

acre ranch that shares 10 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border, which is between Naco, AR, and the San Pedro River, reached 14 breaches with a total of 29 trucks just over the past 12 months. This was taking place in the daylight.

Between the border and the undocumented, our current immigration system does little to ensure that our economy has the talent we need to ensure the United States competes globally. While there are issues on the border with the landholders and all of the problems that presents, and then there are businesses which simply cannot get access to the talent they need, we have a problem that needs to be solved. In addition, the program is oriented toward providing adequate temporary or short-term workers typified by caps that do not work and redtape that makes them all but unusable. The current immigration system is irreparably broken.

This legislation before us takes great strides with border security. I look forward to these provisions being debated and thoroughly vetted throughout this process. I am sure many amendments will be offered. I plan to offer some of them myself to improve this process and to improve the border security elements of the bill.

This legislation has a tough but fair process to bring the undocumented out of the shadows. People who come forward will be required to pay fees and fines.

For those who raise the term amnesty again and again, let me assure them there is no amnesty in this legislation. By definition, amnesty is an unconditional pardon for a breach of law. This is no unconditional pardon. Those who come forward, come out of the shadows, and those who are undocumented will be required, as I said, will be required to pay fines and fees. They will be required to work. They will be required to stay well above the poverty level. When it comes time to renew their status, they will be required to pay any back taxes that have accrued, and again show they have stayed here and maintained the status in a way that would allow them to be renewed.

Before they are able to get a green card, 10 years into this process, there will be many other things required as well. Again, they will need to prove they have paid taxes, and that they have not been a public charge. They will need to learn English. Right now the requirement is the need to learn English to become a citizen. Under this legislation, this requirement has moved up to green card status. Just to get a green card, they will have to be proficient in English.

This legislation also dramatically modernizes our legal immigration system. It ensures U.S. businesses will have access to the best and brightest around the world.

I have been concerned about this issue for years. Years ago I introduced what we called the Staple Act. I heard many times from businesses that we

ought to staple a green card to the diploma of anyone who receives a graduate degree, particularly a Ph.D., in the so-called STEM fields. This legislation accomplishes much of that by simply saying that those who are here and educated in our U.S. universities will be allowed to stay here. Those with a master's degree or Ph.D. in STEM fields will be allowed to stay here and help create jobs.

A big percentage of the jobs created and Fortune 500 companies that are listed are started or created by foreigners—those who were here and received an education here and were allowed to stay or were born by first or second-generation immigrants. We need to make sure those who are going to help us build our economy are allowed to stay, and this legislation does that.

We all know the status quo is unworkable. If someone runs a business in this country, they are not currently given adequate tools to determine whether those who are presenting themselves for work are here legally. This legislation will make sure those tools are there.

I look forward to this process as well as the debate. I think this debate can represent the Senate at its best where we can consider this legislation, consider amendments to make sure the bill is improved, and then send the bill on to the House so it can be considered there as well.

I commend those who have been involved in this process, the so-called Gang of 8, who have worked long and hard. Our staff worked well into the night for weeks on end to make sure we have the legislation before us today, which has been a long, thorough, and good process. As I mentioned before, those who have seen the Congress—the House and Senate—in recent years maybe not reach its full potential, to put it mildly, ought to be heartened by the process on this legislation. I hope we can continue it. I look forward to debating this legislation with my colleagues.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise today to speak about the 2013 farm bill that the Senate just passed. I want to congratulate Chairwoman STABENOW and ranking member COCHRAN for their work and success on this bill. I am proud to support this bill.

Last year, the Senate passed a strong bi-partisan farm bill that I was also happy to support. I greatly appreciate the work that Chairwoman STABENOW and former ranking member ROBERTS put into last year's bill and their willingness to work with me, and my colleagues from Chesapeake Bay region States to keep the conservation programs in the bill strong and effective for Maryland and other Chesapeake Bay States' farmers.

I was pleased to see the strength of the farm bill's conservation programs, namely the Regional Conservation Partnership Program retained, and in some respects improved, in the bill that the Agriculture Committee reported in May. I greatly appreciate that through floor consideration of the bill the conservation programs remained largely unchanged. During last year's consideration of this bill my Chesapeake Bay State colleagues and I, in working with Senators STABENOW and ROBERTS, put a great deal of work into improving the Regional Conservation Partnership Program and I appreciate that all of our work from last year remains intact in this year's Senate farm bill.

I have spoken with my State's soil conservation district managers about the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program that is coming and they are excited and ready to make sure that it works well in Maryland. I look forward to talking with more farmers and other stakeholders about the importance of this new program and will encourage their participation.

Farming in Maryland is extremely challenging. Pressure from developers is compounded by the water quality concerns that persist in the bay and its tributaries. The facts of the matter are that the bay is polluted and it is everyone in the watershed's responsibility to help clean it up.

The Chesapeake Bay is the world's largest most productive estuary. It is a national treasure that has an economic value over \$1 trillion. I firmly believe that it is in the Nation's interest to protect this resource. It is in the interest and purview of the Federal government to coordinate the efforts of the six States and the District of Columbia. Because protecting this national treasure is an initiative in the Federal Government's interest I have made providing farmers financial resources to reduce pollution from their farms from polluting the bay a priority issue of mine in each farm bill I have worked on in the Senate.

Because water quality concerns in the bay watershed are so high, Maryland farms must meet extremely standards of operation to prevent sediment and nutrient loss.

I am proud to have worked with the chairman and ranking member to develop the programs in this bill that maintain the traditions of providing farmers with financial resources to mitigate nutrient and sediment loss from their farms.

Perhaps, what is even more important than the specific financial resources this bill provides farmers to implement conservation activities on their farms is reestablishing the requirement that farms must protect highly erodible lands and wetlands in order to qualify for crop insurance premium assistance. This was an issue that I was proud to help champion last year and that ultimately my Republican friend, the Senior Senator from Georgia, was able to win a floor vote to require any producer seeking crop insurance premium assistance to also meet a basic set of conservation compliance criteria established under the Sodbuster and Swampbuster programs.

The concept behind the conservation compliance programs is simple: The expenditure of Federal taxpayer dollars in support of farming operations cannot support farming practices that result in drainage of wetlands or farming of highly erodible lands. These conservation compliance requirements have long been accepted and applied to broadly to a variety of other longstanding farmer financial safety net programs. In fact, up until the 1996 farm bill these conservation compliance programs also applied to Federal crop insurance premium assistance programs.

These minimum qualifications have been a success in ensuring that Federal taxpayer dollars are not supporting farming practices that lead to costly natural resource degradation. In Maryland, however, these practices are common place not just because our farmers want to be good stewards of the bay but because the State requires farmers to manage for wetland and soil loss on their farms.

While I am proud of my Maryland farmers for their conservation work, they are punished in the marketplace for their good stewardship where they compete with producers whose production costs are lower because their operations are located in States that do not require mitigating the impacts of their operations on the natural environment.

Because the 2013 farm bill aims to move farmers out of direct payment programs and into expanded Crop Insurance Premium Assistance programs, reestablishing conservation compliance eligibility requirements for the Crop Insurance Program helps level the competitive playing field for Maryland farmers and other State's agricultural sectors that are doing what is right to protect the environment.

While mine and Senator CHAMBLISS's efforts last year were met with significant challenges last year, a series of discussions between our Nation's leading agricultural interests groups, like the American Farm Bureau, and our

Nation's top wildlife and conservation organizations resulted in a mutually agreed proposal to re-link conservation compliance requirements to the crop insurance premium assistance program.

The Federal safety the farm bill provides for both farmers growing our Nation's food and low income families who have difficulty putting food on the table continues on in this bill but with needed reforms. I am proud to support this bill and congratulate the chair and ranking member.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, yesterday, I voted against passage of S. 954, the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013, which is commonly known as the farm bill. With an overall cost of nearly \$1 trillion, this legislation is more than we can afford at a time when our debt of nearly \$17 trillion is growing rapidly each day. While I support some of the programs in this bill that are important to Florida and our State's important role in America's food supply, we cannot allow Washington to continue spending recklessly and condemning our children and grandchildren to a diminished future.

Not only was I concerned about the cost of this legislation, but I am disappointed that ample opportunity was not provided to Senators to improve it through a more open amendment process. When the farm bill was considered last year, the Senate voted on over 70 amendments to the bill, including my RAISE Act amendment, which would have allowed workers to earn more money for a job well done without having to first clear it by union bosses. This open process was not the case this time around and prevented my colleagues and I from introducing measures to improve the bill, as well as timely measures such as my proposal to punish Internal Revenue Service employees who violate the First Amendment rights of our citizens.

I remain committed to championing sound policy important to the farmers and working families that contribute to the agriculture industry's success and whose products ultimately end up at our dinner tables. It is why I am pursuing reforms in other areas that would benefit our farmers and our Nation. For example, I continue working towards national immigration reform, which would help create a guest worker visa program to ensure an adequate agriculture workforce. This reform would achieve an agricultural workers program that allows us to bring in both temporary and long-term laborers to provide our farms, dairies and other agricultural industries with the workers they need and in a way that also protects the dignity and safety of those workers.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, yesterday, I voted for the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013—the farm bill—which makes important reforms, such as ending the practice of direct payment agricultural subsidies, and provides strong support to our

local farmers which will help stabilize our food policies and increase access to fresh produce for the next decade.

I especially want to acknowledge and thank Senator COWAN, with whom I worked closely, for his successful effort to include in this bill a provision that was also advocated by former Senator Kerry to help our struggling fishermen in Massachusetts. This provision extends eligibility in the emergency disaster loan program to fishermen.

When our farmers are struck by disasters, they have access to low-interest emergency disaster—EM—loans available through USDA's Farm Service Agency. These loans have been used in the past by farmers, ranchers, and aqua farmers to help recover from crop production losses. Now, our Nation's fishermen will also have access to this important loan program.

I am also proud to have worked with Senator COWAN on his amendment to authorize the Department of Agriculture to conduct a study to propose a method for a voluntary crop insurance program for seafood harvesters. Fisherman and farmers face the same economic hardships when there are significant drops in production. This study is an important step toward providing the seafood industry with an insurance product to reduce their risk. I thank Senator COWAN and former Senator Kerry for their leadership on these efforts to help out fisherman who experiencing very difficult economic hardships.

Although I am proud to support the broad policies in this legislation, there are certain measures in this bill that I strongly oppose and that I will push to modify when the bill is considered in conference.

In particular, I am deeply concerned with the changes that the farm bill makes to the SNAP program. I will continue working to ensure that assistance is available to all families who need help putting food on the table.

SAFE COMMUNITIES, SAFE SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, in May, thousands of law enforcement officers from around the Nation came together at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC to commemorate Peace Officers Memorial Day. The Congressional resolution that created this day of reflection dedicated it to the extraordinary law enforcement officers "who, night and day, stand guard in our midst to protect us through enforcement of our laws," as well as the "Federal, State, and municipal officers who have been killed or disabled in the line of duty."

As we commemorate Peace Officers Memorial Day, it is vital for us to not only to honor the extraordinary work of our Nation's law enforcement professionals, but also to listen to their suggestions for how we can make our Nation a safer place to live. And on one subject, the overwhelming majority of