

States; they have good moral character; they graduate from high school; and they complete at least 2 years of college or military service in good standing. It is not too much to ask to give these young people a chance.

Two weeks ago, I reintroduced the DREAM Act with 33 of my colleagues. I am going to do everything I can to pass the legislation this year or next year. This is a matter of simple justice. There is not another situation in America where we hold children accountable for the wrongdoing of their parents except in this case. It is just not fair. These children did not have a vote or a voice in coming to America. They were brought here, and they did the right thing once they came.

They went to school. They did well. They got up every morning and pledged allegiance to the only flag they knew. They sang the National Anthem—the only one they knew. They believed they were really Americans, but a rude awakening came when they came to learn they were not. I guess they might have been viewed more as people without a country.

What will the passage of the DREAM Act bring us other than justice? It will bring us some of the most talented people in America who want to make this a better nation. These are young people who really worked hard. Their parents were immigrants to this country and most of the time had to take very difficult jobs and work extra hard so the kids could finish school. Many of these young people turned out to be excellent students—valedictorians of their classes and stars in many other respects. Now some of them just want a chance to serve in our military. That says a lot about them too, that they are willing to risk their lives for America.

Is there any question about their patriotism or their love of this country or they want to finish college so they can use their skills and education to improve their lives and make this a better nation.

We have the support of the Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, for the DREAM Act, GEN Colin Powell—a man I respect very much—Rupert Murdoch, a very conservative Republican businessman supports it, and CEOs of companies such as Microsoft and Pfizer.

Every day I hear from another one of these dreamers. They come up to me sometimes very quietly and sometimes very publicly and tell me their stories. Just the other day a young man came up to me as I was leaving a speech here in Washington, and he said: Senator, I just want to let you know I am finishing law school. I cannot be licensed in America because I am not an American citizen. I will pursue my education until you pass the DREAM Act.

I thought about it. This poor young man deserves a chance to use his education not just to continue it. That gives me more of an incentive to work on this issue.

Let me tell a story tonight in the few minutes I have about two of these

dreamers. This is Juan Gomez. This handsome young man was brought to the United States from Colombia in 1990 at the age of 2. He is an academic all-star at Killian Senior High School in Miami, FL. He earned close to 2 years of college credit with high scores on 13 advanced placement exams. He scored 1410 out of 1600 on the SAT, and he finished in the top 20 percent of his class. His economics teacher nicknamed him “President Gomez” and said he is one of the best students ever to graduate from Killian High School.

In 2007, during his senior year in high school, he was placed in deportation proceedings. What happened next is an amazing story.

Scott Elfenbein was the student body President at Juan’s high school. He was also Juan’s best friend. He thought it was basically unfair that this young man would be rooted out of school and tossed back into a country he never remembered. Scott started a Facebook page devoted to stopping Juan’s deportation. Here is what he wrote on the Facebook page:

We need your help in saving Juan from being sent to Colombia—a country he doesn’t even remember. For those of you who know Juan, he is the smartest and most dedicated kid you ever met. He deserves more than to just be deported. Many of us owe him. I know he helped everyone one way or another in school. It’s the least we can do for him.

Thanks to Scott’s initiative, 2,000 people joined Juan’s Facebook page. Then Juan’s friends came here on Capitol Hill to lobby for him. They persuaded Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Senator Chris Dodd to introduce a bill to stop his deportation. Representative Diaz-Balart is a Republican, but he is also one of the lead sponsors of the DREAM Act in the House. My good friend and former Senator Chris Dodd is, of course, a Democrat. So it is obvious this isn’t a partisan issue. Republicans and Democrats should basically come together and agree that to punish this young man because his parents came here illegally is fundamentally unfair.

After his deportation was stayed, Juan was admitted to Georgetown University on a full scholarship. He is going to graduate from Georgetown in May. And thanks to Congressman Diaz-Balart, he has a temporary work permit and has been offered a job at a top financial services firm in New York City. Can we use a person with his skill? Of course we can. Every year we import thousands of foreigners on H-1B visas. Do you know why? Because we say we need these bright minds in America. Well, if we need bright minds in America, why are we exporting those who were raised here and who can bring their skills and talents to a better life for themselves and our Nation?

Let me introduce another person to you. Her name is Ola Kaso. She was brought to the United States by her mother from Albania in 1998 when she was 5 years old. Ola is a senior in high

school in Warren, MI. She is the valedictorian of her class. She has taken every advanced placement class offered by her school. She has a 4.4 grade point average—a very bright young lady. Ola is on the varsity cross-country and tennis teams, she is treasurer of the student council and treasurer of the National Honor Society at her school. She tutors students who are learning English. Ola was also a member of her homecoming court. This is a great picture of her. Here she is at her high school at homecoming.

She sent me a letter. She has been accepted into the honors program at the University of Michigan, where she will be a pre-med student. Here is what her letter said:

I aspire to ultimately becoming a surgical oncologist, but more importantly, I intend to work for patients who cannot afford the astronomical fees accompanying lifesaving surgeries, patients that are denied the medical treatment they deserve. My goal is not to increase my bank account; my goal is to decrease preventable deaths. I wish to remain in this country to make a difference.

Do we need her? You bet we do.

Two months ago, Ola was placed in deportation proceedings. Just like Juan Gomez and many other DREAM Act students, Ola’s friends decided to rally behind her. Senator LEVIN, a co-sponsor of the DREAM Act, asked the Department of Homeland Security to reconsider her case. This week, the Department granted a stay of deportation to give her a chance to continue her education. That was the right thing to do. It makes no sense to send someone like Ola, who has so much to contribute to America, to a country she barely remembers.

I introduced the DREAM Act in 2001. Since then, I have met so many of these young immigrant students who are qualified for the DREAM Act. Like Juan Gomez and Ola Kaso, they are Americans in their hearts. They are willing to serve our country and to die for it if we would only give them a chance. Simple justice and fairness requires it.

I ask my colleagues to support the DREAM Act. It is the right thing to do. It will make America a stronger and better nation. One thing I am sure of is that if we give these young dreamers a chance, they won’t let us down.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

#### HUBERT HUMPHREY CENTENNIAL

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I would first like to thank the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, for allowing me to take a few minutes to speak about something very important in my State—the fact that tomorrow would be Hubert Humphrey’s 100th birthday.

Hubert Humphrey was our “Happy Warrior” in Minnesota. He was the son of a smalltown South Dakota drugstore owner who lifted himself up through hard work and determination to become the mayor of Minneapolis, a U.S.

Senator representing Minnesota, and the 38th Vice President of the United States of America.

I actually have Hubert Humphrey's desk—something I requested when I got to the Senate. It somehow got in a different category, and for the first 2 years I had the desk of the former Senator from New Hampshire, Gordon Humphrey. But then, lo and behold, with the start of this last Congress, I did get Hubert Humphrey's desk.

I was a senior in high school when Hubert Humphrey passed away, and I can still remember standing in line for his funeral in St. Paul. It was January, and it was one of those days where it was below zero—freezing. Yet there we were, standing outside the State capitol, all of us in our puffy winter jackets, 40,000 people waiting to pay our respects. That is how much Hubert Humphrey was loved in our State, loved enough for people to stand outside for hours in the dead cold of a Minnesota winter.

I can honestly say that Humphrey had an enormous impact on my own views of public service. You can go down the list of landmark Federal legislation in the past 60 years, and his fingerprints are all over them—civil rights, Medicare, nuclear arms control, the Peace Corps, the list goes on and on. Hubert Humphrey's impact continues to be felt in our State.

Humphrey was a compassionate man, but he was no pushover. He never backed down from a fight worth fighting. When he was asked to speak at the Democratic National Convention in 1948, he dove headfirst into one of the most controversial topics at the time—racial inequality. It was a gutsy move, especially considering how divisive civil rights issues were for the Democratic Party. And let's not forget that as a 37-year-old mayor of Minneapolis—and the Presiding Officer can relate to this as a former mayor himself—Humphrey's political career was just getting off the ground. He had a lot to lose. But he was convinced that segregation and Jim Crow were hurting our country, and he was determined to challenge the status quo on the national stage even if it meant risking his political career. That was Hubert Humphrey.

I think the last, most important thing to point out about Hubert Humphrey is that he was above all things an optimist. To this day, the Senate, according to our colleagues, has never seen anyone quite like him—bursting with energy, idealism and hopefulness, a happy warrior.

I have a picture of the "Happy Warrior" hanging in my front office, and it hangs there in a visible place for a good reason. It is because I am convinced that now more than ever our Nation needs a good dose of the hope and optimism that defined Hubert Humphrey's life.

The truth is, we have to go back decades to find a time when we were confronted with so many challenges—two

difficult wars, a crushing debt load, and our quest to end our dependence on foreign oil and develop our own home-grown energy. The way we choose to address these challenges will determine the course of our Nation for decades to come. History will tell us whether we are right or wrong, timid or courageous.

I believe we must choose courage, but not only that, we must also choose optimism. We must take a page from Hubert Humphrey's book and strive for that resilience he displayed in public life. I think about the inscription on his gravestone at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis. It is a quote from Humphrey himself:

I have enjoyed my life, its disappointments outweighed by its pleasures. I have loved my country in a way that some people consider sentimental and out of style. I still do. And I remain an optimist with joy, without apology, about this country and about the American experiment in democracy.

These are words that resonate today, words that remind us of the amazing life and legacy of a man who did so much for the causes of justice, democracy, and accountability. America is a better place for his leadership, and that is why we honor him today.

Mr. President, I again thank my colleague from Oklahoma for allowing me to put in these good words for Senator Humphrey.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

#### THE BUDGET

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I wish to spend a few minutes this evening talking about where we are as a nation.

I have to say I am discouraged at the work of the Senate. If we look around and take in the whole picture here, there is nobody here, essentially, and they are not going to be here for 9 or 10 more days. The question I put forward is, If your own personal household was in trouble, financially or otherwise; if you knew you weren't going to be able to pay the bills; if you knew your credit cards were maxed out, would you just sit on the couch and do nothing or would you work to protect your family? Would you go out and do whatever you could? Would you take advantage of every opportunity to secure the future for your family?

Well, we have big problems in our country, and it doesn't matter how we got here. The fact is, we are borrowing \$4.3 billion a day. The interest on our debt is \$2.8 billion a day. We are at a point where if we don't start making the very difficult decisions for our country despite our fear of the political consequences, we will be like the person who, when his family was in trouble, didn't try to solve the problem.

Mr. President, we don't have a budget. Yesterday we had political votes on budgets, but it was a game. For the last 2-plus years, no budget has come through the Senate. There is a reason

for that, and the American people need to know it is not because of our great budget chairman, whose name is Senator KENT CONRAD. It is not his fault there is not a budget. It is because of the leadership in the Senate. The leadership does not want the votes that come along with a budget. You see, the political thinking is, we don't want any of our members to have to be recorded on things that might affect the next election. So to hell with the country. What is more important is the next election.

What is happening in the Senate is a complete meltdown of the very purpose the Senate was created. The fact is, we had votes on four separate budgets, and let me tell you, what is most astounding is that nobody voted for President Obama's budget. The President of the United States submits a budget to the Congress, and nobody in the Senate agrees to vote for it. How disconnected could that budget be from the realities of what our country's needs are if even the people of his own party won't vote for it? I was inclined to vote for it just so we could have a debate on his budget. But the fact is, we didn't have a debate on any budget.

So as we sit here, we are borrowing \$4.3 billion a day and running a \$1.6 trillion deficit and mortgaging the very future of our children. The very reason we work so hard and the reason we live is to nurture and support those who come after us, and to ignore that responsibility is absolutely uncalled for. Congress deserves every recognition from the American people for being a farce. You can't have the kinds of problems we have in front of us and not attempt to address them.

I want to spend a minute talking to every Medicare patient in the country. I have practiced medicine for 25 years. I have cared for thousands of Medicare patients. I understand, at 63 years of age, with three pretty significant disease processes going on in my own body, about worrying about one's health. I worry about the security around that health. It is important enough to me to really take the medicines and to follow the diet my doctor is offering me now that I am 63. I probably wouldn't have paid attention 20 years ago, but today I am doing that.

The health care that is available to me is important to me, as I know it is to every Medicare recipient out there. But the facts are the following: Politicians want to use Medicare as a tactic to scare people into not doing what we as a nation are going to ultimately do anyway. We will have to fix Medicare. And we can fix it in a way that assures every senior who absolutely needs the help of Medicare and is dependent on Medicare will have that health care. Anybody who says something other than that either cares a whole lot more about themselves and their political career or they are absolutely dishonest, because it is absolutely impossible for us to raise the money to continue to run Medicare the way it is