

Mr. Speaker, S. 2516, the Kendell Frederick Citizenship Assistant Act, pays tribute to the memory of 21-year-old Army Reserve Specialist Kendell K. Frederick who was killed in Iraq while attempting to become an American citizen.

Specialist Frederick was born in Trinidad and immigrated to the United States when he was 15 years old to join his mother, stepfather, and two sisters. He attended Randallstown Senior High in Baltimore County, Maryland, where he joined the school's ROTC program. Specialist Frederick enlisted in the Army Reserve in his senior year and was deployed to Iraq in December of 2004.

As he was serving our country, Specialist Frederick sought to apply for U.S. citizenship, yet one bureaucratic hurdle after another delayed his application.

First, the USCIS failed to route his application to the unit that processes naturalization applications for members of the military. The gentleman then rejected his application for failure to pay an application fee even though active military personnel applying for U.S. citizenship are not required to pay that fee.

Next, the agency directed Specialist Frederick to get his fingerprints taken in Maryland despite the obvious fact that he was deployed in Iraq at the time. Besides, he had recently had his fingerprints taken as part of his background check when he enlisted in the Army Reserve.

But when his mother called the agency's help line, she was told that nothing could be done.

Finally, after trying for more than a year to become a U.S. citizen and having his application rejected and delayed as a result of various bureaucratic failings by his own government, Specialist Frederick was forced to travel on a convoy to a base where he could get his fingerprints taken again for his naturalization application.

Tragically, he was killed en route by a roadside bomb. Specialist Frederick was posthumously granted U.S. citizenship a week after his death.

S. 2516 would remove unnecessary procedural hurdles like the ones Specialist Frederick faced for naturalization applications currently or recently serving in the military. Most importantly, it directs Homeland Security to accept fingerprints taken at the time of enlistment as long as they are otherwise acceptable.

The House has already passed legislation similar to S. 2516. It was introduced by Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS. It was H.R. 2884, the Kendell Frederick Citizenship Act, and passed the House by voice vote on November 6 of last year. There are a few minor differences between the House-passed bill and the Senate bill, but both accomplish the goal of removing these bureaucratic hurdles to our soldiers becoming U.S. citizens.

Therefore, I ask that my colleagues support the passage of this bill so that

we can get the bill to the President and signed into law as quickly as possible.

Approximately 45,000 lawful permanent residents are currently serving in our Armed Forces. More than 35,000 noncitizen members of the military have applied for U.S. citizenship since 2002.

This bill is an excellent measure that will help ensure that from now on American soldiers do not face some unnecessary, unreasonable hurdles to American citizenship that cost Specialist Frederick his life. Much more needs to be done to assist America's soldiers with their hassles with our immigration system. But this bill is a good first step, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Specialist Kendall Frederick was a 21-year-old U.S. Army soldier serving in Iraq who dreamed of becoming an American citizen. He was born in Trinidad and came to this country when he was 15 years old. Specialist Frederick joined ROTC while in high school—and I would point out there are increasing numbers of high schools that have denied ROTC presence on their campus. Not the case for Specialist Frederick and we are thankful.

He joined the Army after he graduated. On October 19, 2005, he was tragically killed by a roadside bomb while traveling in a convoy to a base. He was granted U.S. citizenship posthumously, but he never knew he was an American citizen. Tragically, the very reason that he was in that convoy that day was to get fingerprinted in order to achieve his dream.

We know that Kendell Frederick wanted to be an American citizen but bureaucracy stood in his way. He had been trying to become an American citizen for over a year, Mr. Speaker, having started the process while he was in training.

His mother and his sergeant in Iraq tried to help him, but they didn't know the rules. His efforts to become a citizen were thwarted by bureaucratic misinformation and other obstacles.

While he was fighting for our country in Iraq, he was told that he had to have his fingerprints retaken in Maryland. When his mother called 1-800-IMMIGRATION, it's a USCIS unit, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services hotline for immigration assistance, and tried to explain that he was fighting in a war and was, I should say, tied up at the time, as John McCain might say, he could not come home to Baltimore to be fingerprinted so she was told that there was nothing they could do.

This is wrong and this is intolerable that our soldiers are unable to get correct information, Mr. Speaker. They should be given every possible assistance in applying for citizenship.

Last year, the House passed H.R. 2884 which provides that a soldier who sub-

mits a naturalization application within 24 months of enlistment can have that application processed using the fingerprints that were taken at the time of his enlistment. I supported that bill then which was designed to and does honor Specialist Frederick and all of our lawful permanent resident servicemembers.

Today we're considering S. 2516 which is a bill the Senate passed that makes a few technical changes to H.R. 2884. I urge my colleagues to support this bill. It has taken us some time to get this resolved. I trust it will be resolved today in this House, Mr. Speaker, and done so with great gratitude from this Congress and the United States people to Specialist Kendell Frederick and to all of those who have given their lives and parts of their lives and some their limbs for the freedom of this great country.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2516.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1530

EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PILOT PROGRAM EXTENSION

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5569) to extend for 5 years the EB-5 regional center pilot program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5569

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 610(b) of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1993 (8 U.S.C. 1153 note) is amended by striking "shall set aside" and all that follows through "eligible for admission" and inserting "shall set aside 3,000 visas annually for 20 years to include such aliens as are eligible for admission".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that, to the extent practicable, qualifying investments under section 610 of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1993 (8 U.S.C. 1153 note) should be made in targeted employment areas (as defined in section 203(b)(5)(B)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)(5)(B)(ii))), including rural areas (areas other than an area

within a metropolitan statistical area or within the outer boundary of any city or town having a population of 20,000 or more (based on the most recent decennial census of the United States)) and high unemployment areas (areas that have experienced unemployment of at least 150 percent of the national average rate).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, we move to extend an immigration program proven to promote investment and to create jobs for American workers. H.R. 5569 would extend the EB-5 regional center pilot program for 5 years. Unless Congress acts, the regional center pilot program will sunset on September 30 of this year.

Congress created the fifth employment-based preference, known as EB-5, immigrant visa category in 1990 for immigrant investors. To qualify for a green card, the investor must prove that the investment is in a commercial enterprise that will benefit the United States economy and create at least 10 full-time jobs.

In general, investors must invest at least \$1 million. However, that amount can be reduced to \$500,000 if the investment is made in a rural or high unemployment area.

Approximately 10,000 visas have been made available in the EB-5 green card category each year. But the category has been underutilized ever since it came into being.

To help further encourage this program, Congress created a temporary pilot program in 1993. The regional center pilot program allocates 3,000 visas each year, out of the 10,000 available, for EB-5 investors who invest in so-called designated regional centers.

Under the immigrant investor pilot program, an applicant seeking EB-5 status must make the qualifying investment within an approved regional center. The requirement to create at least 10 new jobs, however, can be met by showing that, as a result of the new enterprise, such jobs will be created either directly or indirectly.

The regional center program is vital for our economy. For example, in fiscal year 2007, a total of 806 investors and family members immigrated to the United States in the EB-5 category.

That is not very many people, but even at that level, the EB-5 immigrant

investor program is expected this year to generate an annual rate of \$1 billion in aggregate immigrant investment, creating more than 20,000 new direct and indirect jobs. Usage of the program is expanding as new regional centers get approved.

The regional center program helps get investment money to some of the Nation's poorest communities, creating jobs and revitalizing communities. In Vermont's poorest county, for example, a regional center investment has put \$17.5 million into a ski resort at Jay Peak. This project is expected to create close to 2,000 jobs in the area, according to the New York Times.

It is important that Congress reauthorize the EB-5 regional center program. The pilot program has been renewed several times, and is currently due to expire, as I said earlier, on September 30 of this year. This bill would extend the EB-5 regional center pilot program for 5 years, until September 30, 2013.

When the subcommittee reviewed this bill, we had a discussion about looking at the level of investment and also the possibility of including venture capital-driven investments, where it's really the patents and ideas that are creating the jobs. We hope to be able to work with the minority to further pursue those ideas at a subsequent date. It should not deter us from proceeding today with this program that has proven to be valuable to our Nation by creating jobs for Americans.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself so much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the investor visa program is designed to attract entrepreneurial talent and capital to the United States and to create American jobs. Under this program, permanent resident visas are available each year to aliens who establish a new business in the United States and invest between \$500,000 and \$1 million in the business and eventually create at least 10 full-time jobs for American workers.

Once the Department of Homeland Security approves an alien business plan, the alien receives conditional permanent residence status. Two years later, the Department of Homeland Security determines whether the above requirements have, in fact, been met. If they have, the alien receives permanent residence.

To further encourage economic development, back in 1993, Congress created a temporary pilot program that set aside 3,000 investor visas each year for aliens who invested at least \$500,000 in designated regional centers.

A regional center is any economic unit, public or private, which is involved with the promotion of economic growth, including increased export sales or improved regional productivity or job creation or increased domestic or capital investment.

Further, a regional center shall have jurisdiction over a limited geo-

graphical area which shall be described in the proposal and consistent with the purpose of concentrating pooled investment in defined economic zones.

The establishment of a regional center may be based on jobs that will be created, directly or indirectly, as a result of such capital investments and the other positive economic effects such capital investments will have.

I should acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that one of the operating pilot projects is the Iowa New Farm Family Project, under which host communities are inviting farm families to establish modern dairy farms in Iowa.

And according to Iowa State University, which is our resident authority on the subject matter, "The project has the potential to enrich Iowa communities with young families who establish value-added agricultural businesses . . . and foster healthy economic development . . . The . . . project," which is the Iowa New Farm Family Project, Mr. Speaker, "creates opportunities to increase the population of rural communities, support agriculture, expand value-added agriculture, and maintain Iowa's existing dairy processing industry." That's as described by Iowa State University, the Iowa New Farm Family Project.

I want to point out that it has been successful, and it's not just agriculture. It can be urban, too, depending on the region and the zone as it's defined. It has been quite helpful to us in Iowa, and I am grateful for the initiatives that have been taken by Members of this House, Members of the Senate who have not just reached out in support of this legislation but reached out to individuals and helped pave the way through the bureaucratic nightmare to get investors to come into the United States and establish themselves here, where often they will find their economic opportunities have been dried up because of, let's say, capital exchange or regulation.

It happens to be the case with our Dutch dairy families that come in, that the regulations have gotten so heavy in The Netherlands that they want to continue their skill, their family tradition.

I note that the individual that stood at this particular microphone ahead of me was the gentleman from California who has a dairy tradition in his family, and you look back through generations. This establishes a generational linkage, Mr. Speaker, that I'm very grateful for, and it comes at a particularly good time, especially in the Midwest where we are a center for renewable energy.

Some 6 or 7 years ago, we had almost no industry to produce ethanol, and yet it began back in about 1978 and it began in my neighborhood in my region. And as the first gallon of ethanol was pumped, it became part of an alternative fuel that had been initiated in the late 1970s, came to fruition about 6 or 7 years ago, and since the time I've come to Congress, it has built such an

industry in my region that we now, the Fifth District of Iowa, are the number one renewable energy producing congressional district in America out of all 435.

Because we have the ethanol industry in Iowa, it has been very helpful to our dairy farmers because a byproduct of corn ethanol is the dried distiller strain, or the mash if it comes in a wet form. And the dairy farms have been able to utilize this, as well as anyone has, and it's added value to all of our feed. It's added value to our rough feed, and it's provided a high quality feed which makes it more attractive for our dairy producers to move into the region.

So, the pressure that we're under today with \$4 gas, and, by the way, I just happened to check a receipt here, and I paid \$141 for a tank of gas, \$141.52 on Saturday, Mr. Speaker. That's enough money to put into a gas tank, and that was at \$3.85. The folks on the west coast that are over \$4 a gallon feel this.

But what we've done is created a renewable energy industry in the Midwest to help take on some of that burden of providing energy for America. And when we do that, and as of the 2007 crop it hasn't really brought forward the food versus fuel argument. We have produced more corn than ever before, exported more corn than ever before, and still left more corn for domestic consumption than ever before, and we have produced over 9 billion gallons of ethanol. And the byproduct of that 9 billion, you get about a third of the weight of corn out into ethanol. You get a third of the weight of corn that goes into feed for these dairy cows, for example, and about a third of it goes off in CO₂. That's the simple breakdown, which I'll go into more detail with perhaps a Special Order that I can get into the details, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to point out that we need these dairy farmers in Iowa. The energy situation is actually a plus because \$4 gas holds up the price of corn and holds up the price for ethanol and helps make these systems work, and they're feeding the byproduct in a fashion that's producing more milk in the Midwest. We are still today a net importer of milk in a rural State like Iowa. So we can use some more.

But the regional center program expires in September. The bill will extend the program an additional 5 years. I think this is a very valuable program, and I support the passage of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that we will pass this bill. We have broad bipartisan support for it. But one of the values of debating these bills is not just to enact law but to let the public know of opportunities that the law provides to them.

And it might be instructive to citizens who are observing our proceedings to know that these projects that are being investment-driven through this program are in rural, as well as urban,

communities. The regional center staff—actually, it seems to me this pilot project has proven—make this thing work.

And so there are areas in the country today that are having economic problems. I would encourage those areas, through their local governments, to look very carefully at whether they may want to utilize this program as one piece of putting their economy on the road to recovery.

I note that our colleague SHEILA JACKSON-LEE expressed her interest in making sure that urban disadvantaged areas be looked at, and I note that Houston, Texas, has actually one of the largest applications of all. It is expected that they will have 7,000 jobs and a \$350 million investment.

So this is a great opportunity for America. I would hope that we will pass this expeditiously. It is part of getting our economy on the move again.

I would reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself so much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on the point made by the gentle lady from California about this is, of course, not by any means a complete solution to the immigration circumstances, but we agree on some of these points, and on this point of attracting investors to the United States who will invest in businesses that create jobs and create wealth, more importantly create wealth. Without the creation of wealth, there's no money to pay the wages. Companies have to make money. It takes capital of course and it takes labor, it takes ideas, it takes energy, it takes a free market environment and a low regulatory environment. The United States looks better than some of these other countries in the world.

This sends the right message here today that this Congress is interested in opening up and laying out the welcome mat, at least in this specific case, where we ask investors to come into the United States under this EB-5 program.

Then I would add that there are other interests that we at least philosophically agree on, and one of those is highly skilled immigrants coming into the United States and those that are highly educated. When we can do the calculation on what kind of return we get from someone who comes into the United States as a legal immigrant to work here, to invest here, to start and run a business here, and we can see what they will do from a prosperity perspective, what their contribution will be to the economy and to the society, there are many records that help support that.

What we do see, though, Mr. Speaker, is that between 89 and 93 percent of the legal immigration in America isn't based upon merit like this program is.

□ 1545

Most of it is based on familial connections, who are you related to, as op-

posed to what can you do for the United States of America?

And I have said for years, we need an immigration policy that's designed to enhance the economic, the social, and the cultural well-being of the United States of America. Every Nation has to have an immigration policy that is for them. And we held a hearing a year or two ago about the point system that some of the countries have established. Canada has one established; the United Kingdom is implementing a point system; New Zealand has one; and I believe Australia is looking at one. Those countries come to mind, where they give certain points for certain categories that demonstrate how a person can contribute to society.

For example, higher education is one category that offers significant merit. The next one is job skills; so that's earning capacity. Another one is language skills, which says how easily they will be able to assimilate in a society. It's not a barrier not having the language, but it's easier to assimilate, of course, if you are fluent in the language of the host country.

And another component is youth. If we bring people in here that are 65 years old, that qualify right away for Social Security and Medicare, of course they're not going to be contributing to our economy. And so I plugged myself into the Canadian equation and found out—I don't think the welcome mat is open for me in Canada because I'm a little over the hill, Mr. Speaker.

Youth is a big, important thing because, if you come in at age 22 with a college education, you can contribute to the economy for, let's just say, 43 years before you retire. So youth is an important criteria, as is education, as is job skills, as are language skills. These things are all things that a wise country should reach out for and craft an immigration policy that will enhance the economic, the social, and the cultural well-being of the United States of America, where 89–93 percent of our legal immigrants are not measured that way; about seven to 11 percent are measured that way.

This is a measure on merit. It is strictly a capital investment, and then meeting the other criteria about establishing the jobs in the business. But I fully support it. It is a bipartisan effort. And it is something that we agree on the theme and the philosophy. I wanted to point out that I believe that we need to set a hard cap on our overall immigration, and then start to shift within those visa allotments so that we get a higher percentage of merit coming in legally into the United States. And of course control the border, stop the bleeding there; none of this matters unless we can do that, Mr. Speaker.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that we will likely have an extended debate next year when we visit again the issue of comprehensive immigration reform. I don't

want to get into a debate today, I will just say a core principle of immigration law has always been that the United States Government doesn't tell American citizens who they get to fall in love with and marry. And a second core principle is, when our U.S. citizen marries somebody from another country, the American doesn't have to move to France, his wife gets to move here. So that's something that we will protect as this debate goes forward.

This bill has bipartisan support, and I urge its adoption.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support H.R. 5569. I am proud to join my colleagues in cosponsoring this timely legislation. I would like to thank my colleague, Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, Chairwoman of the Immigration Subcommittee, for her leadership on sponsoring this legislation. I would also like to thank Mr. Blake Chisam, counsel on the Immigration Subcommittee, and Mr. Arthur Sidney, of my staff, for their important work in including my amendment in the bill.

By way of background and explanation, H.R. 5569 extends for five years the EB-5 regional center pilot program. Congress created the fifth employment-based preference, EB-5, immigrant visa category in 1990 for immigrants seeking to engage in a commercial enterprise that will benefit the U.S. economy and create at least 10 full-time jobs.

The basic amount required to invest is \$1 million, although that amount may be \$500,000 if the investment is made in a "targeted employment area." Of the approximately 10,000 numbers available for this preference each year, 3,000 are reserved for entrepreneurs who invest in targeted employment areas. A separate allocation of 3,000 visas is set aside for entrepreneurs who immigrate through a regional center pilot program.

In 2003, Congress asked the U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO, to study the EB-5 program. The GAO report concluded that the program has been under-used for a variety of reasons, including the rigorous application process and the failure to issue regulations implementing the 2002 law. The report found that even though few people have used the EB-5 category, EB-5 participants have invested an estimated \$1 billion in a variety of U.S. businesses.

My amendment expresses the sense of Congress that, to the extent possible, qualifying investments should be made in targeted employment areas, including rural areas and areas of high unemployment. My amendment defines rural areas as an area other than an area within a metropolitan statistical area within the outer boundary of any city or town having a population of 20,000 or more based upon the most recent decennial census of the United States. My amendment also defines an area of high unemployment as an area that has experienced unemployment of at least 150 percent of the national average rate.

The purpose of my amendment is to ensure that all of America will benefit from greater development and investment. The amendment is a bold first step in ensuring that all Americans have a seat at the table and are able to progress and advance as a result of foreign investment as Americans in the wealthy cities and suburbs. I have long championed the rights of Americans in the rural areas and in

underserved communities. These Americans are our brothers and sisters. To be sure, no Americans should be left out from investment. My amendment makes sure that these groups that are often forgotten are not left out.

Ms. ZOE, LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5569, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to extend for 5 years the EB-5 regional center pilot program, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT PROTECTION ACT OF 2008

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5938) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide secret service protection to former Vice Presidents, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5938

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be referred to as the "Former Vice President Protection Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. SECRET SERVICE PROTECTION FOR FORMER VICE PRESIDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Section 3056(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting immediately after paragraph (7) the following:

"(8) Former Vice Presidents, their spouses, and their children who are under 16 years of age, for a period of not more than six months after the date the former Vice President leaves office. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall have the authority to direct the Secret Service to provide temporary protection for any of these individuals at any time thereafter if the Secretary of Homeland Security or designee determines that information or conditions warrant such protection."; and

(2) in the sentence immediately preceding subsection (b) of section 3056, by striking "(7)" and inserting "(8)".

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to any Vice President holding office on or after the date of enactment of the Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5938, the Former Vice President Protection Act of 2008, a much-needed permanent solution that would authorize protection for our former Vice Presidents and their families.

As you no doubt know, the President of the United States, along with his or her spouse and children, are provided continued protection by the United States Secret Service after the President leaves office, but the law does not provide such protection for a former Vice President and his or her family. Rather, Congress has, on an intermittent basis, authorized such protection for limited periods of time.

In the near future, Congress will again be faced with this issue. In January, Vice President CHENEY will be leaving office, and we will presumably decide to provide continued Secret Service protection for him and his family, as has been done for every Vice President in recent decades. But this ad hoc process is inefficient, and the legislation before us replaces it with a permanent fix to current law. Specifically, it provides for Secret Service protection to a former Vice President, including his or her spouse and children under 16 years of age, for 6 months, and it permits this period to be extended if information or conditions so warrant.

I would urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in strong support of H.R. 5938, the Former Vice President Protection Act of 2008.

The Secret Service must be authorized by law or the President to provide protection. Federal law provides Secret Service protection to sitting Presidents and Vice Presidents, former Presidents, their spouses and children, visiting heads of state, Presidential candidates, and other dignitaries. However, the statute does not include former Vice Presidents.

For the past 30 years, it has been common practice for former Vice Presidents to receive protection on a temporary basis via a joint resolution of Congress or Presidential memorandum. This temporary protection typically continues for 6 months after the Vice President leaves office. When necessary, Congress or the President has extended this protection for an additional 6 months.

H.R. 5938, the Former Vice President Protection Act, makes this routine