

is what the New York Times reported on May 18 under the headline on the front page: "Critics Hear E.P.A.'s Voice in 'Public Comments.'"

This is an article on the front page of the New York Times about the public comments that government agencies have to collect. They have to collect these comments from the public when they propose new regulations such as this one that they have done with the waters of the United States. The comment period is supposed to be an opportunity for people who might be harmed by the rules to have their say.

Well, according to this front-page article in the New York Times, the Environmental Protection Agency has twisted the public comment requirements into its own private government-funded spin machine. The article says: "In a campaign that tests the limits of federal lobbying law, the agency has orchestrated a drive to counter political opposition from Republicans and enlist public support in concert with liberal environmental groups and a grass-roots organization aligned with President Obama."

This tests the limits of Federal lobbying law. This government agency ignored the negative comments by Americans who were concerned about the law, who were hurt by the law. Then it used taxpayer dollars to lobby liberal groups to flood the Agency with positive comments. That is not me; that is what is written in the New York Times. These were the same phony, ginned-up comments it used to justify the dramatic overreach of its new regulations.

It is incredible. It is unacceptable. I believe it is illegal. The Environmental Protection Agency would rather skew public comments in its favor than acknowledge the real concerns that Americans and Members of Congress have with this destructive rule. These are the concerns of farmers, of ranchers, of hard-working families, and of small businesses all across the country.

There was an interesting column in U.S. News & World Report last Friday. The headline says: "Stop Terrorizing Main Street." The column talked about the damage that all this redtape can do to small businesses. It says:

When the EPA jumps up and yells 'boo', entrepreneurs cringe. They withdraw. They feel anxious and reconsider plans to start or expand a business. This is bad for our economy.

This is hurting our country. Well, I believe they are exactly right. That is what Washington does with the uncertainty and the overreach of rules such as this one. It is bad for the economy. It does nothing to improve the quality of our water or the quality of life.

There is universal agreement in this country that we should protect America's navigable waters. There is also bipartisan agreement on the best ways for Washington to help to do that. This is not just Republicans against President Obama. This is Republicans and Democrats working to protect Amer-

ica's waterways and President Obama working, instead, to expand the power of unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats.

Here is how the newspaper The Hill reported it last Thursday with an article with this headline: "Democrats buck Obama on water rule." The article says: "Dozens of Congressional Democrats are joining Republicans to back legislation blocking the Obama administration's new rule to redefine its jurisdiction over the nation's waterways."

Now, it is talking about my bill, a bill called the Federal Water Quality Protection Act. The bill has 30 cosponsors in the Senate—Democrats and Republicans alike. A similar bill in the House actually passed with the support of 24 Democrats and every Republican. So what does the administration have to say to the dozens of Democrats in Congress, to the 24 Democrats who voted against the administration, to the millions of Americans who are concerned about this new regulation?

Well, according to the article in The Hill, President Obama's top environmental adviser said of the Democrats who voted for this: "The only people with reason to oppose the rule are polluters." So the President believes that the 24 Democrats who voted to support it and the Democrats in the Senate who cosponsored my legislation are polluters who want to threaten our clean water. That is what the White House thinks of these Democrats in Congress. That is what the White House thinks of anyone who dares to suggest that this rule is bureaucratic overreach. That is such arrogance.

Well, there are a lot of Americans—Democrats and Republicans—who are not going to be intimidated by the Obama administration's power grab or its name-calling. The Obama administration has ignored the strong bipartisan consensus against this rule. It has once again taken its own radical approach. Instead of moving forward with a rule that fails to represent the interests of many Americans, we should act immediately to pass this bipartisan Federal Water Quality Protection Act. This legislation says yes to clean water and no to extreme bureaucracy.

It will protect America's waterways, while keeping Washington's hands off of the things that it really has no business regulating. The Environmental Protection Agency would have to consult with the States to make sure that we have the approach that works best everywhere—not just the approach that Washington likes best. They would not be able to just listen to the echo chamber of phony comments concocted by their own lobbying campaign.

Now, this bill gives certainty and clarity to farmers, to hard-working ranchers, to small business owners and their families. It makes sure that people can continue to enjoy the beautiful rivers and the lakes. They should be

preserved and protected. This bipartisan bill protects Americans from runaway bureaucracy—unaccountable, unelected. It restores Washington's attention to the traditional waters that were always the focus before.

The American people do not need more bureaucratic overreach. We do not need more redtape. Congress should act immediately to stop this outrageous regulation before it goes into effect. The Senate should take up and pass this bipartisan Federal Water Quality Protection Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Montana.

(The remarks of Mr. DAINES pertaining to the introduction of S. 1487 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DAINES. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period of morning business.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 3 years ago this month in June of 2012 that President Obama established the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA, that provides temporary—underline the word "temporary"—legal status to immigrant students who arrived in the United States as children.

DACA is based on the DREAM Act, a bill I introduced 14 years ago, to give undocumented students who grow up in this country a chance to earn their citizenship. These young people have come to be known as DREAMers, and this has become a term of art that is used now across the United States to capsulize the immigration dilemma we face.

While this DACA Program by President Obama has been an amazing success, more than 600,000 of these DREAMers have come forward, paid the filing fee, submitted themselves for background checks, and are now temporarily living in America, going to school and working. DACA has allowed these DREAMers to become part of our country as they strive for education in engineering, education in business—just about every profession you can think of.

This policy of giving people a chance to be part of America's future unfortunately infuriates my Republican colleagues. They have tried over and over and over again to stop the DREAMers,

to deport the DREAMers. I don't understand it.

President Obama established this new program called DAPA to build on DACA's success, which allows their parents, under certain circumstances, to stay in the United States on a temporary basis. Under the President's second program, DAPA, undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States at least 5 years and have American children are required to come forward, pay a filing fee, register with the government, pass a criminal and national security background check, and then pay their fair share of taxes. Those are the conditions. If they violate any of them, they are subject to deportation.

If the government determines that these parents have not committed any serious crimes, do not pose any threat to our safety, this new Executive order says, on a temporary basis, they will not be targeted for deportation.

I have seen this in Chicago, and I have seen it around Illinois. Many people think the undocumented live in a household full of undocumented people. That is almost never the case.

What I found over and over again is that perhaps one parent, usually the mother, is undocumented—the father, a citizen; kids born in America, citizens; the mother, undocumented. Are we really safer as a nation to break up that family and deport the mother if she is no threat to this country? I don't think so.

DAPA was scheduled to go into effect last month. That is what President Obama had hoped for—and I joined him—but it didn't. Why? Because some Republican Governors and attorneys general have filed a lawsuit to block this new program.

The Supreme Court has been clear that Presidents have the authority to set Federal immigration enforcement priorities. I am confident all of the President's decisions in this matter will be upheld. It is hard for me to understand or explain why the Republicans are so determined to stop any reform of our broken immigration system. For years, Republicans in Congress have refused to even consider legislation to fix our broken immigration system.

I spent a good part of my life, 6 months or more, working in a bipartisan group to write an immigration reform bill for Democrats, for Republicans. We brought it to the floor of the Senate. It passed with 68 votes. Fourteen Republicans, virtually all of the Democrats voted for it. It really addressed every aspect of immigration. Parts of it I didn't like, but overall it was a very good and balanced bill.

When it came to the floor, the Republicans said: Wait a minute. No immigration reform until you get tough at the border.

Well, the record says and shows we are already pretty tough at the border. Illegal immigration is down dramatically. But in an effort to make this bi-

partisan, we agreed to even more enforcement at the border. Think about this for a second. Today, there are more Federal law enforcement agents on our border with Mexico than the combined total of all Federal law enforcement agents in every other agency, and we increased it in this comprehensive immigration bill. So the argument that we are not getting tough at the border is kind of hard to make. We passed the bill with 68 votes. We sent it to the House 2 years ago. What did the House do? Absolutely nothing—they refused to call the bill. They refused to call any version of the bill. They refused to call their own bill. They refused to even debate the issue of immigration.

Everyone acknowledges our immigration system needs to be improved and changed. They wouldn't even take up the issue. And now, when the President tries, on a temporary basis, to say: I am not going to deport the mother in a family where everyone else is an American citizen or I am not going to deport children who were brought here at the age of 2, who have grown up in America and simply want to be part of our future, the Republicans have said: We will fight you to the death. We will challenge you in every court in the land. We want to deport these people.

What I have found is that it is best for Members of Congress, the Senate, and the American public to meet some of the individuals who are the target of these high emotions and negative feelings on the Republican side. I want to introduce one of them today.

This is Jean-Yannick Diouf. When he was 8 years old, his father, a diplomat from the African country of Senegal, brought his family to the United States. Unfortunately, Yannick's parents separated and Yannick's father returned to Senegal, leaving him and the rest of his family behind. Yannick was too young to even realize it at the time—he was just a little kid—but when his father left the United States, he lost his legal status to live in this country.

Yannick grew up in Montgomery County, MD. In high school, he was a member of the National Honor Society. He volunteered weekly at a homeless shelter. He organized soccer tournaments for 3 years to raise money for the Red Cross for Haiti earthquake relief.

After high school, Yannick wanted to continue his education. But remember, if you are undocumented in this country, you don't qualify for a penny when it comes to Federal assistance—no Pell grants, no Federal Government loans. So he went to Montgomery College, a junior college, and earned an associate's degree in business. He was on the dean's list.

Yannick then transferred to the University of Maryland, College Park. Again, he had to pay for it all. There was no government assistance since he is undocumented. He is working now on a bachelor's degree in business manage-

ment. He runs the Achievers Mentoring Program. It is an after-school program to advise middle and high school students on how to get into college.

Yannick is also a volunteer for United We Dream, the largest organization of undocumented young people such as himself in this country. He was a leader of the campaign to pass the Maryland DREAM Act, which allows Maryland residents who are undocumented to pay in-State tuition. That is the only break he can get, and it comes from the State.

Keep in mind that Yannick is undocumented. So he doesn't qualify for any financial aid from the Federal Government. Yet he is trying to make a life. Here is what he said in a letter:

DACA means dignity. More than making money, having a job gives you dignity and self-respect. I want to work for what I have. I don't look to anyone for pity. People should judge me based on what I do and what I stand for, not based on status. I want to be given a chance to prove that not only am I a functioning member of society, I am here to serve and share my talents with those in my community.

Earlier this year, Yannick was one of six DREAMers who met with the President of the United States in the Oval Office. Here is what the President said after he met with Yannick and the other five. He said:

I don't think there's anybody in America who's had a chance to talk to these six young people who wouldn't find it in their heart to say these kids are Americans just like us, and they belong here, and we want to do right by them.

Well, I think President Obama is right. Yannick and the other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country. But sadly, Republicans in Congress have a different agenda. They want to shut down DACA, which allows this young man to go to school in the only country he has ever known, and they want to shut down the DAPA Program, which the President has instituted to try to protect the parents of those who have been here at least 5 years.

If they have their way, this young man will be deported to Senegal, a country where he hasn't lived since he was a little boy. Will America be better, if we get rid of folks such as him? Will it be a better country if we tear families apart? I don't think so.

Instead of trying to deport DREAMers and moms and dads, congressional Republicans should work with us to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill to fix our broken immigration system. The estimates are wide-ranging as to how many young people there are in America like Yannick. Some say 1.5 million. Some say 2.5 million. I have met so many of them.

It wasn't that long ago that we had a bill on the floor of the Senate, and that entire Gallery was filled with young DREAMers. They came wearing caps and gowns—that was their decision—to make the point that they are students—students who are learning and trying to improve their lives to be better and to be a better part of America.

That bill was defeated that day. It broke my heart. I went to meet with them afterwards, and I said to them: Don't give up. Don't give up on me, because I am not giving up on you.

I got started on this battle 15 years ago—15 years ago—when I met a young Korean girl in Chicago who was brought here at the age of 2 and who was a musical prodigy. She had been accepted at the Juilliard School of music, the Manhattan conservatory of music, but she was afraid she couldn't go. She was undocuments. Her mom and dad brought her here to this country at the age of 2, and they never filed the papers.

She grew up in a very poor family, but she went into the Merit Music Program in Chicago and became an accomplished musician. It was because of her that I started and introduced the DREAM Act.

There is good news. She went on to the Manhattan conservatory of music. A generous family in Chicago paid for it because she couldn't get any assistance.

She married a young man, became an American citizen, and played in Carnegie Hall. She is now pursuing her Ph.D. in music. Is America better because of that? Yes, it is. I have no doubt that it is.

Those who don't see the promise in the eyes of these young people and don't see what they can bring to America have forgotten who we are. We are a nation of immigrants. We are a nation that has allowed young people such as these a chance to succeed.

One of them happened to be my mother. My mother was brought here at the age of 2 by a mother who didn't speak English. My mother grew up in this country and raised a family, and I was one of the kids. Here I stand on the floor of the Senate. That is my story. That is my family's story. It is America's story.

The people who show such loathing for these young people and what they mean to us have forgotten that. They have ignored that. Let's rekindle our faith in what makes America great—our diversity, the ambition of young people such as Yannick, and the determination of our generation to open a door to give them a chance to prove themselves to make us better. That is what we are called on to do.

All the petty politics aside, we are talking about human lives and about an opportunity for this young man and so many others to prove to us what they can do for the future of America.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you had to characterize the current Congress with one symbol, I would tell you what I think it should be: an extension cord—you know what I mean?—an extension cord you use at home if the plug doesn't quite reach the outlet.

Why would I pick an extension cord? Because this year, under the leadership

in Congress, all we have been doing is extending things a little bit—just a little bit—when we have to.

The Department of Homeland Security appropriation, one of the most important when it comes to the security and safety of the United States, had to be extended and extended and extended, sadly because many in the House wanted to fight the battle of immigration over that bill. Eventually, we prevailed and passed the appropriation after extension and after extension.

Then 2 weeks ago, here on the floor of the Senate, we extended the Federal highway trust fund. What is that? That is a fund where we collect gas taxes every time a gallon of gas is purchased and put it in a fund and then build highways and bridges. We count on that. It used to be a glorious program.

The inspiration for that program was President Dwight David Eisenhower. In the 1950s, President Eisenhower, who had come back from leading America to victory in World War II, remembered what he saw. He saw in Europe, particularly in Germany, an amazing highway system that did not exist in the United States. So President Eisenhower said: We need an interstate highway system in America. It was a bold idea—that the Federal Government would lead in creating an interstate highway system to link every corner of our Nation.

There is not a State that I know of, certainly not in my State, where the interstate highway system hasn't had a dramatic positive impact on the economy. So with the Federal highway trust fund, we built the interstate highway system, we extended the highway system, and now we are in the process of making bridges safer, making certain the highways are extended where they need to be to keep businesses thriving and to create new businesses and jobs in America.

But along comes a group in Congress, a conservative group, that says this is all wrong. Some of them question whether the Federal Government should even have a role in transportation. For them, I have three words: Dwight David Eisenhower, Republican President, who showed the way. Some say it is just impossible to figure out how to fund the building of highways. Well, we have done pretty well so far with the Federal gas tax that is collected. Clearly, we need to look to other forms of revenue. But do we need to give up on the Federal highway program?

Two weeks ago on the floor of the Senate we had the 33rd short-term extension of that program. What it means is we extended it this time for 60 days.

The Federal highway program used to be a 6-year program. Why was it 6 years? Think about the planning, the engineering, acquiring land and building a highway. You can't do it in 60 days, not 6 months, not even in a year. You have to have a commitment of

funds that are coming back to the States. In my State, in Illinois, about 75 percent of all the highway construction comes from Federal funds. So when we do short-term extensions, it really says to the States that they can't count on us.

This money will run out at the end of July. Maybe we will extend it again, maybe we won't. Is that any way to run a nation? Is that any way to run a transportation system—again, using the extension cord example, this time for 60 days?

Just a week or so ago, we had another effort on the floor of the Senate here to extend the PATRIOT Act—FISA—which keeps America safe and gives us the power to ferret out those who threaten us. The suggestion was made by the majority leader that we extend it for a few days—a few days. This has become a pattern, and it is a troubling pattern.

One aspect of this that is particularly troublesome is that at the end of June, unless there is a sincere bipartisan effort, we are going to lose the Export-Import Bank. I have heard a lot of speeches in the Senate about how the United States businesses, especially small businesses, are really the backbone of our economy. Oh, we all give those speeches. As these businesses grow and expand, they often look to foreign exports.

We know that every \$1 billion in new export sales supports at least 6,000 new jobs in this country. So every opportunity to export U.S. products helps communities and families. The primary Federal program that allows most of these very small businesses to export is about to expire. It is about to expire at the end of this month.

The Export-Import Bank provides financing insurance so that U.S. companies, many of them very small, can compete in the global economy. Here is how it works. The Export-Import Bank makes loans to firms exporting American-made goods. This allows businesses, including 3,340 small businesses across the United States, to sell their goods and services to businesses all over the world. They support about 164,000 jobs.

More than 100 of these companies are located in Illinois, and more than 80 of them are small. The Export-Import Bank supports \$27.4 billion in exports. And guess what. It doesn't cost the taxpayers a penny. It actually makes money—money that is returned to the U.S. Treasury for other purposes or to reduce our debt. Over the past two decades—20 years—the Export-Import Bank has returned \$7 billion to the U.S. Treasury. It is a moneymaker. It goes directly to deficit reduction.

One of the companies the Bank helped is the NOW Health Group in Bloomingdale, IL. It is a natural food and supplement manufacturer with 640 employees, 35 of whom work in exports. According to their chief operating officer, Jim Emme, "the flexibility in the payment terms we can offer through