

comes from good, sound conservation practices.

I believe it is very important to take a breather from the controversy surrounding this farm bill and to take a few minutes to focus on the farm bill's proven capabilities to enhance rural America and to improve our Nation's water and soil. The conservation title will do just that. This is one of many reasons this farm bill deserves the support of our colleagues.

I leave my colleagues with the following information regarding the conservation title in the 2002 farm bill. Nationwide, without a conservation title, we would have 13.5 million fewer pheasants, 450 million tons of topsoil disappearing every single year, 2.2 million fewer ducks, an additional 170,000 miles of unprotected streams, and 40 million fewer acres of wildlife habitat. That is the value of a conservation title in the farm bill which accomplishes multiple objectives—protecting and enhancing our soil and land, providing an economic alternative to placing costly fertilizer, seed, and chemicals on unproductive cropland, and enhancing recreation and boosting local economies. Nine percent of the funding in this farm bill goes toward that end. That, when put in a total perspective of what this farm bill spends, is not that much relative to the benefit we accomplish and to the bad things we avoid happening by having a good conservation title.

As this farm bill is debated, we will have amendments at some point when we get an agreement. The amendments will focus on a lot of other areas of the farm bill. Some will focus on the commodity title and trying to move money around within the farm bill.

I am interested in the energy title. I have an amendment to the energy title, and we worked very hard in crafting the energy title in this farm bill to provide the necessary economic incentives for further investment in cellulosic ethanol production. The renewable fuels standard amendment I hope to be able to offer along with Senators DOMENICI and NELSON of Nebraska and others on a bipartisan basis will make that energy title stronger. It will improve it.

It will give us some headroom to work within the area of renewable energy. The renewable fuels standard put in place back in 2005 called for 7.5 billion gallons of renewable fuel by the year 2012. We are going to hit 7.5 billion gallons by the end of this year if we don't act to increase the renewable fuels standard. We have a terrible crunch that is coming ahead of us. I hope we can get this amendment adopted that raises the renewable fuels standard, moves it to 8.5 billion gallons in the year 2008. It will give us the necessary headroom to keep this wonderful example of renewable energy in this country and a remarkable story going forward.

If we don't do something to address the renewable fuels standard, my fear

is we will run into a wall. That would not be good. It would not be good for those who have already invested in ethanol facilities. It would not be good, clearly, for the economy in rural areas and all the jobs that have been created as a result of renewable energy. As importantly, if not more importantly, it will do nothing to lessen our dependence upon foreign sources of energy, which at the end of the day is so important in terms of our policy objectives.

This farm bill, by encouraging more energy production, if we can get the renewable fuels standard added to it, will take us a long way toward lessening our dependence on foreign energy. I would hope before this debate is concluded we will be able to have the amendments adopted and voted on, if not adopted, but certainly a chance to debate these things which we think will make the farm bill stronger. Some of those amendments may deal with the conservation title, but I think this particular title is one that often gets overlooked in the discussion that is held about the farm bill because of the focus on production agriculture and because of the focus on the nutrition title of the bill which really comprises about two-thirds of the total funding of the bill.

But 9 percent of the money that is spent in this farm bill, the conservation value we get from that and the difference it is making in areas all across this country in protecting our critical soil and water resources, in adding to our economy, providing recreational opportunities such as pheasant hunting in South Dakota—this is a very important title of this bill, one that there was great deliberation and consideration given toward coming up with.

I hope at the end of the day we will get the farm bill passed before the end of the year and get this conservation title, along with the other policy changes that are included in the farm bill, implemented into law so our farmers and our ranchers and those who will benefit from the great recreational opportunities that will result from this conservation title will know what the rules are going to be as we approach this next year.

So, again, I have heard many of my colleagues come down and speak on the floor today about different aspects of this bill. My biggest hope and greatest fear at this point is—my biggest hope is we get this thing moving this week. My greatest fear is if we do not, we are not going to get a farm bill this year. So I hope before we leave this week we will come to a resolution about amendments and the way forward and the process we are going to use to get a farm bill adopted.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

VETERANS DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, 53 years ago, President Dwight Eisenhower named November 11 "Veterans Day," setting aside that day to honor all

Americans who have served our country so honorably in the military, both in war and in peace.

I want to take the opportunity this day of remembrance provides to say to all veterans and their families, thank you for your courage, your character, your strength, and the enduring power of your example. All Americans owe you our gratitude and appreciation for your commitment to and sacrifice for our Nation.

Since our Nation's struggle for freedom more than two centuries ago, nearly 50 million men and women have served in the U.S. military and nearly 25 million of these veterans are alive today. Our thoughts and prayers also are with our veterans of tomorrow—the 1.4 million Americans serving in our Armed Forces, including the more than 189,000 service men and women who are in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan. Because of the noble service and tremendous sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, the United States stands as a beacon of democracy, hope, and opportunity to the rest of the world.

At this moment, as we send soldiers to fight overseas, our support for our servicemembers must remain steadfast and strong. Our veterans have earned access to quality health care, affordable educational opportunities, and a chance to thrive once home.

I am proud today to be a part of this Congress that has worked to honor our commitment to our Nation's veterans. In September, the Senate passed the Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill for 2008. The legislation provides nearly 65 billion dollars for the Veterans' Administration. Specifically, the bill makes substantial new investments to improve and strengthen health care for our brave veterans, making critical investments in medical services, including treatment of traumatic brain injury, TBI, and post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans; funding for new claims processors to address the backlog of pending disability claims, and the investment in VA repair and maintenance necessary to prevent another Walter Reed type situation. These investments address key shortcomings in our veterans health care system.

Although a minority in the Senate blocked our ability to send that legislation to the President's desk last week, we voted this past Thursday to provide temporary funding at the level the Bush administration requested. That amount is \$4 billion less than what we in Congress originally intended. We remain committed to ensuring the VA receives the full \$65 billion necessary to provide veterans the care and services they have earned.

But just as important as the quality of care is access to care. My colleague, Senator BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, and I have worked together to secure Federal funding for two new VA community-based clinics in Maryland—one at Andrews Air Force Base in Prince

George's County and another at Fort Detrick in Frederick County. Not only will facilities like these help to reduce backlog and waiting times, they will allow more veterans to receive care close to home.

We know, however, that we can and must do more for our Nation's veterans, for those who have given so much to our country. In addition to giving our veterans the benefits they deserve, we must continue to honor their service and keep the memory of our fallen soldiers alive. In that spirit, I introduced bipartisan legislation to grant a Federal charter to the Korean War Veterans Association, S. 1692, the only fraternal veterans' organization in the United States devoted exclusively to veterans of the Korean war. This bill unanimously passed the Senate, and I am hopeful it will soon pass the House. Should that happen, it will ensure that the nearly 1.2 million American veterans of the Korean war will receive the Federal recognition they deserve for their dedication and sacrifice.

As elected leaders, we also have an obligation to act as good stewards for our military, exercising wise judgment for its use and providing the equipment, training, and materiel necessary for its success. My colleagues and I have made a good faith effort to act as those stewards.

Just this past Thursday evening, Congress passed a spending bill that provides \$460 billion for the Department of Defense, which is \$40 billion above the fiscal year 2007 enacted level. Congress directed that money be spent on a pay raise and better medical care and benefits for our troops but also on procuring new equipment for our National Guard, increasing troop strength, and developing the Armed Forces and the tools necessary to engage in the very different types of conflicts we are confronted with in the world today.

In his second inaugural address, a portion of which is engraved on our Veterans' Administration building, President Lincoln said:

Let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

I see those words as a charge to us here in Government, laying out the grave and important work we have left to do. But I think these words can serve as a guide to all of us, in every community, today and every day, as we welcome and honor our returned and returning heroes and work toward a more perfect Union.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, founding Veterans Day in 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower called upon Americans to "solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of free-

dom. . . ." Today, we heed the advice of President Eisenhower and pay respect to all soldiers who have sacrificed to ensure America remains free, safe, and the symbol of democracy around the world.

Throughout history, our soldiers have been asked to abandon their livelihoods to defend America's ideals and freedoms. Our soldiers have shouldered this great responsibility with courage, dedication, and honor. In return, this Nation cannot forget the countless sacrifices our soldiers have made for this country. We commemorate these valiant Americans who have protected the liberties and freedoms that all enjoy today.

Congress must do its part to honor our Nation's soldiers. We are profoundly grateful for the many sacrifices that our soldiers have made in the current war against terrorists and in past conflicts. This includes ensuring all veterans receive proper health care, benefits, rehabilitation, and services. Congress will continue to support our veterans.

We are all forever indebted to our veterans. I, therefore, personally thank all veterans and their families for the sacrifices you all have endured. I salute your valor and am immensely grateful for your service.

RECOGNIZING THE RUNNIN' BULLDOGS

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to proudly recognize the accomplishments of the Gardner-Webb University "Runnin' Bulldogs" of Boiling Springs, NC.

Originally chartered on December 2, 1905, Gardner-Webb has long been known for its excellent academic and athletic programs, which is a testament to its accomplished faculty. As a thriving regional university, Gardner-Webb offers eight unique degree programs on its beautiful 200 acre campus. Led by University President Dr. Frank Bonner, its approximately 4,000 students are some of the brightest minds their generation has to offer and I look forward to witnessing their rise through the ranks in the coming years ahead.

On November 7, 2007, in a truly David versus Goliath story, the Gardner-Webb "Runnin' Bulldogs" basketball team visited storied Rupp Arena to challenge the Kentucky Wildcats, one of college basketball's most successful programs, boasting seven National Championships. Late into the evening it became official, the Bulldogs shocked college basketball by upsetting the #20 ranked Wildcats. The Bulldogs entered the locker room at half-time with an 11 point lead and never looked back. With a final score of 84-68, head coach Rick Scruggs, team staff and the determined players masterfully executed their game plan which will forever be remembered as one the greatest upsets in college basketball history.

I join the university's many loyal supporters, alumni and fans everywhere in commending not only the Bulldogs' outstanding accomplishment last night, but the entire Gardner-Webb community for cultivating an environment that believes that accomplishing anything is not only plausible, but as highlighted last night, is possible.

TRAVEL RULES

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to notify all Senators that on Friday, November 9, 2007, the Committee on Rules and Administration approved the request of the Select Committee on Ethics and granted a 3-week extension until December 3, 2007, for the Ethics Committee to issue the initial guidelines implementing the new rules on privately sponsored travel required by Public Law 110-81.

In their letter to the Rules Committee, Senators BOXER and CORNYN note that unless the request is approved, the new travel rules would become effective on November 13, 2007. Due to the scheduling of a number of proposed trips on or shortly after November 13, the Ethics Committee believes that the additional required paperwork would not be submitted in time for review before the trips commence.

The 3-week extension will afford the Ethics Committee additional time to post the proposed new travel guidelines on its Web site. These guidelines will be effective on December 3, 2007, and all privately sponsored travel beginning on or after that date will be required to conform to the new rules and guidelines.

I ask unanimous consent to have the letter from the Ethics Committee dated November 7, 2007, printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS,
Washington, DC, November 7, 2007.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Chairman, Committee on Rules and Administration, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT F. BENNETT,
Ranking Member, Committee on Rules and Administration, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS FEINSTEIN AND BENNETT: Consistent with the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007 (the "Act"), the Select Committee on Ethics requests that the Committee on Rules and Administration extends until December 3, 2007, the deadline for the Ethics Committee's formal issuance of the initial guidelines implementing the new rules on privately-sponsored travel. (See Section 544(b)(4) of the Act.)

The legislative history of the Act provides that the new travel requirements "go into effect 60 days after enactment, or the date the Select Committee on Ethics issues the required guidelines under the rules, whichever is later." Without the requested extension, the new travel rules would become effective on November 13, 2007. The Committee has prepared guidelines and new forms that