

has undermined the current system because employers find it increasingly difficult to establish the authenticity of documents presented by job applicants. As a result, too many employers have been either unable or unwilling to comply with the law.

Our legislation adds new features to the Social Security card to deter counterfeiting and make it easier for employers to determine whether a card is genuine by including a digitized photo of the cardholder on the card. The improved Social Security card will also be encoded with a unique electronic encryption code to allow employers to verify each prospective applicant's work eligibility status prior to hiring, through either an electronic card-reader or a toll-free telephone number. The Department of Homeland Security will be required to establish and maintain an Employment Eligibility Database with an individual's proof of citizenship data, work, and residency eligibility information, including expiration dates for non-citizens. This database will also include information from the Social Security Administration that the Commissioner determines necessary and appropriate for the purpose of verifying an individual's work eligibility status. Employers who hire an illegal immigrant or choose not to verify a prospective employee's work eligibility will face stiff federal fines of \$50,000 and up to 5 years in prison. The employer would also be required to reimburse the government for the cost of deporting the illegal immigrant. Moreover, this bill provides that no officer or employee of Department of Homeland Security shall have access to any information contained in the Employment Eligibility Database for any purpose other than the establishment of a system of records necessary for the effective administration of this Act, and will impose penalties of \$10,000 in fines and mandatory-minimum sentence of 5 years in prison on anyone who misuses information on the database.

With the improved Social Security card and national verification system, prospective employees will have no way of obtaining fraudulent identification documents. By improving the employment verification process, we can eliminate the supply of jobs for illegal workers and end the employment magnet that draws them here. Under this bill, legal workers will only need to update their Social Security card once to have their photo placed on the card and for other long-overdue anti-fraud measures to be applied. Moreover, a worker would only need the updated Social Security card when applying for a new job. I want to make it absolutely clear that this proposal does not represent the creation of a national identification card. This bill strictly prohibits the use of the Social Security card as a national ID card, and stipulates that the card not be required to be routinely carried on one's person. Because Social Security cards are already required to be provided to new employers, the changes proposing in this bill take us no further down the road of creating a national ID card. It should also be noted that the government already has the information that would be contained in the Employment Eligibility Database. An individual's eligibility to work under the law is dependent on whether they are a U.S. citizen, and if not, their immigration status. Finally, the Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act also puts teeth into the new enforcement procedures by calling for the addition of 10,000 new Homeland Security officers

whose sole responsibility will be to enforce employer compliance with the law. These new agents will free up the rest of the Border Patrol to exclusively focus on border enforcement and terrorism prevention.

This bill is in no way meant to send a message that we intend to limit opportunities for the American dream to be fulfilled. However, we are a Nation of laws and if individuals wish to pursue opportunities in the United States, they must play by the rules and we must make clear that there will be no economic opportunity for anyone who enters this country illegally. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in this effort, and hope they will consider joining me as we take action on this vital national security priority.

I would like to thank the original co-sponsors of this legislation, including, Mr. REYES of Texas, who began his career in public service with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in the U.S. Border Patrol, where he worked for 26½ years. I would also like to thank the original co-sponsors from my home state of California, including Mr. ISSA, Mr. CALVERT, the author of the Basic Pilot Program, and Mr. BILBRAY, the Chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SHARK CONSERVATION ACT OF 2009

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today I have reintroduced a bill to amend the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to improve the conservation of sharks. In the 110th Congress, the House of Representatives passed this legislation, H.R. 5741 or the "Shark Conservation Act of 2008," by voice vote under suspension of the rules. The Senate, however, was unable to take action on the bill received by the House or on its companion bill, S. 3231, before it adjourned. I have, therefore, reintroduced this bill today given the ongoing necessity for improved shark conservation and its benefits for ocean ecosystems.

Sharks are long-lived apex predators, which breed slowly, making it difficult for them to maintain populations under fishing pressure. Sharks have been increasingly exploited in recent decades, both as bycatch in the pelagic longline fisheries from the 1960s onward, and as targets in direct fisheries that expanded rapidly in the 1980s. The rising demand for shark fins over past decades has also led to increases in the particularly exploitive practice of shark finning, where fins of sharks are removed and the carcass is discarded at sea.

According to scientists, scalloped hammerhead, white, and thresher shark populations are each estimated to have declined by over 75 percent in the past 15 years due in large part to these fishing pressures. Removing these top predators drastically changes the food web structure, marine diversity, and ecosystem health. Addressing the practice of shark finning is an imperative step toward the conservation of sharks and marine ecosystems.

Congress recognized shark finning as an inherently wasteful practice in enacting the

Shark Finning Prohibition Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-557). This Act prohibits U.S. fishermen from removing the fins of sharks and discarding the carcass at sea, and from landing or transporting shark fins without the corresponding carcass.

The Shark Conservation Act of 2009 includes several measures to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of that prohibition and would ensure that the intent of Congress is achieved. First, the bill eliminates an unexpected enforcement loophole related to the transport of shark fins by prohibiting vessels from having custody, control, or possession of shark fins which are not naturally attached to the corresponding carcass. This is intended to ensure that U.S.-flagged vessels are not traveling to the high seas and purchasing fins from fishermen engaged in shark finning and bringing them into U.S. waters in an attempt to skirt the finning prohibition. The bill further strengthens the enforcement of the existing ban on shark finning by calling for sharks to be landed with their fins naturally attached. This "fins-attached" landing strategy simplifies enforcement of the Shark Finning Prohibition Act. It is also consistent with the National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS, final rule, which took effect on July 24, 2008, and which implements the management measures described in the final Amendment 2 to the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and strengthens enforcement of existing law in U.S. Atlantic waters by requiring that sharks be landed with their fins attached.

Finally, the Shark Conservation Act of 2009 amends the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act to allow the Secretary of Commerce to identify and list nations that have not adopted a regulatory program for the conservation of sharks comparable to the United States. This amendment promotes the conservation of sharks internationally and in a manner that is consistent with the expectations placed on U.S. fishermen.

The bill is further consistent with the United States position in the United Nations relative to Resolution 62/177 that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 2007, and which calls upon nation-states to take immediate and concerted action to improve the implementation of and compliance with national measures that regulate shark fisheries, including management efforts to require that all sharks be landed with each fin naturally attached.

The Shark Conservation Act of 2009 reestablishes the intended protections for sharks under U.S. law. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to again pass this timely and important bill in the House of Representatives. I also hope it will receive favorable action and consideration by the other body in the 111th Congress.

TERRORIST REWARDS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2009

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Terrorist Rewards Enhancement

Act. This bill will assist in our fight against terrorism around the globe. Currently, the terrorist rewards program run by the State Department assists in our hunt for terrorists by promising a cash reward or other type of reward for information leading to the arrest of some of the world's most deadly terrorists. This program has been very successful in the past in apprehending key people including Mir Amal Kanshi, a terrorist who had murdered two CIA employees and injured three others in a 1993 shooting outside CIA headquarters in Virginia.

Under current law, the U.S. may not pay a reward to an officer or employee of another government. I have traveled to Pakistan each of the last 4 years, where I met with a number of government officials. At the strong suggestion of Pakistan's ISI and IB intelligence and police bureaus, I believe the President should be able to pay such a reward to anyone having information leading us to the greatest terrorists. If there is anyone, anywhere, even if they work for a Pakistani government agency, who has information about the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden, we should be doing all we can to elicit that information.

With the increasing number of cross-border incursions into Afghanistan coming from the Waziristan region of Pakistan, it is more important than ever to develop a complete picture of where al Qaeda and Taliban terrorists are hiding. We need to provide our State Department and intelligence officials with all the possible tools to aid in the capture of the world's number one terrorist. The Terrorist Rewards Enhancement Act will provide one more of these tools.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS
HEALTH EQUITY ACT OF 2009

HON. CAROL SHEA-PORTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, today, I introduced The Veterans Health Equity Act of 2009. This legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that every State has a full-service veterans hospital, or access to equivalent care in-state. I have been calling for the VA to provide full-service medical care to New Hampshire's veterans since October of 2007 and introduced identical legislation in the 110th Congress.

New Hampshire has not had a full-service veterans hospital since 2001 and is the only State without a full-service VA hospital or comparable facility. While New Hampshire may be a small State, it has a veteran population over 130,000.

Because we lack a veterans hospital, New Hampshire's veterans are often forced to travel out-of-state for medical care. Veterans traveling from the most Northern parts of the State may have to travel three hours to Manchester and then may be forced to travel up to 2 hours to Boston, if they are referred there for their care.

Unfortunately, this routinely happens—each year, hundreds of patients are referred to the Boston, MA or White River Junction, VT facilities.

It is simply a matter of fairness that our veterans in New Hampshire be afforded the

same services as veterans in every other State. Though New Hampshire may be a small State, even smaller States with fewer veterans have full-service care available.

I am a realist, and a fiscal conservative. That is why my legislation does not require the VA to construct a full-service hospital in Manchester if it is not economically feasible. Instead, the Department could work with health care providers in the state to provide care through local hospitals.

The Manchester VA facility has done a great job of reaching out to local partners and getting our vets access to as much local care as possible within their current restrictions. In fact, they have submitted a business plan that would allow them to contract with more local health care providers. I urge the Department to strongly consider this business plan. Its approval would make a big difference in the quality and accessibility of care for New Hampshire's veterans.

If the VA will not consider restoring Manchester to a full-service facility or ensuring that New Hampshire veterans have access to care in New Hampshire, Congress must do so.

Our veterans, regardless of the services they need, deserve the same care their counterparts receive in every other State. It is unconscionable that we deny them this full-service care and instead offer them ad hoc services.

I will continue to work with the Director of the New Hampshire VA and with the new Obama Administration to ensure that our veterans have care in New Hampshire. Last summer's expansion of radiation services proves that the VA can work to ensure that local care is available. It is time for the VA to go further and for the government to live up to the promises we've made to those who have served so honorably.

HONORING FORMER U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES T. CANADY UPON HIS INVESTITURE AS A JUSTICE TO THE FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a former member of this body, Representative Charles T. Canady on the occasion of his investiture as a Justice to the Supreme Court of the State of Florida.

During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Justice Canady served this nation and the people of the 12th Congressional District, which I now represent, with honor and distinction. His steadfast commitment toward upholding the laws and principles on which our nation was founded, will serve the people of the State of Florida well through his appointment as a Justice to the Florida Supreme Court.

Born in Lakeland, Florida, Justice Canady earned his B.A. from Haverford College in 1976 and Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Yale University in 1979. Thereafter, he practiced law in Lakeland at the firm of Holland and Knight and with the Lane, Trohn, Clarke, Bertrand and Williams law firm. In 1984, he was elected to the Florida House of Representatives where he served through 1990.

In 1992, Justice Canady was elected to the 103rd Congress and served four terms in the United States House of Representatives from January 1993 to January 2001. Throughout his tenure in Congress, Justice Canady was an active member of the House Judiciary Committee. For three terms from January 1995 to January 2001, former Rep. Canady was the Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution. In this capacity, his efforts toward protecting and defending the laws of our nation made a lasting mark not only on this body, but on the American people for whom we are called serve.

While a member of the House of Representatives, Former Rep. Canady worked with steadfast dedication and fortitude on the issues found at the core of our country's belief system. Among his contributions include passage into law of the Religious Liberty Protection Act, which protects all citizens' right to exercise their religious freedoms. He also championed the Civil Rights Act of 1997, the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, the Private Property Rights Implementation Act, Equal Opportunity Act, as well as the Family Caregiver Enumeration Act.

Appointed as a House Manager to conduct the presidential impeachment proceedings, he worked to uphold the laws of our nation through his unwavering commitment to the principles of the Constitution of the United States and the governing rules of our country.

Justice Canady kept his term limits pledge, and did not seek reelection to a fifth term in 2000. After leaving Congress, Justice Canady returned to the practice of law, serving as counsel to Governor Jeb Bush. In 2002, Governor Bush appointed him to Florida's Second District Court of Appeal. On August 27, 2008, Governor Charlie Crist nominated Justice Canady to the Florida Supreme Court. His nomination was confirmed and Justice Canady took his seat as the 82nd Associate Justice to the Florida Supreme Court on September 8, 2008, and was sworn-in through a formal investiture on December 3, 2008.

Former Congressman Charles T. Canady resided until his appointment to the Florida Supreme Court in Lakeland, Florida, and is married to wife Jennifer and has two daughters, Julia and Anna. Charles T. Canady is the son of Charles and Delores Canady.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
AMERICARE HEALTH INSURANCE
ACT OF 2009

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to reintroduce the AmeriCare Health Care Act of 2009. I have often spoken before this body about the great need to reform our health care system. For too long, we have been plagued with an inadequate patchwork system that today leaves nearly 46 million Americans uninsured. We spend more per person than any other country in the world, yet our health outcomes lag well behind that of other industrialized nations.

The failing economy is even more proof of our need to act now. Our broken health system is a tremendous financial burden on our