

The stated price tag for this new energy tax is \$646 billion, yet recent news reports indicate that administration officials are privately admitting their program will actually generate between “two and three times” this amount of revenue, or between \$1.3 trillion and \$1.9 trillion. However, these numbers represent only the cost from 2012 through 2019. The budget summary describes the energy tax extending at least through 2050. At the 2012 through 2019 average annual rate, families and workers would face through 2050 between \$6.3 trillion and \$9.3 trillion in higher energy taxes.

On the Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, we have had experience with these types of proposals. We, and the full Senate, debated a proposal by Senators Boxer, Lieberman and Warner that the sponsors themselves indicated would generate \$6.7 trillion from consumers. As you may recall, the Senate defeated this proposal, in part because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that by 2050 it would annually cost the average family \$4,377 and raise gasoline prices \$1.40 per gallon. Experts estimated it would kill up to 4 million jobs by 2030. As you can see, a \$4,377 per family total cost or a lost job would greatly outweigh any \$800 per family payroll tax break offered by the administration.

The budget resolution is not the right place for the careful bipartisan dialogue we need to get these issues straight, or to fully account for the legitimate concerns of energy consumers, economists, and industry. While the budget resolution the Senate will debate is not yet available, we will offer an amendment to strip any climate revenue provision it contains. We urge you to be ready to join our efforts to resist the erosion of proper democratic principles.

Sincerely,

SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE,
Ranking Member.
JOHN BARRASSO,
U.S. Senator.
DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senator.
MIKE CRAPO,
U.S. Senator.
CHRISTOPHER S. BOND,
U.S. Senator.
GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,
U.S. Senator.
ARLEN SPECTER,
U.S. Senator.
LAMAR ALEXANDER,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Senator BYRD, our senior Member of this body, wrote the budget legislation that created the reconciliation process. He has told us that. He has reminded us of that. He talked about how he sat in his office for 10 days and did it to get it right. This is what he said:

I was one of the authors of the legislation that created the budget reconciliation process in 1974. I am certain that putting health care reform and climate change legislation on a freight train through Congress is an outrage that must be resisted.

That is Senator ROBERT BYRD, the senior Democrat, the senior Senator who wrote budget reconciliation.

Senator CONRAD, Senator BAUCUS, Senator DORGAN, Senator CARPER, and many others have said basically the same thing: We agree. Don’t use the reconciliation to ram through health care reform.

So let’s take the budget in the next 10 days, let’s debate it, let’s have our

differences of opinion, but then let’s follow the President’s wise beginning on health care and reform it this year in the way he has suggested and the way he campaigned on. And let’s take the energy issue and the climate change issue and let’s look carefully at how we have the right clean energy strategy, which some of us believe is different from just taxes and high prices and more subsidies.

As far as the budget in general, we believe it spends too much, it taxes too much, and it borrows too much. If I could conclude with only one example of how that excessive borrowing will hurt the economy and hurt the country—an example that helps to illustrate why this 10-year budget the President set is a blueprint for a different kind of country, one with less freedom, one with more Government, and one which our children cannot afford—if there were any one example of why that is true, this would be it: It would be the amount of interest on the debt we will be paying in the 10th year of the budget sent by President Obama.

In that year, interest on the debt will be \$806 billion. The amount of spending on defense by the Federal Government in that year is projected to be \$720 billion. So we will be spending more on interest than we do on defense.

Federal spending on education in that year would be \$95 billion. So we would be spending eight times as much on interest as we would on education.

In the 10th year of the budget, \$100 billion is allocated for transportation spending by the Federal Government on things like roads and bridges that need to be fixed—we agree on that, and we would like to have the money to do it. But we will be spending on interest alone eight times what we will be spending on transportation.

When I was Governor of Tennessee, we were a low-tax, low-debt State. The reason we did not have much debt is because for every penny we did not have to pay in interest, we could pay it for a teacher’s salary, we could improve a prenatal health care clinic, we could build a road, we could have a center of excellence at the university. So low debt means more money for the things we really want to have to invest in this country to make it a better place.

The President’s budget is straightforward. Give the President credit. The attempts by Congress to make it gimmicky and less transparent are deplorable. The idea of trying to pass a health care reform proposal that affects 17 percent of the economy and to impose a national sales tax on the entire energy system during a recession is a bad idea.

What we should do is take this 10-year budget, whittle it back to size so it doesn’t spend so much, doesn’t borrow so much and doesn’t tax so much and move ahead with a blueprint that maintains our freedom, that limits our Government, that preserves choices and that our children and grandchildren can afford.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL SERVICE REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1388, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1388) to reauthorize and reform the national service laws.

Pending:

Mikulski amendment No. 687, in the nature of a substitute. Crapo-Corker amendment No. 688 (to amendment No. 687), to increase the borrowing authority of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Johanns amendment No. 693 (to amendment No. 687), to ensure that organizations promoting competitive and non-competitive sporting events involving individuals with disabilities may receive direct and indirect assistance to carry out national service programs.

Baucus-Grassley amendment No. 692 (to amendment No. 687), to establish a Nonprofit Capacity Building Program.

AMENDMENT NO. 691 TO AMENDMENT NO. 687

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I understand that an amendment is pending; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment for purposes of offering an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for herself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. BARRASSO, proposes an amendment numbered 691 to amendment No. 687.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To modify certain provisions relating to Native Americans)

Section 129(d) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (as amended by section 1306) is amended by striking “and to nonprofit organizations seeking to operate a national service program in 2 or more of those States” and inserting “, to nonprofit organizations seeking to operate a national service program in 2 or more of those States, and to Indian tribes”.

Section 193A(b)(23) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (as amended by section 1704(1)) is amended by striking “and collect information on challenges facing Native American communities” and inserting “collect information on challenges facing Native American communities, and designate a Strategic Advisor for Native American Affairs to be responsible for the

execution of those activities under the national service laws".

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, before I speak to the amendment I have sent to the desk on behalf of my colleague, Senator DORGAN, and others, I would like to speak generally to the measure before us, the Serve America Act. I am a strong supporter of volunteer service, including Global Youth Service Day. I am proud and pleased that this reauthorization has been developed and brought to the floor in a bipartisan manner. The work done on this legislation is the product of the best tradition of the Senate HELP Committee and of the Senate itself. I offer my congratulations to those who have worked very hard on this—Senators KENNEDY, MIKULSKI, HATCH, ENZI—and all their very hard-working staff who do a good job.

I also thank some very professional and dedicated people in the State of Alaska for their thorough review of and comments on the various drafts of the legislation. We would send it off to them and get good response back, good feedback. I appreciate that.

They include: Nita Madsen, executive director of Serve Alaska, and her staff; Rachel Morse and all the great people at RURAL CAP who implement AmeriCorps and VISTA programs; Denise Daniello at the Alaska Commission on Aging; Angela Salerno at the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; and many others who were helpful in providing insights from the providers' perspective.

AmeriCorps and the VISTA programs are a vital part of Alaska's communities. I would like to take a few minutes this morning to give some of the examples of their valuable work in the State and to congratulate the volunteers for their service.

For more than 10 years, AmeriCorps volunteers with the Student Conservation Association have served Alaska and the Nation on our public lands in Denali National Park and Preserve, the Kenai Fjords, and Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. Every year over 1 million people visit Alaska to see these natural resources, to hike and camp and fish and explore. The conservation service provided by these students helps protect scenic beauty of our State, including the volcanoes, glaciers, wild rivers, and waterfalls.

My family and I hiked the Chilkoot Trail a couple years ago and ran into a group of AmeriCorps volunteers who were out on the trail building and refurbishing some of the old historic cabins along the way and making the trail safe for its many visitors.

The students also research and monitor fish and wildlife populations as well as watersheds that are essential for the red salmon. This year 80 of SCA's AmeriCorps volunteers will work in Cook Inlet in the watershed there to monitor and support active fish management. In addition to providing natural resource stewardship, visitor services, and environmental education,

their work supports Alaska's key economic engines which are our fisheries and tourism.

In 2008, SCA placed over 236 high school students and college interns in Alaska who provided over 76,000 service hours, valued at over \$1.5 million. In Alaska last year, there were also 64 VISTA volunteers who served with 18 project sponsors. I will give a little snapshot of one of those projects. It was at Juneau-Douglas High School, the CHOICE project. The CHOICE Program, which is Choosing Healthy Options in Cooperative Education, focuses on improving the academic achievement of 100 at-risk students at Juneau-Douglas High School. The VISTA volunteers help the students develop a sense of belonging and ownership within CHOICE, the high school, and the community at large. So VISTA not only involves the CHOICE students in the community; they also involve the community in the education and learning of the students. Our VISTA coordinator, Jennifer Knaggs, recruited 42 community members to provide internships in State and local offices in the agencies and in the local businesses. In conjunction with the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependency, she helped facilitate three Alaska teen institute retreats. She also organized and coordinated the Beyond School Program, in which six community volunteers teach small groups of high school freshmen a hands-on, real life skill, such as Tlingit carving, writing and producing radio public service announcements about healthy choices, creating short video biographies of tribal elders, and visual promotions of healthy choices within the school.

In a small community such as Juneau, retention of internships is no small feat. Students have reported very positive experiences with their internships and their hosts, and the performance we are seeing coming out of these kids is great. They are proud of their accomplishments. The students have become involved in the community, and it is a real win.

The great public servants who run Alaska's national service programs have noted the many positive aspects of this reauthorization for increasing the recruitment and retention of volunteers, focusing on directions Alaska has already begun to move toward, and increasing the accountability for positive outcomes. In their view, there are a few items they look to in the Serve America Act that are especially helpful. The first is the increase in the living allowance and education awards. It has the potential to increase the recruitment and the retention of AmeriCorps members, especially from rural Alaskan communities. Also, it allows senior volunteers to transfer the education award to a child or a grandchild. Again, this will help with recruitment efforts. It increases focus on individuals with a disability, paralleling one of the focus areas of our Alaska State Commission. Increasing

the connection with the Commission on Aging and Intergenerational Programs also meets another one of Alaska's performance measures. So having this provision in the act will assist with moving this partnership forward.

The accountability provisions will strengthen the State service plan. Having a minimum amount for the formula grants for both AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve is very good for the State of Alaska and other States that have equally small populations. The increase for the operation of the State Commission is a positive; even if obtaining the required 1-to-1 match will be challenging for a State such as ours, we believe it is a positive step.

From the perspective of one of Alaska's largest service grantees, they noted the following: The effort to expand and improve opportunities for national and community service should positively benefit Alaska's engagement in the service; the grouping of "corps" for the service programs into Education Corps, Healthy Future Corps, Clean Energy Service Corps, Opportunity Corps or Veterans Corps, coupled with defined performance indicators, will add value to the existing Corporation for Community and National Service framework; linking the value of the education award to the maximum value of the Pell grant will improve the strength and success of AmeriCorps programs in Alaska; increasing the AmeriCorps living allowance from \$16,000 to \$18,000 will especially benefit the programs serving rural Alaskan communities.

Let me speak to the amendment I have called up. This is amendment No. 691, offered on behalf of my colleague, Senator DORGAN. This amendment to the Serve America Act designates a tribal liaison for the Corporation for National and Community Service and keeps Indian tribes as eligible under existing law for nationally competitive grants. The corporation has recognized the need for a tribal liaison position and has designated an individual to reach out to Native American communities. This amendment will make that position permanent. The tribal liaison will work across all programs and support units to increase Native participation in national service and help to develop and enhance programming to address the unique needs of Native American communities.

In addition, we propose to keep Indian tribes as eligible under existing law for nationally competitive grants. Current law allows tribes to compete for funds with States and national nonprofit organizations. This amendment would maintain the eligibility of tribes to compete with States and national nonprofit organizations for national competitive grants. Many of these activities and indicators under the proposed corps in this act are directly applicable to Indian Country, and access to these grants with the assistance of a

tribal liaison is important. We recognize that the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives lags far behind that of the rest of the country, and the provisions of the Education Corps will help address these needs by providing mentors and tutors to Native students. Likewise, the Healthy Futures Corps would help address the lack of access to health care on many of our reservations.

Likewise, the Healthy Futures Corps will help address the lack of access to health care on many of our reservations. American Indians have higher disease rates and lower life expectancy than the general population. Volunteers serving in the Healthy Futures Corps could assist those who live on reservations or in Alaskan communities in obtaining health services.

I encourage my colleagues to look at the amendment and provide support for this important tribal liaison and in retaining tribal eligibility for competitive grants within the Corporation for National and Community Service.

I thank Senators KENNEDY, MIKULSKI, HATCH, and ENZI for their dedication to public service and congratulate them on what I believe is good legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I, personally, congratulate the distinguished Senator from Alaska for her comments. She has a very important amendment to this bill. I assure her we will work that out so we don't have to have a vote on it. If we do have to go to a vote, we will, but the fact is I think we can work that out. It is a very good amendment. Personally, we want to have those funds as part of this bill. We will work it out.

I want to take a few minutes and pay tribute to some of the wonderful national service efforts that have gone on in my home State of Utah. As I have said throughout this debate, Americans are the most generous and energetic people in the world. Indeed, a volunteer spirit is encoded into our country's cultural DNA. Nowhere is this concept better exemplified than in my home State.

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, between 2005 and 2007, an average 792,000 Utahns gave 146.9 million hours of service every year. Using Independent Sector's estimate of the dollar value of a volunteer, the estimated contribution of these efforts is \$2.9 billion annually. Nearly 44 percent of all Utahns do some sort of volunteer service every year, making Utah's volunteerism rate No. 1 in America, more than 4 percent higher than the State ranked second.

Salt Lake City, UT the second-highest volunteerism rate of any major metropolitan area in the country at 37.2 percent. Among midsize cities, Provo, UT has the Nation's highest volunteerism rate at 63.8 percent, with Ogden, UT coming in at No. 4 with a rate of 41 percent. Much of this volun-

teer work is done by members of the Mormon church in food canneries and storehouses as they stockpile food and supplies for those in need, whether they be members of the church or non-members. As with any community, volunteerism in Utah comes in a variety of forms.

In addition to the privately-led projects throughout the State, national service programs have had a profound impact on communities throughout the State of Utah. For example, there is the Utah AmeriCorps Literacy Initiative, which currently manages programs in 66 schools covering the entire State of Utah, including both urban and rural communities. There are 87 AmeriCorps members in the program who recruit and train community volunteers to tutor struggling readers.

Unfortunately, the current budget situation in Utah is similar to those faced by State governments around the country. As a result, Utah schools have been required to cut their budgets 4 percent this year and 5 percent for next year. However, national service participants have been able to step up and fill the void in schools left by the reduction in the State education workforce. Several teachers' aides whose positions have been downsized due to the budget cuts will be qualified to participate in the Literacy Initiative next year and, accordingly, will receive a small living allowance and an educational award which will allow them to get further training, broadening their skills to obtain gainful employment.

Over the past 5 years, this program has helped over 8,000 elementary schoolchildren serve as mentors, helping younger children improve their reading. The average growth in reading for both the mentor and the mentee they are helping has been one full grade level over the course of the 9-week program. In addition, through this initiative, over 2,000 children have received one-on-one tutoring from community volunteers twice a week over the course of a 30-week program. These are children who did not pass the Utah State End of Level tests the previous year. After 1 year of tutoring through the Utah AmeriCorps Literacy Initiative, 62 percent of the students passed that test at a proficient level.

I think this program exemplifies what we are trying to accomplish with this legislation. All of this work, which has improved the education of literally thousands of students and leveraged the efforts of thousands of other students and community volunteers, has been anchored by a small group of only 87 AmeriCorps members. That is pretty phenomenal when you think about it. Why wouldn't we want to expand this approach? It seems to me it is something we ought to be doing everywhere.

I am convinced that, once this bill is passed, we will see more programs such as this spring up over time, not only in Utah but throughout the country. They will be buoyed by the increased direc-

tion, efficiency, and accountability that this legislation will add to the existing national service structure. In the end, more people will be helped, more traditional volunteers will be put to work in their communities, and more of our Nation's problems will be solved.

That is precisely the point of this legislation.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, thus far, we have had what I believe to be a constructive discussion regarding the Serve America Act. We have seen some fine amendments, and Senator MIKULSKI and I are working together to try to accommodate as many Members as possible. I said at the outset that I hope we can avoid a situation where too many changes to this bill would eventually split the bipartisan support the bill has enjoyed. So far, this does not appear to be a problem.

As we continue to debate this important piece of legislation, it is my hope these constructive efforts will continue. This is a good opportunity for us to set aside partisan differences and do some good for the American people. I once again thank Senator MIKULSKI for her efforts here on the floor to see this effort through.

I thank Senator KENNEDY as well. Even though he has not been here, except for the last cloture vote, he certainly has been working it from home, and he has been on the phone regularly. We also have others who have worked on our side very diligently to try to make sure this bill passes, and in the form it is in.

I mentioned yesterday that I believe the Serve America Act should be a bipartisan bill, not because I believe it is either liberal or conservative but because it is both. I think the bill plays to the greatest strengths of those on both sides of the aisle. It marries what is typically thought of as a "liberal" instinct for Government to make proactive efforts to help those in need with the typical "conservative" desire to place more power in the hands of individuals instead of the Government. It is not all that often we are able to work together to find ways to satisfy both of these ideals, but I believe we have done so with this legislation.

For me, the conservative case for this legislation has been obvious from the beginning. Indeed, many of the provisions in the bill have what I consider to be very conservative roots. In 1990, William F. Buckley, Jr., one of the fathers of modern conservatism, who had served in World War II, published a wonderful book called: "Gratitude: Reflections on What We Owe to Our Country." He became a staunch advocate of

national service, which he believed, "like gravity, is something we could accustom ourselves to, and grow to love."

Buckley believed we owe a debt of gratitude to our country and offered creative ideas for a plan for universal voluntary national service for men and women 18 years and older. While the Serve America Act is not so ambitious as to contemplate that national and community service will become universal, it does provide more Americans opportunities to serve, in the belief that our democracy and the values of our free society take constant vigilance to preserve their vitality and health. It is citizens, acting at the local level, who should play the prominent role, not Government.

For the past several years, I have supported efforts to reposition our Government's support of national and community service from the perception of paying Federal "volunteers" to a more effective model where Government provides a small amount of infrastructure and support to community-based groups that are recruiting, training, and deploying traditional volunteers. That model has worked. The number of traditional, nonsubsidized volunteers who are leveraged into service by existing national service programs dwarfs the number of participants receiving Government assistance—by a ratio of nearly 30 to 1. We have heard that statistic quoted many times during this debate, but I believe it bears repeating.

This model is based on our faith in civil society—not distant Government agencies—and a focus on the efforts of the traditional volunteer. We know so many Americans show up to volunteer—to help with a cause or to serve in the aftermath of a disaster—and are turned away or are not well used. This is a waste of very precious resources. The Serve America Act will help fix that by establishing a volunteer generation fund that will help already successful service programs devote more resources for the recruitment of volunteers, allowing them to expand their efforts.

Help offered by a compassionate neighbor will always be superior to Government-driven approaches designed in Washington. In recognition of this fact, the Serve America Act ensures that the vast majority of service efforts will be generated by local and private organizations responding to community needs.

Young Americans, whose rates of unemployment have soared to more than 21 percent in a tough economy, with college graduates having the highest unemployment rates ever, will be given new opportunities to serve. The good news is that research tells us this is a sound and efficient investment. Not only does it put many unemployed Americans to work at a low cost to Government and meet urgent national needs, those young adults most at risk in our communities gain more by serv-

ing others than they do by being passive recipients of services. During their terms of service, they gain valuable skills that help them secure permanent employment at higher wages. They also outpace their nonnational service peers in remaining committed to volunteer service for the rest of their lives.

These platoons of civil society more often than not consist of faith-based institutions. More Americans perform volunteer service through church-sponsored and faith-based organizations than any other venue. The Serve America Act continues the tradition of enabling volunteers to serve through faith-based institutions in a variety of different ways, including its new Serve America Fellowships and the State competitive and formula grants that may be given to faith-based institutions providing social services. This legislation also introduces new indicators of accountability to ensure that investments generate significant returns. For the Education Corps, for example, we want to know how programs are improving student engagement, attendance, behavior, academic achievement, graduation rates, and college-going rates at high schools with high concentrations of low-income students. Eligible entities for funding through the Education Corps must have a proven record of improving or a promising strategy to improve performance based on these indicators.

The days of simply funding programs that might make us feel better but not generate results are over. Effective programs over time should and will continue to get support, and ineffective programs will ultimately be closed down. These indicators will help us make those decisions.

America utilizes a number of indicators to regularly track the country's economic progress, including unemployment, GDP, housing starts, and more. But our country does very little to measure indicators of our civic health. Even though an active, well-connected, trusting, and engaged citizenry is fundamental to our vibrant communities, a strong democracy is important, and our personal welfare is important as well. So the Serve America Act provides for the collection of data that can give us a snapshot every year of how communities throughout the country are stacking up with respect to rates of volunteering, charitable giving, connections to civic and religious groups, knowledge of American history and government, and more. Policymakers can use this data to strengthen efforts to increase these activities. Indeed, this civic health index will pay dividends through the policy spectrum.

Although some of my colleagues may argue otherwise, the Serve America Act reflects what I believe are conservative values, and because of this I believe many of my Republican colleagues will be on board with this legislation. The bill is founded on a funda-

mental belief in the power of people working at the local level to improve their communities and country, a belief in looking first to community and faith-based institutions to help solve our toughest challenges, a belief in public-private partnerships where the cost is low to the Federal Government and the return on investment very high, and a belief in tough accountability for results and making sure we support only programs that work and end the programs that don't.

But the Serve America Act is also about something deeper that we all value whether we are liberal or conservative, Republican or Democrat. It is about fostering a spirit of patriotism, a love of country, at a time when that patriotism has been fractured somewhat by a tough economy, institutions that fail, individuals whose schemes hurt people, and distrust in government itself to have the answers.

Benjamin Rush, one of our Founding Fathers, wrote a brief text called "On Patriotism" in 1773 that captures my view of the subject and the role that service plays. Here is what Benjamin Rush, one of the Founders of this country, said:

Patriotism is as much a virtue as justice, and is as necessary for the support of societies as natural affection is for the support of families. The love of country is both a moral and a religious duty. It comprehends not only love of our neighbors, but of millions of our fellow citizens, not only of the present, but of future generations.

I often think of our Nation's veterans when I read those words. I think of the men and women serving during wars and campaigns from the American Revolution through Operation Iraqi Freedom who literally had us in mind when they sacrificed their own lives so those in future generations might be free. Those who serve today—whether it is in the military, in government, in national community service, or as traditional volunteers—truly connect themselves to millions of their fellow citizens, not only of today but of the future. Such service is not only the means to our own happiness, it strengthens and makes this country better. It makes better this country that we love so much.

These principles and ideals are the driving force behind this legislation. Every Member of this body, whether they support this bill or not, loves this country and has devoted his or her life to serving it. I believe it is this devotion that we all share—the common belief in something bigger than ourselves—that has led so many to support this legislation. While I am convinced the final result will be pretty lopsided in favor of passing this bill, I am going to keep trying to get it as close to unanimous as I can. Toward that end, I urge all 99 of our Senate colleagues to support the Serve America Act.

I notice the distinguished majority whip is here and would like to speak, so I will reserve my time and speak a little later on some of the other aspects of this bill.

So with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my friend and colleague from Utah, Senator ORRN HATCH—and he is my friend. We have had many political battles in the past, but we have also joined forces in doing some things that I think are important for our Nation. I wish to thank him for his continued support of the DREAM Act. This is a bill which we kind of fought over on initial introduction; we both had the same idea. We are going to continue to work together on that in years to come and, I hope, see it to its successful conclusion. It is the kind of commitment Senator HATCH has made to the ideals of our Nation which he makes again in this Serve America Act.

This act is known on the Senate floor, depending on which side of the aisle you sit, as the Kennedy-Hatch Act or the Hatch-Kennedy Act. It is fitting that Senator HATCH would be teamed up with his old friend and political rival from time to time, Senator TED KENNEDY, as they both came together in a common effort to pass this important legislation.

I spoke earlier this week about the Serve America Act which is now pending before the Senate and what it would mean to our Nation. Let me tell my colleagues a few stories that I think illustrate it.

In my home State of Illinois, each year, 2.7 million volunteers dedicate 302 million hours of service. The estimated economic worth of that contribution and voluntary service is almost \$6 billion a year. More than 66,000 of these volunteers participate in national service programs through 144 different projects and programs. Each of them has a story to tell about a life they have influenced or changed: a mother they have helped feed her family, a child they have helped to learn, or a community that is cleaner and safer because they are working and volunteering to make it that way.

All of these volunteers can also tell about how their time and service improved their lives. Let me mention a few stories.

In Chicago, the City Year Program places young volunteers to work full time in some of Chicago's neediest schools. They serve as tutors and mentors and role models to the kids. A volunteer I talked to recently tutored a young girl named Zariah. She was struggling with a lot of problems in school, with reading and behavior. I won't hold it against her—her behavior problem; I had the same problem, and I ended up in the Senate. Zariah was in jeopardy of failing the fourth grade, so this volunteer showed up and decided to take a personal interest in her.

A few weeks after tutoring Zariah, this volunteer heard a little voice cry out as he walked by the school. It was little Zariah, and she was yelling to this volunteer tutor: I passed fourth grade. I passed fourth grade.

What a reward for that volunteer and what a happy moment for that child.

In Waukegan, IL, four AmeriCorps volunteers helped Habitat for Humanity construct homes and train and recruit volunteers. One of the AmeriCorps members told a story that I think is so heart-warming about driving by a school every morning as an AmeriCorps volunteer, in their notable jackets, and seeing a woman wave and cheer as they came by. She wasn't a homeowner or volunteer herself. She was just a member of the community, and she recognized the AmeriCorps jacket. She knew what the volunteers were doing, and she wanted to say thank you with a wave and a cheer each morning.

Throughout Illinois, the Equal Justice Works Summer Corps Program provides crucial legal assistance to communities. Law students give their time and talents in exchange for a very modest AmeriCorps educational award of \$1,000 for a summer of work, many of them turning down far more lucrative opportunities in the private sector.

In 2008, the Summer Corps Program had 23 members serving in my State, and they served over 1,000 low-income people who couldn't afford a lawyer any other way. One of those corps members was Nichole Churchill of Chicago. She spent a summer serving with the Children's Project of the Legal Assistance Foundation working with parents, foster parents, and adoptive parents. This is what she said about her time there:

It has opened my eyes to the myriad of problems that many of our low-income clients face on a daily basis. This experience has only strengthened my resolve to continue this kind of work and to effectuate meaningful change in their lives.

Those are only a few of many stories told from my State of Illinois.

This week we are considering a bill that will dramatically expand the opportunities for voluntarism and service across America. The Serve America Act will triple the number of national service participants to 250,000 participants within 8 years. Along with this dramatic expansion, it is going to create a new corps within AmeriCorps focused on areas of national need such as education, environment, health care, economic opportunity, and giving a helping hand to our veterans.

We are expanding opportunities to serve for Americans at every stage of life, too. Middle and high school students will be encouraged to participate in service projects during the summer or during the school year. By serving their communities early in life, these students will be put on a path to a lifetime of service.

For working Americans who can't commit to a full-time volunteer job, the bill provides opportunity for them to work part time in their community. Retirees can be given a new opportunity to serve with the existing Senior Corps and through new expansion.

The bill also increases the education award for the first time since the cre-

ation of the national service program. I think that is a perfect complement, that these good, well-meaning Americans would serve their Nation and in return we would help them, give them a helping hand with their education at a time when education is so expensive for so many students. The education award in this program will be raised to the Pell grant level which makes it easier for college students with significant student loan debt to consider national service. The award is transferable so that older volunteers can transfer the education award to their children or grandchildren—a perfect generational legacy.

Each American has the power to make a small difference in the success of a child, the health of the environment, or the lives of their hungry neighbors. All of those small differences repeated over and over again can add up to something truly powerful, truly inspiring. This bill will expand the opportunities for Americans to serve their communities. President Obama has urged us to pass this on a timely basis, and I am going to encourage my colleagues to fight off the amendments which have nothing to do with this bill. Let's get this one done and done right. Let's not get bogged down in a lot of other issues that might be presented. They are all, I am sure, equally meritorious and worth our consideration, but we need to finish this one. Let's get this bill done so that we can expand service and make an even stronger Nation.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am pleased to support the Serve America Act, which expands opportunities for Americans to serve their country at a time of critical need. I thank Senator KENNEDY and Senator HATCH for their willingness to work with my staff to include language that ensures the volunteers funded by this bill can also work on service projects that expand access to affordable housing in our communities. Providing more affordable housing is one of Wisconsin's most pressing needs and language that Senator REED and I worked to insert will help ensure that volunteers can build, improve, and preserve affordable housing throughout the country.

Just as voluntarism plays a crucial role in strengthening our communities and building a stronger America, that same energy, compassion, and knowledge must also be harnessed to help rebuild our image abroad as it has been severely damaged over the past 8 years.

The amendment I am offering today with Senator VOINOVICH encourages

those efforts by strengthening and expanding the Volunteers for Prosperity program authorized in title V of the bill. This program provides a valuable tool to assist international volunteer service, and with my improvements I believe we can make it even more effective.

A recent survey released by the Pew Global Attitudes Project indicates that between 2002 and 2008, opinions of the United States declined steeply in 14 out of the 19 countries polled. And a similar 2007 survey of over 45,000 people in 47 countries found that “[o]verall, the image of American people has declined since 2002,” even among those who used to count us as friends and allies.

The Obama administration has already taken some important steps to rebuild our image abroad, such as the President’s decision to close Guantanamo and redeploy troops from Iraq, and his recent address to the people of Iran. But individual Americans can contribute, too, and we can support those efforts by increasing the opportunities for Americans from all backgrounds and experiences to volunteer abroad.

While the surveys I mentioned showed worsening attitudes toward Americans and the declining popularity of the United States, studies have shown that in places where U.S. citizens have volunteered their time, money, and services, opinions of the United States have improved.

To put it simply, some of our best diplomats are our private citizens who spend time overseas working closely with small communities and spending time with the citizens of other countries. Their volunteer work is enhanced by their ability to share stories and create individual connections. Collectively the two are a force for positive global change and greater cultural understanding.

One example is a story from a constituent, Kathy Anderson from Marathon, Wisconsin, who shared with me her thoughts on the exchange opportunities she and her husband Mike have experienced, including a recent trip to Ukraine to discuss farming methods with folks under the Community Connections program:

We have lots and lots of stories, but the headline may be that people interact with people at a very different level than countries interact with countries. I may not like what your country is doing, but if I get to know you as an individual, I can still build a connection. Programs like these put a face on the country, making it less abstract and impersonal. Once the guests get to know a farmer from Wisconsin, I’m sure they also have a better understanding that our country is more than the image they see presented by the politicians, or the sports figures, or the media folks. It’s real folks with the same kind of dreams, hopes, and wishes for the future that they have. And perhaps we get a bit closer, one relationship at a time.

Our Federal Government should continue to recognize the important role that people-to-people engagement can play in countering negative views of

America around the world and help facilitate such opportunities by promoting both short- and long-term international volunteer options for U.S. citizens. Existing programs such as the Peace Corps, Volunteers for Prosperity, and the exchange programs administered through the Department of State’s Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs already do tremendous work in this area. But even with these existing programs, we need greater, more varied and more flexible citizen diplomacy initiatives. Mr. President, we can and should be doing more.

In 2007, I introduced the Global Service Fellowship bill to offer U.S. citizens the flexibility and support they need to pursue international volunteering opportunities. This bill reduced barriers to volunteering by offering financial assistance and flexibility in the time period Americans could spend abroad—opening the door for more Americans to participate. This bipartisan bill was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last Congress.

Now, in title V of the Serve America Act, we have the opportunity to see a very similar program become a reality. This section authorizes the Volunteers for Prosperity Office created by Executive Order 13317 under President Bush. This program promotes short- and long-term international volunteering opportunities with specific development objectives, and establishes the Volunteers for Prosperity Service Incentive Program or VfPServe program which provides eligible skilled professionals with grants to offset the cost of volunteering abroad. This is a modest program costing only \$10 million per year and yet it will significantly expand the numbers of Americans who can participate.

I support Volunteers for Prosperity and, in fact, my global service fellowship bill would have authorized that program. The amendment I am offering, which is based on my legislation, makes a few changes to the current language in title V. This is a modest amendment but reflects suggested improvements I have received from constituents, experts and organizations active in the field of international voluntarism. As we authorize the Volunteers for Prosperity office, we should make sure the office has the utmost ability to reach as many interested Americans as possible, particularly those who face financial barriers or time constraints.

In the current bill, VfPServe would help offset the cost of international volunteering expenses for prospective volunteers, provided that they match dollar-for-dollar any grant awarded through the program. VfPServe will enable many dedicated volunteers to raise the additional funds needed to pursue international projects—but by requiring the dollar-for-dollar match grants, participants in VfPServe would still be required to cover a substantial amount of their expenses.

Financial limitations are a common obstacle to international volunteering

by Americans, and I have heard from many constituents who are interested in volunteering internationally but are unable to do so due to the cost. My amendment goes an extra step to ensure that even more Americans from a range of backgrounds can volunteer abroad—not just those with the resources or time to pay for half of their expenses.

My amendment complements VfPServe by establishing the VfP Leader Program to award fixed grants that would offset up to 80 percent of the costs of volunteering abroad, including any sponsoring organization fees. In return for this higher Federal contribution, VfP Leaders must commit to sharing their experiences with their communities when they return. By continuing to serve as ambassadors once they return home, VfP leaders will be ensuring that more Americans learn about the benefits of international volunteering, and about people and places beyond our borders. In addition, my amendment would give VfPServe participants the option of raising or providing private funds to meet their matching requirements. I have heard from many organizations that the inability to raise adequate funds has stymied a number of individuals from fully participating in the program. This small tweak will open the door wider to those interested to participate in either VfP program, who may be willing and able to spend some of their own money to do so.

The VIP Leader Program would be administered by the VfP office, along with the VfPServe program in the bill. The USAID Administrator would be in charge of awarding VfP leader grants and would develop the guidelines for selecting recipients, based on the objectives laid out in the underlying bill, which include a commitment to helping reduce world hunger and combating the spread of communicable diseases. My amendment adds a few more objectives: providing disaster response, preparedness and reconstruction, providing general medical and dental care and promoting crosscultural exchange. These are all important priorities, and opportunities for Americans to bolster our global image while providing essential services.

Other than these additions, my amendment does not change the underlying authorization of VfP, nor does it change the total cost of title V. Authorization for title V will remain at \$10 million annually for the fiscal years 2010 through 2014, with half of the money appropriated for grants going to the VIP Leader Program.

I would like to thank Senator VOINOVICH, who cosponsored the Global Services Fellowship Acts of 2007, 2008, and 2009 and who is a cosponsor of this amendment. This amendment is supported by 82 international volunteer organizations such as American Jewish World Service, Cross-Cultural Solutions, and the National Peace Corps Association as well as 91 university

international programs including the University of Maryland's Office of International Programs, its School of Public Policy and its Study Abroad office, and the Fletcher School at Tufts University in Massachusetts. I would like to submit the lists with all the supporting organizations and university international programs in their entirety for the RECORD.

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

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY MEMBERS—MARCH 2009

American University; Boston College—The Center for Corporate Citizenship; Boston University; Boston University—Center for International Health and Development; California Colleges for International Education; California State University, San Marcos—Office of Community Service Learning; Cardinal Stritch University; Catholic University; Central Michigan University Volunteer Center; City College of New York; Chilean Ministry of Education—National Volunteer Center; College of William and Mary—Office of Student Volunteer Services; Columbia University—School of International Public Affairs; Cornell University; Dowling College; Drexel University; Duke University—Center for Engagement & Duke Engage; Duke University—Global Health Institute; Emory University; and Everett Community College—World Languages.

George Mason University—Multicultural Research and Resource Center; George Washington University; Georgetown University—Center for Social Justice; Georgia Institute of Technology—Community Service; Global Citizen Year; Hartwick College; Hillsborough Community College Grants Development; Iowa State University; James Madison College; John Hopkins University; Kennesaw College; Kingsborough Community College/CUNY—Academic Affairs; Lone Star College—Tomball; Lone Star College—Tomball—Academic and Student Development; Lone Star College System—International Programs and Services; Miami Dade College; Missouri State University—International Programs and Affairs; Monroe Community College Foundation; Montgomery College Office of Equity & Diversity; and Moore School of Business.

Mount Wachusett Community College; Mount Wachusett Community College—Community Relations; NC Campus Compact; New York Medical College; New York University—Office of Global Education; North Arkansas College—Institutional Advancement; Norwalk Community College—Academic Affairs; Ohio University; Onondaga Community College—Career and Applied Learning Center; Oregon University System; Palm Beach Community College; Palm Beach Community College—President's Office; Polk Community College—Grants; Ramapo College of New Jersey; Rutgers University; Santa Monica College—Communication; Skagit Valley College—College Advancement; Southwestern Oregon Community College Service—Leanring; Stanford University—Haas Center for Public Service; and State University of New York—New Paltz Center for International Programs.

StonyBrook University; Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs; Tufts, The Fletcher School; University of California, Berkeley—Blum Center for Developing Economies; University of California, San Diego—International Relations and Pacific Studies; Richard J. Daley College; University of Connecticut Center for Continuing Studies, Academic Partnerships and Special Programs; University of Con-

nnecticut Global Training & Development Institute; University of Denver—Graduate School of International Studies; University of the District of Columbia; University of Maryland—Office of International Programs; University of Maryland—School of Public Policy; University of Maryland—Study Abroad Office; University of Michigan—International Center; University of Michigan—Gerald Ford School of Public Policy; University of Minnesota—Learning Abroad Center; University of Missouri, St. Louis—Center for International Studies; University of North Carolina at Charlotte; University of San Francisco; and University of Texas at Tyler—Office of Community Relations.

University of Tulsa; University of Vermont; University of Virginia—Alternative Spring Break; University of Wisconsin-Madison Global Studies & Go Global!; University of Wyoming Center for Volunteer Service, Wyoming Union; Washington University in St. Louis—Center for Social Development; Washington University in St. Louis—Gephardt Institute for Public Service; Western Connecticut State University—International Services; Western Piedmont Community College Humanities/Social Sciences; Western Piedmont Community College Student Development; and White Plains City School.

VOLUNTEERING & SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS—MARCH 2009

ACDI/VOCA; Action Without Borders/Idealist.org; Adventure Aid; American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative; American Jewish World Service; American Refugee Committee; Amigos de las Americas; AngelPoints; Atlas Corps; BeGlobal; Bridges to Community, Inc.; Building Blocks International; Catholic Medical Mission Board; Catholic Network of Volunteer Services; Catholic Relief Services; Child Family Health International; Christian Reformed World Relief Committee; Citizens Development Corps; Cross-Cultural Solutions; and Earthwatch Institute.

Experiential Learning International; Fly for Good (Fly 4 Good); Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children; Foundation for Sustainable Development; Global Citizen Year; Global Citizens Network; Global Medic Force; Global Volunteers—Partners in Development; GlobalGiving Foundation; Globalhood; Globe Aware; Greenforce; Habitat for Humanity International; Hands On Disaster Response; Health Volunteers Overseas; Hope Worldwide; Hudson Institute; Innovations in Civic Participation; InterAction; and International Assoc. for Volunteer Effort (IAVE).

International Medical Corps; International Partnership for Service Learning; International Student Exchange Programs; International Student Volunteers; International Volunteer Programs Association; International Volunteer Ventures LLC (INVOLVE); Karuna International; LanguageCorps; Lifetree Adventures; Manna Project International; Medical Teams International; Mobility International; National Association of Social Workers (NASW); National Peace Corps Association; Nourish International; Operation Crossroads Africa; Partners of the Americas; Partners Worldwide; Encore! Service Corps; and PEPY Ride.

Points of Light Institute; Prevent Human Trafficking; Projects Abroad; ProWorld Service Corps; Service for Peace; SEVA; Student Movement for Real Change; The Advocacy Project; The Volunteer Family; Travel Alive; UN Volunteers; United Planet; United Way of America; US Center for Citizen Diplomacy; Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA); Volunteers for Peace; Volunteers for Prosperity (USAID); Winrock International; World Hope International/Hope

Corps; World Servants; Worldteach; and Youth Service America.

Mr. FEINGOLD. As we debate the Serve America Act and highlight the important role of volunteer service in our communities, we must not overlook the opportunities for volunteers to help restore our image and standing abroad. Wisconsinites have a strong tradition of public service, particularly among young people in my state and it is because of their consistent interest in such opportunities that I offer this amendment today.

International volunteering opportunities are an effective method of addressing critical human needs, building bridges across cultures, and promoting mutual understanding. In turn, this can bolster our national and global security. Though they may be working overseas, Americans who volunteer abroad are truly serving the interests of America.

The VfPServe and VfPLeaders Programs would be a valuable addition to our public diplomacy, to our development and humanitarian efforts overseas. I encourage my colleagues to support the amendment I will offer at a future time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

AMENDMENT NO. 688

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Crapo amendment which incorporates the Dodd-Crapo bill that I have cosponsored. Every Senator in this Chamber has heard from folks in their own communities who have lost jobs, families whose savings are disappearing, businesses that cannot meet payrolls. Unfortunately, until we solve the root of the economic crisis—our credit crisis—there will not be real relief or recovery for these struggling families and businesses.

The bottom line is our financial system is not working. It has become clogged with toxic assets. Some call them legacy assets, but they are toxic as well as old. Until they are removed, fear and uncertainty will continue to dominate the markets.

Earlier this week, Secretary Geithner released his long-awaited details on the administration's plan to solve the credit crisis. While Secretary Geithner did not take all of my advice, I am heartened that the administration has finally developed a plan to tackle the most pressing issue facing our Nation and the largest obstacle to economic recovery.

All Americans need this plan to work. Our Nation cannot afford another lost decade such as Japan faced in the nineties. No one wants to doom the Nation's families and workers to a recession any longer and deeper than the one we have already experienced. But before the Government commits trillions more in tax dollars, I hope Secretary Geithner will recognize that he owes the taxpayers some answers to some very important questions.

Unfortunately, under the previous administration and the current administration, there have been too few answers and too many questions for taxpayers about how economic rescue dollars are being spent. Instead, under both Treasury Secretaries Paulson's and Geithner's watch, billions in taxpayer dollars have been thrown down the rat hole, with no clear plan, no end in sight, and no positive return. So now, this week, the taxpayers need to hear how the administration's plan will provide accountability, transparency, and oversight of taxpayer funds.

First, Secretary Geithner needs to tell taxpayers how this plan will protect their hard-earned dollars. Taxpayers have the right to question whether they are getting a fair deal since the taxpayers are taking on the vast majority of the risks under the new public-private investment partnership initiative.

Right now, private investors only stand to lose a small amount with their invested capital, with opportunities for great returns. In other words, are we again privatizing profits but socializing losses? Do we run the risk that this ends up being "heads they win, tails taxpayers lose"? This plan is dependent on taxpayers subsidizing and excessive leveraging of private resources to purchase these toxic assets. While it is important to encourage private capital, and I believe that is the best solution, we seem to be using the same formula—but this time risking billions of taxpayer dollars—that got us into the present situation. I am concerned that the administration's plan appears to be too generous to Wall Street investors, some of whom contributed to the crisis.

The second point is, what is the ultimate cost to taxpayers? Right now, the administration projects that its plan will initially require \$100 billion in taxpayer funds to leverage up to \$500 billion in taxpayer dollars. But most estimates show there are about \$2 trillion of toxic assets in the system. I believe the taxpayers deserve to know how much Secretary Geithner's plan will really cost them.

Third, the administration and the Treasury Secretary need to explain how he will prevent the rules of the game from changing again. Since the initial rescue of Bear Stearns last summer, the previous and the current administrations have taken an ad hoc approach that has changed and shifted numerous times. This "adhocracy" has amounted to throwing billions of good taxpayers' dollars into failing banks, treating the symptoms rather than the cause, with no apparent exit strategy. This "adhocracy" has resulted in fear and uncertainty in our markets and has done nothing to hasten the much needed economic recovery. As a matter of fact, one skilled observer, Professor John Taylor, said the lack of certainty has been a great cause in the failure of the markets to respond positively to any of the previous activities.

Is the plan announced this week the one and final approach? Will the administration stick to the plan? And just as important, what about Congress? Will we allow the plan to work or will we come in later and change the rules of the game after they have been set? The administration, and I think we in Congress, must convince Wall Street and Main Street that the rules will not be changed again midgame. What expert after expert has told me, people who are looking at the market, people who want to see the market succeed, what the markets desperately need is certainty in a plan.

Finally, will banks and financial institutions holding toxic assets be willing to participate in the program? Despite what seems to be generous incentives for private investors to purchase the assets, it is not clear whether the banks will be willing to negotiate a fair deal with the Government and the partners. If banks are not willing to participate, then toxic assets will continue to clog the system. If they do not participate, will the administration finally turn to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to resolve these problem banks?

Before closing, I note that we all understand we need to strengthen the ability of our regulators to prevent this kind of systemic failure from occurring in the future, but we need to consider any changes carefully. A critical first step would be our pending amendment which incorporates the Dodd-Crapo bill, S. 541, the Depositor Protection Act, to boost the FDIC's borrowing authority to deal with larger institutions and to prevent further substantial fee increases on good banks.

I heard from smaller, well-performing banks in Missouri that did not participate in the subprime and exotic loans that will bear more costs to cover the failures of the large banks that did. These smaller banks should not have to be a casualty of the mistakes of the larger financial institutions. Will the FDIC use the expanded authority that I hope we will give them to return FDIC premiums to their previous level? We need a diverse banking system. We need a system. There are over 8,000 banks of all sizes in communities and States throughout the Nation. It is my hope that this financial crisis resolution preserves that system instead of allowing it to be dominated by a few "too large to fail" institutions.

What else will the Treasury do? How will the Treasury assure these other banks will be strengthened when they are not in the top 20 on which the Treasury seems to focus?

These are just a few of the critical questions about Secretary Geithner's untested, complicated plan. We, on behalf of taxpayers, deserve answers. Taxpayers deserve to hear solutions that will work. It is more important than anything else in solving the economic crisis that we solve the credit crisis.

Our banking and financial system affects every American's standard of living, our ability to create and maintain jobs, and our ability to compete globally. We must tackle the root of this problem—the toxic assets—and lead us out of the economic crisis and help Americans get back to work.

I, like most Americans, am suffering from bailout fatigue. Rightfully so. Taxpayers are fed up over the waste of hard-earned tax dollars and the plans that have wandered all over the lot in the past. Secretary Geithner now has a tough challenge, and that is to convince the taxpayers that this plan is a smart investment that will solve the root of our economic crisis.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support the Dodd amendment. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Pennsylvania.

NOMINATION OF DAVID S. KRIS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to speak briefly on the nomination of David S. Kris to be Assistant Attorney General in the National Security Division of the Department of Justice.

Let me say preliminarily how nice it is to see the other—I shouldn't say "the other Senator"—the Senator from Pennsylvania presiding today. I compliment Senator CASEY on an outstanding tenure for, let me see, 2 years and almost 3 months. I express my appreciation for his cooperation in working together on so many projects.

May I say further for the RECORD, since it is in black and white and not in Technicolor, I think there is a slight blush on Senator CASEY for the warranted praise.

Now on to the other subject at hand.

David Kris has been nominated for this very important position. He comes to it with excellent credentials. He is a graduate of Haverford College, a college I know very well, being my oldest son, Shanin, graduated there, and the Harvard Law School, an institution I don't know quite so well but one I hear is a very good school, not perhaps up to—well, I won't comment about that. After graduation from law school, Mr. Kris served as clerk to Judge Stephen Trott on the Ninth Circuit; was in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice for 8 years; was Deputy Attorney General for 3 years. He has excellent academic and professional standards.

I ask unanimous consent to have Mr. Kris's resume printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, Mr. Kris has the commendations and recommendations of both Attorneys General for whom he worked—Attorney General Janet Reno and Attorney General John Ashcroft. John Ashcroft, our former colleague in the Senate who sat on the Judiciary Committee, described Mr. Kris's "intelligence, independence,

and wisdom" as "valuable national assets."

After years of public service, Mr. Kris joined Time Warner and even found time to write a legal treatise on national security investigations and prosecutions. He is considered an expert on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and leading authority on national security law.

I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

DAVID S. KRIS, ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION

Birth: 1966, Boston, Massachusetts. Legal Residence: Bethesda, Maryland. Education: B.A., Haverford College, 1988; J.D., Harvard Law School, 1991.

Employment: Clerk, Judge Stephen S. Trott, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 1991–1992. Attorney, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 1992–2000. Associate Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, 2000–2003. Vice President, Time Warner, Inc., 2003–2005. Chief Compliance Officer, Time Warner, Inc., 2005–Present. Senior Vice President and Deputy General Counsel, Time Warner, Inc., 2006–Present. Nonresident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, 2008–Present. Adjunct Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Center, 2008–Present. National Security Adviser, Hillary Clinton for President and Obama for America, 2008. DOJ Agency Review Team Member, President-Elect Transition Team, 2008–2009.

Selected Activities: Award, Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service, 1999, 2002. Award, Assistant Attorney General's Award for Special Initiative, 1998. Awards for Special Achievement (various dates prior to 2000). Member, Edward Bennett Williams Inn of Court, 1995–2007; Massachusetts Bar, 1991–Present; New York State Bar, 2003–Present; Maryland State Bar, 2008–Present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I join with my colleague from Pennsylvania in urging my colleagues to give an overwhelming vote to David Kris. I have had the pleasure of working with him on national security matters in my position as vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee. I believe our national security will be well served by Mr. Kris. I wholeheartedly endorse his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I also wholeheartedly endorse his nomination. He is an extremely talented, experienced intellectual in the law. I expect him to be one of the best we have ever had. I am very proud he is willing to serve in this administration and go through the processes many people are trying to avoid at this particular point.

Let me just say, as the longest serving person on the Senate Intelligence Committee, we need people such as Mr. Kris in Government. I commend the administration in cooperating and appointing him.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DAVID S. KRIS TO BE ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of David S. Kris, of Maryland, to be Assistant Attorney General.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate has confirmed four nominees to fill top leadership positions at the Justice Department officials, and today we take another step forward to put in place Attorney General Holder's leadership team. Today, the Senate turns to the nomination of David Kris to lead the National Security Division.

I thank the Democratic and Republican members of the Judiciary Committee for working with me to expedite this nomination when it was in committee. Senator FEINSTEIN chaired our Judiciary Committee hearing on his nomination on February 25. We were able to report his nomination out of the committee by a voice vote on March 5. The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence worked quickly to consider and report his nomination as well. Finally, the Senate today considers his nomination to this critical national security post.

The Judiciary Committee's renewed oversight efforts in the last 2 years brought into sharper focus what for years had been clear—that during the last 8 years, the Bush administration repeatedly ignored the checks and balances wisely placed on executive power by the Founders. The Bush administration chose to enhance the power of the President and to turn the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice into an apologist for White House orders—from the warrantless wiretapping of Americans to torture.

Attorney General Holder has already taken steps toward restoring the rule of law. With the confirmation of David Kris to lead the National Security Division, we fill another key national security position in the Department.

David Kris is a highly regarded veteran of the Department of Justice. He is former Federal prosecutor who spent 8 years as a career attorney in the criminal division at the Department, handling complex cases in Federal trial and appellate courts, including the Supreme Court. Mr. Kris was then a political appointee under both President Clinton and President Bush, serving as Associate Deputy Attorney General

from 2000–2003, supervising the government's use of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA, representing the Justice Department at the National Security Council and in other interagency settings, briefing and testifying before Congress, and assisting the Attorney General in conducting oversight of the U.S. intelligence community.

Mr. Kris understands the role the Bush administration's excesses have played in undermining the Department of Justice and the rule of law. In 2006, Mr. Kris released a 23-page legal memorandum critical of the legal rationale offered by the Bush administration, and in support of the legality of the National Security Agency's warrantless wiretapping program. Mr. Kris was an early advocate for the creation of the National Security Division he has now been confirmed to lead, leaving a lucrative practice as an in-house counsel for a major corporation to return to government service.

Mr. Kris' nomination has also earned support from both sides of the aisle. Former Bush administration Solicitor General Ted Olson, who worked with Mr. Kris at the Department, describes Mr. Kris as "a very sound lawyer," who "is committed to the defense of the United States and its citizens, and respects the rule of law and civil rights." Former Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson, who asked Mr. Kris to remain in his post during the Bush administration, writes that he asked Mr. Kris to stay after finding that "he had a passion for national security issues but also a deep respect and appreciation for the related civil liberties concerns." Former Bush administration Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and former Attorneys General Janet Reno and John Ashcroft have all written in support of Mr. Kris' nomination.

President Obama has reminded Americans and the world that, "to overcome extremism, we must also be vigilant in upholding the values our troops defend—because there is no force in the world more powerful than the example of America." The President reminded us that "living our values doesn't make us weaker, it makes us safer and it makes us stronger."

David Kris understands the moral and legal obligations we have to protect the fundamental rights of all Americans and to respect the human rights of all. He knows, as do the President and the Attorney General, that we must ensure that the rule of law is restored as the guiding light for the work of the Department of Justice.

I congratulate Mr. Kris and his family on his confirmation today.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the nomination of David S. Kris to be Assistant Attorney General for National Security.

Mr. Kris was nominated by President Obama on February 11, 2009, to fill this important position. Since then, his