

suddenly partners with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. The fact that the Iranians also have reason to fear ISIS means we have converging but not identical interests.

The Iranians have used radical Shiite militias—Hezbollah, Kataib Hezbollah and Asaib Ahl al Haq—in Syria and Iraq. The latter two—armed, trained and funded by the Iranians—were responsible for killing hundreds of American soldiers in Iraq. We should be talking to Iraq's neighbors, including Iran, about what we and they can do to help stabilize Iraq and defeat ISIS.

But Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan will not be responsive if they think fighting ISIS means the U.S. is prepared to leave the Sunnis vulnerable to Iran and its Shiite-backed militias. If Iran wants stability in Iraq and not an ongoing sectarian war on its border, it will need to accept that although the Shiites will hold many of the levers of power, they must also be prepared to share them.

In Iraq, if the U.S. is to help blunt ISIS, the central government must give Sunnis and Kurds a sense of inclusion and a stake in working with Baghdad and the military. Prime Minister Nouri Maliki's conspiratorial, authoritarian approach has made that impossible. We should make any coordinated military action with the Iraqi government contingent on Maliki actually taking such steps, including appointing a government of national unity, empowering a Sunni defense minister and permitting the Kurds to export their oil. Absent that, we may still choose to target ISIS forces if there is a need, but without regard to what the Iraqi government may seek.

As for Syria, though we must deny ISIS sanctuary there, the U.S. cannot partner with the Assad regime. The simple fact is that so long as Assad remains in power, he will be a magnet for every jihadi worldwide to join the holy war against him. No country in the region is immune from the fallout of the conflict in Syria, and we all face the danger of those who go to fight in Syria returning to their home countries to foment violence.

Though President Obama has spoken about ramping up our support for the opposition in Syria, we are late to that effort. It is time for the United States to assume the responsibility of quarterbacking the entire assistance effort to ensure that more meaningful aid—lethal, training, intelligence, money and humanitarian—not only gets to those who are fighting both ISIS and the Assad regime but is fully coordinated and complementary.

The broader point is that Washington's actions toward ISIS now must be taken with both Iraq and Syria in mind and be guided by a strategy geared toward weakening those forces that threaten the U.S. and its regional friends. The more we take this approach and highlight the costs to Iran of its current posture, the more the Iranians may see that their interests could be served by a political outcome of greater balance in Syria and Iraq. There will be risks to acting, but by now we have seen the costs of inaction, and they are only likely to grow over time.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I appreciate my dear friend Senator COONS' patience.

At this time I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. COONS. Madam President, something important, something unusual,

something worth noting happened this week, happened yesterday in this Chamber that I don't want to let pass without a few moments of comment.

Yesterday a broad bipartisan majority of this Senate came together to pass the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

First, I congratulate Senators MURRAY, ISAKSON, HARKIN, and ALEXANDER who led so capably on this bill. Senators MURRAY, a Democrat of Washington, and ISAKSON, a Republican of Georgia, spent years working through the details, policy, and language, and months making sure that they got this bill to a point where the Senate and the House in a bipartisan, bicameral way could adopt legislation.

What is this about? It is about something simple, important, and powerful: investing in America's workforce so we can compete with anyone around the world in the 21st century.

This is an area I have focused on a lot here in the Senate which I believe is critical to our Nation, our competitiveness, to strengthening our middle class, and to growing good jobs.

In manufacturing, it is a core challenge for us to ensure that our workers have the training employers are looking for, and that our manufacturing companies are globally competitive. Manufacturing is important to America, to our future, to our middle class, to our communities, and to our families because it pays well, it drives innovation, it contributes greatly to other sectors in our economy and in communities.

That is why a few months ago I launched the Manufacturing Jobs for America initiative that has brought together dozens of Senators. We initially pulled together Democrats from across my caucus to introduce 34 bills, some of the best and broadest ideas we could bring to the table about how to accelerate America's recovery of employment and steady growth in manufacturing. Roughly half of these bills are bipartisan.

Part of the goal of this Manufacturing Jobs for America initiative was to put good ideas out on the floor and get them in the mix as we debate things going forward. So I wish to take a moment today and celebrate that the ideas of many of our partners in this campaign, ideas drawn from many of the bills that are part of this initiative, ended up being important parts of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that was passed this week.

Let me briefly touch on the five most important who contributed ideas that were embedded in this bill that passed.

First, the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act which was sponsored by Senators REED and BROWN. In our rapidly changing economy, ensuring we can train Americans of all ages for all jobs is critical. Senator REED's bill takes an important step in that direction by investing in adult education, expanding access to technology and digital literacy skills and improv-

ing the coordination of State and local programs.

A bill that was endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers is the AMERICA Works Act, sponsored by Senators HAGAN and HELLER.

Another challenge we face is ensuring employers can quickly recognize whether a worker has the skills they need. So Senator HAGAN's bill helped solve this by ensuring we prioritize programs that invest in training that delivers portable national and industry-recognized credentials. This encourages job training programs to match the skills of workers with the needs of local employers, training individuals for the jobs currently available in their communities right now.

A third bill that contributed importantly to this bill that was enacted here yesterday, adopted by the Senate yesterday, was the Community College to Career Fund Act, sponsored by Senator FRANKEN and Senator BEGICH. Senator FRANKEN came to the floor yesterday and gave another passionate, important floor speech in support of these ideas. It is something that as I presided—and I have been with Senator FRANKEN in caucus and have heard him speak many times. It is about equipping workers with the skills they need by investing in partnerships between our community colleges and our employers. Senator FRANKEN, Senator BEGICH, myself and others have seen this work in our home communities. We have seen community colleges learn from manufacturers what today are the actual relevant modern manufacturing skills they need and then deliver customized training courses that make a difference in the skills, in the lives, in the college affordability and access of those who seek to join today's manufacturing workforce.

The fourth bill, the On-the-Job Training Act, cosponsored by Senators SHAHEEN and COCHRAN, contributes to the idea that we need to invest in on-the-job training. Because of Senator SHAHEEN's leadership on this bill, we will now make new and important investments so workers can learn what they need to do in the job that needs to be filled, rather than in an academic setting and then search the skills that may match the skills they learn. On-the-job training in this bill sponsored by SHAHEEN and COCHRAN is an important contribution to modernizing America's workplace skills.

The last, the SECTORS Act, cosponsored by Senators BROWN and COLLINS, is a provision that helps meet the fundamental challenge of connecting our schools with our businesses by requiring State and local workforce investment boards to establish sector-based partnerships.

With all of these bills there is an important and common theme. In the 21st century, rapid economic change is a given. In order to compete, in order to grow our economy and grow employment, in order to be productive and to have a successful and growing workforce, we need to be able to adapt as

quickly as our economy does and we need to invest in modernizing the skills of the American worker.

With the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act yesterday, we have made a strong statement that in a bipartisan way we are willing to invest in America's workers, the jobs of today and the jobs of tomorrow. This is just one of many encouraging moments here in the Senate that sometimes go without note or commentary in our communities at home, but I thought it was important to bring to the floor today this range of five different bills, three of them bipartisan, all of them strong, whose ideas were part of the package adopted on the floor yesterday and that I am confident will be adopted by the House and signed into law by our President. This Senate can, will, should continue to make bipartisan progress in investing in American manufacturing.

I thank the Chair.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I strongly support the bicameral, bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA. This long over-due reauthorization will help Americans to develop the skills necessary to participate in today's global economy. I would be remiss if I did not commend the leaders of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee—especially Senators HARKIN, ALEXANDER, MURRAY, and ISAKSON—for their hard work on crafting this important jobs bill which will benefit job seekers and their families, employers, and the economy. Their House counterparts—Representatives JOHN KLINE, GEORGE MILLER, VIRGINIA FOXX, and RUBÉN HINOJOSA of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce—also deserve our praise and thanks.

Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act, WIA, in 1998. It expired in 2003, but Congress has relied on annual appropriations bills to extend WIA's authorization 1 year at a time. These appropriations bills often have made modest policy changes. Some of the policy changes have been retained in subsequent years but continuity isn't guaranteed. This patchwork approach to improving our workforce education and development system is far from ideal, especially as the labor market changes rapidly in response to the global economy.

As our Nation continues the long, arduous climb out of the worst recession since the Great Depression, effective education and workforce development opportunities are vital to sustaining a building and sustaining a vibrant middle class. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will allow local workforce investment boards to create a system which prepares workers for the 21st-century labor market and helps employers find the skilled labor needed to compete and create good jobs here in the United States.

Let me provide a report on the workforce development progress we have

made in Maryland. The Workforce Investment Network for Maryland is comprised of Maryland's 12 workforce investment area/workforce investment boards. The network reports assisting more than 216,000 Marylanders with job placement assessment, job search workshops, resume preparation, and myriad other services from July 2012 to June 2013. Nearly 16,000 job seekers completed job training programs, with several thousand receiving nationally recognized certificates and credentials. Through an aggressive outreach process, the Workforce Investment Network for Maryland engaged more than 7,700 businesses and was able to match nearly 44,000 jobs seekers with employers.

In Maryland, our local workforce investment boards know how to respond to the needs of the local community. The field of cyber security is projected to grow by 41 percent over the next 8 years, and jobs in this expanding field pay a median hourly wage of \$38 per hour. Maryland is a hotbed of activity in the cyber security field since it is home to the U.S. Cyber Command, the National Security Agency, the Defense Information Systems Agency, the Navy Fleet Cyber Command, and hundreds of Federal contractors and private technology companies. In an effort to address the lack skilled cyber security workers and increase the number of qualified workers in the pipeline, a three-way partnership—the Pathways to Cybersecurity Careers Consortium—was created to bring together the efforts of six workforce development agencies, three community colleges, and the local business community. The partnership, led by Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, was awarded a \$4.9 million community-based job training grant to create the Pathways to Cyber Security Program. The grant was intended to assist 1,000 new, dislocated, underemployed, recently separated veterans, and incumbent workers in obtaining cyber security certifications identified as critical industry shortages by regional businesses and government agencies. I am proud to report that nearly 1,150 workers have received training in the program, 755 program participants have received cyber security certifications, and 721 program graduates have been hired by an employer or improved their skills with an existing employer. Some of the graduates of the cyber security programs have begun to work with a number of Federal agencies in my home State.

As I have traveled across Maryland, I have seen firsthand the positive effect of effective programs in action. This past March, I had the opportunity to visit students at Chesapeake College's Continuing Education & Workforce Training Culinary Arts Program. The students in the culinary arts program learn the principles of food preparation, obtain a nationally recognized safe food handling certificate, and finish the program ready to enter the

workforce in local area hotels and restaurants. Having tasted a number of dishes the students prepared, I can tell you their training is going well. I was impressed by the dedication and enthusiasm of the students. One of them travels more than 2 hours by bus, one way, to attend class each day. I am confident these men and women will continue to hone their skills and enhance their employment prospects.

Our Nation's at-risk youth present special challenges we must overcome. Aaron Sierak, a resident of Aberdeen, MD, dropped out of high school during his junior year. After he became discouraged about his future and expressed a desire to change, he learned about the Reconnecting Youth dropout recovery program run by the Harford County Public Schools in partnership with the Susquehanna Workforce Network. The Susquehanna Workforce Network helped Aaron obtain his GED, enroll in Harford Community College, and obtain a Pell grant to help cover the cost of his first year of tuition. Aaron now plans to obtain an associate's degree and registered nursing certification so he can find work in a high-demand—and rewarding—occupation.

The Workplace Innovation and Opportunity Act improves upon the existing youth services that helped put Aaron back on a path to economic mobility and a middle-class livelihood. WIOA places a priority on out-of-school youth by requiring that 75 percent of youth services funding at the State and local level be targeted to career pathways for youth, dropout recovery efforts, and education and training programs that lead to the attainment of a high school diploma and a recognized postsecondary credential.

The Workplace Innovation and Opportunity Act is bipartisan, bicameral legislation that will improve our workforce development system and help put Americans back to work, preparing workers for the 21st-century workforce and helping businesses find the skilled employees they need to compete and create even more domestic jobs. WIOA creates a streamlined workforce development system by eliminating 15 existing duplicative programs. It applies a single set of outcome metrics to every Federal workforce program under the act. It creates smaller, nimbler, and more strategic State and local workforce development boards. It integrates intake, case management, and reporting systems and strengthens program evaluations. And it eliminates the "sequence of services." Finally, WIOA empowers local boards to tailor services to their region's employment and workforce needs with on-the-job, incumbent worker, and customized training and pay-for-performance contracts.

According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, by 2022 the supply of United States workers with postsecondary

education—including 6.8 million workers with bachelor's degrees and 4.3 million workers with a postsecondary vocational certificate, some college credits, or an associate's degree—will fall short of the demand for workers with those credentials by 11 million. This mismatch will impede our economic growth and harm our international competitiveness. It also represents a huge lost opportunity for millions of hard-working Americans and their families. To maintain our position as the world's economic leader, we need to educate and train our workers to fill the skilled jobs of the knowledge-based economy. And the workforce development system needs to pivot from short-term crisis intervention to long-term human capital development. WIOA does that, and the substitute amendment the Senate has passed demonstrates that here in Congress, we can come together to work on legislation that will boost the economic recovery and help all Americans.

WIOA

Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, I am pleased the Senate voted this week to improve job training in the United States. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA, is the result of a commitment in both parties and both Chambers to modernize our workforce development system to ensure American competitiveness. The last time a Workforce Investment Act reauthorization was signed into law was in 1998, far too long ago, and the significant skills gap we face as a Nation is evidence that our fragmented system simply is not working.

Despite the billions of taxpayer dollars we invest annually on Federal job training programs, there are 4.5 million unfilled jobs and a staggering 10 million unemployed Americans. We need to bridge this gap, and WIOA helps get us there by reducing bureaucracy and providing American workers with a more flexible and effective workforce training system. Over the past year, I have heard from businesses, elected State and local leaders, and families back home about the critical need for reforms to our job training system, and I am glad to have had the chance to work on this bill and be a part of this process in the Senate.

This legislation incorporates many reforms contained in the SKILLS Act, which I introduced in the Senate earlier this year, including the elimination of 15 programs identified as duplicative or ineffective and countless Federal mandates on States and local boards. In addition, WIOA establishes common performance metrics and requires independent evaluations every 4 years of all workforce programs to ensure effectiveness and accountability to taxpayers. By reducing bureaucracy and enhancing flexibility, WIOA eliminates delays that hinder job seekers from immediately accessing job training services and reentering the workforce.

I appreciate my colleagues' work on this important issue and look forward to swift passage of WIOA in both Chambers.

JUNETEENTH REMEMBRANCE

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, last Friday was Juneteenth, which marks four of the most important days in our Nation's long and continuing march toward racial justice and civil rights in this country.

First, on June 19, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation abolished slavery in all U.S. territories. Then 3 years later, a month after the end of our Civil War, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, TX, to free the last of our Nation's slaves. Nearly a century later on June 19, 1963, with Jim Crow laws still a stain on the moral fabric of our country, President John F. Kennedy sent his Civil Rights Act of 1963 to Congress. And the following year, as the Nation mourned JFK's loss, President Johnson shepherded the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to final passage.

As we mark these days in our Nation's history, from the end of our darkest period to some of the most important pieces of civil rights legislation passed, we know we still have farther to go.

It is appropriate that we do so this year especially, that we mark June 19 and these five moments across our Nation's history, because as a result of the Supreme Court's decision last year, the Shelby County case, a key piece of President Johnson's Voting Rights Act of 1965 stands in bad need of repair and revision; and, in fact, the Voting Rights Act itself is at risk of becoming a dead letter in the future of voting in our country.

Two years ago I had the opportunity to join many of my colleagues in the House and the Senate, Republicans and Democrats, in returning to Selma to the site of Bloody Sunday, to the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Many Members of Congress got a chance to hear again from Congressman LEWIS about the events of that day, that day that was etched into the consciousness of this country and mobilized millions to speak out to their representatives and Senators and move this Congress finally to enact legislation that would unlock the key to the ballot box across the country.

I was so proud earlier this year to join with Chairman LEAHY of the Senate Judiciary Committee and with Senator DICK DURBIN, Congressman LEWIS, icon of the Civil Rights movement, Congressman JOHN CONYERS, and Republican Congressman JIM SENSENBRENNER, to introduce a bill that would restore the core protections made possible in the original Voting Rights Act.

The bill we introduced doesn't look at discrimination through the lens of the past. It focuses on modern-day violations, not the things that happened 50 years ago. It takes up the challenge

laid down by the Supreme Court and comes up with a new formula and a new approach that makes voting rights and elections more transparent and has been carefully crafted to be both effective and to pass this Congress. It is a voting rights bill that is modern, to confront modern voting rights challenges.

As a country we have come a long way since 1965, but we are not where we need to be yet. As much as we don't want to admit it or confront it, racial discrimination in voting is not a relic of the past, but a tragic reality of today. Just yesterday the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on what to do to address the loss of a key part of the Voting Rights Act that is known as preclearance.

In 2013 the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act, a bill that each and every Senate Republican voted for in 2006. Let me be clear about that. Again, in 2006 this body unanimously reauthorized the Voting Rights Act. Yet in 2013 the Supreme Court struck down an essential provision of that very act.

The Voting Rights Act and leadership to address the challenges of civil rights in this country have long been bipartisan in nature. My own family and friends who are Republicans are justifiably proud of their party's leadership role in addressing the darkest days and the biggest challenges in civil rights in the last century in this country. But today we are struggling in this body to find a single Republican cosponsor for this important and necessary bill. I ask my friends: Is this because there is nothing that remains to be done? Is that 2006 act, unanimously passed by this body, so obsolete that there is no legislative response necessary to Shelby?

I think a response is necessary. A month after the Supreme Court's decision, North Carolina passed a restrictive, a deeply restrictive, voting law that in addition to a strict photo ID requirement reduces early voting and forbids local jurisdictions flexibility in setting hours for early voting, among other restrictions. After the Shelby County decision, in Pasadena, TX, that city's voters adopted a plan to reduce the number of single-member districts from eight to six, adding two at-large representatives, a change nearly certain to reduce Latino representation on their city council. Hours after the decision, the State of Texas announced plans to implement its photo ID law that had long been blocked under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Again and again, shortly following the Shelby County decision, jurisdictions moved to implement discriminatory voting changes that had previously been blocked under section 5. Something needs to be done. I would suggest to my colleagues, if you don't like this proposal, please come forward with something you can support, with something that looks forward, not back; that has a formula that protects voting as the