

cases, and then they are going to pick up in intensity and number this summer. We also know—and the announcement will be made soon—that there are pregnant women in the United States who have been infected by the Zika virus.

The obvious question is this: Are we doing everything we should be doing to protect America?

Sadly, the answer is no, we are not.

Two months ago, President Obama said to the Congress: I need a supplemental emergency appropriation to deal with this threat. He asked for \$1.9 billion. They want to monitor the Zika virus and how it is traveling across the United States. They want to monitor those who have already been infected. They want to develop a vaccine that we can take that will protect us in the future.

From where I am standing, I can't think of a single public health challenge in America as great as this Zika virus at this moment. One would think that the Congress, now that they know the facts, would have moved instantly to provide the money to the President—this emergency supplemental appropriation of \$1.9 billion. But the answer is they have done nothing. The leaders in the House and in the Senate have done nothing to provide emergency funds to this administration to deal with this public health emergency.

It is so bad that this week a Republican leader in the House announced publicly that he didn't see any emergency. He thinks we may get around to an appropriation for this in October. Well, I don't know what his lifestyle is like, but in the Midwest we have a tendency to get out on the patio and have barbecues and invite our friends and neighbors over. We worry about mosquitoes. It doesn't start in October. It starts now. I don't know if this Republican Congressman plans on sending a memo to the mosquitoes across America saying: no buzzing and biting until October when we get around to this. It won't work.

This has been declared an emergency by not only the President but by the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Why aren't we acting? Why aren't we doing something? We should be doing something.

We are going to leave today. This afternoon we will vote and go home. We will be back in probably 10 or 11 days. Maybe then the Republican leadership in the House and Senate will decide this is an emergency that needs a response. The numbers will start coming in—the number of people across America who are facing this virus—and the concern among American families is going to grow. This is not just an irritation. This is a danger to many people and certainly to women who could be pregnant. This is something we ought to be taking extremely seriously. We have been waiting for 2 months for this Congress to respond with an emergency appropriation to do something.

I have called on the leadership in the Senate this week, and I will continue to do so today and when we return. There is no excuse. God forbid this gets worse and we look back and say: We waited too long; we didn't respond.

Let me add one other thing. The only suggestion we have heard from the Republican side is this: Let's take some of the money we set aside to fight Ebola in Africa and use it for this purpose.

I talked to Dr. Friedman about that. He said: It is true; there has been a real drop in the number of Ebola cases.

Ebola is a deadly disease in West Africa and other places, and we worried about it coming to the United States. He said that we are still learning about how this disease travels.

There was a man who was cured after being diagnosed with Ebola in Africa, and they just learned that a year after he was cured, he transmitted the disease by sexual contact to another person. Even when we think we have cured and solved it, there is still a danger.

Let's make sure that we treat all of these public health hazards for what they are—dangerous to the United States and dangerous to our families. God forbid that something terrible happen. I hope it doesn't. Let's do our job here on Capitol Hill. When the President says we need resources to fight this, we do. I hope we move on it very quickly when we return.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, immigration is an issue which divides America. You only have to tune into the Presidential debate to hear it. Most everyone would agree that the immigration system in America is broken. I believe it is. I was part of an effort with some colleagues to try to come up with a comprehensive immigration reform bill, which passed the Senate 3 years ago by a vote of 68 to 32. We worked long and hard on that bill. We brought this bipartisan bill to the Senate, and it passed with an overwhelming majority. The House refused to consider the measure. Speaker Boehner never called it to the floor. The bill we passed never ever got a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives, and so here we sit today with the same broken immigration system.

Let me tell you that one part of that is very important to me and to many of my colleagues. Fifteen years ago I introduced a bill called the DREAM Act. The genesis of that bill—as I have said on the floor many times and will quickly repeat—began after we got a call in my Chicago office from a Korean American woman who had a daughter who was a musical prodigy. She was an amazing pianist and had been accepted at two of the best music schools in America. She was filling out her application and asked her mom: What do I put down for my nationality or citizenship. Her mom said: I don't know. When we brought you here, Tereza, you were 2 years old and came

here on a visitor's visa. I never filed any more papers. So I don't know. The daughter said: What are we going to do? The mom said: We are going to call Durbin's office.

So they called our office and we said: Let us check the law.

The law was very clear. This 18-year-old girl, brought here at the age of 2, under American law had to leave the United States for 10 years and apply to come back in. Does that sound right? When she was 2 years old, she had no voice in the decision to come to America, no voice in the decision of filing papers. Yet our law basically told her to leave.

That is when I introduced the DREAM Act. It says that if you are brought here under the age of 16, complete high school, no serious criminal issues in your background, we will give you a chance. We will give you a path to become legal and ultimately become a citizen. That is what the DREAM Act is.

We haven't passed that bill. We have passed it maybe once in the Senate, once in the House but never brought it together to be sent to the President. This President, Barack Obama, was my fellow Senator from Illinois for 2 years and he cosponsored the DREAM Act.

So a few years ago, I joined in a letter to the President, with Senator Dick Lugar, a Republican from Indiana, and said to him: Help us protect these young people from being deported until we can finally pass comprehensive immigration reform or the DREAM Act. The President listened and did it. He created what is known as DACA. What DACA says is, if you are such a young person, you may step forward, register with the government, submit yourself to a criminal background check, pay a several-hundred-dollar filing fee, and then we will give you temporary protection from deportation. Then, 2 years later, 3 years later, you have to re-apply—go through the same process—pay a fee and do it again.

As it turned out, 700,000 young people, who were in the same situation as the Korean girl I mentioned from Chicago, have applied for this DACA protection so they can stay here on a temporary basis and go to school, work, and be a part of the United States. There is no guarantee they will ever become permanently legal or citizens—I hope they will—but at least they are protected on a temporary basis.

Two years later, the President said: If you are in a family where one of the kids in the house is an American citizen or here legally in the United States as a permanent resident, we are going to give parents the same opportunity to register with the government, to go through a criminal background check, to pay their fee to the government, then to be given a temporary work permit to work in the United States. That is known as DAPA. So we have DACA and DAPA. It is currently being challenged in the Supreme Court.

I went over for the argument before the Supreme Court last week. The State of Texas and 25 other States have challenged this saying it will create benefits for these individuals under DACA and DAPA that will cost the States money. It turns out, the whole story is that once these people are working in the United States and paying taxes, the State of Texas and all the other States are going to make quite a bit more money off these workers when they actually are required to pay taxes, as they should. So this economic argument doesn't go too far.

The point I have tried to make to my colleagues in the Senate, as long as I have been here and as long as I have had this opportunity to talk about the DREAM Act, is that they ought to take a moment, stop listening to the Presidential debates, and just pay attention to the lives which are at stake in this conversation.

I have come to the floor quite a few times to talk about young people who would be helped if the DREAM Act became the law of the land. This morning I am going to introduce Cynthia Sanchez to those who are watching.

Cynthia Sanchez is another young person who is living in the United States and is undocumented. She was brought here at the age of 7 from Mexico. She grew up in Denver, CO. She was an excellent student. In high school, Cynthia was a member of the National Honor Society and made the President's honor roll every semester with a 4.0 grade point average. I wish I could say the same about my high school experience.

Cynthia was vice president and co-president of the Student Council. She volunteered as a peer mediator and volunteered at the local library. She went on to attend the University of Denver where she received lots of awards and scholarships and was an active volunteer.

For the record, undocumented young people like Cynthia receive no Federal assistance to go to college—no Pell grants, no government loans. They have to find a way to pay for it. They can't use any government benefits to move forward with their education.

She was a member of a student organization called the Pioneer Leadership Program. She helped to develop Denver University Senior Connect, an organization to help raise awareness about the needs of senior citizens.

As a member of the Volunteers in Partnership Program, Cynthia organized workshops at high schools and middle schools with low-income and minority student populations. She helped the students fill out their college applications and write scholarship essays, and she brought the students to visit her campus at the University of Denver.

She graduated in 2010 with a degree in cognitive neuroscience, which is a double major in psychology and biology, and she even minored in chemistry on top of that.

Because of her immigration status—and despite the fact that she had this amazing college experience and was academically successful and had this important degree—she couldn't find a job. She wasn't even able to volunteer at a local hospital because she lacked a Social Security number, being undocumented.

I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you.

Cynthia's dream to become a doctor was on hold because of her immigration status. Only nine schools told her she might be able to apply and be considered as an undocumented student. Two years after graduating, Cynthia was working as a nanny and questioning whether all the hard work and time in school was wasted.

Cynthia cried as President Obama made the announcement about creating DACA. She realized she was going to be given a chance. She applied for DACA immediately. She was approved in the summer of 2013. By September, Cynthia was working at Northwestern University in Chicago doing clinical research in the Department of Medicine's Division of Cardiology. Her research focuses on improving treatment options for patients facing heart failure.

She sent me a letter, and this is what she said:

DACA has meant a new realm of opportunities for me, it has opened new doors for me, and it has allowed me to once again see my dream as a reality. I truly believe that if those opposed to DACA or the DREAM Act had the chance to sit down and meet undocumented students, their opinions might change. They would see capable, smart, hard-working individuals who are Americans in every sense of the word, love this country and want to contribute to its prosperity. After all, this is our home.

Cynthia and the other DREAMers have a lot to give to America. Like many Americans who have come to this country, they are willing to sacrifice. They are willing to go to the back of the line. All they are asking for is a chance.

I urge my colleagues—particularly my Republican colleagues—to join us in doing the right thing for these DREAMers, doing the right thing for Cynthia, and thousands of others who are just asking for a chance to make America a better nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, the fight against muscular dystrophy is a cause I have championed since my days in the House of Representatives. My fight against Duchenne muscular dystrophy began when a parent told me about his son's diagnosis with the disease.

This parent refused to accept that there was no hope. The House and Senate agreed with the MD-CARE Act and, since that time, the life expectancy of the average Duchenne muscular dystrophy patient has increased by a full decade. This is progress we have made on behalf of sick people whose lives were threatened, and this is an example of government at its best.

On Monday of this week, I saw the same devotion in the hundreds of Duchenne families who attended a meeting of the advisers of the Food and Drug Administration. The meeting's attendance broke records. I thank the FDA for making the appropriate accommodations to handle a crowd of this size. Some 11,000 people also tuned in remotely, watching the meeting via live stream.

Monday's gathering was about what could be the first disease-modifying therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. For more than 3 hours, the advisory committee heard from parents, doctors, and patients about the drug's impact on their lives. The stories were heartfelt and hopeful, reinforcing the importance of patient engagement in the drug approval process. The dedication of the Duchenne community continues to set an example for advocates of other rare diseases.

Patient voices should be part of the drug review process, and I am glad to see the FDA is implementing greater stakeholder involvement in this process. This was one of the goals of the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act, which Congress passed in 2012. It continues to be a goal of my Patient-Focused Impact Assessment Act, introduced last year, which would require FDA to share how they use feedback from patients and advocates in the drug approval process.

Unfortunately, the advisory committee decided this week not to recommend the approval of the first Duchenne drug. This is disappointing news for me and for thousands of Duchenne families, even those who might not benefit directly from this drug but from other advancements that could stem from it.

Before a final decision is made next month, I hope the FDA will take into consideration the perspectives of Duchenne patients and parents. The individuals fighting the good fight every day are "the real experts," to quote Austin Leclair, who suffers from Duchenne and has experienced increased mobility because of the drug. People like Austin have a life-threatening disease now. They don't have much time.

No matter the outcome of the FDA's decision next month, I will continue to fight the good fight on behalf of those with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. In the 15 years since I introduced the MD-CARE, I have learned that small wins can lead to big victories.

MD-CARE was the first Federal law to focus on muscular dystrophy. It helped set in motion the research and