

So I think that is exactly what we will be able to do. We are making progress.

My colleague mentioned the fact of the cow business in Japan. Well, that is a problem. Frankly, it is not a trade problem as much as it is a mad cow disease problem. It has been handled wrong, and we are working toward getting that resolved. Our best potential and the largest growth we have in the beef industry and exports has been in Asia. That is where we are now. We have been able to open up the markets in Australia and in South Korea, and we had the markets pretty much open in Japan until the mad cow disease came along, and now we are in the process, hopefully, of getting them open again. So that is very important, and we need to continue certainly to do that.

We need a strong leader to represent our interests. I think that is exactly what we will get with Susan Schwab, and that leadership is what we need. Bob Portman has done a very good job, and she has worked with him, of course, in getting us into this position. So we need to have good leadership to walk away from some of the bad agreements, the tough agreements that we have had. The world is sometimes difficult to deal with, but Susan Schwab will provide that leadership.

During her testimony before the Finance Committee, of which I am a member, she stated:

It will take more than a willing spirit to forge good trade policy in the next 5 years. It will require us to keep the multilateral process on track in the WTO, to negotiate commercially significant free trade agreements, and to enforce vigorously the terms of those agreements and to uphold the rules of trade.

So that is what we are really faced with. These smaller countries, these countries that frankly generally have less economic strength than we do and they always want special treatment: Well, you guys can afford that. What we need is fair trade, and that is what trade is all about, and that is why it takes a leader to do that. So I am very pleased that she is there and that she is willing to do this. She is well trained to do it.

She further stated that her success may require:

An honest, sometimes blunt, but always respectful exchange of views, along with a willingness to compromise when possible and the strength to stand firm when necessary.

The strength to stand firm when necessary. To me, that is probably the most important element of the trade negotiations that we enter into, is to be able to stand firm on what we agree on, and we ought to be in a position to do that when we are as big a buyer as we are. We also need to have some muscle on the other side, and we can do that.

I am pleased with the commitment she has made to reach out and listen and consult with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. Engaging Congress in a bipartisan way upfront

and throughout the process will be crucial, and she will do that. Ms. Schwab understands this, and I am confident that she will follow through.

So I look forward to working with her. I am looking forward to one of the important elements of our economy, and that is world trade, and doing it in a fair manner.

Mr. President, I yield back all time on behalf of Republicans and Democrats and ask for a vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Susan C. Schwab, of Maryland, to be United States Trade Representative?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

A VICTORY IN THE WAR ON TERROR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier today, we witnessed an important victory in the war on terror and in the continued march of freedom and democracy in Iraq.

Al-Zarqawi, like Saddam Hussein, was a mass murderer. I am not sad to say that he has made his last video.

I could not be more proud of our men and women in uniform—our military and intelligence services and those individuals who participated in this particular operation. Our intelligence and military forces have demonstrated their exceptional abilities and reminded us yet again that, through patience and resolve, we will continue to win the war on terror and advance the cause of freedom around the globe.

So I want to say to our military forces and our intelligence community serving all around the world that we support you, we are proud of you, and we know that you will continue to keep up the good work.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, last night the U.S. military, as we know now, working hand in hand with the Iraqi counterpart, located and killed al-Qaida terrorist Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. We know who this terrorist is. He is a brutal terrorist who has repeatedly encouraged violence against Americans and Iraqi citizens.

Al-Zarqawi is credited with ordering kidnappings, beheadings, and killings

of innocent civilians with insurgent attacks. Al-Zarqawi was the operational mastermind of the al-Qaida network in Iraq. He sought to destroy America and our coalition partners to create a sanctuary for the al-Qaida organization in the Middle East. His death marks the fragmentation of al-Qaida's primary leadership and the silencing of a ruthless terrorist.

The military operation against al-Zarqawi was performed by our dedicated, professional Armed Forces in concert with our coalition partner. Our military servicemembers should be commended for their remarkable efforts in eradicating the enemy of a free and democratic Iraq.

Our war fighters worked tirelessly with our Iraqi counterparts tracking the movement of al-Zarqawi's followers, leading to his demise in last night's airstrike.

We are proud of the success of this operation, but even prouder of the job that our Armed Forces have accomplished in their commitment to peace and stability in Iraq. Although this is positive development and significant step in the global war on terror, our fight in Iraq is far from over. We are making significant strides toward eradicating terrorism, developing a free government, and reviving the economy. But Iraq will not become a democracy overnight. While our involvement continues to be difficult, our resolve must remain strong. We must remain focused on our fundamental goal—preserving the freedom and security of the United States. This is an enormous challenge that will take determination, global cooperation, and fortitude to succeed. I am confident the United States will triumph over global chaos and tyranny, as it always has. But whatever it is, we must back our troops.

RECIPIENTS OF THE "HEROES AMONG US" AWARD

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, all of us in New England are proud of the Boston Celtics and their skill on the basketball court. We're also proud of the support they give to those who need help in our communities. Each year, the Celtics organization honors outstanding persons in New England as "Heroes Among Us"—men and women who make an especially significant impact on the lives of others.

The award is now in its ninth year, and the extraordinary achievements of the honorees this year include saving lives, sacrificing for others, overcoming obstacles to achieve goals, and making lifelong commitments to improve the lives of those around them. The honorees include persons of all ages and all walks of life—students, community leaders, founders of non-profit organizations, members of the clergy, and many others.

At home games during this season, the Celtics, their fans and the Massachusetts State Lottery saluted the efforts of each honoree in special presentations on the basketball court. Over 300 individuals have now received the "Heroes Among Us" award, and it has become one of the most widely recognized honors in New England. I commend each of the honorees for the 2005–2006 season. They are truly heroes among us, and I ask unanimous consent that their names and communities may be printed in the RECORD.

Bill Driscoll, Jr., Milton, MA
 Captain Bob DeFlaminis, Franklin, MA
 Sergeant Jim Flaherty, Quincy, MA
 Michael Rodrigues, Hopedale, MA
 Nick Prefontaine, Shrewsbury, MA
 Chiara Arcidy, Bedford, NH
 Dr. Sam Nosike, Watertown, MA
 Brendan and Kelley McDonough, North Chelmsford, MA
 Principal Bill Henderson and Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School, Dorchester, MA
 Carrie Larson, Bedford, MA
 Brian Russell, Merrimack, NH
 Dr. Peter Raffalli, North Andover, MA
 Bob Manger, Scituate, MA
 Jay Blake, Marston Mills, MA
 Jane Smith, Shrewsbury, MA
 Adam Roberge, East Kingston, NH
 Stuart Molk, Danvers, MA
 Ron Bell, Milton, MA
 Marie Poulin, Quincy, MA
 David Russell, Ipswich, MA
 Ryan Curtis, Lynn, MA
 Alex Ingoglia, Malden, MA
 Matthew Scibelli, Malden, MA
 Brian Short, Medford, MA
 Mirelle Manzone, Dover, MA
 David and Stephanie Dodson, Weston, MA
 Anthony Fiorino, East Boston, MA
 Josh Algarin, Holbrook, MA
 Georgiana Melendez, Peabody, MA
 Reverend William Dickerson, Dorchester, MA
 Theresa Reilly, Roslindale, MA
 Dean Levy, Marshfield, MA
 Sean McDonough, North Quincy, MA
 Sarah Fader, Ipswich, MA
 Suzanne Wintle, Weston, MA
 Tiesha Hughes, Boston, MA
 Stan Kosloski, Cromwell, CT
 Ron Goodman, Quincy, MA
 Theresa Lynn, Jamaica Plain, MA
 Denise Carriere, Andover, MA
 Mark Mitchell, West Springfield, MA
 Donna Tardif, Freeport, ME
 Lieutenant Jim Meeks, Chestnut Hill, MA
 Donna Fournier Cuomo, North Andover, MA
 Members of the Original Tuskegee Airmen:
 Luther McIlwain, Methuen, MA, James Sheppard, Portland, ME

AGRICULTURE DISASTERS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, extreme weather conditions pounded much of South Dakota in 2005, leaving nearly 60 out of the State's 66 counties eligible for Federal disaster aid. Many family farmers and ranchers have had little reprieve from the previous year of harsh weather conditions, as blizzards and drought have already hampered the 2006 production year. On top of natural disasters, low commodity prices and skyrocketing energy costs are forcing producers to make tough decisions in order to keep their oper-

ations afloat. I believe we can do more to help ease the burdens that our producers bear, and I want to draw the Senate's attention to a handful of South Dakota counties devastated by natural disaster in 2005 and into 2006.

In 2005, 59 South Dakota counties were included in Presidential or Secretarial emergency declarations as either primary or contiguous disaster counties. These counties experienced natural disasters such as drought, high winds, extreme heat, flash flooding, hail, prairie fires, spring frost, severe storms, and blizzards.

For example, 2005 marked the fourth consecutive year of experiencing drought conditions in central South Dakota, including Hand, Hughes, Hyde, Stanley, and Sully counties. Inadequate snowfall, meager spring rains, high temperatures, and desolating winds led to sparse pastures and a lack of forage crops necessary for feeding livestock. Without adequate precipitation, producers were forced to reduce the size of their livestock herds. Of the 57,500 acres planted or growing in Stanley County, losses ranged from 35 to 70 percent. In Sully County, 50 to 70 percent of 280,075 acres planted or growing were lost due to drought conditions. Hyde County's corn, soybean, and sunflower crops experienced yield losses ranging from 50 to 80 percent.

In southern South Dakota, Charles Mix County experienced much of the same drought conditions. While drought typically wreaks havoc on an area over an extended period of time, one day of particularly extreme temperatures and strong winds on top of severe drought can devastate already struggling crops. On July 23, 2005, the temperature reached 114 degrees Fahrenheit with 45-mile-per-hour winds. These conditions led to a 60 percent loss of corn yields, 50 percent loss of soybean yields, and 30 to 35 percent of yield losses in sorghum, alfalfa, mixed forage, and grass. Neighboring county, Hutchinson County, experienced 100 percent loss of prevented corn and soybean yields and 50 percent loss of corn and soybean yields.

We are now in the middle of the 2006 production season and Farm Service Agencies, FSA, in parts of the State report conditions edging toward severe drought and fear that without adequate precipitation soon, many counties will be faced yet again with another difficult year of production. Livestock producers are increasing supplemental feeding early this year due to poor pasture conditions and lack of water in dams and dugouts. Farmers are left with very little to work with, as both the topsoil and subsoil lack the necessary moisture to produce operation-sustaining crops. This cycle of drought conditions has created a new element of synergism in the agriculture industry, compounding year upon year of devastating effects not only on producers' pocketbooks, on livestock and land conditions.

Campbell County, in north-central South Dakota, is one among many

counties experiencing drought again this year. Entering into its fourth year of drought conditions, with only 1.54 inches of rainfall to date for 2006, Campbell County is currently 63 percent below the normal precipitation for the area. Today, many water sources are dry due to below normal snowfall during the winter months yielding no runoff, and below normal rainfall this spring. In addition to drought, frost has forced producers to shorten grazing time on native pastures and native and tame greases.

In central South Dakota, drought is rearing its ugly head for the fourth and fifth consecutive years. Hand County is experiencing yet another extremely dry year, with approximately 330 livestock producers affected and an estimated \$210,000 needed in Emergency Conservation Program, ECP, funds to correct the damage. In Lyman County, winter and spring wheat yields will likely yield zero to 40 percent of normal. Row crops, which were planted into dry ground, are not germinating and will likely fail unless adequate precipitation is received soon. While most livestock producers in these areas have not liquidated as of yet, should these conditions persist, they will be forced to sell their entire herd.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is Clay County, which experienced a series of heavy rains, flooding, hail, and frost in 2005. Much of the alfalfa affected by the excessive rain incurred a significant quality loss, because most of the first cutting was not able to be marketed as dairy-quality hay. The majority of producers affected suffered a 20 to 40 percent of yield losses, while 100 to 125 producers experienced greater than 30 percent in losses. Of those with greater loss, some producers received assistance from the FSA Farm Loan Division in order to keep their farm in operation.

Counties throughout the State have also been impacted by frost or freezing temperatures. Haakon County, in western South Dakota, had frost hit winter wheat and alfalfa crops in March of 2005, only to experience freezing temperatures two months later. Eighty percent of yield losses affected the 15,800 acres of alfalfa and 10 to 20 percent of winter wheat yields were lost. Among other counties affected by frost or freezing temperatures were Brown, Gregory, McPherson, Hyde, Potter, Brookings, Perkins, Clay, and Sully.

Dealing with winter storms is certainly not new to South Dakotans. However, from time to time the combination of unusually high winds, freezing rain, and large snow accumulation results in the temporary paralysis of communities and agriculture operations. Not only did severe winter weather in 2005 and the spring of 2006 take a toll on livestock, but many producers were without electricity for days and even weeks. Producers' pocketbooks took an extra hit because of the high fuel costs it took to run generators around the clock.