

ninth president, is a great leader, and we work well together. He has been successful in advancing the university and winning accolades from students, faculty, and educators nationwide.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Western Kentucky University on its centennial year.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am encouraged by reports regarding progress the Judiciary Committee made on the immigration bill today. I understand that the committee has scheduled a meeting for Monday, March 27 when we return from our break to try to conclude work on the bill.

It is very important that we allow this process to continue. The committee should be given the opportunity to report out a consensus bill on a bipartisan basis. I want to commend Senators SPECTER, LEAHY, and KENNEDY, among others, for their efforts to draft a comprehensive immigration bill and I hope that the Leader will give them the time they need to complete their work.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD letters that were sent to Senator FRIST today from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Restaurant Association and the National Roofing Contractors Association that express a similar desire.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2006,

Hon. BILL FRIST,
Senate Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FRIST: On behalf of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, I am writing to request that you allow the Senate Judiciary Committee additional time to develop and report out an immigration reform measure for consideration by the full Senate.

While we fully appreciate that the Senate floor schedule is very crowded, and that you must adhere to a schedule to move important legislation through the process, it is apparent that more time is needed by the Committee to adequately consider the many complex issues surrounding immigration. Hundreds of amendments have been introduced by Senators sitting on the Committee, and it would seem that those actually offered should be given due consideration.

Unfortunately, it has now become clear that this will be impossible under a deadline of March 27, with the result that the Committee will not be able to report out a bill by that deadline. The Committee has an obvious expertise to bring to bear on the many difficult, and frankly, controversial issues involved and it should be given an adequate opportunity to shape legislation before consideration by the full Senate.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN.

MARCH 16, 2006.

Hon. BILL FRIST,
Senate Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FRIST: On behalf of the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA), we write today to urge you to allow the Senate Judiciary Committee the time necessary to complete its work on an immigration reform measure for consideration by the full Senate. We fully appreciate the breadth of business placing demands on the Senate calendar, but given the paramount economic and national security concerns addressed in this legislation, it is imperative that the Committee have adequate time to consider the complexities of immigration reform in a full and reasoned fashion.

Established in 1886, NRCA is one of the nation's oldest trade associations and the voice of roofing contractors worldwide. It is an association of roofing and waterproofing contractors, material manufacturers, distributors, architects, consultants and engineers. NRCA has over 5,000 member companies from all 50 states and 54 countries and is affiliated with 105 local, state, regional and international roofing contractor associations.

As you are aware, hundreds of amendments have been submitted by Committee members. Unfortunately, it has become clear during the markup process that your March 27 deadline will not be met given the sheer volume of amendments to be considered.

We commend you for your commitment to bringing immigration reform before the full Senate. The topic is one of our most pressing public policy challenges and ripe for discussion. Toward that end, NRCA looks forward to a vigorous and comprehensive debate on the Senate floor that addresses America's national security needs, while ensuring the long-term health of our economy.

Respectfully submitted,

CRAIG S. BRIGHTUP,
Vice President, Government Relations.
R. CRAIG SILVERTOOTH,
Director of Federal Affairs.

NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION,
March 16, 2006.

Hon. BILL FRIST,
U.S. Senate, Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FRIST: On behalf of the National Restaurant Association, I am writing to ask that more time be allotted to allow the Judiciary Committee to complete its work on comprehensive immigration reform legislation presently before it.

We greatly appreciate your setting aside substantial time on the Senate calendar for consideration of this critically important bill, but think that time would be best spent if the Senate could have the benefit of full consideration of the proposal by the committee of jurisdiction.

Given the tremendous number of amendments offered thus far, and the conflicts with other committee and floor activities impeding the Judiciary Committee's ability to operate, it is clear that without an extension the Committee will be unable to complete its work by the deadline you had earlier set.

In the interest of producing the best possible policy, we respectfully urge you to extend the deadline to allow the Committee to complete its responsibilities,

Sincerely,

JOHN GAY,
Senior Vice President,
Government Affairs and Public Policy.

RECOGNITION OF THE RAPE, ABUSE, AND INCEST NATIONAL NETWORK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to thank everyone involved with the Rape, Abuse, Incest, National Network, RAINN, for giving me the Congressional Crime Fighter Award. This is a great honor.

I have worked in public service, in one way or another, for about 40 years now. During my career, I have become aware of the horrible effects of sexual assault and child abuse—on the victims, but also on our community as a whole. It is a silent epidemic that is shattering lives across America.

We have made progress in helping abuse victims, and that is largely because of the hard work of your organization. Since 1994, more than 970,000 people have called your National Sexual Assault Hotline. More than 5,300 of them were Nevadans. Your work makes an incredible difference in people's lives.

But too many victims are still suffering in the shadows. We need to do more to strengthen laws to fight sexual assault, to provide law enforcement with the tools and funding they need, and to support victims.

I have always been a strong supporter of the Violence Against Women Act. As you probably know, VAWA was landmark legislation that expanded the Federal Government's commitment to eliminating violence against women. I was a cosponsor of the original act back in 1990, and I have voted for it every time it has come up for reauthorization.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have worked to get funding for sexual assault prevention programs and victims aid programs in Nevada and around the country.

I was also happy to work with RAINN last year to get funding to help victims. I hope some of this money will be used specifically to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. We set aside \$500,000 in last year's Federal budget. I think it should have been more the Senate approved more, but the House did not—but I am happy we were able to get the funding.

I know there is a lot more work to be done, and I look forward to working with all of you in the future. Thank you again for this honor.

SUPPORT HOMELAND SECURITY AND EDUCATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleges to support the Homeland Security Education Act. This bill encourages initiatives to increase the number of Americans trained in science, technology, engineering, math, and foreign languages.

Our security and economic future depends on the next generation of workers and their ability not just to keep up, but to innovate. Science and technology are the engines of economic

growth. We must invest in our students and our educational system by providing the training and resources needed in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and foreign languages.

The United States graduates some of the world's best engineers, scientists and mathematicians; however, China, India, South Korea, and Japan are educating a higher proportion of their people in technology, science, and math. According to the National Science Board, in 2004, 59 percent of undergraduates in China and 66 percent of Japanese undergraduates received a degree in science and engineering. In the United States, only 32 percent of the undergraduate degrees awarded were in science and engineering. In 2004, China and India graduated over 600,000 and 350,000 engineers, respectively, while the United States graduated about 70,000 engineers.

In an increasingly global economy and an atmosphere of heightened security, we also need people who can speak a foreign language, particularly less commonly taught languages such as Arabic, Farsi, Chinese, and Korean. Al-Qaida operates in more than 75 countries where hundreds of languages and dialects are spoken. Half of all European citizens speak another language. In contrast, only 9 percent of American students enroll in a foreign language course in college. Even though enrollment in Arabic classes has increased, it represents less than 1 percent of all foreign language enrollments in institutions of higher education.

According to the National Education Association, while student enrollments in education are rising rapidly, more than a million veteran teachers are nearing retirement. Almost a third of our new teachers leave the profession after only 3 years. About half exit after five. We will need more than 2 million new teachers in the next decade. We are feeling this teacher recruitment challenge most acutely in high-need subject areas such as special education, math, science, engineering, and critical foreign languages.

The Homeland Security Education Act encourages the smart and eager students in our country to seek degrees in science, technology, engineering, math, and foreign languages by providing \$5,000 scholarships to undergraduate students who obtain such degrees. Scientists, engineers, technology professionals and those fluent in foreign languages are encouraged to return to the classroom through \$15,000 scholarships. New grant programs encourage educational institutions, public entities, and businesses to enter into partnerships that improve math and science curricula, establish programs that promote students' foreign language proficiency along with their science and technological knowledge, and create and establish foreign language pathways from elementary school through college.

The technological challenge to our country has been explored from many

different angles—from the founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, and the chairman of Intel, Craig Barrett, to the journalist and writer Tom Friedman and the National Academies of Science. The need to strengthen our students' proficiency in science, technology, engineering, math, and foreign languages is well documented. We can't afford not to invest in thoughtful Federal initiatives that foster the kind of technological innovation this country has grown up on. Research and development is critical, but it all starts in the schools. The Homeland Security Education Act will help put our resources where they are needed most.

NEW COMPREHENSIVE COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I have spoken on the floor several times about the administration's ill-conceived, poorly executed, and self-defeating strategy in Iraq. Today, I intend to talk about how the war in Iraq is having a far-reaching and negative impact on our ability to conduct an effective fight against international terrorism. I saw this firsthand during a recent visit to Thailand and Indonesia, two valuable partners in the fight against terrorism in a strategically critical and often underappreciated region. I visited these two countries to gain a detailed understanding of the radical Jihadist networks that are proliferating throughout the region and of what it will take to effectively confront this threat.

I bring back from the trip both good news and bad news. The good news is that we have a significant opportunity in Thailand, Indonesia, and in Southeast Asia in general, to get our counterterrorism strategy right. It is not too late to stem the relationship between international terrorist networks and local extremist organizations. Nor is it too late to tackle the root causes of extremism in the region.

Unfortunately, there is bad news. Unless we develop a truly comprehensive, global strategy to counter terrorist threats, we will miss the opportunity to gain the upper hand in the fight against terrorism in Southeast Asia at what couldn't be a more critical time. And changing our misguided policies in Iraq must be a central element of this strategy.

First, international terrorist networks are alive and well in Southeast Asia. During my visit, I examined the current nature of a leading regional terrorist organization, al-Jesmaah al-Islamiyah, or "JI", and its affiliates—the threat it continues to pose to countries throughout the region, how it has survived the deaths and arrests of some of its key leaders, and its ties with al-Qaida. Most importantly, I gained a more detailed understanding of the conditions that have provided JI with a recruitment base and operational space.

JI takes advantage of vast areas of ocean, isolated islands, weak or corrupt local and provincial governments, the absence of rule of law, and marginalized Islamic populations to develop its strength. JI has a presence throughout the region. And while arrests of prominent JI leaders in the last few years have helped shed light on the organization, it continues to operate in loosely formed cells, in regionally oriented entities, and in partnership with other terrorist organizations like the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines.

That said, according to a number of sources, including the International Crisis Group, Congressional Research Service, and the State Department, JI and al-Qaida have developed a symbiotic relationship. There is some overlap in membership. They have shared training camps in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Mindanao, and often help one another with supply chain systems and transportation. Al-Qaida has also provided JI with considerable financial support.

JI and al-Qaida also exploit similar ground as they seek safe haven and new recruits. These groups feed on anti-United States and anti-Western sentiment, fueled in part by discontent and anger about United States policies in Iraq. Unfortunately, the administration's refusal to provide a flexible timeline for withdrawing United States troops from Iraq allows these groups to portray us as occupiers of a Muslim country. Until we show that we are truly committed to redeploying United States troops from Iraq, terrorist organizations will continue to find recruits in otherwise moderate Muslim communities, and we will continue to make it harder to win the full backing of potential partners and allies in the fight against terrorist networks.

It is in this light that I would like to lay out some of my key observations from my recent trip. I will talk about the political and security dynamics in both Thailand and Indonesia, and will argue that a new counterterrorism strategy in the region must incorporate respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the need to hold our friends and allies accountable for making necessary democratic reforms.

I would like to begin with Thailand. Thailand is a critical strategic partner of the United States in, among other things, the fight against al-Qaida and its affiliates. Our close political and military relationship goes back decades and is a vital component of United States national security policies in the region. The 1954 Manila Pact, together with the 1962 Thanat-Rusk communique, forms the basis of the long-standing United States-Thai security relationship. Thailand's airfields and ports play a particularly important role in United States global military strategy, including having served as the primary hub of the relief effort for the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Thailand has also shown its willingness to stand by the United States in