

It's no secret that we live in a dangerous world and national security decisions must be made to bolster—not weaken—our ability to counter a growing array of threats. A strong, safe America requires a nuclear deterrent that is modern and effective, not aging and depleted. As former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher famously warned, "This is no time to go wobbly."

COMMEMORATING THE 4TH OF JULY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, one week from today—July 4th—we will celebrate our Nation's 237th birthday. In 1776, our forefathers issued the Declaration of Independence announcing that the 13 Colonies were free from British rule, initiating the most successful experiment in human history. Our forefathers had the revolutionary idea that "all men are created equal" and "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights". On July 4th, we gather together, at parades on Main Streets across America and at barbecues with family members and friends, to reflect on just how much we have to be thankful for as Americans.

No other country in the world has such a rich past, diverse population, and bright future. Regardless of our fellow citizens' race, religion or background, we should remember that as Americans we are all eternally bound as countrymen. The novel experiment in democracy our forefathers began more than two centuries ago continues. It continues because we actively strive—in the words of our other foundational document, the Constitution—to "form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity". For 237 years, we have been working to defend and advance the foundations of freedom and equality that this country was built upon, and to promote them abroad.

Our history is not pristine; slavery and Jim Crow stain it. Our history has been about expanding the franchise and making it possible for more and more people to participate fully in American society, to enjoy the blessings of peace and prosperity and to share in our mutual civic responsibilities. We have endured difficult periods, but every time we quarrel amongst ourselves or are attacked from the outside we regroup stronger and more resolute. History has taught us and the future will show that we are at our best when we work together. On a battlefield, factory line, classroom or Congress, nothing can stop Americans when we are determined to move the country forward.

This 4th of July, let us redouble our resolve to continue our great democratic experiment. Not just for ourselves and our posterity, but for all humankind. As the poet Archibald MacLeish wrote:

There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and

mind, is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American Dream.

CELEBRATING LGBT PRIDE MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender, LGBT, Pride Month. This June we recognize the efforts of millions of Americans who have fought to extend liberty and justice to all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Members of the LGBT community have helped this country become a leader in so many fields.

And today I also rise in celebration as a result of yesterday's decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States. Loving families across our great Nation have now been made whole, as the Supreme Court upheld the core principle that all persons must be treated equally under the law.

By striking down as unconstitutional the provision of the Defense of Marriage Act, DOMA, that limited federal marriage benefits to opposite sex couples, the Supreme Court has affirmed that there is no place for discrimination in America based on sexual orientation. Government should not interfere in the ability of men and women to marry the person they love, and they should be entitled to the same benefits as heterosexual couples, including tax benefits, rights of inheritance, health insurance, and legal marriage. The Federal Government—especially Congress and the executive branch—should act quickly to comply with and fully implement this Supreme Court ruling, following the lead of a growing number of States including Maryland that give full recognition and equality to legal marriages of same-sex couples.

Alongside their neighbors, LGBT individuals have been integral in forging this Nation into what it is today. Sadly, many members of the LGBT community encounter prejudice and discrimination on a daily basis. We cannot forget the events at the Stonewall Inn in June of 1969. Shortly thereafter the modern day gay rights movement began to take shape.

In the years since Stonewall, we have made progress in making ours a more just society. I am proud that 13 States—including Maryland by both legislative action and popular referendum—and the District of Columbia have voted to allow two consenting same-sex adults to enjoy all the happiness and privileges that come with marriage. I am proud that our men and women in uniform can no longer be told they cannot serve the country they love because of who they are in love with.

I am proud that we passed legislation, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to expand the federal hate crimes law to include crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity. I am proud that everyday more and more

people support equal rights for all Americans.

Despite all the progress we have made, we must always work harder to maintain the foundation of human rights on which this country is built. I believe that every American should have the opportunity to fulfill their American Dream. This is only possible when the government can provide robust civil rights for all citizens. There is still much that only we in Congress can do to make sure that every American enjoys the right of equal protection under the law.

Right now in a majority of States, an individual can be fired for their sexual orientation or gender identity and have no legal recourse. The fact that someone can be fired for simply being who they are in the year 2013 cannot be accepted. I chair the U.S. Helsinki Commission and sit on the Foreign Relations Committee, and I can tell you that human rights are directly linked to governmental guarantees and enforcement of equal protection.

This June we should recognize the remarkable contributions LGBT Americans have made to this Nation. We should also take a moment to value all the hard work, sacrifice and determination that has defined the LGBT movement.

The issues facing the LGBT community are important to all Americans. We are all harmed when homophobia trumps civility, and similarly we all succeed when we find strength in our diversity.

We have work to do. Members of the LGBT community should feel free and safe to be who they are. Now is the time for all Americans regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity to come together in the spirit of moving the country forward. The LGBT community has been part of America's storied past, and will continue to be central to our perpetual goal of building a brighter future.

Fifty years ago this month President Kennedy asked the Nation a simple question as the fight for civil rights raged across the country:

"The heart of the question is whether all Americans are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities, whether we are going to treat our fellow Americans as we want to be treated."

The answer then, as it is now, should be a resounding yes.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, last week I was honored to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, along with Secretary of State John Kerry; Global Aids Coordinator, Ambassador Eric Goosby; Senator MIKE ENZI; Namibian Health Minister D. Richard Kamwi, and Tatu Msangi, a PEPFAR beneficiary and nurse from Tanzania.

Ten years ago, AIDS threatened the very foundation of societies in Africa—creating millions of orphans, stalling economic development, and leaving countries stuck in poverty. Before

PEPFAR started in Namibia in 2004, Minister Kamwi explained, nearly one in four pregnant women in Namibia were infected with HIV, yet only a handful of them could access treatment. The circumstances were dire, and it was clear something needed to be done. The visionary leadership of President George W. Bush and the Congressional Black Caucus, especially the late Congressman Donald Payne Sr. and Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, led to the establishment of the program in 2003 with an initial \$15 billion to fight HIV and AIDS worldwide.

Today, thanks to the ongoing, bipartisan U.S. commitment to PEPFAR, hope has replaced despair, life has replaced death, and productivity has replaced illness and disability. PEPFAR is the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease internationally, and it has saved and improved millions of lives. Today Namibia's mother-to-child HIV transmission rate at 6 weeks is less than 3 percent. Thanks to PEPFAR, Ms. Msangi, is healthy enough to help treat and counsel HIV patients, and her daughter Faith was born HIV-free, representing the best of what this remarkable program has to offer.

This bipartisan program is a tremendous success, having exceeded every one of its initial goals. PEPFAR directly supports nearly 5.1 million people on antiretroviral treatment, and has contributed to a 20-percent reduction in new HIV infections globally. This month, the program reached a remarkable milestone when the one-millionth infant was born HIV-free, thanks to PEPFAR. Thirteen countries have reached a crucial tipping point—where annual new adult HIV infections are below the annual increase in adults on antiretroviral drug treatment. And we are building capacity for recipient nations to address the problem. We have helped improve host country health care delivery systems, and countries are now taking ownership in their responsibility to care for their people.

I authored an amendment to PEPFAR's 2008 reauthorization bill that supports in-country health worker training for people like Ms. Msangi, which U.S. universities and NGOs support along with other elements of the program. Research being done by Maryland institutions—including the National Institutes of Health, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Maryland—is making a difference globally; and Maryland NGO's like Catholic Relief Services of Baltimore are partnering with us in this global fight.

Yet despite the remarkable progress that these partnerships have produced, we still have challenges ahead of us. According to UNAIDS, an estimated 1.7 million people are dying annually from AIDS-related causes. Global health and development resources are being squeezed due to difficult economic times. And issues of stigma and discrimination continue to limit access to treatment and care to those in need.

The U.S. will continue to lead this global fight, but we need the commitment and leadership of partner countries—reinforced with support from donor nations, civil society, people living with HIV, faith-based organizations, the private sector, foundations, and the Global Fund—in order to see an HIV-free generation in our lifetime.

PEPFAR represents the best of what our government can do when we put aside partisanship for the good of humanity. It represents the very best of America and our commitment to global humanitarian values. It is a testament to the power of thinking big and of dreaming big, and we must continue to do just that to conquer this disease once and for all.

SAFE ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, from the beaches of Rhode Island to the glaciers of Montana, natural ecosystems provide us with life's essentials: clean air and water, crops and timber, recreation and lots of local pride.

Rhode Island's oceans and coasts, for example, are spawning grounds, nurseries, and shelters for nutritious and profitable fish and shellfish. Their natural buffers protect our coastal communities from storms and filter our water. They even provide clean, renewable energy. And, of course, the coastline of the Ocean State boasts world-class beaches.

But climate change threatens to rob us of these essentials. The Government Accountability Office confirms what Americans see with their own eyes: our Nation's ecosystems are at risk from ongoing changes, including—and I will quote GAO: “increases in air and water temperatures, wildfires, and drought; forests stressed by drought becoming more vulnerable to insect infestations; rising sea levels; and reduced snow cover and retreating glaciers.”

This warning comes from a report released last week on climate change adaptation efforts in Federal agencies. Senator BAUCUS and I requested this report because of the risk climate change poses to our natural resources and our national economy.

Climate change is not something we can fix later, and it is not something that only will happen to future generations, although our children and grandchildren will surely pay a heavier price.

Scientists tell us that the carbon pollution we have already emitted has locked in changes in the coming decades to our atmosphere, oceans, and weather. So while we must take up the challenge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we must also begin to adapt, and secure our natural resources against the changes we can no longer avoid.

In this report, GAO examined the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the National Oceanic and At-

mospheric Administration, and the Bureau of Land Management.

It found that while planning for changes in resource conditions is a main part of the mission of these agencies, addressing the effects of climate change is not. In fact, BLM, which manages 245 million acres of land, has not yet established a climate change adaptation strategy.

That is why Senator BAUCUS and I introduced the Safeguarding America's Future and the Environment Act, or SAFE Act.

The Federal agencies that manage our natural resources are responsible for protecting, restoring, and conserving the natural resources that underpin our economy. The SAFE Act would require those agencies to adopt climate change adaptation plans that are consistent with the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy released this year by the administration.

Adaptation—to shifting conditions, to catastrophic events, even to full ecosystem shifts—is not easy work, and resource managers are often constrained by existing laws and regulations. The SAFE Act puts all climate adaptation tools and approaches on the table, and includes State, local, and stakeholder participation.

I want to thank Senator BAUCUS for working so hard to protect Montanans, Rhode Islanders, and all Americans.

The SAFE Act has garnered broad support from sportsmen, the outdoor industry, and conservation groups, including American Forests, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Defenders of Wildlife, Earth Justice, the National Parks Conservation Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Federation, the Outdoor Alliance, Trout Unlimited, and The Wildlife Society.

Noah Matson of Defenders of Wildlife said, “This bill recognizes that responding to climate change isn't just about cutting carbon emissions. It also means ensuring our wildlife and ecosystems are resilient and can withstand the extreme weather and other climate change impacts we are already experiencing. The two go hand in hand for a safe, healthy environment for wildlife, people and future generations.”

I hope the SAFE Act will also garner the support of our colleagues in Congress, and I look forward to working with Democrats and Republicans to pass this important legislation.

FREEDOM, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to wish the town of Freedom, ME, a very happy 200th birthday. The people of Freedom are proud of their hometown and the generations of hard-working and caring people who have made it such a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families.

The name of this town is more than a word; it describes its history. Originally part of the Plymouth Patent,