AMENDMENT NO. 3809

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3809 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4939, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3810

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3810 proposed to H.R. 4939, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3810 proposed to H.R. 4939, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. LOTT, Mr. ALLARD, and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 2691. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase competitiveness in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill that will reform our immigration policies to make the United States more competitive, called the Securing Knowledge, Innovation, and Leadership, or ''SKIL'' bill. Other original cosponsors of this legislation include Senators ALLARD, ALLEN, BENNETT, ENZI, and LOTT.

Our ability to innovate is crucial to the success of our economy. By investing in science and technology, we revolutionize our economy and improve the world. The President has responded to this need by proposing the American Competitiveness Initiative. And I am a proud co-sponsor of legislation that has been introduced in the Senate: the Protecting America's Competitive Edge (PACE bills) and National Innovation Act.

But there is still more that can be done. Immigration policy must be part of any discussion of competitiveness. The United States does not produce enough engineers—China graduates four times as many engineers as the U.S., and within a few years, approximately 90 percent of all scientists and engineers in the world will be in Asia. Foreign students fill that gap right now in the U.S., but then our immigration policy—not our economy—forces them to return home because there are not enough highly skilled work visas.

In the long run, we must improve our schools and encourage more U.S. students to study engineering and mathematics. But we also must adapt immigration policy so that when U.S. students are educated in engineering fields, there will be U.S. jobs for them to fill. With the SKIL bill, foreign students who graduate from U.S. institutions will be able to stay and work in the United States. The bill will allow companies to retain highly skilled and educated workers.

The SKIL bill requires the government to change its processes so that companies do not waste valuable resources. If a worker has been in the U.S. and has complied with all immigration laws, he should be allowed to renew his visa here in the U.S. Why make that worker go to a consulate when all of the processing can be done here in the U.S.?

The SKIL bill exempts from annual visa limit any foreign student graduating from a U.S. university with a Master's or PhD in essential fields. Foreign workers with extraordinary skills, such as a Nobel Prize winner or an international scholar—should not have to wait for a visa. The President has also called for an increase in H–1B visas.

As Chair of the Immigration subcommittee, I have seen how immigration—both legal and illegal—affects all aspects of our lives. I am pleased that there is so much discussion about immigration and about improving avenues for workers to enter our country. But immigration today will shape the country that our children grow up in. And so there needs to be more discussion about the kinds of immigration that will most benefit our economy and our country.

I am introducing the SKIL bill because I don't believe enough attention has been focused on legal immigrants, especially the highly skilled workers who contribute to our economy and comply with our laws. It is my hope that this legislation will allow U.S. companies to retain a highly educated workforce until we can channel more American students into the math, science, and engineer pipeline. The SKIL bill is yet another important piece of the U.S. competitiveness agenda, and I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation.

By Mr. BURNS:

S. 2693. A bill to prevent congressional reapportionment distortions; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, over the last few months, we have discussed at length the problem of illegal immigration. What many may not realize is that illegal immigration affects our system of representation as well.

After the 1990 Census, my State of Montana lost one of its two seats in the House of Representatives. Ten years later, our great State had grown to more than 900,000 residents, but still did not gain a seat.

Meanwhile, we have an estimated 12 million illegal aliens in this country today, and all of them will be a factor to determine which States gain or lose a seat in the House of Representatives after the Census in 2010. This is because current policy tells us to count everyone in this country, illegal or not, when determining Congressional apportionment.

If these trends continue, we will have millions more illegal aliens counted in the 2010 Census. The result will be more seats lost in States that have actually increased in population of law-abiding U.S. residents.

Thankfully, my State of Montana cannot lose any more seats in the House of Representatives. We are down to our last one. Other States, however, will not be so fortunate.

Law-abiding citizens should not have to lose representation because millions of illegal immigrants ignore our laws. That is why today, I am introducing the Fair and Accurate Representation Act. This bill will exclude the masses of illegal aliens in this country from being part of the Congressional apportionment process.

If we act now, we can get started on reforming this process in time for the 2010 Census. The voting rights of law-abiding citizens should not be diluted by those who choose to enter this country illegally. I call upon my colleagues in the Senate to join me in correcting this process, so that those who lawfully reside in this country receive fair and accurate representation.

By Mr. CRAIG (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2694. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to remove certain limitation on attorney representation of claimants for veterans benefits in administrative proceedings before the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I have sought recognition today to comment on legislation that the distinguished Senator from South Carolina, Senator GRAHAM, and I are introducing. This bill will provide veterans with the right to hire counsel to represent them in proceedings before the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and will help ensure that all who represent veterans are held to the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct.

As President Abraham Lincoln eloquently expressed nearly 150 years ago, this Nation has an obligation ''to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan.'' In keeping with that charge, the Federal Government provides a wide array of benefits to veterans and their dependents, through an administrative system that is intended to be informal, claimant-friendly, and non-adversarial.

During recent years, however, veterans' organizations, VA, and others have observed that this system has become increasingly complex. Enhanced legal requirements and layers of procedural steps intended to protect the rights of veterans have increased both the complexity of the system and how long it takes to process a claim. At the same time, with the Nation at war and servicemembers deployed around the world, the disability claims filed by returning veterans have become more

complex. Many of these claims are based on disabilities caused by environmental exposures, traumatic brain injuries, psychological trauma, severe combat wounds, and other highly complex medical conditions, which by their nature may entail complex questions of causality or intricate factual or legal analyses.

Despite the increasing complexity of many cases, all 24 million living veterans are prohibited from hiring a lawyer to help them navigate the VA system. It is only after a veteran has spent months and even years exhausting the extensive VA administrative process that the veteran then may retain counsel—a process that often takes 3 or more years to complete. As the National Organization of Veterans' Advocates (NOVA) testified before the Veterans' Affairs Committee last year, ''[t]his is too late in the process for counsel to be truly effective'' because by that time the evidentiary record ''is effectively closed.'' On the other hand, NOVA testified that, if attorneys were retained at an earlier stage of the process, they could be helpful in obtaining and presenting necessary evidence and in ensuring that VA timely and accurately processes claims.

So, with the potential for lawyers to help veterans successfully navigate this increasingly complex system, why does the government prohibit veterans from retaining counsel? This restriction, which dates back to the Civil War, was born out of concern that unscrupulous attorneys would improperly take large portions of veterans' disability benefits as compensation for their services. And some will argue that this concern is equally warranted today.

Although I understand this longstanding desire to protect veterans' disability compensation, I would ask my colleagues to consider a simple question posited in a recent editorial: ''If American soldiers are mature and responsible enough to choose to risk their lives for their country, shouldn't they be considered competent to hire a lawyer?'' I believe the obvious answer to that question is ''yes.''

Particularly for veterans of to day's All-Volunteer Force—which has been described as the ''best-trained, best-equipped, best-led fighting force in the history of the world''—this paternalistic restriction is simply outdated. These highly trained, highly skilled veterans have the ability—and should have the right—to decide whether or not to hire a lawyer.

This is a right that is not denied to individuals seeking other earned benefits from the government. In fact, if a veteran were to seek Social Security benefits for disabilities suffered during military service, the veteran would be permitted to hire an attorney—while the same veteran seeking benefits from VA for the same disabilities would be prohibited from hiring an attorney based on this remnant of an ancient policy.

The paternalistic restriction that prevents veterans from hiring counsel may have been advisable 150 years ago, but—as one veterans' organization recently testified before the Veterans' Affairs Committee—there is now no logic to it ''except history.'' It has endured for far too long and it is now time to embrace Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes' admonition that it is ''revolting'' for a law to persist ''in blind imitation of the past.'' It is time to repeal this archaic law and to allow our Nation's veterans the option of hiring counsel.

Having said all that, I want to be clear that I am not suggesting that attorneys should be considered necessary in order to obtain VA benefits. Above all, we must ensure that the system continues to serve veterans in a claimant-friendly, non-adversarial manner—regardless of the presence of an attorney or any other representative—and we must strive to reduce the complexities of this vast system. I hope that veterans' organizations across the country will join me in pursuing those goals.

I also want to be clear that, although I believe veterans should have the option to hire attorneys, they should not be discouraged in any way from utilizing the free services now provided by many dedicated representatives of veterans' service organizations. Those representatives are an important and valuable resource that veterans and their families will undoubtedly continue to rely on for many generations to come. The availability of this resource, however, is no reason to restrict veterans' access to other options. If a veteran would rather hire an attorney, we should not stand in the way.

At the same time, however, we should ensure that anyone who represents a veteran is held to the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct and that any fee charged to a veteran is patently reasonable. To that end, this legislation will allow veterans the right to hire an attorney at any time and it will heighten the expectations on all individuals who represent veterans.

Specifically, this legislation will allow VA to ensure that all attorneys who practice before VA have adequate training or experience in this specialized area of law to competently represent veterans and that they conform to specified standards of ethical and professional conduct. It would also allow VA to ensure that all veterans' representatives are honest, professional, and law abiding; that they avoid further delaying or complicating the system by presenting frivolous claims or arguments; and that they conduct themselves with due regard for the non-adversarial nature of the system.

For veterans who opt to hire an attorney, this legislation would provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with authority to reduce any attorney fee if it is excessive or unreasonable and with authority to set restrictions on the amount of fees that could be charged in any case before VA. Finally, in order to avoid any drain on existing VA resources, VA would have authority to impose on attorneys a registration fee to defray any costs associated with allowing them to practice before VA.

In sum, this legislation will take measures to ensure that the interests of veterans will be protected, while allowing them to decide for themselves whether they want to hire a lawyer. I ask my colleagues to support this groundbreaking legislation.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2694

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Veterans' Choice of Representation Act of 2006''.

SEC. 2. ATTORNEY REPRESENTATION IN VETERANS BENEFITS CLAIMS CASES BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR INDIVIDUALS RECOGNIZED AS AGENTS OR ATTORNEYS.—

(1) ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR AGENTS AND ATTORNEYS GENERALLY.—Subsection (a) of section 5904 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by inserting ''(1)'' after ''(a)'';

(B) by striking the second sentence; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(2) The Secretary may prescribe in regulations qualifications and standards of conduct for individuals recognized under this section, including the following:

''(A) A requirement that, before being recognized, an individual—

''(i) show that such individual is of good moral character and in good repute, is qualified to render claimants valuable service, and is otherwise competent to assist claimants in presenting claims; and

''(ii) has such level of experience and specialized training as the Secretary shall specify.

''(B) A requirement that the individual follow such standards of conduct as the Secretary shall specify.

''(3) The Secretary may prescribe in regulations restrictions on the amount of fees that an agent or attorney may charge a claimant for services rendered in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of a claim before the Department.

''(4)(A) The Secretary may, on a periodic basis, collect from individuals recognized as agents or attorneys under this section a registration fee.

''(B) The Secretary shall prescribe the amount and frequency of collection of such fees. The amount of such fees may include an amount, as specified by the Secretary, necessary to defray the costs of the Department in recognizing individuals under this section, in administering the collection of such fees, in administering the payment of fees under subsection (d), and in conducting oversight of agents or attorneys.

''(C) Amounts so collected shall be deposited in the account from which amounts for such costs were derived, merged with amounts in such account, and available for

the same purpose, and subject to the same conditions and limitations, as amounts in such account.''.

(2) APPLICABILITY TO REPRESENTATIVES OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS.—Section 5902(b) of such title is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(B) by inserting ''(1)'' after ''(b)''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) An individual recognized under this section shall be subject to suspension under section 5904(b) of this title on the same basis as an individual recognized under section 5904(a) of this title.''.

(3) APPLICABILITY TO INDIVIDUALS RECOGNIZED FOR PARTICULAR CLAIMS.—Section 5903 of such title is amended—

(A) by inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—'' before ''The Secretary''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(b) SUSPENSION.—An individual recognized under this section shall be subject to suspension under section 5904(b) of this title on the same basis as an individual recognized under section 5904(a) of this title.''.

(b) ADDITIONAL BASES FOR SUSPENSION OF INDIVIDUALS.—Subsection (b) of section 5904 of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting ''and sections 5902 and 5903 of this title'' after ''under this section'';

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(6) has failed to conduct himself or herself with due regard for the non-adversarial nature of any proceeding before the Department;

''(7) has presented frivolous claims, issues, or arguments to the Department; or

''(8) has failed to comply with any other condition specified by the Secretary in regulations prescribed by the Secretary for purposes of this subsection.''.

(c) REPEAL OF LIMITATION ON HIRING AGENTS OR ATTORNEYS.—Subsection (c) of section 5904 of such title is amended by striking paragraph (1).

(d) MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS TO FILE ATTORNEY FEE AGREEMENTS.—Such subsection is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (1); and

(2) in that paragraph, as so redesignated—

(A) by striking ''in a case referred to in paragraph (1) of this subsection'';

(B) by striking ''after the Board first makes a final decision in the case'';

(C) by striking ''with the Board at such time as may be specified by the Board'' and inserting ''with the Secretary pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary''; and

(D) by striking the second and third sentences.

(e) ATTORNEY FEES.—Such subsection is further amended by inserting after paragraph (1), as redesignated by subsection (d)(1) of this section, the following new paragraph (2):

''(2)(A) The Secretary, upon the Secretary's own motion or at the request of the claimant, may review a fee agreement filed pursuant to paragraph (1) and may order a reduction in the fee called for in the agreement if the Secretary finds that the fee is excessive or unreasonable.

''(B) A finding or order of the Secretary under subparagraph (A) may be reviewed by the Board of Veterans' Appeals under section 7104 of this title.''.

(f) REPEAL OF PENALTY FOR CERTAIN ACTS.—Section 5905 of such title is amended by striking ''(1)'' and all that follows through ''(2)''.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect six months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe the regulations, if any, to be prescribed under the amendments made by subsection (a) not later than the date specified in paragraph (1).

(3) CLAIMS.—The amendments made by subsections (b), (c), (d), and (e) shall apply to claims submitted on or after the date specified in paragraph (1).

Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 2695. A bill to provide for Federal agencies to develop public access policies relating to research conducted by employees of that agency or from funds administered by that agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise today to join my friend Senator LIEBERMAN in introducing legislation that will ensure U.S. taxpayer dollars are spent wisely, and will help enhance America's ability to compete in the global economy.

Each year, our Federal Government invests more than $55 billion on basic and applied research. That s roughly 40 percent of the current two-year budget for my home State of Texas.

The bulk of this money is spent by approximately 10 agencies, including: the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, NASA, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Agriculture. These agencies use the money to fund research which is usually conducted by outside researchers working for universities, healthcare systems, and other groups.

Most of the time, researchers will publish the results of their work in an academic journal. The NIH, for example, estimates that roughly 65,000 articles are published each year that report on research either partially or entirely funded by NIH.

Unfortunately, as it stands now, most Americans have little—to no—timely access to this wealth of information, despite the fact that their tax dollars paid for the research. Some Federal agencies, with the NIH chief amongst them, have taken some very positive steps in the right direction to require that these articles reporting on government-funded research be freely available to the public in a timely manner.

In fact, today marks the one-year anniversary of the implementation of a ground breaking public access policy at NIH developed by Director Elias Zerhouni. I thank Dr. Zerhouni and his colleagues for their leadership on this important issue and for energizing this debate.

While Dr. Zerhouni and NIH have made strong progress, Sen. LIEBERMAN and I believe more must be done, not only at NIH and in medical research, but throughout the Federal Government and the sciences in general.

That is why today we are introducing the Federal Research Public Access Act of 2006, legislation that will refine the work done by NIH and require that the Federal Government's leading underwriters of research adopt meaningful public access policies.

Our legislation is a simple, common sense approach that will advance the public's access to the research it funds. We hope this access will help accelerate science, innovation, and discovery.

Under our bill, all Federal departments and agencies that invest $100 million or more annually in research will be asked to develop a public access policy. Each policy will require that all articles that result from federal funding be deposited in a publicly accessible archive no later than six months after publication.

Our bill simply says to all researchers who seek government funding that we want the results of your work to be seen by the largest possible audience. It will ensure that U.S. taxpayers do not have to pay twice for the same research—once to conduct it, and a second time to read it.

This legislation is an opportunity for our government to better leverage our investment in research, and to ensure a greater return on that investment, which is all the more important given the current budget situation. By sharing this information quickly and broadly with all potential users, we can advance science, accelerate the pace of new discoveries and innovations, and improve the lives and welfare of people at home and abroad.

All Americans will be positively affected as a result of this bill: patients diagnosed with a disease or condition will be able to use the Internet to access the full text of articles containing the latest information on ent and prognosis; students at small institutions will have equal access to research articles they need to complete assignments and further their studies; researches will have their findings more broadly and more quickly disseminated, possibly sparking further discovery and innovation

The Internet has dramatically altered how the world gathers and shares information. The Internet gives the homemaker in Houston the ability to find volumes of information about a recent medical diagnosis given to a family member. It allows a young community college student in rural West Texas—a great distance from the nearest research library—to learn the latest in scientific discovery and hopefully spur him to continue his studies.

While a comprehensive competitiveness agenda is still in the works, ensuring greater access to scientific information is one way we can help bolster interest in these important fields and move this issue forward while at the same time helping accelerate the pace of discovery and innovation. Through this legislation, I hope to ensure that students, researchers, and every American has access to the published results

of federally funded research, and I ask for my colleagues' support.

By Mr. TALENT (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. BOND, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 2696. A bill to extend all of the authorizations of appropriations and direct spending programs under the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 until after implementing legislation for the Doha Development Round of World Trade Organization negotiations is enacted into law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, America has the safest, most abundant, best tasting, and least expensive food supply not only in the world, but in the history of the world. There are a lot of good people in the food and fiber production industry who deserve credit for that. But the heart of food production in the United States and the world and the center of the rural communities that produce our food and fiber, is none other than the American family farmer and rancher.

I want to assure everyone here of this. There are a lot of us in Congress and in the country that believe in agriculture; we intend to continue supporting policies that help farmers; and we're not going to apologize to anyone for doing it, especially foreign countries that are not negotiating in good faith with the United States through the WTO.

When I am in Missouri, I hear strong support for the current farm bill. Producers all over the State tell me that they like the programs created in the farm bill and they want to see it extended, especially when we have the uncertainty of the current WTO negotiations hanging over the head of our domestic agriculture industry.

It would be unfair to our nation's agriculture producers to write a new farm bill in the midst of ongoing international trade negotiations. Today, Senator LINCOLN, and I, with a number of other members, filed legislation to extend the current farm bill until the Doha round of World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations is complete.

Our Nation's farmers and their lenders should not be asked to operate under rules that keep changing. We must have fair global trading rules in place before we write the next farm bill. A farm bill extension is a reasonable and sound approach.

Everyone knows that safe food is abundant in the United States. Farmers and farm workers constitute 2 percent of the total workforce in the United States, yet they help feed the entire world. Unfortunately, some people in Washington believe that we spend too much in securing that safe and abundant food supply.

What does this safe and inexpensive food supply cost the Federal taxpayer? In the United States, domestic support programs amount to ¾ of one per cent of the total Federal budget. For ¾ of one per cent our farmers are able to sustain an agriculture industry that produces 25 million jobs and 3.5 trillion dollars in economic activity.

For three quarters of one per cent of the Federal budget, Americans have a hedge against ever being held hostage to food imports the way we are now held hostage to energy imports. Where would our security be without the American family farm? What would it mean for the United States if our family farmers went out of business, and foreign powers could threaten our food as they now threaten our energy? Do we want to rely on Brazil for food the way we rely on Venezuela for oil?

I believe the best way to continue support for this strong sector of our economy is to extend the farm bill until we have a WTO agreement that is good for American agriculture. I do not believe that we should negotiate with our trading partners and against ourselves.

As George Washington wrote in 1796, ''Agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as nations advance in population and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of public patronage.''

America will be more than ever what George Washington predicted in 1788 it would be: the ''storehouse and granary for the whole world.''

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation that would extend the provisions of the 2002 Farm Bill until our trading partners in the WTO have at least matched our commitment to level disparities in global agriculture trade. I would like to thank Senator TALENT for working with me on this important piece of legislation to farm families in my State of Arkansas and across the Nation.

This legislation would extend our current farm bill until one year after implementing legislation for a WTO Doha agreement is enacted. Then . . . and only then . . . will Congress know what to expect of our trading partners and what our trading partners expect from us.

Four years ago, President Bush, after some noted reluctance, signed into law the 2002 Farm Bill. As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and a farmer's daughter, I played an active role in that debate and was pleased with the outcome, which I view as a compromise between many different interests. Most importantly, I view it as a contract between the farmers in my State of Arkansas and their government. It is meant to offer what little certainty can exist for those who choose to make a living providing the safe and affordable food supply which we as Americans depend on. Unfortunately, certainty is something that's hard to come by in farm country these days.

This Administration has repeatedly asked Congress to cut funding or make structural changes to the 2002 Farm Bill, regardless of the fact that CBO estimates it has come in approximately $13 billion cheaper than anticipated.

This Administration has also refused to provide emergency assistance to agriculture producers, despite the fact that farmers across the Nation faced weather-related disasters of all kinds and record high fuel and fertilizer costs in 2005. A wet spring, followed by extreme drought and rising fuel prices, cost farmers in my State $923 million last year. In Arkansas, where one in five jobs is tied to agriculture, this impacts the entire State economy.

All the while, producers wait and watch as U.S. negotiators offer proposals in the WTO that would require drastic reductions and changes in our farm support, while our trading partners continue to protect their markets with tariffs and subsidies far higher than we have in the U.S.

I am tired of waiting, and so are my farmers. Very little was accomplished at the WTO ministerial in Hong Kong, and trade officials recently announced that the April 30th deadline for reaching a negotiating framework would pass without progress. The 2002 Farm Bill is set to expire in September of next year, and we are no closer to an agreement in the WTO than we were one year ago.

No doubt our trading partners are quite content to take the wait and see approach. This Administration has made it quite clear that it supports drastic changes to our farm policy, with or without an agreement in the WTO. Our trading partners are demanding that we dismantle our farm program . . . meanwhile they do little to nothing to show that they are willing to do the same. Why would they?

This Administration is sending them the very clear message that they agree with them . . . and envision 2007 as the year to make those changes. If that is the case, what incentive then do our trading partners have to come to the negotiating table at all? More importantly, what does it say about our negotiating priorities if we are simply negotiating with ourselves?

Some may argue that we must change our agriculture policy to avoid further litigation against our farm programs by WTO countries. But without a completed WTO agreement, like the one negotiated in the Uruguay Round, how are we expected to write new farm policy that is compliant? Compliant with what?

In my view, and I think many of my colleagues agree, the best course of action is to extend the current farm bill until we know the rules of the road. As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, with jurisdiction over international trade . . . and as a farmer's daughter who understands full well the importance of international markets to the U.S. agriculture industry . . . I am introducing this legislation to send a message to our friends in the WTO. We will not negotiate by ourselves . . . we

will not make wholesale changes to our domestic policies until we know that you are willing to do the same.

So long as we maintain the status quo in our international trade agreements, then we should maintain the status quo with regard to our domestic farm policy as well. That is the type of message that I wish our trade negotiators were sending to our trading partners. And that is the message that I hope our trading partners receive today. That is the type of certainty that America's farmers need and deserve.

The legislation Senator TALENT and I introduce today will provide this certainty to our farming communities and send a strong signal to our trading partners. Congress will not make drastic changes to our farm policy without a meaningful agreement in the WTO.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. OBAMA):

S. 2697. A bill to establish the position of the United States Ambassador for ASEAN; to the committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today, I rise to introduce ''The U.S. Ambassador for ASEAN Act'', which signals the importance of bolstering the U.S.–ASEAN relationship for our mutual benefit.

ASEAN was originally established in 1967. The founding Members, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, remain as anchor participants of ASEAN today. Overall membership has expanded, with ten countries now comprising ASEAN.

Over the years, ASEAN has contributed to regional stability in East Asia and has partnered with the United States to combat global terror. In addition to promoting regional peace and stability, ASEAN is committed to accelerating economic growth, social progress, and cultural development.

ASEAN is the third largest export market for United States products, and has received approximately $90 billion in direct investment from U.S. sources. Nearly 40,000 ASEAN students are studying in the United States.

The United States maintains bilateral relationships with the ASEAN Member countries. However, as ASEAN develops an integrated free trade area and addresses matters of common concern with the United States—ranging from environmental and financial challenges to avian influenza and terrorism—it is appropriate for the United States to enhance its overall relationship with ASEAN.

With this in mind, my legislation establishes the position of U.S. Ambassador for ASEAN, subject to advice and consent of the Senate. I believe this initiative will be an important step in advancing an already positive relationship. In addition, I am hopeful that once the position is established, the U.S. Ambassador to ASEAN will help facilitate ongoing implementation of the ASEAN–U.S. Enhanced Partnership, announced last November by ASEAN leaders and President Bush.

By Mr. ALLARD (for himself and Mr. SALAZAR):

S. 2698. A bill to establish the Granada Relocation Center National Historic Site as an affiliated unit of the National Park System; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce my bill to designate the Granada Relocation Camp, also known as Camp Amache, as a National Historic Site in Colorado.

The Granada Relocation Camp, which is located in Southeast Colorado between the towns of Lamar and Holly on the Santa Fe Trail, played an important, and sometimes sad, part in United States history. In the 1800's travelers that came into Colorado along the Santa Fe Trail used it as a place to buy supplies and rest, and it was known as the ''Gateway to Colorado''. This put Granada on the map and the area was settled in 1873. By 1876 it was one of the largest cities in Colorado and endured a move further west for expansion.

The town is now best known for the Granada Relocation Camp, Camp Amache, which was established during one of the darker, but just as important time periods in American history. This camp, one of ten interment camps in the Nation, was established in August 1942 by the United States government during World War II as a place to house the Japanese from the West coast and was closed on August 15, 1945. Camp Amache was named after Amache Ochinee Prowers, the wife of John Prowers, the founder of the county in which Granada presides. It became its own little city with 30 blocks of barracks, school rooms, and mess tents. It also included its own post office, fire station, police, and hospital.

While this was a dark moment in American history, it is still an important part of it. By preserving this site, we are preserving our own history.

By Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 2699. A bill to promote the research and development of drugs related to neglected and tropical diseases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, today I introduced with my colleague, Senator LIEBERMAN, the Elimination of Neglected Diseases Act of 2006. This legislation is designed to confront and combat a group of dangerous parasitic diseases that together claim more than 500,000 lives each year and adversely affect millions more. These 13–15 neglected tropical diseases, NTD, as they are called, are the most common infections in the developing world, and include such debilitating diseases as leprosy, guinea worm, and trachoma. Many are described in the Bible, exposing the sad fact that humans have been suffering from these diseases for millennia. Moreover, research has shown alarming rates of comorbidity of NTD's with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, resulting in severe complications with these already devastating diseases.

The biggest challenge to finding cures for these diseases is the lack of a market. Pharmaceuticals are expensive to develop, and since neglected diseases disproportionately affect poor and marginalized populations in the developing world, there are fewer incentives for conducting research and development for new treatments. The purpose of this act is to encourage drug development by creating market incentives for investment in new research. Specifically, the bill awards a limited patent-term extension or patent-term restoration for certain lifestyle and tropical disease drugs provided the company successfully develops a new FDA-approved drug for an NTD. In this way, a drug company can recoup costs for the large investment in NTD research and development.

With the exception of market incentives, we have all the right ingredients to develop new drugs that would dramatically reduce the number of NTD cases and improve the quality of human life worldwide. I strongly believe that this legislation will add the last remaining step to jumpstart competitive research and development for combating NTD's. I urge my colleagues to join in this effort by supporting this bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 459—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION AND AGREEMENT IN THE DOHA DEVELOPMENT ROUND OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

Mr. BAYH submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 459

Whereas in 2001, World Trade Organization members launched the Doha Development Agenda, a new round of multilateral trade negotiations with a core objective of increasing market access for nonagricultural products, such as industrial goods;

Whereas Ministers of World Trade Organization members agreed in the Doha Declaration that the aim of the nonagricultural market access (NAMA) negotiations is to reduce or eliminate industrial tariffs, with an emphasis on high tariffs and nontariff barriers;

Whereas, at the 2005 World Trade Organization Ministerial in Hong Kong, members renewed this commitment by agreeing to adopt a tariff-cutting formula geared toward the reduction or elimination of high tariffs;

Whereas, at the 2005 World Trade Organization Ministerial in Hong Kong, members agreed once again to reduce or eliminate trade-distorting nontariff barriers, and to focus on liberalization in certain sectors;