

had a windfall profits tax, it, in fact, reduced domestic production from between 320 million barrels and 1,268 million barrels. That is almost 5 percent of overall production. If you think about it, there is an easy way to understand that. If you put an increased tax on American producers—because, of course, we cannot put an increased tax on OPEC, on Venezuela, on Iran, and these state-owned oil companies—the fact is, we put an increased tax burden on our own domestic producers.

Of course, we find that the Congressional Research Service has found that last time we tried a windfall profits tax, it decreased our domestic oil production. Why in the world would we want to do that? How does that help increase the supply of America's natural resources, which can help ameliorate some of this pain at the pump by increasing supply and thus bringing down, hopefully, the cost of a barrel of oil and then the refined product of gasoline?

Well, the last suggestion has to do with the strategic oil reserves. That is a final answer, by eliminating the 70,000 barrels a day that we put into the strategic oil reserves. Now, I think there may be a case for reducing or eliminating the 70,000 barrels of oil a day that go into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. But I have to tell you, the world consumes roughly 85 million barrels of oil a day—85 million barrels of oil a day. What effect is 70,000 barrels a day that would not go into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, what impact would that have on reducing the price of oil globally or bringing down the price at the pump? Well, my calculation is that by reducing the amount of oil going into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, we could bring down gas prices maybe 2 cents or 5 cents per gallon. Maybe that would be welcomed but hardly adequate to deal with the high gas prices we have sustained and are experiencing today.

But I want to take that one step further. If our Democratic friends believe reducing the amount of oil that goes into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve by 70,000 barrels a day is a good idea because that might reduce, although infinitesimally, the cost of gasoline, how much more sense would it make to explore and develop the million-barrel-a-day capacity that is located in Alaska in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? If you take the million barrels of oil a day that could be produced from ANWR, then you are talking about—according to the same calculation I just used on the Strategic Petroleum Reserve—reducing the pricing of gasoline, by an additional million-barrel supply of American oil a day, by 85 cents to \$2.14 a gallon. Now, that would be a real impact, to be able to bring down the price of gasoline by 85 cents to \$2.14 a gallon.

I just mentioned the ANWR reserves. But it is estimated if we were actually to open not only Alaska to environmentally responsible development of

those oil and gas reserves located there and produce an additional million barrels a day of oil, that if we were also to leave up to the States—States such as Virginia and other States, Alaska—the option to open their Outer Continental Shelf to oil reserves, to further production, if we were to open some of the oil shale and oil sands out in the West to production, we could develop another 3 million barrels of oil capacity right here in America without having to depend more and more on foreign sources of oil.

If you take the same argument our friends have offered on the impact of reducing deposits of oil in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and that that would actually have an impact on price, how much more would it have a beneficial impact on lowering the price if, in fact, we were to open up America's natural resources here at home?

We will have an important vote on Monday where the so-called Domenici amendment—which I am proud to join—will be offered for a vote, where the Senate can go on record in showing where they stand when it comes to this effort to help bring down the price at the pump, which Speaker PELOSI announced 745 days ago. The highlights, as I have already mentioned, of that bill are opening portions of the Outer Continental Shelf, as we have the Gulf of Mexico 300 miles offshore from the State of Texas. I tell you, you cannot even see the drilling activity out there 300 miles offshore. Indeed, the drilling activity could occur in the Outer Continental Shelf beyond the horizon in a way that is not even visible to people on shore.

I mentioned the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Tapping into that oil and gas, which we know is there, would immediately produce—once it is done—huge volumes of oil that could help relieve our dependence on imported oil.

We know that building additional refineries would help relieve some of that bottleneck when it comes to refining the oil into gasoline. Of course, 70 percent of the price of gasoline is the price of oil, but another part of it is the burden we put on the permitting process for the construction of new refineries or expanding refinery capacity.

My colleague from Wyoming talked about coal, and I agree with him that we ought to use good, old-fashioned American ingenuity in our research and scientific ability to figure out, how do we use this coal—we are the “Saudi Arabia” of coal—how do we use it in a way that is compatible with a good environment? The technology has already been demonstrated, things such as coal-to-liquids technology, coal gasification, which can capture the carbon, deal with the environmental concerns, and yet provide us access to energy which can help drive our economy and help make us less dependent on imported oil and gas from other parts of the world.

So, Mr. President, I hope our colleagues on the other side of the aisle

will come forward with additional ideas. I have explained how the proposals they have made would have no impact, would provide no supply but would really just rehash old, tired themes which have been shown not to work in the past. But I think the debate is an important one, and I look forward to continuing it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Jersey.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF ISRAEL

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to honor and celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary. On a sad note, this is the first year that we honor Israel's anniversary without my friend and former colleague, Congressman Tom Lantos, former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Mr. Lantos was the only Holocaust survivor to ever serve in Congress, and his recent passing has left a hollow void for all of us.

Mr. President, on April 22 of this year, the Senate unanimously adopted a resolution expressing our unwavering commitment to the sovereign and independent State of Israel.

Sixty years after its founding, we now witness a strong nation, a steadfast ally and strategic partner of the United States, a dynamic democracy with a thriving economic, political, cultural, and intellectual life, that survives despite the heavy costs of war, terrorism, and unjustified diplomatic and economic boycotts.

We now witness an innovative nation which has developed some of the leading universities in the world and produced eight recipients of the Nobel prize.

We now witness a compassionate nation, which regularly sends humanitarian aid, search-and-rescue teams, mobile hospitals, and other emergency supplies to help victims of disasters around the world and which has taken in millions of Jews from countries around the world, often fleeing those countries and persecution. These accomplishments have followed one of the most tragic events in human civilization: the slaughter of more than 6 million European Jews during the Holocaust.

We are reminded that, as I have said many times before on this floor, the events of the Holocaust are not distant and are not buried in the past. Today, those who survived the camps live to tell us their story, the stories of their families and their lives before the Holocaust. Their children and grandchildren are here with us too. They are living testimony to the strength, the courage, and optimism of their parents and grandparents. But in their hearts and in their souls they feel the pain and suffering of those who raised them. In them, too, the past is present.

Echoes from that tragedy still rattle our world in other ways. Every time a hateful slogan is spray-painted on a

wall, every time a bigoted joke spreads like wildfire on the Internet, every time a synagogue somewhere in the world has to station armed guards outside so its members can pray in peace, and every time a terrorist Qassam rocket attack from Gaza shatters a pane of glass at a family's home or a school, we feel the dark shadows of history falling upon our time.

It is a harsh reality that 60 years after its founding, the nation of Israel continues to face mounting threats to its way of life and its existence. Sixty years after the establishment of a homeland for the Jewish people, antisemitism is very much alive.

So those who speak against the sovereignty of Israel or threaten its obliteration or who believe that antisemitism is an attack that need not be answered, do not recognize the consequences of history. In fact, an attack against anyone simply because of race or religion is ultimately the beginning of the unraveling of civilization. So it is in our common interests to raise our voices against antisemitism.

By honoring and commemorating the 60th anniversary of Israel, we do more than congratulate a nation. We take a stand against hatred and discrimination everywhere. We recognize a triumph over fear and achievement of industriousness, a victory of hope. We express our sincere confidence that despite the challenges its people have faced, despite the threats to their very existence, Israel has and it shall overcome.

Israel and the Jewish people have held many commemorations and events over the past week. Yesterday was a day to remember those who gave their lives to protect the State of Israel and others who have fallen victim to attacks from its enemies. Today is a day to celebrate the nation's 60 years of life. It is a day for celebration and for strong action.

On this day, we pause to commemorate all of those who have contributed to make Israel such a strong nation, and we pledge to continue to strengthen our bonds of close friendship and cooperation so that as proud as this nation's history is, the future will be even brighter still.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I thank my colleague from New Jersey for his powerful and eloquent words. I am privileged now to stand to join him in giving honor and celebrating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel, which is a day truly to celebrate.

The 20th century witnessed unprecedented horrors inflicted by man against his fellow man, from the trenches of World War I to the gulag archipelago of the Soviet Union to the killing fields of Cambodia and Rwanda and, of course, the genocide perpetrated by Nazi Germany against the Jews of Europe.

Against these acts of bloodshed and repression and violence, the creation of the modern State of Israel in 1948 stands as a counterpoint in human history, a soaring act of hope and faith in our capacity as human beings to rise from the ashes of despair and to rebuild and restore that which for so long had seemed hopelessly lost.

The modern history of the State of Israel goes back 60 years, but of course the history of Israel goes back more than 4,000 years ago to the first words that God spoke to Abraham as recorded in Genesis 1:21:

Now get thee unto the land that I will show thee, and I will make thee a great Nation.

That was the covenant that God made with Abraham and which God repeated to Isaac, to Jacob, and then to Moses who, with God's help, delivered the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt to Mount Sinai where they received the Ten Commandments, their national statement of purpose and destiny, and then after 40 years in the wilderness, returned to the land that God had promised—the land of Israel.

It was there in the land of Israel more than 3,000 years ago that King David entered Jerusalem and declared it to be the capital of the Jewish people. And it was there in Jerusalem that David's son Solomon built a holy temple to house the Ark of the Covenant and the Ten Commandments. Thus in one place was established both the political capital of the Jewish people and the religious center of that people's faith.

It was also there almost 2,600 years ago on a dark day in history that the temple that Solomon built was destroyed. The Jewish people were forced into exile, returning just 40 years later to their homeland to rebuild the temple. It was during the time of the second temple under Roman rule that Jesus of Nazareth lived, preached, taught, and healed the Jews of Israel. But the temple was to be destroyed once more, and most, if not all, of the Jews were forced to flee the land.

For nearly two millennia, the Jewish people in the Diaspora prayed every day that they could return to the promised land. For almost 1,900 years, the State of Israel was thus carried in the hearts of millions of these Jewish exiles, and even more millions of Christians who prayed some of those same prayers for Zion's restoration, particularly here in America.

That collective yearning gave rise to a new political movement at the end of the 19th century—the modern Zionist movement. It was led by Theodore Herzl and a small band of followers, Jewish and Christian, throughout the world. Many people said those early Zionists of the modern era were naive dreamers, but Herzl replied: "If you will it, it is no dream." If you will it, it is no dream. Will it they did, and work for it they did. In 1948, 60 years ago this month, their dream became a reality.

The story of Israel's rebirth is inextricably bound up in the story of another extraordinary principal, purposeful nation with its own special sense of destiny, and that is, of course, our own beloved country—the United States of America.

From the earliest days of our Nation's history, there has been a link between the promise of America and the promise of Israel. The early settlers to America in fact believed they were founding here a new Jerusalem. The first minister to step foot at Plymouth Rock uttered words from the prophet Jeremiah. Many of our Nation's Founding Fathers were themselves Zionists. The President of the Continental Congress, Elias Boudinot, predicted that the mighty power of God would someday return the Jews to their beloved land. And John Adams wrote:

I really wish to see the Jews again in Judea as an independent Nation.

When the modern State of Israel declared its independence 60 years ago this month, it was officially and most significantly recognized a mere 11 minutes later by a great American President, Harry S. Truman.

Americans and Israelis alike are the children of freedom. We are both devoted to our democratic ideals, our culture of economic opportunity, and our political pluralism. These are the principles we cherish and the principles that define not just who we are but who we aspire to be. I think it is the main reason, when our two nations look at each other, we so often see the best of ourselves. It is also why succeeding Presidents of both parties since Harry Truman have given such steadfast support to the State of Israel.

I have often said as Presidents come and go, some seem more supportive of Israel, some somewhat less. The current President obviously is one of those who has most steadfastly and significantly supported Israel. But over the long term, the great guarantor of the U.S.-Israel relationship has been the bipartisan, pro-Israel majorities in both Houses of Congress.

Throughout her brief history, Israel has also courageously faced enemies who have threatened her existence. Today we once again see the rise of such threats to Israel, including some that are existential. Those threats come from the same Islamist extremists and terrorists who threaten America today and against whom we are fighting the global war on terrorism. History has taught us that we cannot ignore or appease these dangers, so let's never forget that Israel is a living symbol for the ideals we as Americans treasure—the ideals of freedom and human dignity.

It is sometimes said that nations do not have permanent friends, only permanent interests. But I believe the United States of America has a permanent interest in our permanent friendship with the State of Israel because that friendship is based on eternal values. We pledge today on the day of this

60th anniversary of the modern State of Israel, and we pray with God's help that those eternal values and permanent friendships will sustain these two great democratic nations eternally.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate and to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel. I wish to commend my colleagues from Connecticut and New Jersey, Senators MENENDEZ and LIEBERMAN, on their statements this morning.

Since its independence in 1948, Israel's promotion of democratic values has helped forge a thriving society and a bastion of freedom in a region where that value is sadly all too scarce. The vision of a permanent homeland for the Jewish people was centuries in the making and was finally achieved in May of 1948. From its outset, Israel has faced a myriad of challenges which it has navigated successfully against all odds. A small state with few natural resources and residing in a region decidedly unfriendly to its very existence, the odds against Israel have always been high. Yet the nation of Israel has endured.

Today, Israel is known for a vibrant, high-tech economy. It successfully accommodates a significant Arab population inside its borders, allowing Arab representatives to serve in the Knesset. It has achieved broad universal recognition and has forged peace with previous enemies, including Egypt and Jordan. This will to surmount adversity time and time again comes from the tenacious spirit of its people and represents the very reason we are able to celebrate their anniversary today.

I was fortunate enough to visit Israel in November of 2005 and meet with various people who make up the mosaic of that great nation. Today I want to share with my colleagues two indelible experiences.

First, I toured a semiconductor plant, the Vishay plant near Tel Aviv, a plant whose base company is located in Chester County, PA. What made this plant so special outside of its Pennsylvania ties was that it was started by a Holocaust survivor, Dr. Felix Zandman, and his son Mark who led us on the tour.

We not only observed the factory processes and equipment but also, and more importantly, the resiliency, I should say, of this brave family. Dr. Zandman experienced the most horrific fate imaginable to man. Yet out of his experience, he was able to pick up the pieces of his life, begin participating in his community again, and to become a very successful businessman, who now contributes to the global economy. To me, his story reflects the strength and courage embodied in the Jewish people.

The next experience occurred while attending a Saturday dinner in Jerusalem after the end of the Sabbath. I

was at the home of Rabbi Daniel Gordis, who is well known in the United States. He went to Israel from the United States. The rabbi had a 19-year-old daughter at that time who was serving in the military. At dinner, Rabbi Gordis told us the story about going very early in the morning to wake up his daughter to take her back to where she was stationed in the army, only to notice that, while she was soundly sleeping in her bed, next to her automatic weapon was her Curious George stuffed animal from her childhood. As the father of four daughters, I will never forget that image—the image of a young Jewish woman, bravely serving her country, but not that far removed from her own childhood. Rabbi Daniel Gordis, like so many parents in Israel, was feeling the emotion, the human emotion of love for his daughter and, at the same time, love for his country. There is no better example of the profound sacrifices of the Jewish people and what they have given to build and preserve the state of Israel. The story of Rabbi Daniel Gordis and his daughter is Israel's story.

I was reminded, when I was there, of a passage from Scripture. We went by a school, and this part of scripture was inscribed on the school, which, in many ways, represented the bright promise and future of Israel. It is taken from the prophet Zechariah, chapter 8, and I will quote it briefly. This is the prophet predicting thousands of years into the future at that time:

There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for every age.

And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

That prophecy of long ago has indeed come to pass for the great state of Israel. So today, and every day, when we celebrate their bold entrepreneurial spirit, a strong sense of community, a commitment to national service and, obviously, a commitment to liberty, all these values, combined with the democratic ideal that permeates their society, all these make Israel what it is today and demonstrates why it is such a strong ally of the United States of America. Our two nations share a deep and unshakable bond, and that alliance, I believe, will endure for the next 60 years, and for all of our tomorrows, as it has for the previous six decades.

As the world community continues to deal with conflicts in the region, the Jewish people must know that the United States will always extend our assistance to our indispensable ally as it moves forward on the road toward peace and stability.

Once again, I extend my warmest congratulations to the state of Israel on its 60th anniversary.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, let me thank my colleague Senator CASEY

for his comments about the state of Israel. He has captured the special nature of Israel, which one gets when they have an opportunity to visit the country and see the faces of the people of Israel and what they have been able to accomplish in a relatively short period of time, in a very small country.

Today, we in the Senate pause to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary. To the strongest ally of the United States in the Middle East, we wish Israel continued success.

There is good reason that Israel is our strongest ally in the Middle East. It is a nation that has been built upon democratic principles, a trusted ally in our war against terror. It shares our values in a critically important part of the world to the United States.

President Lyndon Johnson said, "The U.S. and Israel share many common objectives, chief of which is the building of a better world in which every nation can develop its resources, and develop them in freedom and peace."

Israel today is a vibrant oasis of democracy in a region of the world replete with secular and religious dictators.

For 60 years, there have been near constant military and terrorist threats, economic boycotts, and diplomatic hostility. Yet it still stands as a thriving, pluralistic democracy, with the rule of law, and an independent judiciary that works to protect freedom of speech, association, religion, a free press, and fair and open elections.

Israel has become not only a regional power but international leader in agriculture, health, science, medicine, high tech, and security. It has used that expertise to reach out and help so many other countries in the world deal with its challenges. Although it is a very small country, eight of its citizens have been acknowledged as Nobel laureates. In homeland security, it has helped the United States in dealing with our war against terror in the post-9/11 era.

Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport is a model for airport security. Our Nation has benefited by learning how the Israelis protected their airports, and we are using many of those procedures here in the United States to protect our own citizens.

I can tell you how the Israelis have helped Maryland deal with homeland security issues. They have come and looked at one of our urban hospitals to make sure we take every precaution to protect the citizens of Maryland.

Israel is a safe haven for Jews—from the Soviet Union, to Ethiopia, or any country where Jews are threatened. As David Ben-Gurion said 60 years ago, "The land of Israel was the birth place of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious, and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave the world the eternal Book of Books."

Ben-Gurion went on to say that the State of Israel "will be based on freedom, justice, and peace, as envisioned by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all of its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race, or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the holy places of all religions."

Since its first days as a modern state, it has sought peace with its Arab neighbors. During the declaration of independence, Israel stated:

We extend our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with its sovereign Jewish people settled in its own lands. The state of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

It has had success, with the help of the United States, as peace agreements were entered into with Egypt and Jordan. But to those who continue to challenge Israel's sovereignty and security, let me caution them with the words of President John F. Kennedy when he said:

Israel was not created in order to disappear. Israel will endure and flourish. It is the child of hope and the hope of the brave. It can neither be broken by adversity nor demoralized by success. It carries the shield of democracy and it honors the sword of freedom.

On the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel, we wish it continued success and peace, as the bond between our two countries continues to strengthen.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, 60 years ago, on May 8—or May 14, under our western calendar—Israel declared its independence. On this special day, when Jews and Christians, heads of state, and others around the world celebrate the founding of Israel, I rise for a few minutes to reaffirm our Nation's commitment to Israel's security and the pursuit of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East.

That is one of the reasons I cosponsored the resolution recognizing Israel's 60th birthday, and reaffirming the close ties between our country and Israel, a nation I have been privileged to visit as a Congressman, as a Governor, as a Senator, and maybe most importantly as a father with a teenage son.

Current events threaten to overshadow the importance, though, of this independence day: Prime Minister Omert is again being investigated. Another round of peace talks appears to have stalled once more. Hamas continues to launch Qassam rockets at

Sderot and other towns near Gaza. Suicide bombings continue. Hezbollah has increased military capability, with support from Syria and Iran. The leaders of Iran—the most active state sponsor of terrorism in the world—continue to call for Israel's destruction, while denying that the Holocaust ever occurred.

These are enormous, complex challenges. But after 7 wars in only 60 years, Israel somehow has achieved remarkable—some would say miraculous—success, all the while having to fight for its existence almost every single day.

Today is the day to express our fundamental pride in a number of their successes. For example, Israel's population today is 7.3 million people, more than 9 times the 800,000 who lived there in 1948. Since its founding, over 3 million immigrants have been successfully absorbed.

While Israel is the world capital of Torah learning, it is among the world's leaders in high-tech, medical, and scientific advances. In 1948, there were only two universities; today there are eight. On a per capita basis, Israel's GDP places it in the top tier of all nations. Democratic institutions flourish there. Both Jews and Arabs serve in Israel's Parliament, the Knesset. Additionally, Israel has an independent, effective judiciary and a free press.

So today I rise to join many of my colleagues in reaffirming the commitment of the United States to Israel's security.

For the people of Israel, to its citizens, our message is simple and clear: We will continue to stand in solidarity with you. We are proud of what you have become.

As I said earlier, I have had the privilege of visiting Israel a number of times—when I served in the House, as a Governor leading a trade delegation, as a Member of the Senate, and perhaps the most special and memorable visit for me was with my teenage son, roughly 3 years ago. We were in Israel on Easter weekend. We actually had the privilege of being on Golgotha, where Christ was believed to have been crucified, and we were there on Easter Sunday. We were privileged to be at the tomb where Christ's body was believed to have been laid, and we placed our hands there on Easter Sunday. What an unforgettable memory. I had the privilege of meeting Prime Minister Shamir, Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon, Netanyahu, and Shimon Peres, among others. I will never forget being at the home of the U.S. Ambassador to Israel on July 4, roughly 10 years ago—being there and meeting what seemed like half of the leadership of Israel, and any number of prominent Israeli citizens as our guests that day celebrating our independence, our Nation's birthday.

Today, some 10 years later, as we prepare to celebrate Israel's birthday with the Israelis and people all over the world, I want to close with the words of

Israeli President Shimon Peres spoken only a few days ago. I know the Presiding Officer has met Shimon Peres before in the number of roles he has played. I have been fortunate to do that as well. I have never met anyone who has a greater gift with the English language than this man.

I want to share these words he said a couple days ago:

Over the past 60 years, we have something that previous generations of Jews, those who were trampled in the pogroms and who were burned in the crematoria, did not have. The soldiers who fell created a miracle unparalleled in history: the miracle of the state of Israel. . . . For 60 years, they fought in seven wars that were forced upon us, and that we won. They enabled us to establish an exemplary society, to be trailblazers in the world in . . . agriculture, medicine and defense, to be a peace-seeking people, a democratic state, and a state that seeks justice.

To that I would only add, may it be so for a millennium or more.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I join my colleagues who have come to the floor today to recognize and salute the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern state of Israel.

Today is a great milestone for the people of Israel—and for all Americans. Ever since President Truman recognized Israel minutes after its birth on May 14, 1948, the United States and Israel have enjoyed a friendship based on values rooted in democracy and mutual strategic goals.

Israel's survival and success are a remarkable testimony to the vision that inspired its creation six decades ago and to the Israeli people who have made that vision a reality.

On this day of celebration, we must reflect on the course charted by the great leaders over the last six decades that have made this milestone possible. Though the journey has not always been along a straight and smooth path, each step along the way has been paved with the two fundamental and complementary tenets of the Israeli nation: resilience and faith.

The existence of Israel across these six decades—the way it has grown and flourished—has provided security and opportunity for its citizens. It has strengthened and enhanced Jewish life around the world. And it has been a beacon of democracy that makes the entire world a safer, more hopeful place.

I had the honor of traveling to Israel 2 years ago and seeing first-hand the strength and vitality of the country. I still remember the warm welcome I received from the Israeli people, as well as the courage and pride they bring to everyday life. I was honored to meet with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon just a few weeks before his tragic stroke, and I will value forever the lessons I learned from our conversation.

Today, America's and Israel's interests in the Middle East and around the world have never been more closely aligned. Our common values and objectives continue to drive us to meet the challenges we face, and to pursue opportunities for greater peace and prosperity.

We are in the midst of turbulent times, with instability threatening to spread across the Middle East. But the people of Israel must know that wherever forces of intolerance gather to endanger their safety or security, the United States will stand beside them in defying and defeating these foes.

By continuing to support Israel, we support stability and democracy and we can make further progress toward peace in the region.

I ask that my colleagues join with me in congratulating and celebrating with the people of Israel on the 60th anniversary of the founding of their nation, and that we renew our commitment to ensuring that we will continue to celebrate each successive anniversary for decades to come.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, on May 14, 1948, proclaimed the establishment of the state of Israel, and 60 years later now, we celebrate this momentous time in Israel's history. I congratulate, along with all of the other Senators, Israel on its 60th anniversary, and the close relationship the United States and Israel have. It serves as an important purpose of promoting peace in the Middle East.

Helping Israel achieve peace with its neighbors while maintaining its security strengthens both of our strategic interests. We must do everything we can to end the bloodshed and bring the parties together. We must resume those positive measures.

We must, as the Good Book says: Come, let us reason together. Most of us out here support two states living side by side in peace and security for both. That was outlined by the President in a speech on June 24, 6 years ago.

To achieve that, the Palestinians need to reform their institutions and cease those continued terrorist activities against all the innocents. Continued engagement by our country is required to help us get to that goal of peace in the Middle East. I look forward to the continued cooperation of Israel and the United States toward that goal. My hearty congratulations to Israel on its 60th anniversary.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the State of Israel on the 60th anniversary of its independence.

The story of the tribes of Judea began, as we know, in the Old Testament. The Israelites fled from Pharaoh's slavery, wandering for 40 years in the desert before coming to their land. It is a familiar narrative—and not only to those who study Scripture—for those early trials of the Jewish people bespoke an awe-inspiring destiny, both glorious and tragic. No other people on earth have survived and prospered in the face of so much hardship. The Jewish community has been contemporaries of the Assyrians and Babylon, Crusaders and Rome, the Hapsburgs and the Soviet Kremlin. They have

faced injustice, persecution, expropriation, pogroms, and genocide; and they have persevered.

The return of the Jews to the Holy Land is perhaps the greatest historical event of our time. The Jewish community emerged from the greatest tragedy the Diaspora had ever known, and in its aftermath built the greatest triumph. The authors of that triumph encompass the whole of the early Israeli community. The great David Ben-Gurion declared Israel a state but he could not have without the thousands of brave Israelis willing to fight for it. Chaim Weizman secured international support for Israel but he could not have without the hundreds of thousands of Jews willing to immigrate to the Holy Land. And of all these heroes, the famous and the anonymous, none have given more than the 22,437 Israeli soldiers who have fallen in battle since 1860. It is no coincidence in Israel that Independence Day is preceded by Remembrance Day, to honor the fallen Zahal warriors. On this 60th anniversary of Israel's independence, I know that wherever they are, those sons and daughters of Judea are proud indeed.

I am also proud that America has stood with Israel in her times of need. It is only fitting that the two great democratic nations forged by immigrants and pioneers be close allies, in the ongoing struggle against the forces of fanaticism. For Israel, this fight is as familiar as existence; for America, it is an old enemy in a new guise. During my time in the Senate, I have worked tirelessly to strengthen the bond between our two countries. I believe the bonds our two countries share are as everlasting as they are many-layered. Together, they will ensure that Israel faces down the next threat, and the one after that, and after that, and so on until her 120th anniversary, when I pray there will at last be peace.

The past three have been littered with many enemies, from Titus to the Nazis, each with their own dream of destroying the Jews. Some came perilously close. But today we know that the destruction of the Second Temple, and the Inquisition, and the pogroms, and the Holocaust were not in fact the end of the story. The legend did not end. In 1948, the new chapter of the tribes of Israel began, always glorious and always tragic, animating the pages of history until the final chapter of Man.

May Israel ever be with us, and us ever by her side.

Mr. WYDEN. It is a great honor to come to the floor in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel. The creation of an independent Israeli State was truly one of the most significant events of the 20th century. Following the horrific events of the Holocaust, the founding of the State of Israel symbolized a recognition of the right and the need of the Jewish people to have a homeland—a place of sanctuary and security after the senseless annihilation

of 6 million Jews. The Holocaust was not the first or the last genocide. It was the culmination of centuries during which Jews were ostracized, persecuted, and purged from country after country. The Jewish people struggled to maintain their heritage, their traditions, and did so in the midst of other cultures, after the fall of Jerusalem and enslavement by many other societies.

For over 2000 years, Jews faced discrimination, including restrictions of their rights, religious practices, and even professional occupation. Yet even as Jews were able to prosper and establish themselves as an integral part of society in Europe, this progress was wiped out by the Nazi regime. Thousands upon thousands of Jewish families, including my own, were uprooted from their homes and forced to flee for their lives for no other reason than the fact that they were Jewish. Not all of our family was able to get out. We lost family at Krystallnacht. We lost family at Theresienstadt. My family came to this country knowing they were coming to the best and freest place on Earth. But not all were able to come here. Many European Jews were not allowed entry into other countries, including the land that is now Israel.

Upon the conclusion of World War II, the United States joined with other countries in the United Nations to recognize the right and need of the Jewish people to have the security of being able to live in their own state. The United States was, in fact, the very first country to recognize the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. After thousands of years, Jews had established in their historic homeland a sovereign country of their own, Israel. Yet Israel is much more than a sanctuary for the Jewish people. Israel's importance transcends the Jewish religion. Israel is a place of enormous historic significance. It is a sacred land not only for Jews but for Christians and Muslims as well. All three of the world's major monotheistic faiths honor Jerusalem and other surrounding sites as holy places that hold unique importance to the development of their religions. Israel has worked to protect the interests and rights not just of Jews but those of all faiths.

The Israeli Government provides access to historic and religiously significant sites and allows clergy, scholars, historian, archeologists, and others to pursue their studies of this very historic, very special land. Israel is also of enormous importance to our country. Israel is America's strongest and most reliable ally in the Middle East. In a region that has been plagued by instability but is of enormous strategic significance, Israel is a stable democracy and a stalwart ally.

As a member of the Select Committee on Intelligence, I follow these issues closely and would say from the Camp David accords to the current peace talks, Israel has consistently demonstrated a willingness to work

along with the United States to engage its neighbors in difficult negotiations. Despite constant attacks and threats to its very existence, Israel has given up land and made very significant conciliatory offers in the interest of achieving lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.

Finally, beyond the religious, historic, cultural, diplomatic, and strategic significance, it is important to recognize the impact Israel has had at the human level for its citizens and for people around the globe. Israel has established a thriving economy, a world-class education system, and has advanced scientific and technological innovation on numerous fronts. The distinguished Senator from Minnesota and I have talked many times about the issue of health care. It is striking to see the Israelis in such an innovative, focused kind of way look to health care improvements that are going to be of great use, not just to the people of Israel but to many around the world. In 60 years, Israel has truly established itself as a global leader and a vital partner in the international community.

It is a great honor to be able to stand today on the Senate floor to recognize the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel. I look forward to continuing the close and indispensable partnership between our country and Israel. Today I wish the people of Israel the greatest success, the greatest happiness, and especially peace for the next 60 years and beyond.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, a birthday is an occasion that allows a family to focus on one of its members and celebrate what is unique and special about that person. It is time to reflect on major challenges met and major fulfillments achieved. The same is true when we celebrate the birth of a nation, or perhaps more appropriately today, its rebirth.

The modern State of Israel is 60 years old today. But the idea of Israel was born at the dawn of recorded history. Students of the Bible know that Israel was originally a person—the father of 12 children who became the Twelve Tribes. Israel became a nation as the progeny of those patriarchs grew in population of more than 1 million. And Israel has become a revered concept, a union of spiritual ideas that has benefited many cultures far from the Middle East.

That is what our second President, John Adams, meant when he wrote:

The Hebrews have done more to civilize man than any other nation. If I were an atheist and believed blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for civilizing the nations.

We in the United States have enjoyed that civilizing influence. Much of what we believe and assert in our founding documents was drawn from ancient Jewish roots. The belief in individuals having ultimate value is because they are made in the likeness and image of

God; respect of the rule of law as the foundation of a just society, not just the power of men; and a commitment to the cause of liberation because the rights of the people are an inalienable gift from their Creator.

So this celebration is not just a milestone for the Jewish people but for all humanity. It is a celebration of the perseverance and faith of the Jewish people, those who have resisted oppression for thousands of years. The story of Israel is a passionate history of the capacity of human beings to remain true to ideals, to overcome the longest odds, to realize a dream in the midst of those who wish to deny it.

Over a century ago, Theodore Herzl put into writing his vision for a free Jewish state. His immortal words: "If you will it, it is no legend," personified the deep faith of the Jewish people and their heritage and their role on this planet. Both the United States and Israel were founded on the hope and promise of being "a light unto nations," and this is a principle that defines us and binds us together.

For this reason, I believe the anniversary of the State of Israel encompasses much more than the rebirth of a nation. As a person of Jewish heritage and a public servant, this milestone has special significance for me. It reminds me not just of the added sense of responsibility to work for justice and peace, but of the lesson to never give up in my pursuit of those ideals, no matter the size of the obstacle.

But in Israel's existence, there is also a lesson of what we are called to pursue. The Jewish people have withstood much persecution through the years and endured some of the most horrific crimes against humanity that the world has ever seen. It is our responsibility to remind the world what humanity is capable of if we do not remain vigilant and fight ignorance and injustice wherever it emerges.

Even today, after 60 years of independence and 7 wars fought to preserve it, Israel continues to face grave threats. Iran and its regional proxies— Hamas and Hezbollah—continue not only to reject a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, but also to undermine the very existence of Israel as a democratic and Jewish State.

The Iranian President continues to blatantly deny the Holocaust of the Jewish people while vowing to create another one. Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon is very real and must not be allowed to succeed. A nuclear Iran would dramatically alter the fragile balance in that volatile region and would pose an existential threat to the State of Israel.

In 1948, the United States under President Harry Truman made an unconditional commitment to the State of Israel. That commitment was not based on the price of gas, economic policy, or partisan politics. It was a moral covenant made in response to generations of mistreatment of the Jewish people and a desire for them to have a

secure homeland founded upon democratic principles. We believed then, as we do now, that democracy is, in Lincoln's words, "the last best hope of Earth." From such a commitment there is no out. To deny our support of Israel would be to deny everything America holds sacred and vital. We not only have to hold to our commitment, but we must use our influence around the world to encourage other nations to move in that direction.

This commitment dictates that we remain vigilant and watchful over these Iranian threats. I expect the United States to lead the way and use its influence over other countries that may undermine these nonproliferation efforts. For this reason I was very disappointed by the administration's insistence in signing a nuclear cooperation agreement with Russia. I have written, along with Senator BAYH, a letter to the President signed by 32 Senators from both parties in which we state that taken together, Russia's opposition to effective U.N. sanctions against Iran's nuclear weapons program, its ongoing assistance to Iran's ballistic missile programs, its exports of fuel to Iran's Bushehr reactor, and its increasingly abrasive foreign policy, all give us cause for concern without finalizing such an agreement.

Submitting a 123 agreement with Russia to Congress at this time could severely undermine our policy with respect to Iran at a critical juncture. Iran's testing of advanced centrifuges could significantly reduce the time it would take to reduce highly enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon. We urged the President not to send the agreement to Congress until Russia has ended support for Iran's ballistic missile program and stopped providing advanced conventional weapons and assistance to Iran's nuclear fuel cycle program. Russia must also cooperate with us to increase meaningful economic pressure on Iran to end its defiance of the United Nations Security Council's mandatory resolutions to suspend its enrichment of uranium.

Improving our commercial ties to Russia may be a national interest. It may be good economically for the United States and for Russia, but preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons is a national interest of greater importance on which we cannot compromise.

When I reflect on Israel at 60, I am excited about Israel's future, despite the ever-present challenges. As David Ben-Gurion said in the early days of the modern Israeli nation, "Around here, if you don't believe in miracles, you're not a realist."

The Jewish people truly understand this concept, as there are many miracles that have come together to preserve the Jewish people throughout history, including the one that brought the modern State of Israel into existence. The anniversary of this miracle should be a joyous one, and the fact that Israel has now stood firm for 60 years should be celebrated.

America should thank God for the heritage of freedom Israel has given us. On this day, America should reaffirm its resolve to protect and sustain the place and the people who have given us so much. The gift Israel needs from us on its birthday is our gratitude, to be sure, but also our renewed, unshakable commitment to keeping those ancient dreams and ideals that we share alive.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, it is an honor to come to the floor today to celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel's 60th Independence Day.

Today, on its 60th birthday, we recognize that Israel remains an island of openness. Its success belongs to all the Israeli people and is more lasting than anything that ever happened on a battlefield.

With politics that are open and vibrant, markets that are free and fair, and laws that hold for weak and strong alike, for six decades, America has been a good friend to Israel. Indeed, it only took us but 11 minutes to recognize this new state, this new ally, in May 1948.

This is a matter imbued with great personal meaning to me, Mr. President. As my colleagues are aware, my father, Tom Dodd, spent over a year as executive trial counsel in one of the most remarkable court cases the world has ever seen—the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi war criminals. He stood face-to-face with men who committed the most terrible atrocities imaginable. Indeed, they were so horrible many were convinced they had could not have taken place—that is, until my father set out meticulously proving that they had.

It would have been impossible to be unchanged through that confrontation with evil, and my father was no different. I know how often he spoke of it to me. And I think it was impossible for anyone to go through the Nuremberg Trials without wondering, at some point or another:

What if those 6 million had someplace to go; what if there had been a country to take them in—no questions asked; what if there had been a nation willing to stand up for them when no one else did?

Only 2 years after my father came back from Nuremberg, 60 years ago today, that nation was born. So in a small way, I share some of my past with Israel, because my father had his part in the events that proved—at the price of tremendous pain—the necessity of a Jewish state. My father learned that necessity, and I learned it through him. In the years since, nothing has dampened the force of that lesson. How could I forget?

For nearly 60 years America and Israel have been two nations that can look across the gulf of history and space and language, and still see, in each other, themselves. That enduring bond is what we celebrate today, Mr. President.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am pleased today to speak on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State

of Israel, and to congratulate the Israeli people on this historic occasion.

It is also an appropriate occasion to note the close and unwavering friendship our two countries have enjoyed over the past 60 years.

President Harry Truman formally recognized Israel just 11 minutes after the new country's independence proclamation. Eleven minutes. That is perhaps the fastest that anything has ever occurred in this city.

Fast doesn't necessarily mean easy, though, and President Truman was under a great deal of pressure, including from his own State Department, not to support the creation of a Jewish state.

But Harry Truman did the right and courageous thing, and for the past 60 years, Israel has been one of America's closest friends and allies.

That friendship has persevered, in part because of our dedication to many common values.

Israel has a strong and vibrant democratic tradition, and a prosperous and innovative free-market economy.

In fact, Israel's economy grew faster last year than that of the United States, Europe, the U.K. or Japan. Such growth stems in part from more than 3,000 hi-tech companies now operating in Israel.

And, I believe, Israel is committed to achieving peace with its neighbors. But peace requires security, and the United States still has a very important role to play to make both of these a reality.

The late Congressman Tom Lantos—whom we lost at the beginning of this year—understood this perhaps better than anyone.

As the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to the Congress, Tom knew what Israel's existence meant for Jews the world over, and no one advocated more strongly than he did for continued U.S. support for Israel.

The fact that the Israeli foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, spoke at his memorial service here in the Capitol speaks not only to Tom Lantos's personal commitment to Israel, but also to the broader commitment of Israel and the United States to each other as nations and as people.

It is a commitment that we must not abandon.

The United States must remain engaged diplomatically to ensure that the process begun last fall in Annapolis, the most recent in a string of U.S.-led Middle East peace initiatives stretching back over 30 years, continues to move forward.

We must work with other countries and the United Nations to prevent Iran from gaining the ability to develop nuclear weapons that could threaten Israel's security.

We must provide appropriate assistance to the Palestinian Authority to enable it to secure its own territory and strengthen its democratic institutions.

And we must find a way to stop weapons from making their way into the

Gaza Strip and the hands of those who seek to do Israel harm.

Such continued U.S. engagement is imperative if there is any hope for long-term peace between Israel and its neighbors.

But hope is the foundation on which Israel was built.

It is what enabled people of so many backgrounds and languages to speak with a common voice.

It is what enabled them to bring water to a desert and grow crops where there had only been sand.

It is what continues to lead the Israeli people forward, 60 years after its founding.

I share that hope for a brighter future—for Israel, for the United States, and for our enduring friendship.

Congratulations to Israel on its 60th birthday.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am pleased to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel. On this momentous occasion, we celebrate a vibrant nation that has thrived since its founding in 1948 under the most difficult circumstances. Founded in the aftermath of the Holocaust as a home for Jews around the world, Israel continues to be a beacon and a rare outpost of freedom and democracy in a region that knows too little of either. As we take the time to acknowledge the importance of this anniversary, we should also remember those who lost their lives in the fighting that coincided with the birth of this nation. Few, if any, nations have had such difficult births and have overcome such tremendous challenges.

As we celebrate the anniversary of one of our strongest allies, the struggle for peace and stability throughout the Middle East continues. Peacemaking in this region is no easy task, but we need to nurture the progress developed during the Annapolis Summit and keep working toward a two-state solution that resolves the decades of turmoil Israel and its neighbors have endured. I am hopeful that through a continuing dialogue and diligent efforts, we will see a breakthrough that improves trust and cooperation between all actors and provides a framework for a lasting peace.

The United States and Israel have a unique relationship that both Americans and Israelis cherish. Today, we should celebrate that relationship, which is as strong and deep as ever.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in recognizing Israel's Independence Day—the day Jewish people around the world rejoiced after generations of political and religious persecution. Exactly 11 minutes after Israel's first Prime Minister, David-Ben Gurion, announced the nation's independence, the United States became the first nation in the world to recognize it.

Since that time, Israel and the United States have forged a friendship based on shared ideals and common values—a commitment to political and

religious freedom, the rule of law, democratic governance, and the preservation of individual rights. During my first official trip abroad as Senator, I traveled to Israel and saw firsthand the sacrifices Israeli people make to protect these principles. This visit helped me better understand the urgent need for sustainable peace in the Middle East and Israel's vulnerability within the region.

The United States shares Israel's desire to protect their thriving democracy, and we honor our commitment by supporting security efforts in Israel. Since 1948, Israel has been a reliable and steadfast ally to the United States, and our support helps to ensure the security of its territory and citizens. A strong and healthy relationship with Israel is critical to the endurance of democracy in the greater Middle East and the United States will continue to stand with Israel to ensure its survival, peace and prosperity.

I extend my greetings to all those taking part in celebrations to mark this historic week for Israel. In my home State of Florida, the home to thousands of individuals of Jewish descent, today is especially important. It marks the day a permanent home was established for a people who suffered tremendously for generations because of their ethnicity and religious beliefs.

So during this momentous time, I offer the people of Israel and its many friends around the world my best wishes and the hope for continued prosperity.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the 2000 year search for a Jewish homeland concluded on May 14, 1948, with the declaration of an independent State of Israel. But, the birth of Israel on that day was far from easy. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion made his first radio broadcast the following day from an air raid shelter as the precarious new nation came under attack.

Even as a war was being launched against their young nation, Israel's founding father took the time to remind the first citizens of Israel what had been accomplished and what it would take to defend their dream. Ben-Gurion said, "whatever we have achieved is the result of the efforts of earlier generations no less than our own. It is also the result of an unwavering fidelity to our precious heritage, the heritage of a small nation that has suffered much, but at the same time has won for itself a special place in the history of mankind because of its spirit, faith, and vision."

The United States has played a critical role in the development of Israel over the past 60 years. President Harry S. Truman, the first head of state to grant Israel diplomatic recognition, expressed its special place in the hearts of Americans as he declared, "I had faith in Israel before it was established, and I have faith in it now. I believe it has a glorious future before it—not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our

civilization." This special partnership which began with Israel's creation has been repeatedly tested since 1948. The United States has been steadfast in our commitment to helping the people of Israel develop their own economy and secure their own peace. We have helped give them the time that their founding fathers knew was needed to secure their future.

A decade ago, in celebration of Israel's 50th anniversary, I traveled there for an international conference of Jewish legislators from around the world. In our discussions, I saw then that the philosophy that was embraced by Ben-Gurion and other visionary leaders helped Israel become a dynamic democracy with a thriving economy. In the decade since that conference, Israel has come within a few breaths of a peace agreement and also experienced episode after episode of violence carried out against its civilians. Still, Israel's faith and fortitude remain as strong today as they were when the dream was realized six decades ago.

In recognition of Israel's remarkable history, I was pleased to be a cosponsor of S. Res. 522, which the Senate unanimously passed late last month. The resolution acknowledges the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel and reaffirms the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel. This is a fitting tribute to Israel's past, and we all hope that our nations' mutual goodwill augurs well for future positive and peaceful developments in Israel, in the Middle East and around the world.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today joining my colleagues in congratulating our friends in Israel as they celebrate the 60th anniversary of their independence and modern-day founding.

Sixty years ago, Missouri's own President Harry S. Truman signed the telegram making the United States the first Nation on the Earth to recognize officially the State of Israel. Since that time, Israel and the United States have stood side by side on many issues and have shared common bonds and values that unite us still today.

I daresay that no country has faced such adversity and strife during such a short period of time. Our staunchest ally in the region has persevered against enemy invasions, random terror attacks, and saber rattling throughout its short existence and has grown stronger as a result.

As a Member of this body, I have been proud to support joint U.S. and Israeli programs aimed at strengthening our mutual defense and cooperation. We are engaged in a war against a common enemy that seeks to further its agenda through suicide bombings, the targeting of innocents, and the destruction of the civilized world. The United States and Israel recognize that without freedom, respect for human rights, and liberty, we are lost.

Today, I congratulate and offer my sincere thanks to the people of Israel

for being our ally during trying times and a friend upon whom we can always count.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, may I inquire what is the business before the Senate?

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2007

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2284, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2284) to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, to restore the financial solvency of the flood insurance fund, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Dodd/Shelby amendment No. 4707, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell amendment No. 4720 (to the text of the bill proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 4707), of a perfecting nature.

Allard amendment No. 4721 (to amendment No. 4720), of a perfecting nature.

Landrieu/Nelson (FL) modified amendment No. 4706 (to amendment No. 4707), to improve the Office of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

Nelson (FL) amendment No. 4709 (to amendment No. 4707), to establish a National Catastrophe Risks Consortium and a National Homeowners' Insurance Stabilization Program.

DeMint amendment No. 4711 (to amendment No. 4707), to require the Director to conduct a study on the impact, effectiveness, and feasibility of amending section 1361 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to include widely used and nationally recognized building codes as part of the flood plain management criteria developed under such section.

DeMint modified amendment No. 4710 (to amendment No. 4707), to end the premium subsidy for any property purchased after the date of enactment of this act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I wish to inform my colleagues we are open for business. I know there are amendments that Members have they would like to be considered. I am more than happy, with my colleague, the ranking member, Senator SHELBY, to try to consider those amendments and deal with them expeditiously.

Last evening, we entered a unanimous consent agreement which requires that all amendments be offered,