

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

THE DREAM ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today and throughout the coming weeks, I hope this body will move closer to comprehensive immigration reform. Actually, accountable immigration reform would be a more appropriate term to call it—accountable to the people of the United States who overwhelmingly want this dysfunctional, broken system to be mended.

We are a nation of immigrants, and the people of our Nation know it. They know it not only intellectually and abstractly; they know it in their gut because they see on the walls of their homes the proud photographs of their parents, their grandparents—people who have come to this country as a beacon of economic opportunity and freedom, some of them struggling through the most horrific kinds of trials and tribulations to reach this great land, the greatest Nation in the history of the world.

I have told my colleagues in the past—and I will state again—one of the most inspiring things I do—and I had done it as attorney general for a long time but now as a Senator—is to visit our courthouses where immigration and naturalization ceremonies take place. Those ceremonies are profoundly inspiring because they come—new citizens, people about to become citizens—with their families. It is a day of joy and pride unmatched and unexcelled in their lives. They come with friends, and they come to celebrate with their friends and families, with tears in their eyes and their hearts and their throats. There is no time when I have seen one of these ceremonies that I have not been deeply moved and uplifted.

If you ever have a down day, if you are ever discouraged about this Nation, see one of these ceremonies. You will know what it means to be a citizen of the United States of America and how important it is and how important we should regard it.

So I approach immigration reform with a profound appreciation of its importance to people who seek liberty and economic opportunity and justice in this great land but also how we are enriched as a nation of immigrants by the diversity, the talent, the dedication they bring to our factories where they work, to our laboratories where they invent, to our military where they serve and sacrifice and give their lives.

So I hope we will embark on accountable immigration reform that provides a path to earned citizenship for the 11 million people or more now in this country undocumented. Many times they pay taxes, they live here, and

they regard the United States as their home. They have no criminal background. They have done nothing wrong. We need to find a way to bring them out of the shadows and provide earned citizenship, with background checks to show they have no criminal records, that they will learn to speak English, if they do not now do so, go through all the other steps that may be set, and then go to the back of the line behind people who have legally sought to come here.

That reform should also include much stronger security at the borders, a crackdown on employers who hire undocumented immigrants—people in this country who are here illegally but who can be exploited by those employers—and, of course, a streamlined immigration process. The elements of this reform are becoming clearer and attracting a growing consensus. If nothing else, we should make sure we provide an expedited route for people who now come with H-1B visas.

Some of the details of these proposals need to be resolved so we give those people who come to this country with extraordinary skills or who are educated here and are now forced to leave the country, to the detriment of our tech corporations—and many are in my home State of Connecticut. And maybe, first and foremost, we need to make sure we give the DREAMers what this country so richly deserves—one would think, I might say, what they deserve, but truly the country deserves what they have to contribute and give back to this country.

For some time I have come to the floor of the Senate to talk about individual DREAMers. I wish to talk about a young person, Cinthia Perez, whose photograph is here in the Chamber and who is one of those DREAMers—many of whom are brought to this country as infants or very young children. They know no other country. They often know no other language but the one spoken here. Their lives are rooted in this country. Their friends are here. They are going through our schools. They are serving in our military. Yet they can be deported at any time.

Right now, the President has commendably offered the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals—DACA—system for them, but it is only for a limited period of time. It does not provide the certainty and security they need to do what Cinthia Perez wants to do with her life. That is why the nearly 2 million immigrants nationwide who would benefit from the DREAM Act—between 11,000 and 20,000 in Connecticut—deserve the benefit of a more secure route, an expedited route to citizenship. That has to be part of accountable immigration reform.

Cinthia Perez was born in Mexico. She was brought to America at the age of 5. She has not left America since. Her family settled in New Haven, CT. She went to the New Haven public schools from elementary school through high school.

It was in high school that Cinthia came to understand how her undocumented status would actually affect her future, because during her senior year of high school, Cinthia attended a college preparation class. From the start of that class—supposedly to prepare her for college—Cinthia could not fully take part in the course because she thought she would not be eligible to go to college because of her undocumented status.

Still, she continued in that class as a way to stay motivated about her future and to experience the college application process, as many Americans do. In fact, she eventually applied to four universities—some State and some private. She was accepted by how many? All four.

Her excitement and her family's soon faded as she realized the choice she faced. She would not be able to attend any of these schools because she could not afford it, and her dream school looked even further out of reach because her parents could not afford to pay full tuition and Cinthia could not share the financial burden because she was afraid to seek work. She is ineligible to work in this country, and she felt hopeless because all she wanted to do was attend college, work her way through, so she could create a better future for herself and make a difference for the country.

Around that time, Connecticut passed a State law—and I advocated it—to allow undocumented students who have graduated from high school in Connecticut to pay instate tuition rates that are available to other Connecticut residents. With that financial burden slightly lessened, Cinthia was able to enroll at Southern Connecticut State University.

She is now proud to be in her sophomore year at SCSU, and she hopes to use her education to pursue a career in community development or environmental management. Basically, she wants to help improve education and support for children in need—children such as herself who simply want an education so they can give back to this country, children such as herself who are motivated and inspired to contribute to America, and children such as herself who are undocumented and, therefore, hampered and impeded in their aspirations.

I have no doubt Cinthia will continue to contribute to Connecticut. She will, unfortunately, face the dangers of deportation from her home and may be sent back to a country she has not seen for many years—in fact, since she was 5 years old.

I hope every DREAMer is given deferred action status under the President's program. I hope Cinthia's application will be favorably received. I hope she will be able to pursue her education and work and give back to this Nation and that she will be eligible at some point for financial aid.

But the full measure of relief from deportation will not come to her or any

of the other DREAMers without the DREAM Act. Therefore, I urge that the comprehensive immigration reform under consideration by a bipartisan group headed by Senators SCHUMER and MCCAIN and the solution eventually adopted by this body to fix that broken system of immigration law will include the DREAM Act.

I wish to thank and give credit to Senator DURBIN, who has championed this measure for a long time, giving a model to many of us at the State level, where I was attorney general for 20 years and championing our equivalent of the DREAM Act there, providing aid, as we did with Cinthia, so she could fulfill her aspirations to seek education.

But at the end of the day, just and effective comprehensive immigration reform must resolve the status of those 11 million people, including Cinthia's relatives who may be here, including the DREAMers' parents who may be here. It has to be comprehensive so as to establish an earned pathway to citizenship for the undocumented immigrants already giving back, already here, already contributing members of our society, and, most especially, the children who were brought here, through no fault of their own, when they were 5 years old or 6 years old or 5 months old, and we reaffirm that America is a land of justice and opportunity.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, February 25, 2013, at 5:00 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 7; that there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE COCHRAN FAMILY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in Vermont, you will find any number of successful family-run businesses. Today, I want to recognize the Cochran Family and their Cochran Ski Area. This family, which has spent 50 years on a hillside in the town of Richmond, VT, has seen 10 of its own compete in the Olympic Games and has brought thousands of local youth together to share in Vermont's rich tradition of winter sports.

The Cochran Ski Area is truly a remarkable place in Vermont, where the rewards of family togetherness, community support, and shared knowledge have been reaped to the fullest for half a century. In the 1960s, the Cochran slope was a skiing family's dreamland, but Mickey Cochran, alongside his wife Ginny and family, chose to open their home and their hearts to the community. Since then this slope has become a source of skill not only for the Cochran Olympians, but for every Vermonter who, with their guidance, has been helped to master the art of skiing. The Cochrans intensified their skiing talent and dedication through the application of math and physics, complementing a classroom education with a thrilling hands-on experience unlike any other. This Vermont family and their legacy are a model of community building and achievement. Their charity has enriched Vermont and the Cochran Ski Area has been cherished in return as a haven for families to enjoy winter traditions. Today, a new generation of Cochrans preserves their relationship with the land Mickey and Ginny Cochran sought to make their home years ago, by founding Slopeside Syrup, a maple syrup business. Each spring Cochran's taps more than 20,000 maple trees around the ski slope and opens its doors of the Slopeside Syrup sugarhouse to visitors and neighbors alike.

I am proud to share the Cochran family's story with the Senate. I ask unanimous consent that a recent article from The New York Times about this incredible family be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Jan. 23, 2013]

SHORT HILLSIDE'S LONG LEGACY

(By Bill Pennington)

RICHMOND, VT.—It was 1960 in northern Vermont and Mickey Cochran had a simple plan with an uncommon stipulation. A former schoolteacher, Cochran would buy a house in the country for his growing family, but only if the new home had a pitched slope behind it where he could install a ski lift.

Along with his wife, Ginny, whom he met while skiing, Cochran found the right house and parcel of land for \$10,000, and soon there was a rope tow just outside the back door.

Educated as a mechanical engineer, Cochran affixed floodlights to adjacent trees and the roof of the two-story home, turning the modest rural hillside into a round-the-clock winter playground.

Like a Vermont version of the movie "Field of Dreams," if you build and illuminate a place to ski in snow country, people will come from far and wide.

Throughout the 1960s, thousands of local schoolchildren and their parents learned to ski at the Cochran hill, with Mickey and Ginny providing free hands-on instruction. They did not charge to use the 400-foot rope tow either. Everyone was welcome, even in the kitchen of the Cochran home, which served as a warming hut.

"It was a magical place," said Bob Cochran, one of Mickey and Ginny's four children. "Like a big party at your house every night."

The ski hill, moderately expanded in subsequent decades, continues to this day as a nonprofit organization and revered civic resource, a tribute to Mickey Cochran's humble 1960 dream.

But that is not the reason Cochran's Ski Area, with its one tiny roadside sign, is known throughout the racing world. It is not why the one-room Cochran lodge, built in 1984, is replete with pictures of international skiing stars who have made the trek to this out-of-the-way little ski area next to the Winooski River.

Mickey and Ginny Cochran's children—Marilyn, Barbara Ann, Bob and Lindy—all made the United States ski team and each raced in the Olympics. At the 1972 Games in Sapporo, Japan, Barbara Ann won a gold medal in slalom.

The Skiing Cochrans, as they became known in the 1970s, were an American sensation, feted at gala dinners and featured in national magazines, like a sporting version of the Osmonds.

But there's more: six of Mickey and Ginny Cochran's grandchildren have made the United States ski team in the last decade, including Ryan Cochran-Siegle, Barbara Ann's 20-year-old son, who won two events at the junior world championships last season. His cousin Robby Kelley, Lindy's son, is the reigning national giant slalom champion, extending the lineage of America's first family of ski racing into a sixth decade.

In 2005, four second-generation Cochrans were on the United States ski team, matching the four Cochrans on the team 43 years ago. And the ski area has helped produce more than a dozen United States team members who are not related to the Cochrans, even if they are all embraced as Cochran racers.

"People have asked me if there's something in the water," Bob, 61, said with a laugh last month, sitting at a picnic table inside the unassuming Cochran lodge. "People think we have some secret. But there was no special criteria for coming here except one. My father said you had to have fun."

"And my mother made every kid who showed up here feel like a part of the family."

NO DISCUSSION OF OLYMPICS

Each of the original skiing Cochrans insisted that making the Olympics was never discussed by their father, who died in 1998 at age 74, or by their mother, who was 76 when she died in 2005.

"Even making the national team was never envisioned," said Lindy, now 59. "That was some mystical place and the farthest thing from my father's mind. He did, however, believe that you needed a lot of repetition to get good at something."

So what better way than to grab the rope tow just outside your bedroom window?

The usual Cochran winter day would have the children doing their homework after