

I am also disappointed that the House's visa waiver language was accepted—rather than Senator FEINSTEIN's language that I supported.

But in the end, that is what a compromise is—and that is what it means to negotiate and to govern.

I want to praise Senator REID, Leader PELOSI, Senator MIKULSKI, and all of my fellow Democrats who fought so hard to make this the best agreement we could reach. I also praise their Republican counterparts.

I believe this is a good deal for the American people. It is good for our families, our children, our economy, and our environment, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to move forward with the Senate language on the Toxic Substances Control Act, TSCA, which has been a difficult, multiyear odyssey.

I did this for two reasons. First, the bill has been vastly improved over the original bill, which in my opinion would have been harmful to our families because it overrode our State laws and set up an ineffective and nonexistent way to regulate most toxic pollutants. Secondly, I have been assured that, as the House and Senate bills are merged into one, the voices of those who have been most deeply affected—including nurses, breast cancer survivors, asbestos victims, and children—will be heard. I will have the opportunity to be in the room at every step and express their views.

This is very important to me because the history of this bill has been so contentious. I want to assure my colleagues, my home State of California, and the people of this Nation that I will stay intimately involved as the bill moves forward, and I will share my views openly. I look forward to the work ahead, and I am optimistic that we can reach a fair and just conclusion.

THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF LIGHT AND LIGHT-BASED TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, as the year comes to a close, I would like to highlight a proclamation from the U.N. General Assembly recognizing 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light-Based Technologies. This global initiative is aimed at raising awareness of the vital role of light in our daily lives and its importance to 21st century technology and innovation. For centuries, light has transcended all boundaries from geography and gender, to age, culture, and race.

For centuries, light-based technologies have provided solutions to worldwide challenges in energy, agriculture, telecommunications, security, and health. To start, light has revolutionized medicine through technologies such as x ray imaging, laser surgery, and cancer treatments. Light has

transformed international communication via the Internet, a tool we cannot imagine living without today. It has helped us improve safety through sensors in cars and aircraft, advanced infrastructure monitoring, and weather prediction. Furthermore, light has helped millions around the globe work, study, and play after dark through low-cost and sustainable light sources for families who do not have access to grid electricity. From agriculture to forensics to virtual reality, light and light-based technologies continue to fuel innovations and improvements that touch nearly every aspect of lives around the world.

In fact, the science of light is becoming increasingly critical in growing our economy and keeping American manufacturing competitive on a global scale. The contribution of light-based technologies to our economy starts with fundamental optics and photonics education and research. Look no further than the work being done in my home State at Delaware State University's Optical Science Center for Applied Research, OSCAR, where researchers are developing new detectors for night vision technologies, methods for determining the composition of complex materials, and technologies with applications in space exploration, to name just a few. These economic contributions continue with investments in manufacturing to increase the development and production of new optics and photonics applications and technologies, a market that supports more than 7.4 million jobs and \$3 trillion in annual revenue in the United States.

The transformative value of light-based technologies was reaffirmed earlier this summer with the establishment of the American Institute for Manufacturing Integrated Photonics, AIM Photonics, as part of the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation. Continued investment in public-private partnerships like AIM Photonics accelerates research and development that leads to technologies like integrated photonic components and circuits. This vital work helps ensure that breakthroughs in related fields like biophotonics, high-resolution imaging, next generation wireless communications, and quantum computing will not only occur, but also be built right here in America.

The International Year of Light is also a real opportunity to provide the general public with a better understanding of the science of light; promote STEM education; and inspire the next generation of scientists, researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs. This past year, optics and photonics organizations have held events around the United States such as the Light for a Better World symposium held in September in Washington, DC, that featured two Nobel prize winners as keynote speakers, Dr. Eric Betzig and Dr. Shuji Nakamura. In October, the University of Delaware also hosted Green

Light: Prospects in Lighting Design and Technology, which brought together artists and scientists from around the world, while other groups across the country have hosted similar symposia through local sections and student chapters of organizations. Events such as these provide public outreach on the importance of optics and photonics, promote youth interest and engagement in science, and educate us all on the crucial role that light-based technologies play in the U.S. economy and in everyday life.

Events like these have been happening not just here in the United States, but all over the world throughout 2015. Across the globe, events have been organized to learn more about the science of light and to celebrate the innovation and imagination that has fueled incredible discoveries and inventions. The storied history of innovation in light dates back to the first studies of optics 1,000 years ago and continues today with breakthroughs in the field of optical communications.

These activities would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of people in the optics and photonics field, both in industry and in academia. This includes the optics and photonics based societies and organizations that have sponsored the initiative, including the Optical Society, the American Institute of Physics, the American Physical Society, the European Physical Society, the German Physical Society, the Abdus Salam International Centre of Theoretical Physics, the IEEE Photonics Society, the Institute of Physics, Light: Science and Applications, Lightsources.org, 1001 Inventions, and the International Society for Optics and Photonics. In fact, the International Year of Light has been endorsed by the International Council of Science, as well as several international scientific unions and professional societies, and has more than 100 partners from over 85 countries.

By highlighting the critical role light plays in our everyday lives and its unique potential to improve the world in ways we cannot yet imagine, celebrating the International Year of Light provides a valuable opportunity to inspire, educate, and connect all of those who are fighting to make the world even brighter. From scientific societies to educational institutions to trade groups, from nonprofit organizations to private sector partners, the global community has recognized 2015 as the International Year of Light not only to commemorate achievements past, but also to set the stage for technologies of the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE CRAWFORD-SEBASTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, it is my honor to congratulate the

Crawford-Sebastian Community Development Council, CSCDC, on its 50th anniversary of providing critical help for the people of western Arkansas. Since 1965, this community action agency has administered a wide range of Federal programs that help with housing, utilities, food and other basic needs.

This agency does not just process paperwork; it alleviates hunger, provides shelter, and gives hope to more than 50,000 Arkansans annually.

I have always been struck by the great kindness and care that the staff at the CSCDC provides. The team, including 1,600 volunteers, is passionate about helping people and improving the community. They consistently look for new ways to improve their services, and I am grateful for their tireless efforts to support the homeless, families facing difficult times, and those who are seeking to improve their lives.

I have had many opportunities to see their work in person, including helping a family celebrate their new home through the self-help housing program. The CSCDC is a leader in providing counseling for first-time and low-income home buyers and creating homes hand-in-hand with them that will stand the test of time. It also quietly helps those in greatest need each day with services such as utility assistance, emergency food, and a no-cost dental clinic.

This year, the CSCDC has proven that it intends to remain a leader in community support for many years to come. This agency joined efforts to create the new Hope Campus in Fort Smith, AR, that brings together a number of nonprofits and services for the homeless in one place. It is a place of hope, healing, and opportunity.●

TRIBUTE TO MARK GOLLINGER

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to honor Mark Gollinger for his faithful devotion to the veterans of Butte-Silver Bow, MT. Mark has tirelessly served countless veterans over the years by serving as a liaison between veterans and veteran providers.

Mark is a U.S. Navy retired senior chief who now runs the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, DVOP, from the Butte Job Service. One of the chief responsibilities of his position is communicating with veterans in the area and keeping them informed of what is happening around the community. Some of his most recent efforts have included free tax preparation for veterans and Active-Duty military members, virtual career fairs with the Forest Service, and a career mini-summit.

Mark also hosts a quarterly veteran service provider, VSP, meetings in Butte, at which presentations are given with information to help veterans learn more about the providers in the area, in addition to sharing any other relevant information for veterans.

As a strong advocate for ensuring our veterans are cared and provided for, it is my honor to have someone like Mark

Gollinger call Montana home. I am grateful for his exceptional work and look forward to hearing about the continued impact he is having in the Butte community.●

TRIBUTE TO GORDON BURGESS

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Tangipahoa Parish president Gordon Burgess. Gordon has selflessly served nearly 30 years as Tangipahoa's first and only parish president.

A graduate of Southern Arkansas University, Burgess served 2 years in the Nike Missile Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battery of the U.S. Army, as well as 4 years on Active Reserve in the National Guard. Following his service, Gordon owned and operated a successful oil service company for more than 20 years before becoming Tangipahoa Parish president in 1986. Gordon and his wife Margaret are both members of the First Baptist Church in Independence, LA, where he serves as a deacon and she in the music ministry.

As a staunch fiscal conservative, Gordon has fought to reduce taxes and to live with a balanced budget by implementing his now famous "pay as you go" approach. When first elected Tangipahoa Parish president, Gordon inherited a parish government nearly \$12 million in the red. Under his leadership, all of that debt has been paid off, and 19 separate property taxes totaling over \$96 million have been eliminated.

During his eight terms in office, Gordon strengthened Tangipahoa's highway system, upgraded the drainage systems, built new governmental facilities, and invested in a higher quality health system for his Parish's citizens.

Gordon's public service extends well beyond Tangipahoa Parish to State and Federal levels. His experience and vision have led to an appointment on Louisiana's Commerce and Industry Board and the Louisiana Police Jury Executive Board. On the Federal level, he serves as vice president of the Zachary Taylor Parkway Association.

Gordon is also an honorary cochairman and committee member of America's Wetland Storm Warning IV Committee. He is a member of the Louisiana Federal Property Advisory Board, a member of Parishes Against Coastal Erosion, the Amite Rotary Club, the Hammond Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Ponchatoula and Amite Area chambers. Additionally he is a member of the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association.

I am pleased to hereby honor parish president Gordon Burgess on his commitment to providing invaluable public service to the people of Tangipahoa Parish and the State of Louisiana.●

RECOGNIZING HARLOW'S DONUTS AND BAKERY

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, behind each of the millions of small businesses

in the United States, there is an entrepreneur who is willing to put in the hard work necessary for success. In the heart of Pineville, LA, Roy W. Burr, Sr., exemplified this commitment by dedicating over 30 years to growing and maintaining this week's Small Business of the Week, Harlow's Donut and Bakery.

Harlow's Donut and Bakery has been a staple in Pineville since opening its doors in 1972. When Roy W. Burr, Sr., took over in 1984, he was determined to maintain the bakery's name and good reputation. With no prior experience in the food industry, Roy would regularly begin making donuts at 2:30 in the morning. In the decades since, three generations of Burrs have created an environment where locals could start their mornings with hot coffee and a fresh pastry, while catching up with their friends and neighbors. Harlow's Bakery is widely recognized as a staple in the community in large part due to the Burr family treating both their employees and customers as members of their extended family.

Over the years, Harlow's Donut and Bakery has been awarded statewide and national accolades. In 2011, Harlow's was featured as a Travelocity Local Secret, Big Find and more recently was honored by the North Rapides Business and Industry Alliance as a Small Business of the Month in March 2015.

This past November, Roy W. Burr, Sr., passed away after running Harlow's for over 30 years. In remembrance of Roy and his dedication to the Pineville community, Harlow's Donut and Bakery is officially recognized as Small Business of the Week.●

RECOGNIZING WETLAND RESOURCES, LLC

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, restoring, protecting, and preserving our vulnerable coastal habitats remain among the most important priorities for those of us in Louisiana. Coastal erosion has reduced our Nation's largest marsh by more than 2,000 square miles since 1930. We need to work toward effective solutions combating coastal erosion because it affects our homes, businesses, and daily lives. That is why I would like to recognize Wetland Resources, LLC, of Tickfaw, LA, as Small Business of the Week.

The threat of natural disaster will always remain for those of us living in Louisiana, and it is well known that coastal restoration goes hand-in-hand with storm protection. In the 10 years since Hurricane Katrina, which flooded 80 percent of New Orleans and displaced thousands across the country, we as a State have made great strides to protect our homes and communities, and our future is brighter than ever. But we are not done yet.

Husband and wife team Gary Shaffer and Demetra Kandelepas of Wetland Resources have stepped up to play a major role in coastal restoration and in