person with the revoked visa can stay in the United States—a terrorist, then, can stay in the United States—and can appeal the consular officer's decision of whether they had a right to be here in the first place. Thanks to a small provision inserted during the consideration of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Act of 2004, the visa holder has more rights than he or she should have, considering the terrorist connection. If they were originally denied a visa by the consular officer, there would be no right to dispute it.

I will give an example. If a consular officer grants a visa to a person and that person makes his or her way to the United States and after arriving in the United States the consular officer finds out that the foreign individual has ties to terrorism—maybe the consular officer found out that the visa holder attended a terrorist training camp or maybe the intelligence community just informed the consular officer that the visa holder was linked to the Taliban or maybe our Government just learned that the visa holder gave millions of dollars to a terrorist organization before they applied for a visa—whatever the case might be, the person should not have a visa, and the consular officer has to revoke it. This revocation should be a final determination—no ifs, ands, or buts about it. It should not be reviewable and especially should not be reviewable in the U.S. courts.

What are the ramifications, then, of where we are today with the law and why change the law? Deporting an alien on U.S. soil with a revoked visa is nearly impossible today if the alien is given the opportunity to appeal that revocation. This exception has made the visa revocation ineffective as an antiterrorism tool. Allowing review of revoked visas, especially on terrorism grounds, jeopardizes the classified intelligence that led to revocation. It can force agencies such as the FBI and the CIA to be hesitant to share information if it might get out within the environment of a court. Current law could be reversing our progress in information sharing.

So why is this relevant, then, to the bill on the floor? The 9/11 Commission—again, I want to emphasize it is a bipartisan commission—found flaws in our visa policies. Specifically, the staff report said that the 19 hijackers used—these are the 19 people who died on those airplanes that killed 3,000 Americans—these 19 hijackers used 364 aliases. Two of the hijackers may have obtained passports from family members working in the Saudi passport ministry. The 19 hijackers applied for 23 visas and obtained 22. The hijackers lied on their visa applications in detectable ways. The hijackers violated the terms of their visas, and they came and went at their very own convenience.

The leaders of the Senate claim that the underlying bill will finish the implementation of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. The floor manager on the other side of the aisle was quoted as saying:

> Every day that we don't act is another day in which we are not as secure here at home as we should be.

The 9/11 Commission pointed out the obvious by stating:

> Terrorists cannot plan and carry out attacks in the United States if they are unable to enter our country.

The 9/11 Commission explicitly recommends, on page 385, that:

> The United States should combine terrorist travel intelligence, operations, and law enforcement in a strategy to intercept terrorists, find terrorist travel facilitators, and constrain terrorist mobility.

So we are back to my amendment. The amendment, amendment No. 300, helps to achieve this goal. Intelligence officials need to share information with immigration and consular officers to prevent terrorists from entering the United States and impede the mobility of terrorists throughout our country, wherever they want to do their dirty work.

The Speaker of the House pointed out that:

> Implementing the 9/11 Commission recommendations is supported by 62 percent of Americans.

I think a higher percentage of Americans would agree that reforms to our immigration and visa policies should not be ignored, especially given the 9/11 Commission's recommended actions on these issues that then would make it easier to get these people with revoked visas out of the country and would not put them in an environment where, if they were going to be pursued through the courts to get them out of the country, that intelligence information or FBI sources would have to be disclosed in the courts.

Unfortunately, our leaders have forgotten a major recommendation of the 9/11 Commission. In other words, this bill is not as complete as the authors of this legislation want us to think it is, and this amendment will make it more complete. This amendment would constrain terrorists' travel, and it should be accepted on this bill. Allowing aliens to remain on U.S. soil with revoked visa or petition is a national security concern and is something about which the 9/11 Commission would suggest correction is needed. We must encourage, as the 9/11 Commission recommended, a procedure in which our intelligence community can work with consular officers, who then cooperate with our Nation's law enforcement to keep terrorists from coming to the United States. We should not allow potential terrorists and others who act counter to our laws to remain on U.S. soil and to run to the courts and to seek relief from deportation.

Terrorists took advantage of our system before 9/11—and I have laid this out, how you can get more visas than you even need, how you have hundreds of aliases, the tools they use—and proved how sophisticated they are and proved how they could carry out their dastardly acts on September 11. Enough is enough. They took advantage of our system before 9/11. We need to do everything we can to make sure they don't take further advantage of our system.

I hope my colleagues will support amendment No. 300.

I ask unanimous consent to add Senator VITTER as a cosponsor of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

46TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEACE CORPS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, 46 years ago, President John F. Kennedy proposed to the Congress one of the most successful and influential programs in the history of our Nation. It was on March 1, 1961, that President Kennedy asked the Congress to establish the Peace Corps.

In making that request, President Kennedy pointed out that the program would be of great benefit to struggling nations that were in ''urgent need for skilled manpower.'' The program has helped meet that need as more than 187,000 volunteers have served in the Peace Corps since its inception, in 139 countries.

President Kennedy also explained that the program would benefit developed nations as well. ''The future of freedom around the world,'' President Kennedy explained, ''depend[s], in a very real sense, on the ability to build growing and independent nations where men can live in dignity, liberated from the bonds of hunger, ignorance, and poverty.'' In pursuit of the Peace Corps mission of helping people help themselves throughout the world, Peace Corps volunteers have served as school teachers, economic development advisers, agricultural and environmental specialists, and in various capacities as skilled laborers. These dedicated Americans have helped developing nations with health and sanitation projects and have assisted them in increasing their agricultural production. They have helped these nations to combat diseases, including malaria and HIV/AIDS, that have, for too long, plagued underdeveloped nations. Because of the outstanding work of its volunteers, the Peace Corps has become an enduring symbol of the American commitment to freedom through the encouragement of the social, as well as the economic progress of all nations.

And, in proposing the creation of the Peace Corps, President Kennedy forthrightly acknowledged that American self-interest was involved in the creation of the program. ''Our own young men and women,'' he explained, ''will be enriched by the [Peace Corps] experience . . . an experience which will aid them in their future careers.'' And it did. Members of the Senate, Senators Paul Tongas and CHRIS DODD, came to

this Chamber as Peace Corps veterans. My good friend and colleague from West Virginia, Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER had worked for the Peace Corps in Washington, DC, where he served as the operations director for its largest overseas program in the Philippines. Members of my staff, like Zach Pusch, and even the mothers of members of my staff, like Mrs. Dorothy Corbin, have served in the Peace Corps. I have heard all of them, on a number of occasions, discuss how their lives and careers were enhanced by their service in the Peace Corps. Their experience in the Peace Corps inspired them to persevere in making this world a better and safer place in which to live, work, and raise families, long after they had left the program.

It is through the Peace Corps that the dreams and the policies of the great and beloved President John F. Kennedy live on.

On this 46th Anniversary of the Peace Corps, and in celebration of National Peace Corps Week, I want to congratulate everyone and anyone ever involved in this unique organization for your service to our country. And, I want to commend you for your efforts in promoting freedom around the world.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I regret that on February 28, I was unable to vote on certain provisions of S.4, the Improving America's Security Act of 2007. I wish to address these votes so that the people of the great State of Kansas, who elected me to serve them as U.S. Senator, may know my position.

Regarding vote No. 54, on the Inouye amendment No. 285, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the result of the final vote.

Regarding vote No. 55, on the DeMint amendment No. 279 as modified, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the result of the final vote.

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWNS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, this Sunday, March 4, will mark the 86th anniversary of the enactment of a measure which established the Tomb of the Unknowns, honoring those members of the U.S. Armed Forces who fell in battle but who were not able to be identified, those ''known but to God.''

By its very nature, war takes life. Parents lose children, children lose parents, and with each passing this country loses a son or daughter that makes this Nation what it is, great. No funeral or ceremony can stop the pain that cuts deep into the families of servicemembers who have been killed in action. But for the families of servicemembers missing in action, the cutting pain of loss remains an open wound.

At the end of the First World War, this country asked itself questions related to those American soldiers who were unknown or missing in action. Where would those families come to pray, to grieve? Where would the rest of us go to ponder how it is we should honor them?

Eighty-six years ago, Members of Congress, standing in the Capitol where we stand today, sought to respond to those questions. Eighty-six years later, the Tomb of the Unknowns stands honored and guarded. Since 1937, Tomb Guards of the 3rd U.S. Infantry have safeguarded those buried in the tomb, every minute of every day, never failing. They epitomize our Nation's commitment to honor all of America's unknown and missing soldiers.

On this occasion, choosing to reflect on the Tomb of the Unknowns and what it means would be of value to us all. We should think of the the families of the missing, the spirits of the unknown soldiers, and of the Tomb Guards, who honor them. For myself, I extend heartfelt feelings my prayers for the families, my deepest gratitude to those unknown soldiers, honored by us all, though ''known but to God,''and my respect to those entrusted to guard the tomb.

ASSAULT WEAPONS PROTECTION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, in 1994, I voted for the assault weapons ban which was enacted into law, and in March 2004, I joined a bipartisan majority of the Senate in voting to extend the ban for another 10 years. Unfortunately, despite the overwhelming support of the law enforcement community, the ongoing threat of terrorism, and bipartisan support in the Senate, neither President Bush nor the Republican congressional leadership acted to help protect Americans from assault weapons. On September 13, 2004, the assault weapons ban was allowed to expire. Today, law enforcement agencies across the country have been forced to upgrade their firepower in order to counter what they describe as an increasing presence of high-powered weapons on the streets.

According to an article last week in USA Today, Scott Knight, chairman of the Firearms Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, revealed that an informal survey of approximately 20 police departments showed that since 2004, all of the agencies have been forced to either add weapons to their officers' units or replace existing weaponry with military-style arms. ''This (weapons upgrade) is being done with an eye to the absolute knowledge that more higher-caliber weapons are on the street since the expiration of the ban,'' Knight explained.

The 1994 assault weapons ban prohibited the sale of 19 of the highest powered and most lethal firearms produced. It also prohibited the sale of semiautomatic weapons that incorporated a detachable magazine and two or more specific military features. These features included folding telescoping stocks, threaded muzzles or flash suppressors, protruding pistol grips, bayonet mounts, barrel shrouds, or grenade launchers.

Ron Stucker, criminal investigations chief of the Orange County Sheriff's Department in Florida, stated that over the past 2 years his department has been arming many of its deputies with assault weapons. These deputies are now ''frequently'' encountering dangerous assault weapons even during routine traffic stops.

In Houston, homicides rose 25 percent in 2006 over the previous year. Police Chief Harold Hurtt acknowledged the AK–47 assault rifle has become the ''weapon of choice'' for major drug dealers, warring gangs and immigrant smugglers. ''The reality on the street is that many of these weapons are readily available,'' according to Hurtt, whose department has also been consistently upgrading its weaponry with assault style arms.

It is clear that allowing the 1994 assault weapons ban to lapse has contributed to the dangerous and deadly consequences so many of us feared. Over the past 2 years criminals have been permitted easier access to weapons that simply have no place on our streets. I urge my colleagues to enact a commonsense ban on assault weapons.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I report that a victim of a hate crime in the city of Detroit died 10 days after the brutal incident.

Andrew Anthos was an extraordinary citizen with a passion for community service. During the last 20 years, Mr. Anthos repeatedly traveled by bus from Detroit to Lansing with a singular purpose, to urge the Michigan capital's dome be illuminated in red, white and blue, to honor his country.

Mr. Anthos wrote me last year to inform me of his efforts. As he put it, he wanted Michigan to be ''the first State to inaugurate this patriotic tribute to its loyal citizens.'' He had support from many in the State, and had hoped for dedication lighting during Michigan Week, which will occur in May of this year, when Michigan would celebrate its 170th anniversary as our 26th State.

On the evening of February 13, 2007, Mr. Anthos was riding a bus home from the Detroit Public Library. A passenger on the bus yelled at him and asked if he was gay. The man then followed him off the bus, where Mr. Anthos was helping a wheelchair bound friend off of the bus. The assailant then struck Anthos in the back with a metal pipe, leaving him critically injured, lying in the snow.

The man left, without any effort to rob Mr. Anthos. This clearly was a hate crime, where Anthos was targeted because of his sexual orientation. Mr.