

their renting or leasing practices or in the care of the vehicle. This provision is a common sense reform that holds vehicle operators accountable for their own actions and does not unfairly punish owners who have done nothing wrong.

Unfortunately, the Senate bill does not contain this important reform. I urge my colleagues to consider the merits of this provision and retain the House-passed language in the conference bill.

#### TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT

I-49 AND I-69

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a matter of great importance to my State, one that I hear about every time I go home. Economic development and job creation is something that every Arkansan is concerned about. One surefire way to generate economic development and create jobs is through highway construction. The U.S. DOT estimates that for every \$1 billion of investment in highways, 47,500 jobs are created, but the benefits go far beyond that. It does Arkansans no good to have good health care, education, and jobs if they don't have the roads to get there. Furthermore, business investors do not want to place their companies anywhere that does not have ready access to interstate roads.

My State is in the process of building two new interstates that would jumpstart economic growth, relieve congestion, and provide two additional freight corridors between our two largest trading partners.

Future Interstate 49 connects Canada with New Orleans and would provide the only north-south corridor within 300 miles, cutting through Kansas City, MO and Western Arkansas. I-49 is extremely important to Arkansas, as it traverses the fastest growing part of my State, which is home to Wal-Mart, Tyson's, JB Hunt Transportation, and numerous other transportation companies. The potential for freight movement along this corridor is enormous. However, the State of Arkansas has lacked the funds to make significant progress along the most expensive part of the corridor.

Future Interstate 69 connects Canada with Mexico through Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas. It also has enormous potential for freight movement, but it also cuts across the poorest region of my State where economic development is vitally important to the future of local communities. The amount of jobs a project such as I-69 would create has the potential to lift these areas out of poverty.

During debate on the highway bill, I have requested amounts that would provide Arkansas with a sufficient amount of money to make significant progress on these two extremely important roadways.

Mr. BAUCUS. I want to first commend the Senator for his continued

work on transportation issues. He is a real leader in this area and I appreciate his hard work on behalf of the State of Arkansas. I am aware of the Senator's requests and I understand the importance of these projects to Arkansas and the country. My colleague has been very persistent and we have worked hard to include a formula in the bill that provides a significant increase in funding to Arkansas so that the State may be able to accomplish this task. Specifically, Arkansas stands to gain over \$550 million over the 5 years of this bill, a 30 percent increase from the levels they received under TEA-21. Would this amount be sufficient to make progress on the two important interstates Senator PRYOR has mentioned?

Mr. PRYOR. I thank the Senator from Montana for his question. My understanding is that this amount would be enough to make substantial progress on both projects until the next reauthorization. However, since this bill does not include references to specific projects, the difficulty would be to make sure these projects did indeed receive a large portion of this increase. Since the increases are largely through apportioned programs to the State, could my State use the increases to fund these interstate projects?

Mr. BAUCUS. The Senator is correct that the bill in the Senate does not have specific funding for projects. However, it is up to the State of Arkansas to make the decision on how to spend this increase in funding and the additional money to the State can certainly be used to make progress on these projects. I would expect that many States would consider projects such as the ones described in Arkansas that are nationally significant. It would be up to the State to set those priorities and move forward. I believe the projects in Arkansas, both I-49 and I-69, are in various stages of development and construction. It is my understanding that both projects are eligible for Federal funding under this reauthorization bill we have written.

Mr. PRYOR. I thank Senator BAUCUS for his hard work as a manager of this bill and the ranking member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee of EPW and ranking member of the Finance Committee, and I compliment him for this strong bill he has helped put together. The Senator always listens to my concerns, and I appreciate his willingness to include such robust funding for my home State.

#### DESIRE TO WITHDRAW S.J. RES. 13

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, several weeks ago I introduced a joint resolution which has been given the number S.J. Res. 13. This resolution is a one sentence amendment to the Constitution declaring that marriage is between a man and a woman. I would like the RECORD to reflect at this point that I would like to withdraw this resolution.

I understand that under the Senate rules, a unanimous consent withdrawing a joint resolution would not be in order. Thus, copies S.J. Res. 13 will remain available from the Government Printing Office. However, while it is my intent to continue to hold hearings on the important issue of traditional marriage, it is not my intent to advance S.J. Res. 13 through the legislative process.

#### ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. JOHNSON. Last week, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld sent his base closure recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. I am deeply disappointed with his decision to include Ellsworth Air Force Base. This recommendation is short-sighted and harmful to our national security. I am confident that the BRAC Commission will recognize the invaluable contribution that Ellsworth makes to the defense of our homeland and will support removing it from the list.

Ellsworth is one of only two bases in the country where the B-1 is stationed. In the past decade, the B-1 has been invaluable to our national defense and it is truly the backbone of our bomber fleet. B-1 crews stationed at Ellsworth have flown missions in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, B-1s were integral in liberating Iraq by dropping more than half the satellite guided munitions on critical targets including command and control facilities, bunkers, and surface-to-air missile sites.

In addition, Ellsworth is strategically located and has excellent access to B-1 training ranges. It is not threatened by urban encroachment or congested air space and has strong community support. During the past decade, I have used my position on the Military Construction Appropriations subcommittee to help direct funding to Ellsworth for critical upgrades including a new base operations building, a B-1 training facility, and military housing that ranks amongst the best in the country. Given its ideal location, as well as the long-term investment in the base's infrastructure, Ellsworth is capable of expanding and accepting new missions.

I emphatically disagree with the Secretary's recommendation to close Ellsworth, and I am eager to work with the Ellsworth Task Force, and the entire South Dakota Congressional delegation, to ensure Ellsworth remains a vital part of our national defense. Ellsworth is a premier installation that has proven it can be a competitive military base for decades to come.

To that end, I am cosponsoring legislation that will postpone this round of base closures. At a time when we are engaged in two military conflicts, as well as rotating soldiers back to the U.S. from overseas installations, we should not be closing bases at home. Simultaneously closing domestic and

overseas bases will irrevocably damage our ability to defend against threats at home and abroad.

This bill will delay this round of domestic base closures until the recommendations offered by the Overseas Basing Commission report has been reviewed by the Department of Defense. In addition, the bill would prohibit this round of base closures from commencing until combat units currently deployed to Iraq have returned home and the Pentagon completes the quadrennial defense review. I firmly believe that these are reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure we do not irreversibly impair our national defense.

The entire State of South Dakota is proud of Ellsworth and the men and women stationed there for their role in keeping America safe. We are confident that the commission will see the military value of Ellsworth and will support removing it from the base closure list.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### HONORING SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to publicly commend two American Legion Auxiliary units in South Dakota for the wonderful services they provide to their communities. I point to Unit 230 Pike-Huska American Legion Auxiliary Post of Aurora, and Unit 74 of Brookings as fine units whose efforts are worthy of recognition.

In April of 2005, Unit 230 in Aurora sponsored an Election Forum designed to introduce voters to the four candidates running for Aurora City Council. The meeting enabled the community to not only meet the candidates, but also learn about their positions on various issues.

Additionally, Aurora Unit 230 joined with Brookings Unit 74 to fulfill "The Dictionary Project." Since Aurora school children are bussed to the three schools in the Brookings School District, the two units collaborated by purchasing and hand delivering 206 dictionaries, one to each third grade student in the Brookings district. Upon receiving the dictionary, each student signed it, thus establishing it as his or hers to keep. "The Dictionary Project" was so successful that the Auxiliary plans to continue this generous program each year.

I am proud to have this opportunity to honor the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 230 and Unit 74 for their outstanding service. Their commitment to encouraging voter awareness and helping our young people in their pursuit of knowledge is admirable. I strongly commend their hard work and dedication, and I am very pleased that their efforts are being publicly recognized and celebrated. It is with great honor that I share their impressive commitment to civic duty with my colleagues.●

##### CIVIC EDUCATION IN ACTION

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize the outstanding efforts of a group of young Idahoans from Madison High School in Rexburg, ID. These young men and women came to Washington, D.C., to represent my State in the national finals of the "We the People: the Citizen and the Constitution" program. They represented Idaho well and are a tribute to our State's youth.

The national finals include a mock congressional hearing which gives the students the opportunity to translate their specialized learning in history, social studies, government and civics into action. As they use their newly-gained knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to examine, counter and defend issues facing America today, they come to appreciate the timeless nature of this great document. This experience gives students the opportunity to apply civic values to real-life challenges and will serve them in whatever they choose to do after they graduate from high school.

Idaho can be proud of the growth of civic virtue in these young people. As they look beyond themselves to the realm of the public good, Idaho and America will benefit as these individuals develop into responsible, intelligent citizens who practice discernment in judgment in matters of concern to our State and Nation. In the future, these student citizens will be more inclined to exhibit leadership faithful to the ideals upon which our country was built and consonant with the notions of liberty, freedom, justice and rule of law.●

##### CONGRATULATING STEVE SINTON

• Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Steve Sinton of Shandon, CA, on winning the American Farmland Trust's 2005 Steward of the Land Award. This award recognizes Steve for his lifelong commitment to conservation and sound stewardship practices. He is the ninth American farmer to win this award, and I am pleased to praise his efforts and achievements today.

Created in 1997 in honor of farmer and conservationist Peggy McGrath Rockefeller, the American Farmland Trust gives the Steward of the Land Award each year to a farmer or farm family in the United States who has shown outstanding leadership at the national, State, and local levels in protecting farmland and caring for the environment. This award recognizes ranchers such as Steve and helps raise awareness about the public benefits of good stewardship and the importance of conserving land for future generations.

Through his work on his own land and throughout the State of California, Steve Sinton has epitomized the spirit of this award through his dedication to protecting our country's farmlands and

ranchlands, understanding how critical they are to supporting our local communities, sustaining our Nation's food supply, and preserving clean water and wildlife habitat.

A fourth generation California rancher, Steve and his wife Jane manage 18,000 acres of ranchland and 125 acres of vineyards where they utilize a variety of innovative practices to promote sustainability and protect the environment. He effectively works with local governments to protect ranch and farmlands, and Steve and his family have also played an important role in providing habitat for the reintroduction of the California condor on their land, including essential nesting grounds.

But Steve's efforts go far beyond his own family's farm. Steve helped form the California Rangeland Trust in 1998 where he was elected to serve as the founding chairman. With his leadership, the Rangeland Trust has protected over 170,000 acres of ranchland. Steve has also served as vice-chairman of the California Cattlemen's Association Land Use Committee, where his dedication and leadership galvanized support among the ranching community for agricultural conservation and conservation practices.

A look at Steve's family history makes clear why he works so hard for farmland preservation and takes these efforts so seriously. Steve's family came to San Luis Obispo County in 1874 and bought the family farm the following year, meaning that Steve's family has been ranching in the county for 130 years. Steve grew up on the family ranch and attended my alma mater, Stanford University, before heading to the University of Colorado School of Law. After five years with the California Department of Water Resources in Sacramento, CA, Steve returned to San Luis Obispo County to help manage the family's ranches and continue his private water law practice. In addition to all this, Steve also has been active in his community, working with numerous organizations, coaching sports, and serving on the Shandon School Board for fifteen years.

As a U.S. Senator representing the State of California, I congratulate Steve on winning this award and thank him for his many years of service to our State. I wish to send my very best to Steve, his wife Jane, and their two children Julie and Daniel.●

##### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:39 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2360. An act making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.