

we have tripled the number of border agents and increased the enforcement budget tenfold. True border security requires both increased enforcement measures and the creation of adequate legal channels for immigration, including programs to bring needed foreign workers into the U.S. and to allow undocumented immigrants who pass background checks to earn legal status. These measures allow us to separate those who are here to work and contribute to our communities from terrorists and others who pose a serious threat to this Nation, so that our immigration enforcement agents can focus their efforts in the right place. Postponing these measures—as this bill does—makes us less safe, not more.

The bill's solution to the third challenge of immigration reform—shaping the contours of legal immigration—is a radical shift away from family reunification. That solution is not consistent with the core values of this Nation. In the past, our immigration laws have acknowledged that our country and our communities are stronger when families are united. But under this bill, it will be much harder for U.S. citizens and legal immigrants to be reunited with parents, siblings, and adult children. Some of my colleagues argued that this shift in policy is a necessary step toward embracing a “merit-based” system of immigration. But I believe there is a great deal of merit in keeping families together. And I don't believe that bringing people with useful skills to this country can only be accomplished at the expense of family unity.

We had the opportunity to do something about the bill's antifamily provisions. Along with Senators MENENDEZ and OBAMA, I cosponsored two amendments: one that would sunset the so-called “merit-based” system in 5 years, and one that would reallocate points within the merit-based system to place more value on family ties. The first amendment failed, while the Senate has not yet had the opportunity to vote on the second. Other amendments would have improved this aspect of the bill, but they fell victim to points of order, and we were prevented from voting on them. So we are left with a system that values 3 years of U.S. employment more than the relationship between a brother and sister.

Beyond these much debated aspects of the bill, I am also deeply concerned by a little-discussed provision that would allow the Department of Homeland Security to detain several different categories of immigrants indefinitely. These immigrants may effectively be given a lifetime jail sentence, even though they have committed no crime for which such a sentence could be imposed by judge or jury. There is already a provision in our existing immigration laws under which the Government may indefinitely detain any immigrant who is suspected of terrorism or whose release would threaten national security. The bill goes far be-

yond that, even allowing the Government to detain—forever—immigrants who have never been suspected, let alone convicted, of any crime. That does nothing to make us safer, and it goes against everything this country stands for.

A similar challenge to our core values was presented by an amendment offered by Senator CORNYN. The amendment would have allowed the Government to deny citizenship to legal immigrants based on secret evidence and without any opportunity for review. It would have required the mandatory deportation of several new categories of immigrants without any individualized determination of whether such deportation was appropriate. And it would have doomed the earned legalization program with provisions that would make most applicants ineligible. In short, the amendment put forward a scattershot approach that would have penalized immigrants who pose no threat to us and stripped them of crucial due process rights. Fortunately, Senator KENNEDY offered us an alternative that responsibly and effectively targets the small proportion of immigrants who threaten the safety of our communities. His amendment will ensure that immigrants who have committed serious crimes not fully covered by existing immigration laws, including firearms offenses, domestic violence, child abuse, or felony drunk driving, cannot come to this country. I joined the majority of the Senate in voting for this more sensible and effective approach and against Senator CORNYN's amendment.

Despite my concerns about the bill, it contains several provisions that are important and worthy. For example, this bill contains the DREAM Act, which provides higher education opportunities for children who are long-term U.S. residents and came to this country illegally through no fault of their own. It also contains AgJOBS, a bill long in the making that will provide much needed assistance to agricultural workers. And it contains the Secure and Safe Detention and Asylum Act, to ensure that asylum seekers and other vulnerable populations have a meaningful opportunity to exercise their rights under law, and to provide for humane detention conditions in accordance with the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

I am pleased the Senate approved the addition to the bill of the Wartime Treatment Study Act, legislation Senator GRASSLEY and I have been trying to enact for years to examine the treatment of German Americans, Italian Americans, and other European Americans during World War II, as well as Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. While there has been study of the internment and relocation of Japanese Americans during World War II, few people know about our Government's failure to protect the basic rights of German and Italian Ameri-

cans. We also must understand why, as the United States heroically battled fascism, our Government turned away thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany, delivering many of them to their deaths at the hands of the Nazi regime. I first introduced this legislation in 2001 after hearing from a group of German Americans in Wisconsin who were concerned that this sad chapter in our Nation's history had gone unnoticed for too long. It is only appropriate for a country that prides itself on equality and justice to acknowledge and learn from its mistakes. It is long past time to enact the Wartime Treatment Study Act, and I will continue to push for it to become law.

I hope the Senate will still have the chance to address the need for comprehensive immigration reform. Congress needs to act on this issue, which is why I voted to move forward with this bill despite the serious flaws I have discussed. I will work with my colleagues to try to make sure this happens and to make sure that we end up with a bill that represents true immigration reform—one that encourages the 12 million undocumented immigrants in this country to come forward out of the shadows, takes a comprehensive approach to preventing illegal immigration in the future, and strengthens our society by welcoming immigrants who can make valuable contributions.

VERMONT HOUSING AND CONSERVATION BOARD

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is my pleasure today to bring to the attention of the Senate the important work the members and staff of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board have accomplished during their first 20 years of service to protect Vermont's working landscape and to help ensure that Vermonters have safe and affordable places to call home.

Since 1987, VHCB, its board members and staff have invested in 427 farms, resulting in the conservation of 118,500 acres of farmland; protected 250,000 acres of recreational and natural areas; and constructed or rehabilitated 8500 units of affordable housing. This has been a conscious investment of \$200 million in our Green Mountains, leveraging an additional \$750 million from public and private sources. Few organizations can boast the stimulus of \$1 billion in two short decades.

For centuries, Vermonters have made their livings working the land. As land use patterns drastically change across the country, including in the valleys of Vermont, VHCB has helped many farmers and communities conserve the rural working landscape that has come to define Vermont and the way of life in our State's communities. VHCB has become a national leader in farmland protection practices—educating family farmers how they can make money protecting working farmland and rural landscape for generations to come. The

protections VHCB has been able to offer Vermont's farmers have resulted in hundreds of farms remaining active and contributing members of their communities, allowing them to remain Vermont's ultimate environmental stewards. VHCB's expertise also allowed me to work with them to implement a farm preservation pilot program in Vermont that has since become known as the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program, a national farmland protection program. Today, this program has protected nearly a half million acres of farmland in 42 States nationwide.

For centuries, the very same farmers who have lived off the land have become well known for their love of fishing, hunting, hiking and snowmobiling across Vermont's forests and open spaces. With encroaching urban sprawl and changing demographics, these lands, too, have been dwindling. VHCB has made it a priority to preserve these natural lands and access to these lands, conserving a quarter of a million acres of these green spaces.

As a dual mission organization, VHCB has also led the country in developing and administering steady private, State and Federal funding sources for the preservation, development and rehabilitation of quality affordable housing in all corners of Vermont. These homes, like the great pieces of granite my grandfather once cut out of the mountainsides of Vermont, are the foundations for the future of Vermont. Additionally, many of these homes are designated perpetually affordable, ensuring that generations of Vermonters will have places to call home. Recently the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development named Vermont's federally funded HOME program, administered by VHCB, as the most effective program among 51 participating jurisdictions in the country for the fourth quarter in a row.

Like so many Vermonters, I live in a rather old house in the Green Mountains. At least half of Vermont's housing stock is estimated to be more than 50 years old, and many are more than a century old. With this Yankee character comes a great danger that VHCB has identified and tackled with great skill: lead poisoning. The most common cause of lead poisoning is exposure to dust from deteriorated lead-based paint in a child's home or daycare. The Vermont Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program, administered by VHCB, has provided technical and financial assistance to eligible landlords and homeowners to reduce the risk of lead poisoning in Vermont's buildings and homes.

Since the very beginning, my good friend Gus Seelig has steered this organization through both calm and stormy weather. Like any good leader, I am certain that Gus would say this organization owes a great deal of its success to its many past and present board members and staff. On behalf of the

people of Vermont, I thank and applaud everyone who has worked to make the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board a success. Congratulations on 20 great years preserving the character and affordability of Vermont.

RECOMMISSION OF THE USS "MICHIGAN"

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to commemorate the recommission of the USS *Michigan*, SSGN-727. A formal return to service ceremony will be held on Tuesday, June 12 at 1 p.m. to honor the USS *Michigan* and her officers and crew, which includes captain of the boat CDR Terry Takats and chief of the boat CMDCM Wayne Lassiter.

The USS *Michigan* will return to active duty as the second *Ohio*-class nuclear-powered Trident missile submarine in the U.S. Navy to be refitted from a ballistic missile submarine, SSBN, into a guided missile submarine, SSGN. This conversion has enhanced and transformed the capabilities of the USS *Michigan*, making it a more valuable asset and serving as an example of the Navy's ongoing transformation to face current and future threats around the world.

The USS *Michigan* has had a proud tradition of service, and SSGN-727 will be the third naval vessel to bear the name of our great State. The first ship to carry this name was launched by the Navy in 1843 as its first iron-hulled warship. She operated throughout the Great Lakes for her entire period of service, gaining notoriety when she helped to successfully end the Fenian invasion of Canada by intercepting supplies between Buffalo and Fort Erie, Ontario along the Niagara River.

U.S. Naval vessels bearing the Michigan name have courageously seen action against Mexico, served as convoy escorts during WWI, and most recently completed more than 33 strategic deterrent patrols throughout the world. The newly converted USS *Michigan* SSGN-727 will return to service with a new mission and enhanced capabilities.

The new guided missile submarine conversion program was developed by the Navy to create a more efficient and effective dual-use submarine force. The USS *Michigan*'s successful transformation has maintained all the benefits of its predecessor, while creating a ship that will act as a force multiplier for the Navy. It has an increased payload capacity of 154 cruise missiles and the capability to more effectively house, sustain, and deploy a variety of special operations forces, allowing for a support role, as well as stealth insertion and extraction of operatives. The flexibility of this new submarine will allow it to efficiently function in a variety of multimission scenarios.

The USS *Michigan* is a shining example of the U.S. Navy's transformation, and I know my colleagues will join me in commemorating its return to active service.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MONTANA HISTORY

- Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, the history of Butte, Anaconda, and Walkerville is as bright and intricate as the people who live there. Stories of greed, danger, and power intermingle with values like hard work and loyalty, to weave a tapestry as rich as any city in America. As the Montana Historical Society has so richly shown, the history of Butte is the history of our country.

As America began to slowly mature from a budding nation to an international superpower, the growing pains became evident. Settlers, packing what little belongings they could fit into the legendary prairie schooners, began to gaze at the horizon and seek fame and fortune on the Western frontier. As the trails became longer, and the distance grew greater, the limits of one nation were pressed. Yet the powers of American ingenuity and our Nation's legendary can-do spirit kicked in. Samuel Morse learned how to communicate through code, and Alexander Graham Bell discovered how to talk through wires.

While these men showed great genius, without the sweat of working men and women these inventions would be nothing more than a footnote in history. But as miners extracted mountains of copper from the Earth's belly, telegraph and telephone wires began to crisscross our country. Suddenly, a letter that used to take days would now take minutes. Citizens on the eastern seaboard would know what was happening on the plains, and at last we truly were one Nation.

And at the heart of this was Butte, Anaconda, and Walkerville. Here, the gallow frames and the towering Anaconda Company smokestacks pierce the skyline as a monument to the men and women whose toil became the bedrock of our great Nation. Though faced with danger, and even death, these workers strapped on their boots every morning and from daybreak till night provided the fuel for a growing nation.

Faced with dire circumstance and physical harm, these workers developed a bond that none outside the mines could understand. They stood together through thick and thin, and truly were a family.

This bond took form in two of the Nation's most radical unions, the Western Federation of Miners, and the Industrial Workers of the World. Located in "the Gibraltar of Unionism", Butte and Walkerville, these unions waged a class warfare the likes of which is still the fodder for legends. The class war soon came to a raging boil after the Butte Granite/Speculator Mine fire, the worst hard-rock mining disaster in the Nation's history. Unions were busted, agitators dealt with, and the crushing hand of the "company" dealt a crippling blow to the workers.