

based on a few ideas that are found in our founding documents, based on our common history, and based on our common language. We are proud to be from wherever we come from or where our ancestors came from. We are prouder to be American. Almost every American agrees with that.

That's why we created our common schools 150 years ago. In the words of Al Shanker, as I said yesterday, we created the common school to help mostly immigrant children learn to read and write in English and learn math and to learn what it meant to be an American. In 1906 we passed a law that anyone who becomes a citizen of this country needs to pass a test in English. Today we require it to be an eight-grade level of understanding of English.

This Senate, by a 91-to-1 vote last month, said that as we consider an immigration bill, we better focus especially, and redouble our efforts, on helping prospective citizens become Americans because when we have a lot of people from other countries come here, the real limit on that is how quickly we can assimilate them into our culture, how quickly they can become Americans. We want new legal immigrants, but we do not want enclaves of people living here who have their allegiance to other countries and who permanently decide to speak another language and who don't pledge allegiance to our flag. That underlies our debate on immigration as much as anything else.

So this is a very fundamental issue for me, and I believe it is so for a great many Americans. It is important for the people of this country to know that 12 of us in the Senate have before this body a very simple resolution, not about what we are made to do but about what we ought to do, and what we ought to do—whether we are at our Boy Scout or Cub Scout meeting or whether we are opening the day in the Senate, and we say the Pledge of Allegiance—we ought to say it in our common language. If we are singing the national anthem before a football game, it ought to be in our common language, English. If we are taking the oath of allegiance required for citizenship in the United States of America, which a half million to a million new citizens do every year, we ought to do so in English.

We ought to say that as Senators. The mayor of Los Angeles said it. He is offended by the idea, he says, that our national anthem should not be sung in some other language. Governor Bill Richardson says it. He agrees. He doesn't think it ought to be an issue.

This bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives. It has strong Democratic support there. What is wrong with the Senate Democrats? Why do they insist, day after day, that our national anthem, our Pledge of Allegiance, and our oath of citizenship ought to be said or sung in some other language than our common language, English?

I would like to get this cleared up.

Out of respect for my colleagues in the Senate and the fact they are not here to object, but they do object, I will not ask unanimous consent today. But I again wish to say to my friends that this floor is for the debating of important issues. This is an important issue. We have so little civics and U.S. history taught in America's schools today that perhaps we need a little civics lesson every single day on the floor of the Senate. I intend to provide it every single day I am here until this legislation is voted on. And when it is voted on, I predict it will pass by a wide margin with bipartisan support; it might even pass with unanimous support.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

THE RISING COST OF GASOLINE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to speak on a matter that has gotten a lot of attention lately, and for good reason. The rising cost of gasoline is hitting all Americans hard. Families, businesses, farmers, and truckers are all hurting as the cost escalates out of control.

With gas prices now hovering around \$3 a gallon, everyone in Congress is looking for a solution or for someone to blame. Unfortunately, some have chosen to pinpoint ethanol as the culprit. However, blaming ethanol for the costs at the pump ignores the fact that crude is at near record highs, and our country is still suffering from a strained domestic refining industry.

Around the country, gasoline refiners are making a voluntary decision to remove MTBE, a gasoline additive, from the market. In its place, they are using ethanol. So, ethanol is currently being blended for the first time in many parts of the East Coast and in Texas.

Because of the new demand for ethanol, some of my colleagues have begun to argue that there is a shortage and that it is responsible for the rising cost of gasoline. They look to increased imports of ethanol, and the lifting of the import tariff, as the solution. Let me be clear: there is no shortage of ethanol. And, ethanol is a tiny fraction of cost of gasoline.

You don't have to take my word for it. Guy Caruso, Administrator of the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy, recently stated that the 10 percent blend of ethanol is affecting prices by "just a few

pennies." Ethanol's role in gasoline prices is a tiny fraction of the overall increase.

I would like to address the claim that there is a shortage of ethanol. According to the Energy Information Administration, 130,000 barrels per day of ethanol are needed to replace MTBE. Last month, 302,000 barrels of ethanol were produced each day. That seems to me like it is enough to meet the demand. There is also 25 days of ethanol supply in storage.

Have there been some transportation issues surrounding the transition from MTBE to ethanol? The answer is yes, and they're being dealt with. Sufficient supplies of ethanol are where they need to be. There is no shortage of ethanol.

If there is no shortage, what good does it do to eliminate the import tariff on imported ethanol? None. Domestic supplies are sufficient.

Lifting the tariff won't have an impact on gas prices because the only other major producer of ethanol—Brazil—simply doesn't have enough ethanol to export at significant levels at this time. I know this issue well. I was in Brazil just six weeks ago, and one thing I heard over and over was that Brazil is experiencing an ethanol shortage.

Shortages of ethanol in Brazil are being driven by strong demand for ethanol in that country. Looking at the longer term, USDA analysts in Brazil are reporting that Brazil is anticipating even higher demand for ethanol later this year and in 2007.

Given low supplies in Brazil, there has even been talk of importing ethanol into Brazil.

I would like to point out something else. Brazil and other countries can already ship duty-free ethanol to the United States. They don't have to pay the U.S. tariff. Under the Caribbean Basin Initiative, Brazilian ethanol that is merely dehydrated in a Caribbean country can enter the U.S. market duty-free up to 7 percent of the U.S. ethanol market. That's generous access, but Brazil has never even come close to hitting the 7 percent cap.

And it isn't that the Caribbean countries don't have the capacity to dehydrate more Brazilian ethanol. They do.

As we're already providing duty-free access for Brazilian ethanol shipped through Caribbean countries, and as Brazil isn't taking full advantage of this duty-free treatment, I don't know why we should bend over backwards to provide even more duty-free access for Brazilian ethanol.

I especially don't know why we should do this given Brazil's stance in the Doha Round negotiations of the World Trade Organization. Brazil is the leader of the G-20 negotiating group in the WTO negotiations, a group that is resisting our efforts to obtain improved market access for U.S. products around the world.

In addition, the Brazilian government intervenes extensively in the price and supply of ethanol in that

country. But the U.S. tariff on ethanol operates as an offset to an excise tax credit that applies to both domestically produced and imported ethanol. So by lifting the tariff, we would in effect be giving the benefits of a U.S. tax credit to subsidized Brazilian ethanol.

Providing yet more duty-free treatment for Brazilian ethanol would send the wrong signal to those Americans who are devoting their careers to help America become more energy independent. The U.S. ethanol industry is working every day to lessen our dependence on foreign oil. This is a virtue that President Bush has touted again and again.

Just last week the President restated his goal to replace oil from around the world by expanding the use of U.S. ethanol.

The President stated:

The federal government has got a role to play to encourage new industries that will help this nation diversify away from oil. And so we're strongly committed to corn-based ethanol produced in America.

The President clearly understands the need to assist our domestic ethanol industry so that they can get a foothold and succeed. Why would the United States want to send a signal that we're backing away from our efforts to seek energy independence by promoting renewable fuels in the United States?

We're already dependent on foreign oil. Surely, President Bush doesn't intend for our nation to go down the path of eventually becoming dependent on foreign ethanol also. Providing yet more duty-free treatment would be a step in the wrong direction. I don't think our country should take any action that would harm the farmers and investors in rural America that have worked so hard to develop this industry. The efforts to reduce our dependence on foreign oil have only just begun.

Providing more duty-free treatment for ethanol won't increase supplies or reduce prices at the pump. It's a bad solution in search of a problem. It's a bad idea for our energy independence and our national security.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

LIMITING THE TERM OF THE PUBLIC TRUSTEES OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise to comment on legislation that Chairman GRASSLEY and I introduced yesterday that would limit public trustees for Social Security and Medicare to a single four-year term of service. The bill, S. 2752, will also codify that the President should consult with Congress on the nominations of public trustees for these important programs. This legislation was prompted by recent events.

Upon learning last November that the White House intended to renominate John L. Palmer and Thomas R.

Saving as public trustees, Chairman GRASSLEY and I both responded immediately that the White House should find two new individuals to nominate as public trustees. Both individuals had already served one term as Social Security and Medicare public trustees, and their terms ended in March 2005. Dr. Palmer and Dr. Saving served admirably as public trustees during their term and the Chairman and I thank them for their service, but I did not want to see an important tradition abandoned. Never in the history of the public trustees have individuals served more than one term, and that's for good reason. Fresh thinking and new ideas are critical to the proper assessment and administration of the Social Security and Medicare programs. If the executive branch will not voluntarily follow this vital precedent, this principle must be written into law.

There was a second problem last year. The White House is supposed to consult with the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee before sending the nominations to the Senate. Unfortunately, no such consultation occurred last year prior to the nominations being forwarded to the Senate. Therefore, the bill adds language to the Social Security Act requiring the President to consult with the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Finance before considering individuals to be nominated as public trustees.

Ignoring our views, on April 19 of this year, the White House announced the recess appointments of Mr. Palmer and Mr. Saving as public trustees of the Social Security and Medicare programs. I immediately objected to this action by the White House because I believe the role of the public trustees is too important to be diminished by the recess appointment process. It was this extreme action on the part of the White House—in combination with the other two problems I mentioned previously—that prompted the chairman and me to introduce this bill today.

I think some good has come out of this unfortunate episode regarding the public trustees. Hopefully, everyone has a better understanding of the role of the public trustees. The Greenspan Commission recommended creating the positions of two public trustees to help ensure that the reports on the Social Security and Medicare trust funds were objective and not solely the work of administration officials. The Greenspan Commission envisioned experts from outside the executive branch who are confirmed by the Senate. They are unlike most other Presidential appointments because they do not represent the administration, they represent the public. Because of that unique distinction, it is inappropriate to recess appoint the public trustees. Individuals who are nominated to be public trustees should be selected by a process of consultation between the White House and Members of Congress. Once confirmed by the Senate, they should only

serve one term. To do otherwise undermines the public trustees' role as an objective check on the production of the trust fund reports.

Since this legislation should not spark any controversy, I hope both Chambers will quickly consider and pass this bill and send it to the President for his signature.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2459. A bill to improve cargo security, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. SPECTER):

S. 2754. A bill to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THOMAS:

S. 2755. A bill to enhance the energy production, refining, infrastructure, conservation and efficiency capabilities of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 2756. A bill to authorize the President to utilize Federal equipment, supplies, facilities, personnel, and other non-monetary resources to assist utility companies that contribute to recovery efforts from the effects of a major disaster; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 22, a bill to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system.