

Iraq, without the requisite stability and security, is likely to cause the violence there—which has decreased substantially but is still present—to cascade into an even larger humanitarian crisis.

Third, the counterinsurgency campaign led by Gen. David Petraeus is the correct approach in Iraq. It is showing promise of success and, if continued, will provide the Iraqi government the opportunities it desperately needs to stabilize its country. Ultimately, however, these military gains must be cemented with regional and global diplomacy, political reconciliation, and economic recovery—tools yet sufficiently utilized. Today's tactical gains in Iraq—while a necessary precondition for political reconciliation—will crumble without a deliberate and comprehensive strategy.

Fourth, our strategy in fighting the Long War must address Iran. Much has been made this week of the intelligence judgments that Iran has stopped its weapons program. No matter what, Iran must not be permitted to become a nuclear power. All options should be exhausted before we use military force, but force, nonetheless, should never be off the table. Diplomatic efforts—from a position of strength, both regionally and globally—must be used to engage our friends and coerce our enemies to apply pressure on the Iranian regime.

Fifth, our military capabilities need to match our national strategy. Our military is stretched thin and will be hard-pressed to maintain its current cycle of deployments. At this critical juncture, we cannot afford to be weak. Numbers and capacity matter.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, America was not mobilized for the Long War. This was an opportunity lost, but it is not too late. Many Americans are frustrated by the war effort, the burden of which has been shouldered by less than one percent of our citizenry. Our country is accustomed to winning. We deserve a comprehensive strategy that is focused on victory and guided by decisive leadership. America must succeed in Iraq and Afghanistan, but we also cannot focus too narrowly on those conflicts. We need a regional and global strategy to defeat worldwide Islamic extremism to ensure a safer world today and for future generations.

The day after his famous Pearl Harbor speech, President Franklin D. Roosevelt again addressed the nation. "I was about to add that ahead there lies sacrifice for all of us," he said. "But it is not correct to use that word. The United States does not consider it a sacrifice to do all one can, to give one's best to our nation, when the nation is fighting for its existence and its future life." His words inspired the "Greatest Generation," and they should inspire us again today.

Americans must mobilize for the Long War—bolster our strained military, galvanize industry to supply troops with what they need right now and fund the strategy with long-term solutions. We have no doubt that Americans will rally behind a call to arms.

America's veterans—young and old—are resolved to support and defend the Constitution from all enemies, foreign and domestic. This commitment, and nothing less, should compel us to stand together, in and out of uniform. Would that Congress finds the courage to bury its pride and do the same.

FHA MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am pleased to support the FHA Modernization Act of 2007, and I hope the House and Senate can quickly work together to get this legislation to the President.

This bill is a good first step to helping address both housing affordability issues and problems in the subprime lending industry. I look forward to monitoring the legislation's implementation to ensure that the FHA reforms truly benefit low-income and middle-income homeowners.

The rising rate of foreclosures and its broader impact on the nation's economy is a serious issue that requires the involvement of all levels of government as well as both private and non-profit organizations. Subprime lending and rising foreclosure rates are complicated issues to unravel and any response, whether legislative or regulatory, will bring with it a set of consequences, some intended and some unintended. We need to examine a variety of responses to the rising foreclosure rates and their consequences, including providing more housing counseling for borrowers and more effectively regulating lending practices to prevent some of the unscrupulous practices that have occurred. Some of the more egregious lending practices include high rates of predatory lending in minority communities, steering borrowers into subprime mortgage products even if the borrowers qualified for more conventional loans, and not ensuring that borrowers fully understood the terms of subprime loans.

I was disappointed that the Senate FHA Modernization Act did not contain a provision directing some of the revenue realized by the FHA bill into an affordable housing fund as the House FHA reform bill did. I hope that conferees will work hard to find a fiscally responsible way to direct some of the increased revenue from the FHA bill into a national affordable housing trust fund. I also hope that Congress can pass stand-alone legislation creating a national affordable housing trust fund in the coming year.

The creation of more affordable housing through a national affordable housing trust fund will also help to alleviate the affordable housing crisis we are facing throughout the country. Local communities around the country are creating such trust funds, including in my state of Wisconsin. Congress needs to act promptly so that a national affordable housing trust fund can complement the good work going on in states and local communities throughout the country.

Earlier this year, I introduced legislation, the Affordable Housing Expansion and Public Safety Act, which contained provisions designed to assist low-income Americans in affording safe and adequate housing, including authorizing 100,000 new Section 8 vouchers, authorizing new targeted funding for the HOME program, reauthorizing the Public and Assisted Housing Crime and Drug Elimination Program, and calling on Congress to create a national affordable housing trust fund. I hope that Congress can take a step toward the creation of such a fund by including a provision in the FHA reform

bill conference report to dedicate a fiscally responsible revenue stream toward such a national affordable housing trust fund.

This Nation faces a severe shortage of affordable housing for our most vulnerable citizens. Shelter is one of our most basic needs, and, unfortunately, too many Wisconsinites and people around the country are struggling to afford a place to live for themselves and their families. As Congress continues to take steps to deal with affordability issues, rising foreclosure rates, and reform of lending practices by banks and mortgage brokers, we need to ensure that any such reforms benefit those Americans most in need.

THE MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT OF 2007

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

Early in the morning of December 8, 2007, 25-year-old Nathaniel Salerno was attacked by five to seven men on a Washington, DC, Metro subway train. Salerno, a gay man, had been at several clubs prior to returning home. Shortly after boarding the train, the men approached him and allegedly demanded that Salerno give them his wallet and BlackBerry. When he stood up, the attackers snatched the items and began to punch and kick him, screaming antigay slurs. Salerno received stitches for the lacerations he received to his face during the attack. Washington's Metro police are investigating the assault as a bias-related violent crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Matthew Shepard Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ENERGY

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the energy legislation Congress is on the brink of passing in these last days of the first session of the 110th Congress. I voted against this legislation in the Senate because it contains numerous provisions that will distort competitive markets for energy through subsidies, Government mandates, special projects, and irresponsible increases in Federal spending. This bill will not promote the goal of energy security but will likely increase fuel and food prices and reduce consumer choice for everything from cars to light bulbs.

First, I want to talk about ethanol. It is difficult to understand why Congress continues to believe that ethanol is a desirable substitute for gasoline. It is widely reported that even if all of the 300 million acres—500,000 square miles—of currently harvested U.S. cropland produced ethanol, they wouldn't supply all of the gasoline and diesel fuel we now burn for transport, and they would supply only about half of the demand for the year 2025. We are not going to grow our way to energy security. We are also starting to see the devastating effects our current ethanol production is having on our scarce water supply, the environment, and human health.

Despite these facts, one of the bill's most prominent features is a five-fold increase in the ethanol mandate from the currently required 7.5 billion gallons by 2012 to 36 billion gallons by 2022. Meeting this mandate will require even more corn-based ethanol and the production of other so-called advanced biofuels, largely made from cellulosic ethanol. Although cellulosic ethanol production is in its infancy and does not exist commercially today, the bill specifies that 21 billion gallons of the 36 billion gallons mandated be cellulosic ethanol. This is nothing more than a congressional gamble with American taxpayer dollars.

If Congress is serious about moving away from oil to alternative fuels it cannot, as it has done here, subsidize political favorites and engage in statutory prescription. This will actually slow energy innovation and may even retard the gains we have made. An excellent example of this point is the exclusion of woody biomass material from our Nation's overgrown forests from the production of advanced biofuels. Companies throughout the West, including many small businesses, are working in partnership with the Federal Government to help restore our national forests by removing this woody biomass material and using it to produce energy. This oversight in the bill complicates these efforts and could seriously slow the gains my home State of Arizona and other Western States dominated by Federal lands have made to combat catastrophic wildfire.

Now, let's turn to the other major feature of this bill—federally mandated increases in corporate average fuel economy, CAFE, standards. This bill requires each manufacturer's fleet to average 35 miles per gallon by 2020, a roughly 40 percent increase over current standards for cars and trucks. What this proposal seems to overlook is that more fuel efficient cars and trucks already exist on the market for those who want them. And as gas prices rise, my guess is increasing numbers of consumers will buy smaller, more fuel efficient cars without being told to do so by Congress. The point is that this is a consumer choice issue. By federally mandating these increases there will be less choice, in-

creases in car sticker prices, and the very real possibility of more unnecessary highway deaths due to the increases in lighter vehicles, which generally are less safe in collisions on the road. A National Academy of Sciences study concluded that vehicle downsizing costs 1,300 to 2,600 lives per year.

Another major problem with the CAFE provisions in the bill is the failure to clarify the regulatory responsibilities of the National Highway Transportation Safety Board and the Environmental Protection Agency over the regulation of tailpipe emissions and fuel economy requirements. The administration in its Statement of Administration Policy makes this point. Failing to address this issue will likely leave industry to sort through layers of contradictory regulation.

Beyond the biofuels and CAFE provisions, the bill includes a full assortment of new efficiency mandates for appliances and buildings and even takes measures to phase out incandescent lightbulbs. Industry in the private sector has already brought to market alternative lighting technologies to the traditional lightbulb, and as prices drop consumers are switching over to them. Provisions like these are nothing more than Congress's attempt to take credit for something the market is already doing and accomplishing far more quickly and efficiently than the government can, I might add.

In sum, instead of enacting poor energy policy, Congress should focus on what it must do before we leave here this year—fund the Government by enacting fiscally responsible appropriations bills and ensuring our troops have what they need.

PASSAGE OF FARM BILL

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, with the passage of the farm bill, I want to commend the work of my legislative staff led by Kasey Gillette our senior legislative assistant. Kasey did an excellent job on both substance and strategy always focusing on how the bill would impact farm families and the agricultural economy of Pennsylvania. Kasey had two great teammates: Caryn Long and Alex Davis, who labored for months on very complex matters in the bill. Without the work of Kasey, Caryn, and Alex, I wouldn't have been able to have four amendments adopted during the floor debate and five others adopted during the committee markup.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE HALE

• Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, this morning WABI-AM radio in my home State of Maine dedicated the George Hale Studio in Bangor. I commend Clear Channel Communications for recognizing the many contributions George Hale has made to our State dur-

ing his 54-year career in broadcasting, and I am honored to offer a few words in tribute to him.

George Hale is a true broadcasting legend. For more a half century, he has kept the people of Maine informed, he has entertained us, and he has brought us together as a community of friends and neighbors. He has brought the best of Maine into our homes, and he has always been a welcome guest.

Still going strong today, George Hale will forever be associated with the Bangor Auditorium and the great high school basketball tournaments held there, but that is just a start. University of Maine football, baseball, and basketball have all benefited from his great work, and he is beloved by generations of fans, coaches, and players. Whether describing victory or defeat, he always treats the athletes with respect and appreciation for their efforts.

Generations of Mainers have begun their day with George. Many used to begin their day by tuning in at 5:45 a.m. to hear his thoughts and comments on everything ranging from Red Sox to world affairs.

And the tradition continues today. Along with his friend and cohost Ric Tyler, George's show provides news and insight about the issues facing Maine and the Nation. As one who has appeared on his show many times, I can say that George always treats his guests with fairness and respect.

George was blessed with a great voice, and he has used it well as a powerful spokesman for great causes. His support for the March of Dimes, and especially his advocacy for the folic acid campaign, has greatly helped this outstanding organization carry out its vital mission of improving the health of babies by preventing birth defects and infant mortality. The March of Dimes and George Hale truly are a championship team.

WABI-AM radio is known as the Voice of Maine. It is a fitting name because George Hale truly is the Voice of Maine. He is a great friend to me and to all the people of my State. I know we all look forward to many more years of hearing that great voice from the George Hale Studio.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4357. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Review Group, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Streamlining of the Farm Service Agency's Direct Farm Loan Programs" (RIN0560-AF60) received on December 7, 2007; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4358. A communication from the Administrator, Risk Management Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Common Crop Insurance Regulations; Potato Provisions" (RIN0563-AC05) received on