

I believe the same win-win-win arrangement will be possible through this approach. It would be very appropriate that the now second President Bush, who as a candidate for President indicated his sensitivity to the importance of the coast, the environment, and the economic relationship of those in my State and in the eastern Gulf of Mexico planning area and indicated that he would use his influence to provide protection—there is no better form of protection that can be provided than that which is sought by this amendment and that which was achieved by his father's efforts in the area south of the 26th latitude.

There have been some who have suggested that these are in some way selfish moves and motivated by a desire for self-protection; that every part of the country which is a user of energy, which means every part of the country, should also be a supplier of energy; and that no part of the country should be off limits to make that contribution.

That is a fundamental misunderstanding of what the United States of America is. The United States of America is a republic of 50 States that have given to the central government certain powers to be administered under the laws that we and our colleagues in the House of Representatives pass.

The United States of America represents a common destiny, but each State has different things to contribute to that common destiny. As an example, our State provides over half the national supply of phosphate, a critical mineral, particularly for agriculture and for industrial activities. It is an activity which has been environmentally difficult for our State. I think maybe we are doing a better job today than we did in previous times. But we accept that as part of our contribution to the Nation. Nature happened to put a lot of the world's phosphate in what is now the State of Florida.

Near those phosphate mines is also grown over half the citrus that is consumed in the United States. That is a product that has great nutritional and health value. It requires a combination of climate and soil type that is uniquely found in Florida; therefore, we produce a lot of citrus.

We also, during the winter months, provide a substantial percentage of all the fresh fruits and vegetables consumed in the eastern U.S. We are a major fisheries State. We are the largest State for tourism, and we have the highest percentage of Americans who move to retire to someplace other than where they had lived. Florida receives more of those retirees than any other State. So we make a substantial number of contributions to America.

On the other side, we don't have much energy. Historically, we have not been a site where a significant amount of oil, gas, coal, or other major energy sources have been found. We even have difficulty with things that people find. Surprisingly, we are not a particularly

good State for wind power because the winds are not reliable enough to convert it into commercial applications.

We are also a State which has not benefited by the industrial revolution, as most other States have. We were a State that did not have the essential qualities that the industrial revolution required. Energy access to certain raw materials, such as iron ore, cheap transportation systems in proximity to markets—none of those were true in Florida in the 19th century. Therefore, we largely were passed over in the industrial revolution.

So every State has its own strengths, weaknesses, and contributions. I believe one of the synergies which makes America a great place is that we recognize that and, collectively, we have almost a bounty of everything that humans would like to have. It just happens to be distributed over a continental landmass of the United States of America.

What Florida has particularly contributed, and what the eastern planning area of the Gulf of Mexico includes, is beautiful waters, pristine beaches, areas that contribute substantially to the economy, while at the same time protecting the environment. The principal threat to that environment today is the potential of developing inappropriate oil and gas production, and that we might suffer some accident that would result in damage to those critically important parts of our State.

This amendment I am offering, I believe, stands the test of being fair to all parties—fair to the oil and gas companies by giving them a voluntary election, a means by which they can recapture past expenses in the form of credits that they can use for required future expenses, balanced insofar as protecting the economy and the environment of the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and will meet the same kind of national standards as the first President George Bush did when he led the way to eliminate 600 square miles of oil and gas leases off the Florida Keys and the southwest coast of my State.

This is an opportunity that I hope we will grasp as part of this energy bill. I recognize there are, in a parliamentary sense, other amendments that will be considered prior to this. We will be taking a vote tomorrow on a cloture motion, which could further affect the procedure for consideration of amendments. But I am committed that the Congress will have an opportunity to consider this approach, which I think brings such value and security to our Nation and to our future environment and economy.

I appreciate this opportunity to outline this proposal. At the appropriate time, I look forward to calling this amendment before the Senate.

Mr. President, I 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. BINGAMAN. 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. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill S. 517.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business and that Senators be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

• Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, now that Secretary of State Colin Powell has concluded his recent diplomatic mission to Israel and the Middle East, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on recent events in the region. There are many opinions about the most effective approach to the current crisis, but I believe the Bush administration's renewed emphasis on ending the violence and reaching a negotiated settlement is a positive development.

As America properly takes steps to defend our Nation's vital economic and security interests in the region, though, we must be mindful that Israel is a sovereign nation with a responsibility to defend the safety and security of its citizens. After suffering dozens of deadly attacks aimed at innocent civilians during the last 18 months, I believe Israel has every right to take steps, including military action, to neutralize Palestinian terrorists that Yasser Arafat and the PLO have been unable or unwilling to detain. I would expect no less from our Nation and it is unfair to ask any less from Israel. The United States endured some international criticism for our anti-terrorism campaign in Afghanistan and I would expect a special empathy by the U.S. Government toward Israel as it faces similar criticism today.

I am optimistic that the current military operation in the West Bank will curb the violence so that the peace process can proceed in a meaningful way. To achieve a final settlement, all interested parties will be required to make painful and difficult choices in the weeks and months ahead. I believe Israel has demonstrated its willingness and ability over time to live up to its commitments and responsibilities to exist peacefully with its neighbors.

Unfortunately, the lack of leadership and vision exhibited by the Palestinian Authority in recent years has, in my estimation, prevented the Palestinian people from achieving liberation and attaining the hopes and dreams they

deserve. Let's hope Chairman Arafat fully appreciates the precarious nature of his current position and how the choices he makes in the immediate future will determine what role he will play in future peace negotiations.

I want to conclude, by expressing my profound sadness for the tragic loss of life that has befallen both Israelis and Palestinians in this conflict. As a person of faith, I value the inherent dignity of every human being and believe all interested parties have a responsibility to actively pursue the benefits of peace and freedom. It is my sincere hope that through strong leadership and determination, the next generation of Israeli and Palestinian children will be able to focus on building a prosperous future instead of on the carnage and destruction of the past.●

EVERY DAY IS EARTH DAY IN OREGON

● Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I come to the floor today on the occasion of Earth Day, which was first officially recognized 32 years ago. I can assure you, however, that the spirit of Earth Day has been in bold practice for generations in my home State of Oregon, where the words of John Jay ring true: "this land and these people were made for each other."

What is unique about Oregon is that, for so many, there is a profound connection between the products and comforts of our daily lives and where those products ultimately came from. In Oregon, it is difficult to forget that the wood our homes are built of came first from a forest, a forest that was harvested and has since been regenerated. We know that the food we buy for our families at grocery stores came first from a farm, a farm most likely owned and operated by another family not unlike our own. Oregonians can easily remember these things because the forests and the farms are not in some distant region, they are right down the road.

Down those countryside and mountain roads, you will find Oregon's first and finest environmentalists: generations of fishers, farmers and foresters who learned long ago that Oregon's rich natural resources could be perpetually sustained through careful stewardship and innovation.

Down one of those roads, near The Dalles, you will find the Baileys, who were recently given the American Farmland Trust's Steward of the Land Award. The Bailey's orchard was established in 1923, and successive members of the Bailey family have continued to use the latest research and technology to minimize the farm's impact on the land and water. The Baileys initiated an Integrated Fruit Production program for their trees, which includes efficient and responsible pest management, irrigation practices and control of weeds without residual herbicides.

They have also been strong advocates of preserving farmland and agricultural

communities. For the Baileys and so many others, the values of the farm go far beyond the safe and affordable food they provide, but also extends to the scenic open space, wildlife habitat and filters for clean air and water that the farm provides.

The growing awareness of those values has finally reached the policy-makers in this country. I am eager and hopeful that a balanced agreement on this year's Farm Bill will include a landmark commitment to cost-share and incentive payments for farm stewardship practices, as outlined in the Harkin-Smith Conservation Security Act. When that investment is made, we will have taken a bold step toward recognizing and rewarding all the Baileys of this country, and ensuring that there are many more to come.●

FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY EDUCATION PROGRAM'S NATIONAL FLAGSHIP LANGUAGE INITIATIVE

● Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to request full funding for the Foreign Language Assistance Program, FLAP, which has been cut from the President's fiscal year 2003 budget and for the National Security Education Program's, NSEP, National Flagship Language Initiative. These two programs would enhance the foreign language capabilities of this Nation at a time when foreign language proficiency plays a critical role in maintaining our national security. The security, stability, and economic vitality of the United States depend on American citizens knowledgeable about the world. To become so, we need to encourage knowledge of foreign languages and cultures.

Unfortunately, the United States faces a critical shortage of language proficient professionals throughout Federal agencies. The inability of law enforcement officers, intelligence officers, scientists, military personnel, and other federal employees to decipher and interpret information from foreign sources, as well as interact with foreign nationals, presents a threat to their mission and to the well being of the Nation. It is crucial that we invest in programs like the Flagship Initiative and FLAP in order to strengthen the security of the United States.

While the General Accounting Office has highlighted the Federal Government's deficiency in personnel with foreign language proficiency, the entire country became aware of this problem after the events of September 11th, when FBI Director Robert Mueller called on English-speaking Americans with professional level proficiency in Arabic and Farsi to help with the translation of documents for the ensuing investigation. To address this need, Senators DURBIN, THOMPSON, and I introduced S. 1799, the Homeland Security Education Act, and S. 1800, the Homeland Security Federal Workforce

Act. These proposals are designed to improve educational programs in science, mathematics, and foreign languages and then attract graduates possessing these critical skills to the Federal Government.

However, these legislative initiatives cannot succeed if the foundations on which they are based are not supported. Moreover, while these initiatives go a long way to help agencies recruit those possessing these critical skills, we need programs like FLAP and the Flagship Initiative to create a larger talented and proficient applicant pool to address the growing foreign language needs in the national security community.

NSEP was created in 1991 by the David L. Boren National Security Education Act, P.L. 102-183, and administers three programs to enhance foreign language education: undergraduate scholarships for study abroad, graduate fellowships, and grants to U.S. institutions of higher education. As part of its grant program, NSEP intends to implement a National Flagship Language Initiative. The Flagship Initiative would establish national and regional language programs in universities throughout the Nation. These institutions would in turn educate significant numbers of graduates, across disciplines, with advanced proficiency levels in those languages critical to our national security.

The Flagship Initiative is designed to address the urgent and growing need for higher levels of language competency among a broader cross-section of professionals, particularly for those who will join the federal workforce. The goal is to produce students with professional proficiency in critical foreign languages. Professional proficiency is considered to be at least a level 3 proficiency in listening, reading, and speaking where an individual is capable of speaking with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.

However, current foreign language programs in the United States, both Federal and academic, at best, aim toward 'limited working proficiency' which is defined as level 2. This skill level includes the ability to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements and handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope. Level 2 proficiency is generally insufficient for more complex and sophisticated work-related national security tasks.

While programs like the Flagship Initiative would make significant improvements in the country's language capabilities, university-level training alone will not meet the challenge currently before us. We must also take steps to address what foreign language experts have recommended for years—start early. The Foreign Language Assistance Program, FLAP, initiates, through competitive grants, foreign