

S. 3012

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3012, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2012.

S. 3022

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3022, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to prohibit the sale of dishwashing detergent in the United States if the detergent contains a high level of phosphorus.

S. 3032

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3032, a bill to increase the standard mileage rate for use of an automobile for business, medical, and moving deduction purposes for 2008 and permanently increase such rate for charitable deduction purposes under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and to temporarily increase the reimbursement rate for use of an automobile by Federal employees.

S. 3044

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3044, a bill to provide energy price relief and hold oil companies and other entities accountable for their actions with regard to high energy prices, and for other purposes.

S. 3061

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3061, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2008 through 2011 for the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, to enhance measures to combat trafficking in persons, and for other purposes.

S. 3108

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3108, a bill to require the President to call a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

S. 3111

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD) were added as cosponsors of S. 3111, a bill to implement equal protection under the 14th article of amendment to the Constitution for the right of life of each born and preborn human person.

S. CON. RES. 86

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 86, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the United States, through the

International Whaling Commission, should use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all of its forms and seek to strengthen measures to conserve whale species.

S. RES. 575

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 575, a resolution expressing the support of the Senate for veteran entrepreneurs.

S. RES. 580

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 580, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BIDEN:

S. 3136. A bill to encourage the entry of felony warrants into the NCIC database by States and provide additional resources for extradition; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Fugitive Information Networked Database Act of 2008, or the FIND Act. This bill provides resources to law enforcement to ensure the entry of felony warrants into the national FBI database and to assist in tracking down and extraditing fugitives. It helps ensure that fugitives who flee their States will be located, apprehended, and brought to justice. It protects our communities by taking dangerous criminals off the streets.

According to a recent series of articles in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, anywhere from 1.9 million to 2.7 million felony fugitives are on the run from law enforcement. When State and local law enforcement issue a warrant for a fugitive's arrest, they are expected to enter it into the FBI's National Crime Information Center database as well as into their own State and local databases. The national database is accessible to all State and local law enforcement agencies, which use the national database to track fugitives around the country.

The national database is only as good as the information that States enter into it, however. Too often, State and local law enforcement agencies enter warrants into the State and local databases, but not into the national database. It is estimated that more than a third of all felony warrants have not been entered into the national database. That means anywhere from 800,000 to 1.6 million wanted felons can escape justice and remain at large in our communities simply by crossing State lines.

Unless a warrant is entered into the national database, a sheriff or police officer who stops a fugitive has no way of knowing that he is wanted in another jurisdiction—sometimes for a violent crime. Many fugitives go on to commit additional crimes in other States. Some know that if they can flee across State lines, there's a good chance they can—in some cases—get away with murder. This is inexcusable.

I have heard a range of reasons why State and local law enforcement have not been entering felony warrants into the national database. Some reasons are valid. For instance, if law enforcement is using a person suspected of a felony as an informant, it's understandable that they would not want to enter the informant's name into the database.

Many jurisdictions don't enter warrants into the national database, however, simply because they don't have the time and resources to update and validate warrant entries, which is a resource- and time-intensive process.

Fortunately, the burden of warrant entry and validation can be alleviated. By developing new databases, or by upgrading existing ones, to ensure compatibility and interoperability with the national database, State and local law enforcement can facilitate information sharing and seamless warrant entry into databases at all levels of government. With additional resources to hire personnel for the validation process, State and local law enforcement can enter felony warrants into the national database without worrying about not having the resources to validate them.

The FIND Act addresses the problem of warrant backlogs by providing State and local law enforcement with the resources necessary to develop and upgrade their systems, and hire additional personnel to perform the validation process. Specifically, it authorizes \$25 million for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 for grants to States to develop new systems or upgrade existing systems so that they are interoperable with the NCIC database.

Another reason law enforcement doesn't enter felony warrants into the national database is concern that the State will not have the resources to extradite the fugitive if he is found outside the State's borders. Helping State and local agencies enter their felony warrants into the national database is therefore only half the battle. We also need to ensure that when a dangerous fugitive is caught, the jurisdiction in which he is wanted can work with the U.S. Marshals Service to extradite him to face justice.

While I was drafting this bill, I spoke to one sheriff who apprehended an individual wanted for rape in another State. The sheriff notified that State that he had their criminal in custody, but when the State said they didn't have the resources to extradite him, the sheriff had no choice but to free the rapist into his community.

When we in Congress do not provide law enforcement with the basic resources they need to extradite dangerous criminals like this, we fail in our most basic duty to those we represent—the duty to protect them from violent crime.

The U.S. Marshals Service is on the front lines of fugitive apprehension and extradition. We authorized funds several years ago for the development of Regional Fugitive Task Forces that combine the resources and expertise of State and local law enforcement and the U.S. Marshals Service. These task forces have been very successful and could do much more to track down and extradite fugitives if they had the proper resources.

My bill authorizes an additional \$20 million in fiscal year 2009 to fund existing and develop new regional task forces, and it provides \$10 million for fiscal years 2010 through 2014. It also authorizes \$3 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 to assist in the extradition of fugitives through the Justice Prisoner and Alien Transport System.

The FIND Act provides essential resources to locate, capture, and bring to justice dangerous fugitives. It takes commonsense steps to protect our communities from rapists, murderers, and other violent criminals who have fled across State lines. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3136

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 cited as the “Fugitive Information Networked Database Act of 2008” or the “FIND Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION.

In this Act, the term “National Crime Information Center database” is the computerized index of criminal justice information operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation pursuant to section 534 of title 28, United States Code, and available to Federal, State, and local law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies.

SEC. 3. GRANTS TO ENCOURAGE STATES TO ENTER FELONY WARRANTS.

(a) STATE SYSTEM.—A State Attorney General may, in consultation with local law enforcement and any other relevant government agencies, apply for a grant from the United States Attorney General to—

(1) develop and implement secure, electronic warrant management systems that permit the prompt preparation, submission, and validation of warrants and are compatible and interoperable with the National Crime Information Center database; or

(2) upgrade existing electronic warrant management systems to ensure compatibility and interoperability with the National Crime Information Center database; to facilitate information sharing and to ensure that felony warrants entered into State and local warrant databases can be automatically entered into the National Crime

Information Center database. The grant funds may also be used to hire additional personnel, as needed, for the validation of warrants entered into the National Crime Information Center database.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible for a grant authorized under subsection (a), a State shall submit to the United States Attorney General—

(1) a plan to develop and implement, or upgrade, systems described in subsection (a);

(2) a report that—

(A) details the number of felony warrants outstanding in the State;

(B) describes any backlog of warrants that have not been entered into the State and local warrant databases or into the National Crime Information Center database, over the preceding 3 years (including the number of such felony warrants);

(C) explains the reasons for the failure of State and local government agencies to enter felony warrants into the National Crime Information Center database; and

(D) demonstrates that State and local government agencies have made good faith efforts to eliminate any such backlog; and

(3) guidelines for warrant entry by State and local government agencies that will ensure that felony warrants entered into State and local warrant databases will also be entered into the National Crime Information Center database and explain the circumstances in which, as a matter of policy, certain felony warrants will not be entered into the National Crime Information Center database.

(c) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 and 2010 for grants to State and local government agencies for resources to carry out the requirements of this section.

SEC. 4. FBI COORDINATION.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation shall provide to State and local government agencies the technological standard that ensures compatibility and interoperability of all State and local warrant databases with the National Crime Information Center database.

SEC. 5. REPORT REGARDING FELONY WARRANT ENTRY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the House and Senate Committees on the Judiciary a report regarding—

(1) the number of felony warrants currently active in each State;

(2) the number of those felony warrants that State and local government agencies have entered into the National Crime Information Center database;

(3) the number of times State and local law enforcement in each State has been contacted regarding a fugitive apprehended in another State over the preceding 3 years; and

(4) the number of fugitives from each State who were apprehended in other States over the preceding 3 years but not extradited.

(b) ASSISTANCE.—To assist in the preparation of the report required by subsection (a), the Attorney General shall provide the Comptroller General of the United States with access to any information collected and reviewed in connection with the grant application process described in section 3.

(c) REPORT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—States that receive grants under section 3 shall, as a condition of receiving the grant, report to the Attorney General on an annual basis the number of felony warrants entered into the State and local warrant databases, the number of felony warrants entered into

the National Crime Information Center database, and, with respect to felony warrants not entered into the National Crime Information Center database, the reasons for not entering such warrants. On an annual basis, the Attorney General shall submit to the House and Senate Committees on the Judiciary a report containing the information received from the States under this subsection.

SEC. 6. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR FUGITIVE TASK FORCES AND EXTRADITION.

(a) PRESIDENTIAL THREAT PROTECTION ACT OF 2000.—Section 6(b) of the Presidential Threat Protection Act of 2000 (28 U.S.C. 566 note) is amended by adding at the end the following: “There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General for the United States Marshals Service to carry out the provisions of this section \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through 2014.”

(b) JUSTICE PRISONER AND ALIEN TRANSPORT SYSTEM.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General for the United States Marshals Service \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 to assist in extradition of fugitives through the Justice Prisoner and Alien Transport System.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 3137. A bill for the relief of Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing a private relief bill on behalf of Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, his wife, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez and their son, Jorge Rojas Gonzalez. The Rojas family are Mexican nationals living in the San Jose area of California.

The story of the Rojas family is compelling and I believe they merit Congress’ special consideration for such an extraordinary form of relief as a private bill.

Mr. Rojas and his wife Ms. Gonzalez originally came to the United States in 1990 when their son Jorge Rojas, Jr. was just 2 years old. In 1995, they left the country to attend a funeral, and then re-entered on visitor’s visas. The family has since expanded to include a son, Alexis Rojas now age 15 and a daughter Tania Rojas now age 14.

Since arriving in the United States, this family has dedicated themselves to community involvement, a strong work ethic and volunteerism. They have been paying taxes since their arrival in 1990. The family has been described by their friends and colleagues as a “model American family.” I would like to tell you some more about each member of the Rojas family.

Mr. Rojas is a hard-working individual who has been employed by Valley Crest Landscape Maintenance in San Jose, California, for the past 14 years. Currently, Mr. Rojas works on commercial landscaping projects. He is well-respected by his supervisor and his peers.

In addition to supporting his family, Jorge has volunteered his time and talents to provide modern green landscaping and a recreational jungle gym to Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, where his two youngest children attend school.

Ms. Gonzalez, in addition to raising her three children, has been very active in the local community. She has worked to help other immigrants assimilate to American life by working as a translator and a tutor for immigrant children at Sherman Oaks Community Charter School and the Y.M.C.A. Kids after-school program.

She has also coached soccer teams, and has recently directed a Second Harvest food drive for the school. Ms. Gonzalez also devotes many hours of her time to the organization People Acting in Community Together PACT, where she works to prevent crime, gangs and drug dealing in San Jose neighborhoods and schools.

Perhaps one of the most compelling reasons for permitting the family to remain in the United States is the impact their deportation would have on their three children. Two of the children, Alexis Rojas age 15 and Tania Rojas age 14, are U.S. citizens. Jorge Rojas, Jr. has lived in the United States since he was a toddler. For these children, this country is the only country they really know.

Jorge Rojas, Jr. is currently working at Jamba Juice. He graduated from Del Mar High School in 2007 and has been accepted to San Jose City College. However, his dreams and aspirations have been placed on hold because he remains subject to deportation.

Alexis and Tania Rojas are students at Sherman Oaks Community Charter School. They are described by their teachers as "fantastic, wonderful and gifted" students. In fact, the principal at Sherman Oaks has described all three of the children as "honest, hard-working academic honor students" and has commended all of them for their on-campus leadership.

It seems so clear to me that this family has embraced the American dream and their continued presence in our country would do so much to enhance the values we hold dear. I have received 30 letters from the community in support of this family. Enactment of the legislation I have introduced today will enable the Rojas family to continue to make significant contributions to their community as well as the United States.

I ask my colleagues to support this private bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill and letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3137

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

SECTION 1. PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS FOR JORGE ROJAS GUTIERREZ, OLIVA GONZALEZ GONZALEZ, AND JORGE ROJAS GONZALEZ.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151), Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez

Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez shall each be eligible for the issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence upon filing an application for issuance of an immigrant visa under section 204 of such Act or for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—If Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez enters the United States before the filing deadline specified in subsection (c), Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez shall be considered to have entered and remained lawfully in the United States and shall be eligible for adjustment of status under section 245 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1255) as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall apply only if the application for the issuance of an immigrant visa or the application for adjustment of status is filed with appropriate fees not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) REDUCTION OF IMMIGRANT VISA NUMBERS.—Upon granting an immigrant visa or permanent residence to Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez, the Secretary of State shall instruct the proper officer to reduce by 3, during the current or next following fiscal year, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of birth of Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez under section 203(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act or, if applicable, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of birth of Jorge Rojas Gutierrez, Oliva Gonzalez Gonzalez, and Jorge Rojas Gonzalez under section 202(e) of such Act.

SAN JOSE, CA,
March 14, 2008.

HON. DIANE FEINSTEIN,
Post Street,
San Francisco, CA.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: We are the Rojas Family: Jorge Rojas, Sr., 43 years old, supervisor, Valley Crest Landscape Co.; Oliva Rojas, 40 years old, tutor, Sherman Oaks Charter School; Jorge Rojas 19 years old, son; Alexis Rojas, 15 years old, son; and Tania Rojas, 14 years old, daughter.

The reason for this letter is to ask for your help on our immigration status.

We came to the U.S.A. in 1990, there were three in the family at that time: my wife Oliva, my son Jorge, he was 1-year and 5 months old, and myself. Years later Alexis and Tania were born in California.

After a long immigration process we were denied to stay in the U.S.A. and now we are facing a voluntary departure schedule on or before April 18, 2008, in the meantime we are asking to extend our departure until the kids finish the school year that ends on June 13, 2008.

Our main goal is to stay in the U.S.A. as legal residents, my kids were born here and grew up here, even my son Jorge was too young to remember where he was born, this is all that they have ever known. What I want the most now is that my kids keep going with their hopes and dreams and be able to stay in school and someday be great citizens in this Great Country.

After several changes in immigration laws, we started a legal process trying to get a legal residence in this country. One day we knew thru other people that someone in the Los Angeles area could help us out to get a legal residence, wrongly we started a political asylum process, that later will be an ap-

plication for cancellation of removal, we were misled, we were told that its only a way to get a hearing with an immigration judge and because we were in the U.S.A. for more than 10 years and we have 2 citizen kids will be a lot easier, afterwards we found out that this person was not a lawyer and he was a notary, whom only submit political asylum applications and then turn everything to a lawyers that represent us in the hearings. A lot of trips to L.A. but one day received a call telling me that me case was move out to San Francisco and the next hearing will be there.

At the first hearing in San Francisco the Judge instructed me to get a lawyer that represent us in the upcoming process. We hire a lawyer with immigration speciality, a real lawyer, it was on March 2003. He represent us I think the best way that he could, after almost 3 years on April 2006, we were denied to stay and granted with voluntary departure within 60 days, this happen on April 2006.

Still we had another chance; appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, so in May 2006, we hired another lawyer with better knowledge in appeals. Our efforts to stay legally here never give up.

On February 24, 2008 we received a decision from the Board of Immigration Appeals saying that we have to leave the country voluntary in the remaining 32 days after the final decision that will be made on March 17, 2008.

Now our last hope is if you can help us.

We are a very close family that always been working and doing voluntary jobs and time to the community where for 14 years we belong participating not only with our kids, we were among parents and teacher helping.

My wife Oliva has been a soccer coach and she is involved in the community association named "PACT" (Parents Acting in Community Together), helping too in the distribution of food with "The Second Harvest Food Program". Myself I was a soccer coach too and involved in a lot of jobs done to the Sherman Oaks Charter School, were my three kids attended.

My kids now are emotionally affected because they can not understand all that is happening to us and of course to them, for me is really hard to explain them.

Even so we all know the decision that had been made, we keep on going everything; work, school and time together as a family. We have our hopes and faith in something or somebody that is going to help us to stay in The U.S.A.

I am pretty sure that with your help my whole family will keep this faith, hopes and dreams going and we will be part of this great country.

I want to say ahead that myself and my family are deeply grateful for you time and for whatever you can do for us.

Thank you so much.

JORGE ROJAS.

Update on this letter

MARCH 19, 2008.

On March 17, 2008 we were granted by de I.C.E. Office with 60 days more until my kids can finish the school year, now our voluntary departure is schedule on or before June 18, 2008. That gives us more comfort and time; hoping that you can help us.

Thanks again for your time and help.

JORGE ROJAS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 13, 2008.

Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: In late February, staff from my office met with Jorge

Rojas and his wife, Oliva Gonzalez Rojas in regards to their immigration case and that of their son, Jorge Rojas Gonzalez. After exhausting all appeals to the decision of the Immigration Judge, the family was scheduled to depart the United States under an order of voluntary departure to Mexico on April 18, 2008.

My office supported their request to get an extension of the voluntary departure order until June 18, 2008 so that the two younger United States citizen children could finish the school year. As of this moment the family is still scheduled to leave the United States on June 18th. At the time of the first meeting, my office also referred the Rojas family to their U.S. Senators offices to inquire about the possibility of a private bill being introduced.

Since February, my office has received many calls from individuals supportive of the Rojas family and concerned about their impending departure. My office was also contacted by People Acting in Community Together (PACT), members of the Santa Clara Interfaith Council, Santa Clara County Office of Human Relations, YMCA, and Sherman Oaks Community Charter School.

In addition, on March 9, 2008, the Rojas family participated in a community forum organized by First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto. The Rojas family participated on a panel which included a San Francisco Immigration Judge, the Director of the Santa Clara County Office of Human Relations, and one of my staff members. The event was co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto, the Santa Clara Council of Churches, Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice, and El Buen Pastor, Iglesia Episcopal Church (Redwood City). The organizers have verified that there were a total of 115 attendees at the event, many of whom still inquire about the Rojas family and their situation.

It is apparent that the Rojas family is a hard-working, beloved family that has contributed much to their community through their volunteer work. My office has been as supportive as possible of this family and of their efforts to exhaust all possible avenues to remain legally in the United States.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

ZOE LOFGREN,
Member of Congress.

VALLEYCREST
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE,
San Jose, CA, 12 March 2008.

Re Jorge G. Rojas.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: Jorge G. Rojas has been working for our company ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance since 1994.

Not only is he a valuable member of our team but has been instrumental in energizing the water conservation and sustainability issues as they relate to the LEED efforts in the Bay Area for commercial landscaping.

Jorge Rojas is a technician in Urban Construction. He obtained his degree from Conalet Technical School in Guadalajara.

Jorge's skills in that area will be a great loss not only to the company, but to the state of sustainability and green programs in Silicon Valley.

Commercial clients are seeking LEED certification for their existing buildings and industry talent in this arena is critical.

We at ValleyCrest urge our to consider drafting a private bill to secure permanent residency for him and his direct family.

Jorge is also seeking an extension from the Immigration office to allow his American resident children to complete their graduation.

We would appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

NADA DUNA,
Regional Manager.

SHERMAN OAKS COMMUNITY
CHARTER SCHOOL,
San Jose, CA, March 13, 2008.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: I write this letter in support of the Oliva Gonzales Rojas and her family. Many years ago she and her husband, Jorge, left Mexico to come to the United States. At that time their oldest son was two years old. They have lived in the United States in California for the last eight years.

During that time they have consistently demonstrated their commitment to this country, appreciating the opportunities the United States has afforded them. In addition to their oldest son, they have two other children—a son and daughter, citizens of the United States. These children have demonstrated strong academic skills, and they have shown positive and consistent leadership. They understand the importance of service to community.

Yesterday, Alexis, their son volunteered at Sherman Oaks, organizing our book room and hanging posters on the wall. He has received excellent modeling from his parents who have donated many hours of service to our school. They have demonstrated discipline and excellence in their work. Oliva works at Sherman Oaks as yard duty and as a tutor. Jorge, the father, has developed a highly successful landscaping design business, which caters to large-scale corporations and business parks.

Oliva and Jorge are decent people, who came to America to live the American dream. For eighteen years they have worked hard, rearing their children, teaching them the values of perseverance, diligence, and sacrifice to achieve and to thrive. Pillars of the community, the family is universally loved and respected by all at Sherman Oaks School. It was Jorge, who planted trees and fixed the irrigation system to maintain the lush fields that are a mecca to our children and their families. Oliva serves as the liaison for our school to the neighborhood. She tutors their children, organizes support for families in need, and integrates new immigrants into the school. Oliva and Jorge are good people, model citizens, and contributors to society.

With great respect, I plead with you to consider the merit of this case. Specifically, I request that the family may stay, at least until the end of June, so that their children can complete this school year. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

NANCY ATKINSON,
Principal.

PEOPLE ACTING IN
COMMUNITY TOGETHER,
San Jose, CA, March 17, 2008.

Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Post Street,
San Francisco, CA.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: I am writing to express my strong support for Oliva Rojas and her family and to ask for your assistance in postponing—and we hope canceling—their order of removal from the DOHS.

Oliva was an active PACT volunteer leader for several years in the early 2000s and has continued to support our organization since then. PACT is a multi-ethnic, inter-faith grassroots organization that empowers every day people to create a more just community.

For more than 20 years, PACT has helped ordinary people win extraordinary victories for our community, not by speaking for them, but by teaching them how to speak, act, and engage in the public arena for them-

selves. Thousands of PACT-trained, volunteer community leaders have worked together across ethnic, religious and socio-economic lines to create innovative and effective public policies that have improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people throughout Santa Clara County. For example, PACT co-founded Santa Clara County's innovative Children's Health Initiative, which provides access to health insurance to all low-income children in the County and has served as a model for similar programs in twenty-three other California counties plus many other states, as well.

Oliva was active with the PACT parent group at her child's charter school. She put in many hours every week to help improve the school for the benefit of all the children. She was also a leader in the effort to fight crime, gangs, and drug dealing in the neighborhood around the school, and helped organize large meetings with this purpose.

I've been working for more than 15 years to involve everyday people in the public life of their communities. While most people feel disconnected and apathetic, Oliva is full of hope and exudes inspiration about her community. Even though she is new to this country, she embodies the values we hold dear, as individuals and as a society: committed to her family, hard working, involved in the community, participant in the democratic process.

Our community needs Oliva and her family. We need so many more people like her. We would be a much weaker community without her.

Thank you for your assistance.

MATT HAMMER,
Executive Director.

SHERMAN OAKS
COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL,
San Jose, CA, March 10, 2008.

DIANE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senator,
San Francisco, CA.

HONORABLE SENATOR FEINSTEIN: I am writing in behalf of the Jorge and Oliva Rojas Family and their eminent "removal" from the United States. I have had the good fortune to have known the Rojas family since 1999, when Tania Rojas was in my Kindergarten class. We did home visits that year, and I was immediately impressed with the close family ties and structure within the Rojas household. Tania was a fantastic student and we had a great year. Her mother, Oliva, was a ready volunteer for anything that she could help out with at school, and was always an integral part of our school community. Two years later, I had Alexis in my fourth grade class. Another wonderful, intelligent, GATE (Gifted and Talented) student. That year, he talked about being an astronaut some day. And, of course, Oliva continued to do anything and everything to help out. Always with a positive "can-do" attitude and sense of humor.

Oliva started out volunteering, but because she is so capable, she was soon hired by our school to do almost everything! As a charter school, we have had more flexibility in hiring than some schools. In the past, Oliva has helped out as a substitute, an art teacher, yard duty, tutor, and parent liaison. Students love and respect her. She is someone who is always willing to help out where needed. She has been a lifesaver to me, as a teacher, many times. Whether it's making copies for me at the last minute, or helping out with our 4th grade overnight at Sanborn Park when my partner teacher got sick, or helping me design and build our altar for Day of the Dead—Oliva is always there. Her

background design for the 4th grade Opera every year, is always spectacular. She helps students with homework. She helps our Kindergarten in our "mid day block". Our structure is very different from traditional schools, and Oliva is someone who helps make it work. She helps make everything work at our school. I can't even imagine what our school will be like without her here. Her own 3 children, Jorge, Alexis and Tania are no longer students at our school, but truly, all the students at Sherman Oaks are Oliva's kids.

Oliva soon started working in the YMCA's after school and summer school program, where, once again, she was loved by all who worked with her. I believe she has worked with them for over 4 years. I am attaching this year's YMCA brochure, which, ironically, came to my house just this week. On page 7 is a picture of smiling staff members. Center front, is Oliva Rojas.

Every October, the Rojas family participates with my husband with his theater group, Familia Aztlan, in their multicultural event celebrating Day of the Dead in San Jose. Both Jorge Sr. and Jr. along with Tania and Alexis, participate in the parade, wielding large, life sized, skeleton puppets. Oliva puts her creativity to use, painting the faces of children and adults alike.

Oliva's removal from this country in mid April will put an extreme hardship on all the students and teachers at Sherman Oaks Community Charter School in San Jose for this school year. As a teacher at this school for 10 years, I can truthfully say that Oliva Rojas' position at our school touches every single student. I can't imagine how we would explain to our students why she was all of a sudden gone—mid year. What could we say to explain it to them? And they will ask.

I respectfully ask for your intervention, in whatever way you can, to get an extension of at least until June for the removal of the Rojas Family. Ideally, this family merits full time, legal status in this country based on their many civic and artistic contributions, stable family, and work ethic. But, if this is not possible, at least, for the sake of the students, families, and faculty of Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, please intervene for an extension until June, 2008.

It is truly this country's loss if/when the Rojas Family is "removed."

Respectfully and hopefully,

BARBARA LYNN,
4th Grade Teacher.

SAN JOSE, CA, March 5, 2008.

SENATOR FEINSTEIN, I am writing to you because of my concern for a co-worker and friend, Oliva Rojas. Although she and her family have been trying to legally stay in the United States for many years, her appeals have run out and she and her family will be leaving on a volunteer departure on April 18th.

I am Oliva's supervisor at Sherman Oaks Elementary School in San Jose in the Campbell Elementary School District, a bilingual, dual-immersion school. Oliva reports to me everyday for 2 hours and works with grades K-6 with a specialty in Kindergarten. (She works other hours for a different supervisor.)

I can't think of a time when I have been so disappointed in our government. This is a family that is a vital part of our community and Oliva is a valued co-worker. Because she is smart, trusted, responsible and nurturing, Oliva has been given many duties that go beyond her job description. (At one time, we were a charter school and Oliva was even able to substitute teach in classrooms and did a fabulous job.) Oliva's family has always been the first to step up and take action if something needed to be done at our school to

improve the grounds or atmosphere. They would be the first to volunteer to help at the many gatherings we would have. Oliva and her family are some of the most involved, unselfish people I have ever met.

If Oliva leaves on April 18th, it would be a hardship to not only me and her fellow co-workers, but to each and every child she works with on a daily basis. We depend on her to be there because she handles the children in a very special loving way. Nobody could replace her. I have tried to fill her position with other employees at times when she is sick or at immigration hearings and it has not worked out. We need Oliva to be with us throughout this school year and beyond.

I would like you to take a look at her case and help her and her family out in this matter. Please do whatever you can do to keep the family here in the United States.

Thank you,

LYNDA ZOLEZZI.

SAN JOSE, CA, MARCH 11, 2008.

Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
*One Post Street,
San Francisco, CA.*

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: We ask you to please urge ICE to allow Jorge Rojas, Sr., Oliva Rojas (his wife) and Jorge Rojas, Jr. (their 19 year old son) to remain in this country at least till the end of this school year, June 13, so that their U.S. citizen children, Alexis and Tania, may finish school. In fact, I would hope that the whole Rojas family could stay legally for the rest of their lives.

The Rojas family has been a fixture of our community in San Jose for at least 16 years. We raised our sons, their Jorge Jr. and our Sam, together from 2nd grade on (both are now 19 and 20 years old respectively), spending many hours together. We were active together in People Acting Together (PACT) successfully pushing for health insurance for all children in Santa Clara Co. in 2000. Oliva is well-know to all children at Sherman Oaks Community Charter School (Campbell Union School District) due to her early volunteer work at the school, then her paid position as an aide, and then as a YMCA worker running after school programs.

Jorge Rojas, Sr. has been an active parent leader in the Sherman Oaks Community Charter School neighborhood in west center San Jose. It was Jorge, as a trained landscaping professional, who enlisted other parents to reseed and regrade parts of the school playground and to repair the irrigation system when the school district had no funds to do so. It was Jorge who led the work to plant trees from Our City Forest in front of the school to reduce heat and glare. It was Jorge who volunteered his weekend operating the equipment and then doing the hand digging necessary to install a French drainage system (6 feet deep) into holes cut in the concrete to ensure proper drainage.

It was both Jorge and Oliva who for years volunteered to coach soccer teams for neighborhood children after school. As bilingual parents, Jorge and Oliva have been key to bridging the cultural/language gap between neighbors in our multicultural neighborhood and school community. If this family leaves, they will leave a big hole in our community which has come to depend on them for leadership, translation, advice, hard work, and friendship. They will also leave a big hole in the hearts of many of us who count them as close friends.

It is tragic that a whole community would suffer such a loss due to a legal error made by an untrained, irresponsible "notario" years ago. This family has spent thousands and thousands of dollars in an effort to overcome the error of that notario and to legalize their status.

We ask for your assistance on behalf of the Rojas Family and our community.

Sincerely,

SUSAN PRICE-JANG and VICTOR JANG.

By Mr. WEBB. (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 3140. A bill to provide that 4 of the 21 weeks of parental leave made available to a Federal employee shall be paid leave, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce the bipartisan Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2008. I introduce this bill with Senators WARNER, CLINTON, KERRY, SCHUMER, MIKULSKI, SANDERS, and DURBIN.

This bill has a simple and yet important requirement: that Federal employees be granted 4 weeks of paid paternity and maternity leave.

The Federal Government is the country's largest employer, with more than 2.7 million employees. My state of Virginia is home to more than 100,000 Federal employees. As the Nation's largest employer, the Federal Government should be the leader in workplace policy. The Federal Government should provide benefits that are equal to what we call best practices in the private sector.

Furthermore, according to the Office of Personnel Management, more than half of the Federal Government's employees will become eligible for retirement within the next 10 years. The Federal workforce is aging faster than the private workforce. The benefits desired by younger workers are offered by private sector employers, but not by the Federal Government. Although the Federal Government cannot compete with private sector salaries, we should be offering comparable benefits.

The current parental leave law for Federal employees is in need of an update. The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act provides that, of the 12 weeks of unpaid leave guaranteed by the Family and Medical Leave Act, federal employees will be allowed to substitute 4 weeks of paid leave, as well as any accrued annual or sick leave for the birth or adoption of a child.

This requirement mirrors a recent provision put forward by the Senate Armed Services Committee in the National Defense Authorization Act, which would allow 21 days of paid paternity leave for our military personnel.

The legislation we are introducing today is also an issue of fairness for the working family. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that more than 70 percent of women with children over the age of 1 are in the workforce and that both parents work in most families.

Additionally, according to the National Partnership for Women and Families, in today's highly competitive jobs environment, there is little workforce flexibility to help working

women and men care for their families and still succeed at their jobs. This is particularly true for those Americans whose economic security is most at risk.

It is important to note the parental leave practices of non-Federal employers. Research by the Joint Economic Committee has found that Fortune 100 firms offer paid leave typically lasting 6 to 8 weeks. Additionally, most of America's economic rivals provide paid parental leave, as do many other nations. The European Union requires that member countries offer 14 weeks of paid leave and most offer more than the required amount.

By contrast, our Nation's current laws force healthy, long-term federal employees to save up their sick days and vacation time so they can use this paid time off to care for their newborn or newly adopted child. Asking employees to cobble together accrued leave makes it difficult for relatively new employees or those who experience health problems to save up enough time for parental leave. We owe our civil servants a more thoughtful, work-friendly policy.

I note that the House of Representatives recently reported a similar bill out of the appropriate House committee by a strong bipartisan vote. I hope the Senate begins similar action on this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this pro-family, pro-Federal worker legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 595—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2008 AS “GOSPEL MUSIC HERITAGE MONTH” AND HONORING GOSPEL MUSIC FOR ITS VALUABLE AND LONGSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 595

Whereas gospel music is a beloved art form unique to the United States, spanning decades, generations, and races;

Whereas gospel music is one of the cornerstones of the musical tradition of the United States and has grown beyond its roots to achieve pop-culture and historical relevance;

Whereas gospel music has spread beyond its geographic origins to touch audiences around the world;

Whereas the history of gospel music can be traced to multiple and diverse influences and foundations, including African-American spirituals that blended diverse elements from African music and melodic influences from Irish folk songs and hymns, and gospel music ultimately borrowed from uniquely American musical styles including ragtime, jazz, and blues;

Whereas that tradition of diversity remains today, as the influence of gospel music can be found infused in all forms of secular music, including rock and roll, country, soul,

rhythm and blues, and countless other styles;

Whereas the legacy of gospel music includes some of the most memorable voices and musical pioneers in the history of the United States, such as Thomas Dorsey, Mahalia Jackson, James Vaughan, Roberta Martin, Virgil Stamps, Diana Washington, Stamps Quartet, The Highway QCs, The Statesmen, The Soul Stirrers, Point of Grace, Smokie Norful, Terry Woods, James Cleveland, Billy Ray Hearn, Rex Humbard, Joe Ligon and The Mighty Clouds of Joy, Kirk Franklin, V. Michael McKay, Theola Booker, Yolanda Adams, Edwin and Walter Hawkins, Sandi Patty, The Winans, Kathy Taylor, and Brenda Waters, Carl Preacher, and Shirley Joiner of B, C & S;

Whereas many of the biggest names in music emerged from the gospel music tradition or have recorded gospel music, including Sam Cooke, Al Green, Elvis Presley, Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Little Richard, Ray Charles, Buddy Holly, Alan Jackson, Dolly Parton, Mariah Carey, Bob Dylan, Randy Travis, and Glenn Campbell;

Whereas, regardless of their musical styles, those artists and so many more have turned to gospel music as the source and inspiration for their music, which has blurred the boundaries between secular and gospel music;

Whereas, beyond its contribution to the musical tradition of the United States, gospel music has provided a cultural and musical backdrop across all of mainstream media, from hit television series to major Hollywood motion pictures, including “American Idol”, “Heroes”, “Dancing with the Stars”, “O Brother, Where Art Thou?”, “Sister Act”, “The Preacher’s Wife”, “Evan Almighty”, and more; and

Whereas gospel music has a huge audience around the country and around the world, a testament to the universal appeal of a historical American art form that both inspires and entertains across racial, ethnic, religious, and geographic boundaries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2008 as “Gospel Music Heritage Month”; and

(2) recognizes the great contributions to the culture of the United States derived from the rich heritage of gospel music and gospel music artists.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4982. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for Mr. INOUE (for himself, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. NELSON, of Florida, and Ms. SNOWE)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3403, to promote and enhance public safety by facilitating the rapid deployment of IP-enabled 911 and E-911 services, encourage the Nation's transition to a national IP-enabled emergency network, and improve 911 and E-911 access to those with disabilities.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4982. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for Mr. INOUE (for himself, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. NELSON of Florida, and Ms. SNOWE)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3403, to promote and enhance public safety by facilitating the rapid deployment of IP-enabled 911 and E-911 services, encourage the Nation's transition to a national IP-enabled emergency network, and improve 911 and E-911 access to those with disabilities; as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “New and Emerging Technologies 911 Improvement Act of 2008” or the “NET 911 Improvement Act of 2008”.

TITLE I—911 SERVICES AND IP-ENABLED VOICE SERVICE PROVIDERS

SEC. 101. DUTY TO PROVIDE 911 AND ENHANCED 911 SERVICE.

The Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999 is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 6 (47 U.S.C. 615b) as section 7;

(2) by inserting after section 5 the following new section:

“SEC. 6. DUTY TO PROVIDE 9-1-1 AND ENHANCED 9-1-1 SERVICE.

“(a) DUTIES.—It shall be the duty of each IP-enabled voice service provider to provide 9-1-1 service and enhanced 9-1-1 service to its subscribers in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Communications Commission, as in effect on the date of enactment of the New and Emerging Technologies 911 Improvement Act of 2008 and as such requirements may be modified by the Commission from time to time.

“(b) PARTY FOR IP-ENABLED VOICE SERVICE PROVIDERS.—An IP-enabled voice service provider that seeks capabilities to provide 9-1-1 and enhanced 9-1-1 service from an entity with ownership or control over such capabilities, to comply with its obligations under subsection (a), shall, for the exclusive purpose of complying with such obligations, have a right of access to such capabilities, including interconnection, to provide 9-1-1 and enhanced 9-1-1 service on the same rates, terms, and conditions that are provided to a provider of commercial mobile service (as such term is defined in section 332(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d))), subject to such regulations as the Commission prescribes under subsection (c).

“(c) REGULATIONS.—The Commission—

“(1) within 90 days after the date of enactment of the New and Emerging Technologies 911 Improvement Act of 2008, shall issue regulations implementing such Act, including regulations that—

“(A) ensure that IP-enabled voice service providers have the ability to exercise their rights under subsection (b);

“(B) take into account any technical, network security, or information privacy requirements that are specific to IP-enabled voice services; and

“(C) provide, with respect to any capabilities that are not required to be made available to a commercial mobile service provider but that the Commission determines under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph or paragraph (2) are necessary for an IP-enabled voice service provider to comply with its obligations under subsection (a), that such capabilities shall be available at the same rates, terms, and conditions as would apply if such capabilities were made available to a commercial mobile service provider;

“(2) shall require IP-enabled voice service providers to which the regulations apply to register with the Commission and to establish a point of contact for public safety and government officials relative to 9-1-1 and enhanced 9-1-1 service and access; and

“(3) may modify such regulations from time to time, as necessitated by changes in the market or technology, to ensure the ability of an IP-enabled voice service provider to comply with its obligations under subsection (a) and to exercise its rights under subsection (b).

“(d) DELEGATION OF ENFORCEMENT TO STATE COMMISSIONS.—The Commission may delegate authority to enforce the regulations