

that passed with bipartisan support in the Senate in June.

The livestock disaster provisions originally enacted in the 2008 Farm bill expired in 2011, leaving producers without disaster assistance for the current crop year. The Senate bill strengthens these programs and makes them retroactive to address the current drought of 2012.

As of July 17, approximately 73 percent of cattle producing areas were affected by moderate or more intense drought.

As I mentioned earlier, the Delmarva peninsula, where a fair amount of the corn is raised for feed for Delmarva poultry, is in a state of drought, as are the regions of the country where the rest of the corn Delmarva poultry uses is shipped in from.

Livestock disaster programs are critical as farmers and ranchers experience losses in livestock and grazing land due to extreme heat, drought, and fire. The 2012 Farm Bill provides permanent funding and authority for the Livestock Disaster Programs.

Beyond helping livestock and poultry growers, the 2012 Farm Bill also provides much needed assistance to fruit and vegetable growers, too, by expanding crop insurance coverage to these farmers. The bill also allows the Risk Management Agency to conduct research and development on new crop insurance products to expand access to index-based weather insurance products for fruit and vegetable growers.

The House appears poised to just kick the can for a year. The House is likely to consider a measure to merely extend the 2008 Farm Bill for a year, while also offering some drought assistance—paid for from cuts to conservation programs.

This is a plan that the American Farm Bureau opposes, and demonstrates both the dysfunction of the House—in that they won't simply do what's easiest and best for farmers by taking up and passing the Senate bill—while also ignoring how vital farm conservation is to preventing agricultural disasters.

The Senate Farm Bill preserves USDA conservation programs. The Natural Resource Conservation Service, formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service, was born out of the tragedy of the Dust Bowl.

The disastrous droughts of the 1930s taught us the lesson that we need to do more to protect water and soil resources so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

The 2012 Senate Farm bill conservation programs are critical for keeping America's farmers and ranchers doing what they do best—growing and producing a safe and stable food supply. Crops need healthy soil and plentiful water to grow, and natural disasters like drought have a long-term impact on soil and water quality.

The Farm bill's conservation title provides farmers and ranchers access to the tools they need to conserve and

keep our Nation's natural resources as resilient as possible, even in the face of drought and other natural disasters.

For the good of American agriculture and the American consumer, I urge the House leadership to take advantage of this last opportunity before the August recess to do what is right and pass the Senate Farm bill. My hope is that House leadership will realize that it behooves us, when we go home to our districts during the summer recess and attend State and county fairs, to be able to tell our farming communities that we sent a Farm bill to the President with meaningful reforms and essential disaster relief to help them through these difficult times.

Personally, I want to be able to tell my poultry growers that Washington hears their plight. That is why, in addition to urging House passage of the Senate Farm bill, I would also like to see further relief for poultry growers in the form of improved access to corn feed.

For decades, America's corn growers were outproducing demand for corn from food producers. While consumers may have benefitted from relatively low corn prices, American corn and grain growers were hurting badly.

Since 2007, the tides have been turning significantly. National demand for corn is at an all-time high and corn is likely to reach \$9 a bushel in the near future. A growing and hungry Nation, combined with new demands for corn that are the result of technological innovations, have created new uses for corn in the form of ethanol as both a motor fuel additive and in plastics. These new uses, combined with expanded traditional uses, have fueled the upward spike in corn prices.

The effects of the 2012 drought are obviously a catastrophe that we cannot legislate away. However, there are actions that the USDA and EPA could take to help improve market access to the corn stocks food producers need to keep feeding America.

Senators HAGAN, CHAMBLISS, PRYOR, BOOZMAN, and I have authored a letter to the EPA administrator calling for the waiver of the Renewable Fuel Standard's conventional ethanol production mandate for this year. Doing so would allow food producers to compete fairly with ethanol producers for corn.

While ethanol production is down, due to high corn prices ethanol producers are sitting on roughly 2.5 billion production credits, known as RINs (Renewable Identification Numbers), that they could cash in and further reduce the perceived demand for corn and increase the supply available to food producers.

I understand the important role domestic ethanol production will play in helping our Nation achieve greater energy security. However, the growth of our domestic biofuels industry must not come at the expense of our domestic food supply. We cannot sacrifice U.S. food security for energy security.

That is why I do not support the use of food based feedstocks like sugar and corn to be commercially produced into ethanol.

I believe the future of biofuels must be in the development and production of cellulosic and advanced biofuels that are not derived from feedstocks that are part of essential food sources.

Because of corn's many uses, it has become a commodity that is in high demand. Assuring our domestic food producers' access to this valuable and increasingly scarce crop is so important to controlling the cost of food in America and maintaining the economic viability of our U.S. food companies.

I urge my colleagues to join Senators HAGAN, BOOZMAN, PRYOR, CHAMBLISS and I in calling on EPA to waive the RFS corn ethanol production mandate and call on the House to pass the Senate's Farm bill.

BRUMIDI GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remarks I deliver on July 11 at the Brumidi Gold Medal Ceremony be printed in the RECORD.

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

STATEMENT ON S. 254

A BILL TO AWARD POSTHUMOUSLY A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO CONSTANTINO BRUMIDI CONSTANTINO BRUMIDI GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY, RAYBURN ROOM, DELIVERED JULY 11, 2012—11 AM

Mr. Speaker, Leaders, Mr. Ambassador, fellow Italians—and friends of Italy. This is a process that started about five years ago, and it's the first one that one hundred Senators ever sponsored. It's taken 5 years but for Constantino Brumidi, there was no greater honor than being called an American citizen. It was a title he sought and then signed with pride on the best of his work.

For my own family and for many of you, it wasn't long after Constantino Brumidi left for America, that my own ancestors heard the call for freedom and came here as well. Just like Constantino Brumidi they left the beauty of Italy—its mountains and its sunny shores—to come and be a part of the great adventure called the United States.

And I swear that if you walk through these halls late at night you can almost hear the whispers of the past and the hushed echoes of the voices of our Founding Fathers, past Senators and Representatives as they debated and discussed the issues of the day. And perhaps Constantino, as he talks about the art.

The history books tell us that Constantino Brumidi was born in Rome of Italian and Greek heritage, and he had a great talent for painting that revealed itself at an early age. After he came to the United States and one day, after completing a commission, he stopped in Washington, DC, to visit the Capitol on his way home, and looking at its tall, blank walls and empty corridors, he must have felt the excitement and inspiration only an artist facing an empty canvas can know. On that day he began what was more than an assignment for him—it was a labor of love—as he brought to life the great moments in American history for all of us to see on the walls and ceilings. His efforts were destined to earn him the title of "America's Michelangelo."

Liberty is the philosophy that guided Constantino Brumidi's hand as it fired his imagination and inspired his creations in our nation's Capital. Imagine what he would think if he could walk these corridors today. He would see that his beautiful work has stood the test of time, especially after being cleaned up after the accumulated lamp smoke. He would know of the appreciation and admiration of countless visitors from our shores and around the world. He would see that his art continues to thrill the millions who flock here every year. I believe he would be both proud and humbled to be the center of such attention.

Throughout the Capitol, each careful stroke of Brumidi's brush will continue to remind us that we are blessed and truly fortunate to live in this land of promise and opportunity.

Now it is only fitting that the Congress of the United States of America should bestow on Constantino Brumidi the nation's highest civilian honor—the Congressional Gold Medal—which incidentally is to be permanently displayed in the Capitol. It will be the only one displayed in the Capitol, and will give people an opportunity to see what a Congressional Gold medal looks like.

And now I would like to introduce my colleague and fellow Italian-American, Senator Pat Leahy of Vermont, who served since 1974, and if you check his left lapel, he is wearing one of the highest awards that Italy can give to a son of Italy. He was one of the original sponsors on my Senate Constantino Brumidi bill and helped me gather every single signature to support this bill. Senator LEAHY is the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and is a senior member of both the Agriculture and Appropriations Committee. I give you my fellow Italian, Senator Pat Leahy.

CPSIA ANNIVERSARY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, few states appreciate the importance of outdoor recreation the way we do in Minnesota—whether it is cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, hiking or off-roading, these activities are more than just hobbies for us—they are a way of life and they are woven into the fabric of our economy. That is why today I rise to commemorate the 1-year anniversary of the passage of the lead standard exemptions for youth all-terrain vehicles.

Minnesota is home to many strong recreational product manufacturers that provide jobs and have helped move our economy forward during these difficult times. Our economy doesn't hinge on churning money around Wall Street, it hinges on building things and the motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle industry is a shining example of that. This industry is not just about recreation—it is about jobs, it is about manufacturing, and it is about preserving a key part of our culture and economy.

I supported the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act when it passed in 2008 because it addressed serious safety concerns about lead in children's toys. But when we have legislation as detailed and sweeping as the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, certain adjustments and clarifications sometimes need to be made, as we saw with the lead limits for youth all-terrain vehicles. Simply

put, children's off-road vehicles were never supposed to be subject to requirements in the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act.

The law was designed to protect our kids, but by banning youth-sized all-terrain vehicles children were put at risk because they started riding oversized adult vehicles that don't take the same considerations as a model meant to accommodate children. Once it became clear that the Consumer Product Safety Commission was going to hold youth all-terrain vehicles to the new lead requirements, I began working to find a solution to the problem.

That is why I pushed to pass the amendments to the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act last year to exempt youth all-terrain vehicles from lead standards. August 12th will be the 1-year anniversary of enactment of these amendments to Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act into law.

I would like to commemorate the 1-year anniversary of passage of these amendments to Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act that help protect our children and ensure they enjoy the outdoors for many years to come.

TRIBUTE TO TOM SULLIVAN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the exceptional leadership and dedication of my deputy chief of staff Tom Sullivan, who has been with me since my first days in the Senate and will soon be leaving to accept a senior adviser role at the U.S. State Department.

To say that Tom will be missed would be an understatement. Over the last 6 years, he has distinguished himself as an invaluable member of my staff, rising through the ranks and filling many key roles along the way. He started out as a legislative assistant, but it wasn't long before he was serving as my deputy legislative director and, eventually, my deputy chief of staff.

In many ways you could call Tom the nerve center of my office—the utility player who can step in and perform virtually any task that is asked of him, regardless of whether it is press strategy or scheduling or legislative analysis. No policy was ever too complex for him, no assignment too daunting, no challenge too thorny.

Tom's versatility is especially apparent in his knowledge of policy, which spans the full spectrum of State and Federal issues. He came to my office with a background in foreign relations but quickly became an expert in everything from energy to technology to health care, mastering and remembering even the most minute of details without losing sight of the forest for the trees. That is a rare talent, and Tom has it in spades.

Mr. President, as you know, Senate offices often become like their own little family units. In the last 6 years, Tom Sullivan has become an esteemed member of the Klobuchar family, and

he will be sorely missed—not just for his skill and expertise but for his composure, kindness, and unflappable good nature. We wish Tom well in his new position at the State Department and know that we can expect to see great things from him as he begins a new and exciting journey in public service.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the importance of passing the Violence Against Women Act, and reauthorizing this critical funding for survivors of domestic violence. We have heard about the protections the Senate version offers that the House does not, to women on college campuses, to women on tribal lands, to LGBT victims, and to immigrants. It is important to remember all of the other programs supported by this important legislation.

On this day, when preventive health care finally becomes available to 47 million women, including free domestic violence screening and counseling, it is worth taking a look at how domestic violence impacts healthcare for women and families in this country.

According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control, the average cost of health care services for women is more than twice the average cost for men, and this is largely due to the costs and impact of domestic violence.

The CDC estimates the direct health care costs associated with domestic violence to be around \$4.1 billion every year. And we know this is a conservative estimate, because many victims never come forward.

But we have a proven tool in this fight, and that is the protections in the Violence Against Women Act. Since the bill first went into effect in 1994, reporting has increased by 51 percent according to the Department of Justice. The FBI reports that the number of women killed by an intimate partner has decreased by 34 percent. And VAWA saved \$12.6 billion in its first 7 years alone.

It is not just that women are safer because of VAWA, our economy also improves when domestic violence is successfully prevented, because fewer women are going to the emergency rooms, missing work, or deciding they cannot care for their children.

I have had a chance to visit several crisis centers in New Hampshire who benefit directly from VAWA funding. Most recently, I visited the Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention in Keene, and had a chance to speak with caseworkers and survivors. I spoke with two women who told me that when they decided it was time to leave their abuser, they had no place else to go.

And I asked them, "What would have happened if this center wasn't here?"

"My husband would have killed me," replied one woman.

This is why we need to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. This