

pool of talented employees to choose from.

Like many States, Kansas is facing a shortage of math and science teacher applicants. I agree with my advisory committee that global competitiveness lies with our younger generation. It is imperative that we provide them with an education from science and math teachers possessing a solid knowledge base and effective teaching skills. We also need to find ways to spark students' interests in math, science, and technology while they are in the early years of education. The America COMPETES Act addresses these needs by strengthening the skills of math and science teachers, creating partnerships between National Laboratories and high-need high schools, facilitating the expansion of advanced placement programs, and increasing the number of students who study foreign languages.

Additionally, the bill provides an increase in research investment by doubling the funding for the National Science Foundation, NSF. The grants distributed to States from the NSF are being used to conduct extraordinary research in every corner of the world.

My advisory committee supports the America COMPETES Act, and so do I. It is only through our commitment to the underlying goals of this bill that we will see success in building our competitive workforce.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleagues Senator JEFF BINGAMAN, Senator PETE DOMENICI, Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, and Majority Leader HARRY REID for their efforts to move this issue. I am so proud of this great bipartisan team of 54 Senators working to pass this bill. I can't say enough about the appreciation that many of us in the Senate feel about my colleagues' initiation of the report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," which is the basis for this legislation, the America COMPETES Act.

America must remain an innovation economy. This legislation creates the building blocks that we need for a smarter America. Our Nation is in an amazing race—the race for discovery and new knowledge, the race to remain competitive and to foster an innovation society, to create new ideas that lead to new breakthroughs, new products, and new jobs, the innovations that have the power to save lives, create prosperity and protect the homeland, the innovation to make America safer, stronger, and smarter.

This legislation is called the America COMPETES Act or America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education and Science. It is divided into three sections: research, education and innovation. It calls for getting new ideas by doubling Federal funding for research at the National Science Foundation and establishing the Innovation Acceleration Research Program to fund frontier research like testing new theories and using new research methods; getting the best minds with scholar-

ships for future math and science teachers, including \$10,000 scholarships from the National Science Foundation for undergraduate students majoring in math or science along with teacher certification; and establishing a President's Council on Innovation and Competitiveness to develop a comprehensive agenda to promote innovation and competitiveness in the public and private sectors.

Why is this so important? Because a country that doesn't innovate, stagnates. The whole foundation of American culture and economy is based on the concept of discovery and innovation. That is part of our culture. When you look at what has made America a superpower, it is our innovation and our technology. We have to look at where the new ideas are going to come from that are going to generate the new products and workforce for the 21st century.

I want America to win the Nobel Prizes and the markets. This legislation will help to set the framework. It will make sure that we're helping our young people with scholarships and helping our science teachers and those working in science with funding and research opportunities. We also are forming partnerships with the private sector and building an innovation-friendly Government.

The very essence of our culture is innovation and discovery. Remember we got here because someone wanted to discover. When Lewis and Clark set out on their expedition, it wasn't the National Geographic Society, to find a trail to the Pacific—it was called the Corps of Discovery. That is who we are. That is what our culture is, and that is what we need to maintain.

We are a nation of explorers and pioneers always searching for new frontiers. The next generation of pioneers, engineers, and scientists is out there. They will help us create jobs and win the markets. Most importantly, they will help us win the amazing race. I will use my position as chair of the subcommittee that funds science to make sure that there is money in the Federal checkbook to support these proposals, and I hope my colleagues will do the same.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I have an amendment to S. 761, the America COMPETES Act. My amendment would allow competency-based institutions of higher learning to access grant programs which will help them train math, science, and critical foreign language teachers.

I applaud the goals of increasing the numbers of math, science, and critical foreign language teachers in our schools, including high-need schools. Our ability to compete as a nation is directly tied to our ability to educate our young people and retrain those who are in industries that are no longer viable.

We now have the finest system of higher education in the world. There is no doubt that if we provide the proper

incentives, many brilliant innovators and educators will take up the clarion call.

I come before this body today to introduce my amendment because many of today's teachers are teaching an older generation of students. The U.S. economy is in a state of continual change, and with that change comes displacement of workers and a need to retrain and retool. These nontraditional students often receive their training from accredited schools who assess student development based on a student's ability to demonstrate competency in the material being taught. Under the bill as drafted, these competency-based universities would not be able to access the grant money for teacher development. My amendment would remove this bias and allow competency-based universities access to the teacher development grant money. This in turn will increase the teaching quality in math, science, and critical foreign language, thereby providing the students attending these universities with a better education.

Current bill language would prevent participation by well-respected and widely recognized institutions, such as Western Governors University, WGU. WGU was set up by over 19 Governors to provide innovation in higher education and is now training over 1,000 math and science teachers, the majority of whom are women and minorities. WGU's innovative approach to teacher education has proven very successful.

As we set about to ensure that our Nation has the needed highly qualified teachers in critical subject areas, we must make certain that these institutions are included in this legislation. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, recently we learned that the Ohio National Guard could face early redeployment. We learned the National Guard is being asked to train without the proper equipment. Our Guard will do the job well, General Wade and others in Ohio assure me, and their past history shows they will. Our Guard will do the job well regardless of the circumstances, but it is wrong to send them to Iraq with incomplete training, with inadequate equipment, with insufficient downtime.

The conference report released last night echoes what many of us in Congress and what so many military families across our great country have been saying: We need a new direction for Iraq.

Make no mistake, we take a back seat to no one in supporting the brave men and women fighting in Iraq, and we absolutely support their families. But more of the same is not a plan for our troops. More of the same, more involvement in this civil war, will not end the war in Iraq. This war has made our country, and our world, less safe. The Iraq war has cost 142 Ohioans their lives and wounded another 1,000.

GEN Colin Powell, talking about the President's surge, the President's escalation of this war, has said:

I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing this communitarian violence, this civil war, will work.

Colin Powell, General Powell, recognizes this is a civil war, recognizes that the surge, the President's escalation will not result in a different outcome in Iraq.

Congress will continue, of course, to fight for our Nation's military by working to see that they have the resources and the support they need and the leadership they deserve. The conference report fully funds and fully supports our troops while establishing conditions that will bring our troops home. It provides desperately needed funding to the Veterans' Administration to help care for the hundreds of thousands of new veterans created by this war.

When we think of the carnage brought about by this war, when we think of the literally tens of thousands of men and women who serve this country and who are back from Iraq and who are in the Veterans' Administration health care system, we understand why we need from our Government literally a 50-year plan. What are we going to do for the next five decades for these injured men and women who have suffered psychological injury and physical injury? Yet this administration is not even funding our troops, the health care of our returning troops well this year, let alone planning into the future. This supplemental bill we will send to the President in the next few days begins the process of what we need to do to take care of the health and the welfare of these returning troops, these injured, psychologically and physically injured soldiers.

If the President won't take responsibility for his failures and lead our troops home, then Congress needs to and Congress will. We owe it to our soldiers, to our sailors, to our airmen and women and to our marines, and we owe it to their families.

The President should listen to military leaders and the American people and work with Congress to change course in Iraq instead of threatening vetoes. Vetoing this legislation would deny funding that our military needs in Iraq. It would deny funding our veterans desperately need who have returned home.

The President says there is too much pork, too much spending in this bill, as if every other supplemental bill that

previous Republican Congresses, the House and Senate, have sent to the President every time with other supplemental emergency spending has not. Mr. President: Please read this bill. Don't dismiss it out of hand because you don't like some of the language about Iraq, even though it protects our soldiers, even though it takes care of our veterans, even though it does things such as spend \$3 billion for the mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles, vehicles that will make our troops considerably safer than the flat-bottomed vehicles where far too many of our troops have been killed or badly injured.

This supplemental bill we are sending to the President includes billions of dollars for BRAC, billions of dollars for military construction, the kind of work we need to do to make our military even more efficient, even more productive. It spends \$1.6 billion for individual body armor, something the military and the civilian leadership in the White House and the civilian leadership in the Pentagon have fallen short on, providing the kind of body armor for our troops and the kind of up-armor for our humvee vehicles that is needed.

I ask again, Mr. President: Please read this bill before you decide what you are going to do, and then sign this bill. The VA would get \$1.7 billion more than the VA proposal from the President, which was zero; it would have \$39 million in polytrauma-related funding; it would have \$10 million for blind veterans programs. It has \$100 million for VA mental services. It has \$25 million for prosthetics.

This legislation we are sending to the President—again we ask him to read it before making his decision instead of dismissing it out of hand—has all kinds of support for our troops, for their health care, for their supplies, for supplying them in the field. It has way more money for our troops in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and for those troops returning home in our VA system, way more resources than the President has allowed in his budget.

The President has set our Nation on a path that leads nowhere. He did not listen to the voters last fall. He has not listened to the Iraq Study Group, the bipartisan panel of very distinguished Americans. He has not listened to many of the military advisers, free to speak freely, and he has not listened to the House and the Senate majorities about this legislation.

In addition, this legislation provides for help for mine safety. It provides for emergency spending for the LIHEAP program, for elderly indigent people who have had their heating or air-conditioning cut off because they simply can't afford to pay for their energy use at home. It has support for the pandemic flu. It has pandemic flu protections. As Senator STABENOW from Michigan said a few moments ago, it has a minimum wage increase, something this Senate or House has not done for 10 years.

Mr. President: Please read this bill before you decide whether you are going to sign it or veto it, and please listen again to General Powell, who said:

I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing this communitarian violence, this civil war, will work.

We are on the wrong course in Iraq. If the President signs this bill, it will help us redeploy our troops more quickly out of Iraq in the most orderly and safest way possible. It will also equally and importantly provide for health care for our troops, for the tens of thousands of injured troops who have returned home from this war.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

HONORING PROFESSOR CHERIF BASSIOUNI

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor an outstanding Illinoisan, Professor Cherif Bassiouni, a great legal mind, teacher, and humanitarian, and to congratulate him on his retirement.

For more than 40 years, Professor Bassiouni has made Chicago—and DePaul University—his home. At DePaul, he has made countless contributions to international law and legal education. He has also been a consistent advocate for the rule of law. His legacy at DePaul continues the legacy of his family. The Bassiouni family is widely known for their impact on the struggle for independence in Egypt almost one century ago.

Cherif's maternal and paternal grandparents were lawyers and leaders in the struggle for Egyptian independence. His paternal grandfather led the 1919 revolt against the British. Professor Bassiouni's early instruction was comprised of French Jesuit schooling, Muslim tutors, and European nannies. His upbringing encompassed the best of different societies and was a sign of great things to come. He was introduced to the charitable works of St. Vincent de Paul and since his youth, has been guided by St. Vincent's motto, "to serve God by serving the needs of man." He lived through some of the most dramatic moments in both Egyptian and American history; he was a soldier during the 1956 war but then dissented against Nasser's regime and was placed under house arrest. Soon afterward he immigrated to the United States.

After finishing his law degree, Professor Bassiouni began his teaching career at the DePaul University College of Law in 1964, where he was able to link the experiences of his youth to the work of his adult life. He was steadfastly devoted to the advancement of human rights. He did pro bono work for clients involved in the civil rights movement that culminated in the 1967 Chicago riots and the 1968 Democratic National Convention protests. Ten years later he applied what he had learned to his native land, by advising President Anwar Sadat during the Camp David Peace Accords.