

hand in every major aviation safety bill over the past decade. Congressman COSTELLO's legacy will be safer skies and runways for America.

No one in Congress has a better understanding of or a stronger commitment to improving America's transportation infrastructure.

JERRY COSTELLO has helped write three national Transportation bills. We served together on the conference committee for the most recent Transportation Act, which passed earlier this year. It was a bipartisan victory that will create or save 3 million good jobs, strengthen America's infrastructure and provide the certainty that transportation planners and builders need.

Building modern, regional transportation networks to support economic development and improve people's quality of life has always been one of his top priorities.

JERRY COSTELLO has been involved in every major transportation project in the St. Louis-Metro East region for the last 30 years, from construction of the Clark Bridge to the New Mississippi River Bridge connecting St. Louis and East St. Louis.

He helped bring light rail to the Metro East region and he helped lead the effort to create a high-speed rail corridor connecting St. Louis and Chicago. He helped pass the strongest airline safety law in 50 years. His leadership was critical in securing the funding to strengthen the flood control levees and dams along the Mississippi River and in the adoption of new flood insurance maps that are fair and equitable.

The first vote JERRY COSTELLO cast in Congress was a "yes" vote to help bring a South Africa trade sanctions bill to the floor for debate. He has remained a committed, consistent champion of basic human rights and worker rights—including worker safety and the right to bargain collectively.

He has fought for fair trade, for efforts to create good jobs in America, and against rewarding companies for shipping American jobs overseas. He has voted to make college more affordable, and he helped pass the Affordable Care Act. Presidents and Congresses tried for a century to pass comprehensive health care. JERRY COSTELLO bravely cast one of the votes that finally got the job done.

Coal lies below 65 percent of Illinois' surface. It could be a real economic and energy boon to America—if we can find a way to use it safely and cleanly. JERRY COSTELLO has fought for cutting-edge new technologies and public-private partnerships including FutureGen and the new Prairie State Energy Campus that can advance clean coal exploration and bring thousands of good new jobs to Illinois. He has also been a strong supporter of expanding the use of biofuels—a move that would help our environment, boost our energy security and benefit Illinois farmers.

Scott Air Force Base is the largest employer in Illinois south of Spring-

field. When the future of the base hung in the balance during successive rounds of BRAC closings between 1995 and 2005, JERRY COSTELLO led the effort to maintain and expand its missions. Instead of shutting down, Scott Air Force Base actually added 800 new jobs and when then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates visited Scott in 2007 he hailed it as one of America's three most important air bases.

Congressman JOHN SHIMKUS has called JERRY COSTELLO the "patron saint of Scott Air Force Base" and he's right. JERRY's energy and skill did more to save Scott Air Force Base from being closed by the BRAC process than any other factor.

Loretta and I want to thank JERRY's wife, Georgia, their three grown children, Jerry, John and Gina, and their eight grandchildren for sharing so much of their husband, father and grandfather with our State and our Nation all these years.

JERRY has said that he might like to teach government next. He would be good at it. The success of our democracy depends on our ability to solve hard problems by reaching honorable compromises. JERRY COSTELLO could teach that lesson because he has lived it. Whatever his future holds, I wish my old friend the best of luck and I want to thank him again for all he has done for our State and our Nation.

I now ask unanimous consent to enter Senator KIRK's statement honoring Congressman COSTELLO's service to the State of Illinois into the RECORD following my remarks.

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I rise today to give thanks to the dean of Illinois' House of Representatives delegation, Congressman JERRY COSTELLO, who has announced his retirement after more than two decades of service in the Congress. Congressman COSTELLO has been a fixture in the halls of the Capitol long before I took office in 2001, and we will miss his leadership and dedication to the people of the 12th Congressional District.

From his senior position on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, he has been a tireless advocate for our Nation's road, rail, waterway and aviation infrastructure. His work to improve southwestern Illinois' levee system in particular will pay lasting dividends for his district's safety and economic development.

Congressman COSTELLO has been such an effective legislator not just because of his knowledge of the issues, but also due to his ability to work across the aisle. In a time of increasing partisanship in Washington, Congressman COSTELLO has established himself as a bipartisan partner, more interested in delivering for his district than scoring political points. This fact is underscored by his close relationship with our colleague Congressman JOHN SHIMKUS. Together, they have advanced numerous priorities for southern Illinois, including their support for clean, domestic energy production.

But his work on behalf of the men and women of Scott Air Force Base is what I believe will be one of his lasting legacies. Congressman COSTELLO fought to keep Scott open during Base Realignment and Closure Commission process and has been a strong

advocate for the base's core medical, communications, and logistics missions, along with the communities that surround Scott.

I know I speak for our entire delegation when I wish Congressman COSTELLO a happy and well-earned retirement. His leadership will be missed.

2012 PARALYMPIC GAMES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this past Sunday, the closing ceremonies of the 2012 summer Paralympic games were held in London. More than 4,200 athletes seated in the arena were joined by 80,000 cheering spectators to celebrate the culmination of 11 days of athletic achievement with parades, fireworks, and music.

Of the 227 American athletes competing in this year's London games, 20 are members or veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, including three Active Duty servicemembers. This is especially noteworthy given that it was disabled British World War II veterans using sports as rehabilitation who founded what has become today's modern Paralympic games.

Among those representing Team USA in the London Paralympic games were many athletes from Illinois, including a number of students and alumni of the University of Illinois' acclaimed Adapted Varsity Athletics Program.

Evanston native Greta Neimanas arrived at her second Paralympic games as a 7-time national champion, 13-time world championship medalist and ParaPan Am games gold medalist. A longtime patient of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC) and an inspiration to many of RIC's younger patients, she competed in both track and road cycling events in London.

Joe Berenyi left London with three Paralympic medals: a gold, a silver, and a bronze. The cyclist, who was born in Aurora, IL, also set a world record on his way to becoming the Paralympic champion in the men's individual C3 Pursuit. A father of three, Joe returned to Oswego this week where he was surprised by a parade of family and friends in his honor.

Centennial High School graduate Nichole Millage of Champaign won her second silver medal in sitting volleyball as a member of the women's team. Even before winning silver in Beijing, Nichole saw the amputation of her left leg as an opportunity, not a disability.

Born in Chicago, Justin Zook is a three-time Paralympic gold medalist and world recordholder. Justin's victory in the 100-meter backstroke in London was all the more impressive given his disability reclassification on the eve of the games, placing him alongside athletes with a lower level of physical disability than he had competed against previously.

University of Illinois junior Tatyana McFadden, who goes by the nickname "Lady Velocity," won four medals in London: three gold and one bronze. She competed in the 100, 400, 800, and 1,500 meters and the marathon and was only

prevented from medaling in all five by a punctured tire during the marathon. She still came in ninth. As a leading voice advocating for disability rights, her motto is "Sports is my passion, paving access for others is my purpose."

Born and raised in Chicago, Eric Barber has been playing wheelchair basketball for 20 years. He captured his second Paralympic medal this year in London as a member of the bronze-winning U.S. men's wheelchair basketball team. Eric was also a member of the wheelchair basketball team that won bronze in Sydney in 2000.

Joining him on the men's wheelchair basketball team was former University of Illinois point guard Steve Serio, who led the U.S. team with 20 points and recorded four rebounds and eight assists during the team's bronze-medal game against host Great Britain.

Team captain Will Waller was the third Illini on the men's wheelchair basketball team at his fourth Paralympic games.

Jennifer Chew represented the University of Illinois on the women's wheelchair basketball team. When not training herself, she manages the Denver Lady Nuggets basketball team and assistant coaches the Junior Rolling Nuggets basketball team.

Teammate and fellow Illini Sarah Castle was in London at her fourth Paralympic games but only her second as a basketball player. Sarah competed at the 2000 and 2004 Paralympic games as a swimmer—winning silver in Sydney—before a shoulder injury prompted her to pursue wheelchair basketball instead.

Paralympian Adam Bleakney has competed in wheelchair racing events ranging from 100 meters to the marathon in the 2000, 2004, 2008, and now 2012 summer games. Adam completed both his undergraduate and graduate education at the University of Illinois in Champaign, where he now serves as head coach of the wheelchair track team.

Three-time Chicago Marathon winner Josh George claimed bronze in London in the men's 800 meters. After graduating with honors from the University of Illinois, Josh continued to participate in the school's program as a volunteer assistant coach. When not racing, he works at Intelliwheels, a startup that develops innovative wheelchair technologies at the University of Illinois' EnterpriseWorks.

Anjali Forber-Pratt began wheelchair racing when she was just 9 years old. She went on to win a total of four gold, six silver, and two bronze medals at the Junior National Wheelchair Games before claiming two bronze medals at the Paralympic games in Beijing and competing in the 100, 200, and 400 meters in London. Anjali embodies her personal motto, "Dream, Drive, Do" not only as an athlete but also as a student—she holds three degrees from the University of Illinois, including her doctorate.

Illinois freshman Ray Martin dominated the track, sweeping the men's

100, 200, 400, 800 meters. His impressive four gold medals placed him at the top of the medal count for Illini athletes.

Since competing in his first marathon in 2007, Aaron Pike has become one of the top wheelchair racers in America in the event. At the University of Illinois, he led the Illini to four straight finals of the National Intercollegiate Wheelchair Basketball Tournament, and two titles.

Jessica Galli of Savoy has competed in four Paralympic games, where she has won one gold, one bronze, and four silver medals. She holds both a bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of Illinois, where she also competed on the wheelchair track team. She serves as an advocate for disabled athletes through her work on the U.S. Olympic Committee's Athletes' Advisory Council, Wheelchair and Ambulatory Sports USA, and USA Wheelchair Track and Field.

In a momentous year for Brian Siemann, he not only competed in his first Paralympic games, but he will also graduate from the University of Illinois, where he is currently a senior. The 2012 U.S. Paralympic National Champion in the 100 and 200 meters, Brian lives his favorite quote: "Don't stop believing."

Recent University of Illinois graduate Ryan Chalmers competed as a collegiate athlete in both basketball and track, where his multisport talent earned him an athletic scholarship. Ryan chose track over basketball before being selected as a member of Team USA for the 2012 Paralympics.

After an intense summer training in Champaign, Amanda McGrory competed in London in five events, including the 800, 1,500, 5,000 and the marathon. The University of Illinois graduate began as a sprinter but changed her mind after her first marathon, one of the sport's most grueling events.

Although she hadn't ever competed in a marathon until moving to Champaign to attend the University of Illinois just a few years ago, Susannah Scaroni represented the United States in the distance event in London. A member of the Illini track and road racing team, this was her first Paralympics.

It is no coincidence that so many of Illinois' Paralympians are current students or alumni of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Since becoming the first in the Nation to open its doors to those with disabilities in 1949, our State's flagship university has become a world leader in disability sports. The University of Illinois' adaptive sports program draws athletes from across the globe, and has sent students, alumni or coaches to every Paralympics since 1960.

Just as their nondisabled counterparts, the athletic ability and tenacious commitment of each and every one of these athletes serves as an inspiration to their friends, their families, and to Americans across the country. Although each faces some form of

physical limitation, these athletes accept no limits on what they can achieve.

I congratulate all of Team USA's athletes on their success at this year's Paralympic games, and especially those from Illinois. It is an honor to represent them.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I regret having missed the September 12, 2012, vote on the motion to proceed to S. 3457, the Veterans Jobs Corps Act of 2012.

Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of the motion to proceed to the Veterans Jobs Corps Act of 2012. I am a proud supporter of our Nation's veterans, and I believe this bill will provide our veterans with much needed support in order to start new careers.

REAUTHORIZING THE EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, the House of Representatives passed S. 3245, legislation to reauthorize the job-creating EB-5 Regional Center Program for an additional 3 years. In addition to this important program, the legislation also prevents the expiration of three other immigration programs important to Senator CONRAD, Senator HATCH, and Senator GRASSLEY.

I am very pleased the House acted with such strong bipartisan support, and I commend House Judiciary Committee chairman LAMAR SMITH for his quick action on the bill. Once again I thank the Judiciary Committee's ranking member, Senator GRASSLEY, for his partnership on this legislation.

Passage of this legislation in the House today will ensure that the job-creating EB-5 Regional Center Program will continue. Today's action will allow the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to continue to improve and grow the program administratively and will give me and other interested lawmakers, agency officials, and private citizens the time needed to consider and find consensus on lasting statutory improvements to the program so that it may continue as a permanent and vital part of our immigration system. Most importantly, it will allow American entrepreneurs to continue building job-creating development projects around the country.

This program is and will remain a productive part of America's immigration system. Like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, the United States is right to provide the world's citizens the opportunity to immigrate to its shores based upon investment. This program welcomes people from around the world who devote substantial investment capital to American businesses to invigorate American communities. And it does so at no cost to the American taxpayer. Moreover, those who immigrate through this program will purchase