

that their trading partners throughout the Great Lakes system receive maintenance as well. Both Duluth and Two Harbors, MN, ports are considered deep-water ports, so they come into a classification which has tended to get the funding, but, in fact, the entire Great Lakes navigation system is in trouble.

The backlog of sediment due to insufficient dredging is more than 18 million cubic yards and estimated at \$200 million. When ships on the Great Lakes have to “light load”—having to reduce the amount of cargo they carry because channels are not deep enough—our economy suffers.

At first some people might think: What does light loading mean? At the end of 2012, the light loading to navigate the Soo Locks on the St. Mary's River between Lake Superior and Lake Huron meant 10,000 tons of cargo could not be transported on the final voyage. Think of it. These are American goods that our workers produced, and we want them to make more of it. Yet we literally cannot put them on the ships because we have not maintained our ports the way we are supposed to.

The ships that are coming in cannot take the goods. They have to wait until the winter is done. That is what happened this year and has been happening many years.

We are an export economy. America's way forward is to make goods again, invent, and export to the world. Well, that is not going to happen if we cannot get our goods to market. That is why I have been working so closely with Senators from across the Great Lakes to address this backlog. We have been able to make some progress.

I cosponsored an amendment with Senator LEVIN to direct the Secretary of the Army Corps to manage the Great Lakes navigation system as an interconnected system. This would ensure that maintenance and dredging is done throughout the system. There is much more to do. I will continue to work with Senator LEVIN, Senator STABENOW, and other Great Lakes Senators on this bill.

The WRDA bill will go a long way toward increasing the efficiency of the shipping across the Great Lakes system, thereby strengthening the economic standing of our agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and other industries.

The bill also makes critical reforms to our Nation's rivers and waterways. The inland waterway system in this country spans 38 States and handles approximately one-half of the inland waterway freight. Farmers and businesses in my State transport soybeans, corn, and other commodities from Minnesota to other terminals in the South. From there, ships are loaded and the commodities are eventually delivered to trading partners.

Again, if we want to produce and export to the world, we have to have the transportation system that supports it. With many maintenance and construc-

tion projects years overdue, the inland waterways are in dire need of major rehabilitation. The Inland Waterways Trust Fund, which funds these projects, is in steady decline. If we don't make the Inland Waterways Trust Fund sustainable, the industries that are so heavily dependent on the inland waterways will suffer, and this means jobs suffer.

I cosponsored the RIVER Act with Senator CASEY and Senator LANDRIEU to help move forward major construction projects on the inland waterway system. That bill is also supported by Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER. It is a bipartisan bill, and it includes much needed rehabilitation of the locks and dams along the Mississippi River.

This bill includes a number of reforms to the project management process that will ensure that waterway projects are completed on time and minimize cost overruns.

I also, by the way, support the amendment to increase the inland waterways user fee. I am a cosponsor of that amendment. Let me emphasize that the users who pay this fee have asked for it. We have a situation where the industries are willing to pay more so we can improve the locks and dams so they can get their goods to market. That is what is going on here. They understand we are having budget issues, and they are willing to pay a higher fee to pay for the changes.

Industry partners from farmers to shippers to companies, such as cargo companies in my State, strongly support this user fee increase. The increase was, in fact, their idea. They realized that the government wasn't going to fund these and that they were having trouble doing business, and they have agreed to pay for this increased fee. To me, it is the perennial no-brainer that we get this done. They know this modest change would go a long way to making our Nation's rivers and waterways viable for years to come.

While the fee increase will not advance, sadly, in the WRDA bill because it is considered a tax provision, it sends an important message that industry and shippers are at the table and volunteering more to help build the infrastructure our economic future requires. We plan on advancing this part of the river act in another bill—in tax reform or standing on its own—because we think it is so important to be able to fund these improvements to the locks.

Finally, in Minnesota, the fishing and boating industries contribute around \$4 billion to our State's economy each year. Sometimes I like to tease people and ask them how much money do they think we spend on worms in Minnesota every year. Well, it is literally tens of millions of dollars. People come to our State and buy worms and bait and other forms of fishing tackle because of their importance to our economy. In fact, for last week-end's Minnesota fishing opener, sadly,

cold and ice covered many lakes, but people were still out there looking for that empty hole where there wasn't ice so they could put their line into the water.

In Minnesota, we also know how important it is to address invasive species problems, especially when they threaten our lakes and rivers. In our State the problem of Asian carp is literally swimming and jumping into our lives. Anyone who hasn't seen the YouTube video should look at it. You can see Asian carp literally jumping out of the water and hitting fishermen in the head. We are very concerned because we have seen problems with them downriver in southern Minnesota. They are coming our way, and we do not want them to ruin our way of life in Minnesota, nor do we want them to hurt our jobs and our \$4 billion fishing and gaming industry.

I believe we need an “all-of-the-above” solution to this challenge that includes research, carp barriers, as well as authority to close the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock. I am very glad the provision was included to allow for greater coordination between Federal agencies when it comes to Asian carp, and this also includes rivers and not just the Great Lakes.

So we are continuing to work on this bill when it comes to Asian carp and other invasive species, but I think there are some other good provisions in this bill as well.

I wish to commend Senators BOXER and VITTER for their great work to put together this bipartisan legislation. I support its passage, from fighting to protect towns from flooding to critical waterway infrastructure. This legislation is vital to our economy, to our environment, to our cities, and to our towns. I am excited to be a part of it. I hope my colleagues support it and we can get this done.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF KENTUCKY BUS CRASH TRAGEDY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I rise today to commemorate a sad and tragic event in Kentucky history that happened 25 years ago today: on May 14, 1988, a horrific bus crash occurred on I-71 near Carrollton, KY. Twenty-seven people were killed, 24 of them children, and 34 were injured when a drunk driver traveling in the wrong direction hit the bus. It remains the worst drunk-driving crash in American history.

On this day 25 years ago, the Radcliff First Assembly of God Church in Radcliff, KY, organized a youth trip to a nearby amusement park, and drove 170 miles to Cincinnati in the church bus. The bus was full with 67 passengers. After a fun day of roller coasters and ice cream, at 10:55 that night, on the return trip, a drunk driver in a pickup truck traveling north in the southbound lane of I-71 struck the church bus directly head-on.

The impact ruptured the bus's 60-gallon gasoline tank, starting a fire which reached 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit and filled the bus with smoke. With the front door blocked by collision damage, and no emergency exits in the windows or roof, most of the survivors exited through a single emergency exit at the rear of the bus. Of the 40 survivors, only 6 escaped uninjured. Many others suffered severe burns and other injuries. And 27 lives were lost in that crash.

I want to extend my gratitude to the Kentucky State Police, who not only provided rescue efforts at the scene and crash reconstruction analysis afterwards, but were also the lead investigative agency for this tragedy, following the case through to the prosecution phase. Current Kentucky State Police Commissioner Rodney Brewer was one of the investigators who worked on the challenging case.

Remembrances and observances in honor of the victims are happening in Kentucky today, where dozens of families remain grief stricken by the senseless loss of their beloved child. Those who survived the crash are still haunted by what happened. I wish to express my deepest sympathies for the victims' families, the survivors, first responders, and all those who were touched by this tragedy. The people of Kentucky stand with you today and share your sorrow.

If any good can be said to have come from this awful event, it is that it directed national attention on driving safety, the dangers of drunk driving, and safety requirements in buses. Kentucky took the lead in responding to this tragedy by requiring school buses to have more emergency exits than the Federal standard and instituting stricter drunken driving laws.

Madam President, I know my colleagues in the Senate join me today in paying tribute to the 27 people who were killed in this bus crash, to their families who grieve today, to the surviving passengers who must still live with the nightmare of what happened, to their families, to the law enforcement officers and first responders who assisted in rescuing the passengers, and to every Kentuckian whose life was altered by the events of that fateful day.

Even today, 27 people are killed every day in America as a result of drunken driving. In 2011, drunk driving killed 9,878 on America's roads and injured over 300,000. I believe one way we can honor the memories of the victims of this terrible accident is to continue to speak out against the dangers of drunk driving and work towards its elimination. No family should have to endure the suffering that so many Kentucky families did on this day 25 years ago.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the names of the 27 crash victims be included in the RECORD following my remarks. I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the names of the 27 victims of the tragedy of May

14, 1988, were entered into the RECORD as follows:

Jennifer Ann Arnett, Cynthia Anne Atherton, Sandy Brewer, Joshua Conyers, Mary Catheryn Daniels, Julie Ann Earnest, Kashawn Etheredge, Shannon Rae Fair, Dwailla Fischel, Richard Keith Gohn, Lori Kathleen Holzer, Charles "Chuck" Kytta, Anthony Marks.

April Mills, Phillip Lee Morgan, Tina Michelle Mustain, William J. Nichols, Jr., Patricia Susan Nunnallee, John R. Pearman, Emilie S. Thompson, Crystal Erin Uhey, Denise Ellen Voglund, Amy Christine Wheelock, Joy Williams, Kristen Williams, Robin Williams, Chad Anthony Witt.

PLIGHT OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

• Mr. KIRK. Madam President I wish to call attention to the plight of the Bahá'í community and the atrocious human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Today marks the fifth year Fariba Kamalabadi, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naemi, Saeid Rezaie, Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Vahid Tizfahm have been behind bars in Iran due to their faith. These six individuals, along with Mahvash Sabet, imprisoned 2 months earlier, make up the "Yaran-I-Iran," or Friends of Iran, which is the former leadership group of the Bahá'í community of Iran. We must not let up on our efforts to defend the Bahá'í community until the Iranian Government's intensifying persecution comes to an end.

Iran outlawed Bahá'í institutions in 1983, leading to the establishment of an ad hoc leadership group to meet the basic spiritual and social needs of the Bahá'í community of Iran. In August 2010, the Government of Iran sentenced the Yaran to 20-year prison terms on the absurd charges of "spying for Israel, insulting religious sanctities, propaganda against the regime and spreading corruption on earth."

The Bahá'í faith is an independent world religion that began in 19th-century Persia. Its central tenets include unity, peace, and understanding. The Bahá'ís are currently the largest non-Muslim minority in Iran, numbering some 300,000 members, and the Bahá'í faith is one of the world's fastest growing religions with more than 5 million followers worldwide. Since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, the Bahá'ís have been a target of systematic government-sponsored persecution. Roughly 200 Bahá'ís in Iran have been killed by government authorities since 1978 and more than 650 Bahá'ís have been arrested since 2005 alone.

In May 2011, the government conducted raids on the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education, an informal learning system created by the Bahá'í community in response to the exclusion of Bahá'ís from universities. Several educators were arrested and detained. Seven of them—Mahmoud Badavam, Noushin Khadem, Vahid Mahmoudi, Kamran Mortezaie, Farhad Sedghi, Riaz Sobhani, and Ramin Zibaie—were sentenced to 4 and 5-year prison terms,

although Vahid Mahmoudi has since been released. Since October 2011, four more BIHE instructors were imprisoned.

The 2013 U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Report stated that "during the past year, the already poor religious freedom conditions continued to deteriorate, especially for religious minorities, in particular for Bahá'ís." On February 28, 2013, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran reported that there were 110 Bahá'ís currently imprisoned in Iran solely for practicing their faith. Bahá'ís in Iran are restricted from filling public and private jobs, denied business licenses, and excluded from university. In recent years, the state-sponsored media in Iran embarked on a systematic campaign to demonize and incite hatred against Bahá'ís through the use of false and offensive propaganda pieces. An increasing amount of personal property has been confiscated, an increasing number of Bahá'í-owned businesses have been vandalized and attacked, and an increasing number of Bahá'í cemeteries have been desecrated over the past year across the country.

Despite being bound to numerous international treaties, the Iranian Government continues to persecute those who seek to exercise their freedom of expression, thought, conscience, and religion. As Americans, we honor our fundamental rights and freedoms by speaking out for the rights and freedoms of the Bahá'ís and all others who are oppressed in Iran. And it is incumbent on the Senate to reveal the truth about the situation of the Bahá'í community in Iran and take steps to eradicate the violence and injustice.

Illinois is home to the world-renowned Bahá'í Temple, so the plight of Bahá'ís in Iran holds special significance for our citizens. I am proud to have joined with my Illinois colleague, Senator DURBIN, in introducing S. Res. 75, a resolution that condemns the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Bahá'í minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights. Today, we reaffirm our solidarity with the faithful Bahá'ís in Iran who are subject to discrimination, detention, or worse solely for their beliefs and views. It is my hope that S. Res. 75 will bring the persecution of Bahá'ís and the issue of human rights in Iran to the forefront of the international agenda.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, it has been 5 years since the Iranian regime arrested and imprisoned seven members of the Bahá'í community's ad hoc leadership group. Today I rise to mark this sad anniversary and to remind folks of the persecution that religious minorities continue to face in Iran.

The Bahá'í faith was founded in Iran during the 19th century. It is an independent religion not a sect of Islam