistance. Nurseries are also eligible for economic injury caused by drought conditions.

The SBA has the authority to help all small businesses hurt by drought in declared disaster areas, but the agency won't do it. For years the agency has been applying the law unfairly, helping some and not others, and it is out of compliance with the law. The small business drought relief provision that passed yesterday as part of the Defense Authorization Act—and that I introduced this July as the Small Business Drought Relief Act of 2005 S. 1463—would force SBA to comply with existing law, restoring fairness to an unfair system, and get help to small business drought victims that need it.

This legislation has been thoroughly reviewed, passing the committee of jurisdiction and the full Senate three times, with supporters numbering up to 25, from both sides of the aisle. In addition to approval by the committee of jurisdiction, OMB, the Office of Management and Budget, approved virtually identical legislation in 2003. The legislation passed yesterday includes those changes we worked out with the administration, and I see no reason why this should not be retained in the final conference report and sent to the President for his signature.

I thank Senators SNOWE and BOND, our current and past chairs, both of whom have been supportive of this legislation each time it was introduced and passed. And I again thank Senators LEVIN and WARNER.

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 crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On September 3, 2003 in Bridgeport, CT, George Hamilton hosted an after-

noon picnic at his home. During the picnic, Hamilton and another guest discovered that one of the other men at the event was gay. They attacked and beat the gay man, causing injuries to his face and ribs. According to sources, throughout the attack the men shouted anti-gay slurs.

I believe that our Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, in all circumstances, from threats to them at home. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a major step forward in achieving that goal. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to speak briefly on some of the votes that this body held yesterday related to the fiscal year 2006 Department of Defense authorization bill. Overall, this year's Defense authorization bill was a step in the right direction—for supporting our troops, for strengthening our military, and for securing our country. While I regret the limited time that we had to debate amendments, the end result here is, on balance, positive.

There are, however, a couple of important votes on amendments that I would like to take this opportunity to discuss. First, the two amendments on Iraq—one offered by Senator LEVIN, which I cosponsored, and the other a Republican alternative offered by Senator WARNER, which I voted for.

These two amendments were very similar, and they were both steps in the right direction. They both express the Senate's belief that U.S. forces should not remain in Iraq indefinitely. They both establish expectations that calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq. They both stress the need for compromise among Iraqis to achieve a sustainable sovereign government. And they both require the President to begin sharing with the American people his campaign plan for success in Iraq.

But these two amendments, despite all of their similarities, have a fundamental difference. The Democratic amendment would have gone one important step further than the Republican amendment that we ended up adopting. It would have required the President to tell the American people not only his campaign plan, but estimated dates for the redeployment of U.S. forces—in other words, a timetable and strategy for success in Iraq. The Levin amendment acknowledged that unexpected contingencies might arise, and that such contingencies might change some of the projected redeployment dates, but I still believe that without these projected dates, we have left ourselves in an open-ended

commitment. That is not good for us, it is not good for Iraq, and it is not good for stability in the region.

Ultimately, I supported the Warner amendment because, as I have said, it is a step in the right direction. But it frankly doesn't take us any closer to convincing the American people that the President has a plan or a timetable for bringing our operations in Iraq to a successful conclusion. And I believe that our soldiers and the American public deserve better.

I would also like to briefly address three related amendments offered by Senators GRAHAM, BINGAMAN, and one by both Senators GRAHAM and LEVIN, dealing with the issue of habeas corpus and detainees who are in U.S. custody at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

I voted against Senator GRAHAM's underlying amendment on this issue because I believe that it would have been a step in the wrong direction for our country. That is not to say that we should be providing sanctuary to terrorists. We shouldn't. Any coward who is complicit in terrorist attacks against the U.S. and the civilized world must be brought to justice.

I also recognize that the new threat posed by international terrorist organizations such as al-Qaida, and their murderous henchmen, requires law-abiding nations to adapt in how they combat this threat.

But as we adapt to the terrorist threat, we have to make sure that we don't hurt ourselves, and the cause of freedom, in the process. America's judicial system is part of the bedrock of our country. Protecting its integrity should be a cause of highest concern. That is why I voted for Senator BINGAMAN's second-degree amendment to strike the Graham amendment's text that would have stripped U.S. courts of the ability to review writs of habeas corpus submitted by or on behalf of foreign detainees at Guantanamo Bay. I regret that Senator BINGAMAN's amendment failed on a party line vote.

I commend, however, Senator LEVIN for working with Senator GRAHAM to strike a compromise on this issue. The Graham-Levin compromise is not perfect. It certainly doesn't go as far as this Senator would have liked in fixing the underlying text. But faced with the prospect of the original Graham amendment being sent to conference in its original form, I chose to support the Graham-Levin compromise, which is a definite improvement over the underlying text. What is particularly heartening is that Senator GRAHAM, upon reflection, realized that his amendment went too far and accepted the moderating suggestions proposed by Senator LEVIN. My hope is that the conferees on this bill will continue to improve upon the Graham-Levin text.

Mr. President, as I said at the outset, the Defense authorization bill that the Senate passed yesterday is not perfect. But on balance, I believe that it sends a message to our troops that we are here to support them, and that we remain committed to providing them

with everything that they need to come home from their missions abroad safely and securely. At the end of the day, that is a good start.

PROFILES IN COMPASSION: IOWANS PITCH IN TO HELP VICTIMS OF KATRINA

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, Iowans are a big hearted, generous people, especially toward people in need. And citizens of my State proved this, once again, by extending a helping hand to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Some Iowans as individuals or in organized groups—traveled directly to the region to give assistance in their areas of expertise. Other collected funds and supplies to send to the gulf coast region. Still others helped to welcome more than 1,400 evacuees who made their way to Iowa. And, of course, countless Iowans reached into their bank accounts to contribute to the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and other organizations participating in the relief effort.

I would like to mention at least a few of the individuals and groups that went far beyond the call of duty in the aftermath of Katrina.

Even before Katrina made landfall—within 2 hours of receiving an emergency call—the Iowa-1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team based in Kirkwood, IA, began making its way to the gulf. Commanded by Dave Wilson, this team of rapid-response medical professionals set up headquarters in Bay St. Louis and Waveland, MS. In the first 14 days after the Hurricane hit, they took care of more than 2,700 patients. Their facilities were equipped to care for only 125 patients a day, but, on some days, the team cared for as many as 450 people.

Another Disaster Medical Assistance Team from Iowa, this one consisting of 30 members, helped to turn an abandoned hospital in Baton Rouge, LA into a full-fledged emergency room hospital. Key members of this team were Beth Boyd of Nevada, IA; Melissa Groet of Oskaloosa; and Kevin Long of Des Moines. A smaller crew from this DMAT team, all of them environmental health experts, deployed to rural Louisiana where they played a critical role in getting public water systems back online.

Some 140 members of the Iowa Army and Air National Guard deployed from Camp Dodge to the gulf region in a convoy of fuel tankers, water tankers, food and water trucks, and other much-needed equipment. Dubbed “Joint Task Force Iowa,” their mission was to provide medical, logistics, and water-purification support in Mississippi. In addition, the 185th Air Refueling Wing of the Iowa National Guard provided evacuation, transport, security, and fuel-handling missions from its base in Sioux City.

Meanwhile, back in Iowa, thousands of Iowans went into action in those initial days and weeks after Katrina hit

the gulf. For example, the Iowa Jaycees collected enough supplies to fill 20 semi tractor trailers bound for Louisiana. Half of the semis carried clean drinking water, and the others carried diapers, baby wipes, batteries, hygiene products, canned food, and much more, all bound for Louisiana. Jaycee chapters all across Iowa contributed to this magnificent effort.

So many individual Iowans stood out as profiles in compassion during this difficult time. For example, Pastor Rod Bradley of the True Bible Baptist Church personally made three trips by car to pick up evacuees in Gonzales, LA. Wesley Jones traveled from Iowa to the gulf to help clear away debris. And school children in LeClaire, IA, helped evacuee children to adjust to their new school, and sold homemade bracelets to raise money for the evacuee families.

Mr. President, obviously, these are just snapshots. I cannot possibly name all the people from my State who gave generously of their time, talents, and energy to assist the victims of Katrina. Thousands of Iowans opened their hearts, their homes, and their pocketbooks. I simply want to take this time to thank them—the named and the unnamed for their amazing response to this tragedy. They have done Iowa proud, and I am deeply grateful to them for their service and sacrifice.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT WORKS SECURITY ACT

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act of 2005. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill.

When Timothy McVeigh drove a rental vehicle up to a Federal building in Oklahoma City, Americans began to look at trucks in a completely new way. So we learned to screen vehicles to safeguard against such a tragedy ever happening again.

On September 11, 2001, a thing as ordinary as an airplane became an instrument of destruction and terror, robbing innocent people of the rest of their lives. As a result, we have gotten pretty good at screening people and their luggage at airports, and at keeping planes out of protected air space.

While these changes are necessary and prudent, there is another part of the equation to consider: the act of terror not yet committed. We must look at the threats our security experts have identified and address these potential threats.

One such threat is a possible attack on our Nation's wastewater treatment plants. Traditionally, wastewater treatment plants have stored chemicals that, if used properly, clean the water of harmful organisms. When most of these plants were built, we did not design them to ward against use as potential weapons of mayhem and destruction. Appropriately, we were only concerned about the environment, safety, and preventing accidents.

Since September 11, as security concerns have been identified in this sector, many of these facilities have taken steps on their own to switch to safer alternative treatments or to further secure chemicals and the facilities against deliberate acts of terrorism. But, such changes are expensive. Many of these facilities need assistance to upgrade security at the facility and to switch to these safer alternative forms of treatment.

The Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act of 2005 puts in place requirements to assess facilities' vulnerability and provides much needed financial assistance to upgrade security and to switch to safer forms of chemical treatment. My only regret is that the bill does not pick up more of the cost of the assessments and upgrades. I believe the Federal Government needs to take on a larger share of funding these types of homeland security improvements.

This is a much needed bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

LEAKGATE AND THE INDICTMENT OF LEWIS LIBBY

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, 2 years ago, after the Washington Post first reported that “two senior White House officials” had exposed Valerie Plame Wilson’s identity as a covert operative of the Central Intelligence Agency, I repeatedly came to the Senate floor to call on President Bush to act quickly to identify the leakers.

After all, this was a potentially illegal act committed by “senior White House officials.” This should have outraged everyone at the White House. President Bush should have taken steps to identify the perpetrators forthwith.

Bear in mind that the number of “senior White House officials” with the appropriate security clearances and access to knowledge about Ms. Wilson’s identity could be counted on one hand—two hands at a maximum. If Mr. Bush had been serious about identifying the perpetrators, those 5 to 10 “senior White House officials” could have been immediately summoned to the Oval Office and questioned by the President. This matter would have been resolved literally within 24 hours.

But that did not happen. There was no outrage. There was no internal investigation. There was no angry President Bush demanding answers from his senior aides. Instead, we have had more than 2 years of concealment, coverup, and contempt.

Well, Special Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald has now broken that coverup wide open. Vice President DICK CHENEY’s top aide, Scooter Libby, has been indicted for lying and obstructing justice in order to conceal his role as one of the two leakers. “Official A,” the second leaker, is President Bush’s top aide, Karl Rove, according to multiple reports in the media, quoting senior White House sources.