

to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, LWCF, Act of 1965 to provide for full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This comes at a time when the purposes of this program are keenly important to communities across the country that are facing escalating development pressures, while striving to maintain their focus on improving the quality of life in their communities.

In my own home State of Vermont, LWCF has led to the conservation of many valued areas—from the Green Mountain National Forest, which stretches over nearly two-thirds of the length of Vermont across a diverse landscape, to our Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge near the Canadian border, to the Appalachian Trail that winds through the State, and to the stunning Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, VT. In recent years, LWCF has also helped to fund the Forest Legacy Program, which has permanently conserved more than 60,000 acres of forestland in Vermont and nearly 2 million acres nationwide. I am concerned, though, with how this new LWCF language has been drafted and worry that it could restrict our ability to allocate funds for the federal purposes, such as the Forest Legacy Program and other land acquisition programs that assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to quality outdoor recreation resources and important natural resources. I hope that I can work with the majority leader and other supporters of these land conservation programs moving forward to ensure that LWCF meets the outdoor conservation and recreation needs of the American people.

These investments not only protect crucial and delicate ecosystems and landscapes that are relied upon by countless communities and by indigenous wildlife; they also offer important recreation opportunities for Vermonters and visitors from other States to enjoy these beautiful places for our campgrounds, hiking trails, skiing, snow shoeing, snowmobiling, and fishing. It made good economic and environmental sense in 1965 and it remains good sense today to reinvest a small fraction of Federal leasing revenues in permanent natural resource protection. A healthier environment and more recreational opportunities will not only promote health and quality of life but also have a positive impact on our economy. More than 500 million people visit national parks and monuments, wildlife refuges, and recreational sites each year, contributing to family paychecks and to local economies.

LWCF is a visionary and bipartisan program. Since its creation in 1964, it has conserved more than 5 million acres of land and water across the country. These are iconic American landscapes like the redwood forests, the Grand Canyon National Park, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the

Great Smoky Mountains, the Denali National Park and Preserve, the Everglades, and our own Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont. This is a program that touches every American. Even those who have not been able to visit a national park or forest likely have enjoyed one of the many urban parks, picnic areas, playgrounds, open trails, or open spaces that LWCF has been the key to providing and protecting—places prized by everyday Americans across the land as places for recreation and so many other uses.

I am proud to have led the bipartisan efforts in the Senate to build support for the fund, whose budget is overseen by the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee. I have sought, with bipartisan support, increased funding for both the Federal and State sides of the program and the Forest Legacy Program, another successful and popular conservation initiative that I was gratified to be able to launch when I chaired the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. Regrettably, securing adequate resources for LWCF has always been difficult, and LWCF has only been fully funded once in its history.

I must also voice some additional concerns and reservations that I have about the LWCF language in this bill regarding the role of the Appropriations Committee. I hope that we can ensure that Congress, through the direction of the Appropriations Committee, will still have control in establishing how the Land and Water Conservation Fund is allocated among the State and Federal purposes and the various agencies within. I ask that the majority leader commit to working with the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee chairman to develop language that guarantees the role of the Congress in appropriating and directing these funds rather than leaving all control in the administration. I trust that we can find a way to fully fund LWCF and maintain the congressional involvement through the appropriations process.

I applaud the majority leader for including this provision in the bill and appreciate both his support and that of the chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator BINGAMAN, for leading this effort to protect America's most treasured landscapes, to strengthen our local economies, and to ensure the future of our natural, cultural, and recreation heritage.

Now I would be remiss if I did not mention another program that has faced the same difficulty receiving its full authorized amount. That would be the Historic Preservation Fund, which also receives funding from the Outer Continental Shelf oil lease revenues but has rarely been appropriated more than half of the authorized level of \$150 million. I hope that I can work with my colleagues to solve this issue for the Historic Preservation Fund, just as we are trying to do for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

This bill is also an important step forward for the Home Star Program, a bipartisan home efficiency effort that Congressman WELCH has helped lead in the House, that will lower consumers' energy and water costs while creating jobs. As Vermont has shown time and again, energy efficiency retrofits work. They not only create quality jobs and save homeowners money on their energy and water bills, but they also reduce our dependence on foreign oil and cut down on harmful carbon emissions.

The Clean Energy Jobs and Oil Company Accountability Act would reduce our dependence on foreign oil by making investments in vehicles that run on electricity and natural gas. The lack of fuel diversity in our transportation sector makes our economy and American consumers particularly vulnerable to increases in oil prices, and I am pleased that this bill invests in other transportation alternatives that will also bring down our carbon emissions.

I am sorely disappointed in Washington's inability so far to overcome the entrenched power of special interests by acting on comprehensive climate change remedies. This bill is not a substitute for that, but it does signifies several constructive steps forward.

I am proud to stand with Majority Leader REID in support of the victims of the greatest environmental disaster on American shores. But the legislative package he has assembled will do more than just bring justice to these victims. It will save consumers and taxpayers money, create jobs throughout the country, and move our country toward a safer, more responsible energy industry. It is a commonsense solution. I hope it will receive bipartisan support.

45TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, tomorrow our Nation celebrates the 45th anniversary of Medicare, a vital program that has provided health care for millions of Americans through the years. During my career in the Senate, I have fought to ensure that our Arkansas seniors and all seniors receive the best health care possible. I have fought to protect Medicare benefits for our Arkansas seniors, so they can receive the care they need, when they need it.

I believe in the promise our government made to working Americans that if we work hard, Medicare will be there to help us in our golden years. Medicare has made a healthy and secure retirement possible for tens of millions of Americans, including my own mother.

More than 500,000 Arkansans are enrolled in Medicare, and I am proud of my work on their behalf. In particular, our Arkansas seniors will see significant new benefits because of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which I played a major role in crafting.

The new health care law will enhance the life and well being of our seniors in

many ways. For example, I fought successfully to reduce the Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage gap known as the doughnut hole, which will save seniors money beginning this year. In addition, the legislation will immediately extend Medicare payment protections for small rural hospitals and other health care providers that play vital roles in their communities.

I am proud that the Senate health care reform law explicitly states that no reductions in guaranteed Medicare benefits will be made, and that any savings generated for the Medicare program will extend Medicare solvency, reduce Medicare premiums and cost-sharing for beneficiaries, improve or expand Medicare guaranteed benefits, and preserve access to Medicare health care providers.

In addition my Medicare Advantage lemon law included in the bill creates a 45-day period—January 1 through February 15—beginning in 2011 during which beneficiaries who enroll in Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plans during the annual enrollment period can disenroll and return to traditional fee-for-service Medicare. This proposal will help protect seniors from losing benefits or the ability to see their doctors if they have discovered they signed up for a Medicare Advantage plan that does not cover their doctors or does not meet their health care needs, a problem we have experienced often in Arkansas.

As we commemorate the 45th anniversary of Medicare, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Arkansas health care community for their dedicated efforts to ensure that their fellow Arkansans receive the best care possible. In particular, I commend our health care professionals for their participation in the Medicare program, providing comfort and care and making a healthy retirement possible for millions of Arkansans since the program's inception 45 years ago.

AFGHANISTAN REPORT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control has been studying the evolving counternarcotics efforts in Afghanistan and has found that the Taliban has morphed into a hybrid—it is one part terrorist organization, one part global drug trafficking cartel.

The Taliban's terrorist operations are increasingly fueled by its substantial narcotics profits, with as much as \$169 million coming from a single heroin trafficker in a 10-month period.

In Afghanistan, the convergence of terrorism and international drug trafficking is strikingly similar to what we have witnessed in Colombia. There, profits from the cocaine trade has kept the Marxist terrorist group known as the FARC going for the past 46 years.

These hybrid organizations are the face of 21st century organized crime.

In just one counternarcotics operation in October 2009, a major labora-

tory in Kandahar province in Afghanistan was raided. Sixteen Taliban were killed.

Roughly 1.8 metric tons of opium and heroin were seized at the lab—along with improvised explosive devices, IEDs, IED bomb-making materials, and Taliban training manuals.

The Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA, took down 25 heroin processing labs in Afghanistan in fiscal year 2009. All of them had ties to the Taliban.

In December 2009, before the House Armed Services Committee Karl W. Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan testified that:

The cultivation of poppy and the trafficking of opium without a doubt has the most debilitating effect of Afghan society, feeding corruption and undermining the legal economy, while generating funds for the insurgency.

Systemic corruption at all levels of the Afghan government remains a problem fueled by the drug trade.

The two largest income-generators in Afghanistan are estimated to be drugs and bribes, accounting for \$2.8 billion and \$2.5 billion per year, respectively, according to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime report: "Corruption in Afghanistan," January 2010.

Together, that is equal to about half of the country's legitimate GDP. This shocking figure clearly identifies the two biggest problems in Afghanistan: drugs and corruption.

Additional resources for the counternarcotics mission are now being developed after it was determined that drug trafficking clearly supports the insurgency.

However, experts agree that it may take many years to get the drug trade in Afghanistan under control.

Meanwhile, as the U.S. military plans to scale back its presence starting in summer 2011, civilian personnel will remain to continue to support Afghans.

So the question comes: Will the civilian counternarcotics forces in Afghanistan have enough personnel and equipment to continue meaningful operations without the U.S. military?

As part of the Drug Caucus review, I asked that we identify which programs and tools work, and which ones don't.

This report makes several recommendations, including: Increasing the capacity of the Afghan counternarcotics forces; continuing U.S. support for alternative livelihood programs and evaluating new program proposals; clarifying U.S. policy on eradication; increasing dedicated assets for air support of counternarcotics missions prior to the U.S. military drawdown; utilizing narcotics investigations as a tool to root out and prosecute corrupt Afghan officials; and suggesting policymakers develop a counternarcotics plan as soon as possible for when the military-to-civilian ratio changes.

Let me highlight one of the report's nine findings and recommendations.

This finding involves narco-terrorism investigations.

In addition to hearing testimony, we have spoken to experts from the Departments of Justice, State, and Defense, nonpartisan think tanks, and intelligence community officials.

All agreed that it is essential to remove the leadership of the Afghan narco-cartels from the deadly mix of drug money and terror.

However, the Afghan judicial system is not capable of prosecuting and incarcerating high-value narcotics kingpins.

The good news is that there is a legal vehicle for U.S. law enforcement to remove these high-value targets.

In March 2006, as part of the Patriot Reauthorization Act, the United States enacted title 21 United States Code section 960a.

Known as the Federal narco-terrorism statute, this law gives DEA the authority to pursue narcotics and terrorism crimes committed anywhere in the world—if a link can be established between a drug offense and a terrorist act or group.

This statute can be applied worldwide. It has been particularly effective in combating major drug violators in Afghanistan.

These are the violators who are providing weapons and other substantial resources to the Taliban for use against American and coalition forces, and against the innocent civilian population of Afghanistan.

DEA currently has two 13-agent units—the Bilateral Investigations Unit and the Terrorism Investigations Unit—which address this type of narco-terrorism.

The Bilateral Investigations Unit primarily pursues cases of drugs being exported to the United States, and has been responsible for successfully investigating and convicting major Mexican and Colombian drug traffickers.

The Terrorism Investigations Unit investigates international criminal organizations that use illicit drug proceeds to promote and finance foreign terrorist organizations and acts of terror, pursuant to title 21 U.S.C. § 960a, narco-terrorism.

Agents with the Terrorism Investigations Unit have produced impressive case results, including: obtaining the first conviction under the new narco-terrorism law, against Khan Mohammed. Captured by DEA and Afghan Counternarcotics Police in Nangarhar Province in October 2006, Khan Mohammed was convicted in May 2008 in U.S. District Court in Washington, DC. He received two life sentences for selling narcotics and intending to use the proceeds to purchase rockets to attack the U.S. military base in Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

Indicting Haji Juma Khan and coordinating his arrest and expulsion from Indonesia on October 23, 2008. He was placed into DEA custody and transported to New York, where he awaits trial. He is one of the world's most significant heroin and opium traffickers, who provided direct support to