

On balance, this is a truly excellent bill. We will be voting on it here, hopefully before the week is over. Absolutely I hope that is the case. It is very important we get these funds in place. As a result of that, we will continue this rather significant—I would call it dramatic—progress toward putting in place the capital, the resources, and the people necessary to secure our borders.

But I would point out this caveat. No matter how many people we put on the border and no matter how much capital resources we put behind this—and we are going to do whatever it takes on those two counts—you still have the issue of human nature to deal with, which is, if a Mexican is making \$5 a day and he can come to the United States and make \$50 a day and he has a family to support, he is going to come to the United States. We have to figure out a comprehensive approach which will allow somebody to come to the United States, work a job that Americans are not willing to work or we don't have enough Americans to work, and be able to do that under a guest worker program that is responsible and allow employers the capacity to be able to verify that the individual is in this country legally. That is a critical element to securing our borders and making sure we do this right.

So comprehensive reform should not be ignored. It has to be part of this whole package. But pending comprehensive reform, this bill, which we will vote on, the Homeland Security appropriations bill, is a significant, robust—actually, you could even call it dramatic—step forward in making sure our borders are secure.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, how much time do we have remaining on our side of the aisle in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority has 9½ minutes.

HELPING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I wish to say, while he is still on the Senate floor, what an outstanding job the Senator from New Hampshire, Mr. GREGG, has done in this area of homeland security and border security. I doubt there is any other Member of the Congress, House or Senate, who has done more to actually produce results.

There is very little we could be doing in the Congress, now and in the foreseeable future, more important than security for our homeland. It is an integral part of the War on Terror. It is a part of why we have not had another major attack since 9/11.

Once again, the Senator from New Hampshire has shown real leadership. He has produced a bill we have to have this year, to provide the appropriations for this important Department and the agencies within it and to put funding in it for border security. This is a

major achievement. No matter what else we get accomplished this week, this will probably be, overall, the most important. I thank him for it.

I have been very involved in the reform of FEMA because I have seen how FEMA did not always have the authority and didn't have the power, if you will, didn't have the people or the money to do the job after Hurricane Katrina. This reform will help make FEMA stronger, and I believe it will be a benefit to the Department of Homeland Security.

There are a lot of those saying we should be accomplishing more. I am hoping before this week is out we will pass a major border security bill. I am hoping we will pass the Outer Continental Shelf energy package. I believe we will get Defense authorization and Defense appropriations and hopefully several other good bills.

I have never seen a Senate more paralyzed than I have seen over the past few months. There is no doubt in my mind that a conscious decision was made by the Democratic leadership January a year ago to slow-roll, obstruct, delay everything. Every time you take a week or two on a bill that should be done in a day or two, that is that many days you cannot use to do other things which need to be accomplished. But I think, rather than trying to have a list with a whole lot of things on it—little things, in many instances—it is more important to keep a focus on the big issues.

What have we done to really help the American people?

Quite often some people say, please don't pass more laws. Leave me alone; allow the private sector, allow the markets, allow us to do our job, and let the States and localities do their jobs.

I think we overemphasis sheer numbers. But I think it is important that we look at the list of what this Senate has passed this year. When you add to that the other things which we hope we will complete this week—the most effective week of a session is always right before the end of the year. I remember one night when we passed something like 67 bills after almost everybody had gone home. The Democratic and Republican leadership had a blast. We passed a lot of good legislation.

Look at what we have already done. The Patriot Act. Under the title of Homeland Security, we have taken major actions and they have made a difference in securing our country and have been a critical part of the War on Terrorism. The Patriot Act, border security, and we have funded the war on terror.

On taxes and in the budget area, once again Senator JUDD GREGG did a great job as chairman of the Budget Committee. We cut entitlements somewhat. We cut taxes by \$70 billion. Other than Homeland Security and Defense, we have basically held the line on appropriations. A lot of the credit goes to my colleague from Mississippi, Senator COCHRAN.

We passed a comprehensive energy policy bill last week. It is having a positive effect. It takes time for legislation in that area to have an effect.

We passed the Pell grants in the area of math and science competitiveness in education.

We passed lawsuit abuse reform.

In the area of health for the benefit of Americans, health information technology, it sounds as though it wouldn't make that much difference, but it is going to control costs and make information more available to the patients so they can make the right decisions for their health needs.

We have tremendous fights over judges. We have confirmed two Supreme Court judges—outstanding judges. We have confirmed 14 circuit court judges and 34 district court judges. Hopefully, we will confirm more this week. But there again, the Democrats chose to filibuster on judges—in my opinion, clearly unconstitutional. In fact, the majority leader now on almost every bill has to file cloture. Why? Because otherwise you can't get to the substance of a bill.

When you spend 30 hours on a motion to proceed to a bill which has major consequences for border security, then you know there is something wrong with the institution. Instead of us finding ways to work together, we find ways to expound and put out more hot air instead of taking action.

We have done some other things in protecting families, and also moving toward sound government.

We passed the Voting Rights Act.

I am here today for some reasons and for efforts that are not listed on this board. One year ago, I was standing on this floor pleading with my colleagues to help us in dealing with the aftermath of the biggest natural disaster to ever hit this country. We tend to forget about it. But most of last fall we spent on passing in a bipartisan, bicameral way Katrina relief legislation. We passed major appropriations. I am not talking about a few millions. I am talking about well over \$100 billion.

When we came back from the August recess, instead of going to some of the things that were scheduled—such as repeal of the death tax—we went immediately to Katrina legislation. But in providing appropriations, in providing tax incentives for businesses and industries to rebuild, to stay in the area, or come to the area to help us recover, we did that.

Medicaid changes—we allowed the States of Louisiana and Mississippi to cope with the great increase in the number of people who needed Medicaid assistance; assistance through that bill to help many of our hospitals that were primary care hospitals. They treated everybody who showed up. It ran into hundreds of millions of dollars.

And right across the board, we have Stafford Act changes in the law, help for our schools and colleges. All of our schools in Mississippi were back and

open by November 7. In many instances, they were in pretty dilapidated facilities, without air conditioning, or temporary buildings. But every one of them opened by November 7, partially because Congress made a commitment to help them with the costs of what they had lost, to deal with the gap between what their insurance provided and what they were going to need to recover.

I am here to thank the Congress for helping us.

Have we had continued problems? Yes. Have we been disappointed in FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security and the Corps of Engineers? Yes, even though a lot of good people have done good work.

I have to admit that at the State level and the local level, we have had problems sometimes in making decisions dealing with elevation requirements, dealing with national flood insurance, and actually even distributing the money.

When you are trying to distribute \$3 billion to 17,000 people, you do not throw it out the window. You have to have a process to make sure these people actually lost their homes, or had damaged homes, and that they are going to deal fairly with their mortgage holders, that they would have a way to get their homes back in place. That process is still underway. It has been a very difficult one.

So you can be critical of what happened after Katrina, but there are a few places where a lot of credit should be given and it has not been adequately done.

The Congress did the job after Hurricane Katrina. Every committee chairman and ranking member came to our aid. The Mississippians, the Louisianians, the Texans, the Alabamians told you what our problems were. We poured our hearts out, and the Senate did its job.

Senator COCHRAN, my colleague from Mississippi, deserves enormous credit for the very calm, cool, and determined way he handled that legislation.

I am here to say thank you. When you make this list of Senate accomplishments, you must add to this list the things we did after Hurricane Katrina. The system worked. Congress did its part. For that I will be eternally grateful.

By the way, we ate up the major part of 3 months trying to make sure we were doing it right, appropriately, to help the people who needed it and to make sure it was done in an honest way.

Sure, I complained we didn't do more. I complain about the way we do things. I don't like the totally partisan political seasons we get into. We all do it and I do it. But I think that while we are doing that, we ought to take a little credit for what we did do and what we did right.

I wanted to make that point this morning.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority controls 30 minutes.

THE 109TH CONGRESS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, this is an interesting time as we end the 109th Congress, at least in that portion that will start with the recess apparently this weekend, according to the majority leader and the Speaker of the House, only to return and reconvene sometime in November to do a lot of work that was not done earlier this year. Most of the appropriations bills have not been passed, and perhaps one, maybe two, will be done this week, but the rest will be done after the election.

I know my colleague who just spoke—and others will come to the floor of the Senate and talk about how fruitful and how productive the 109th Congress has been. I wish I could say the same. I serve in this Congress. I am a Member of this Congress and I hope and wish we could end a year and say we did an unbelievably good job for the American people; that we addressed the things that needed to be addressed; that we strengthened this country; and that we helped people in many ways. I wish I could say that. But as Peggy Lee's song says, Is that all there is? Is that an appropriate response to the chart that we see trumpeting the 109th Congress accomplishments? Is that all there is? Yes, that is all there is.

Let me describe a few of the things we ought to be dealing with and especially describe the things we are not dealing with.

On health care and the issues related to health care, every business in this country and virtually every family in this country—and especially our Government—bears the cost of these dramatically increasing prices in health care. No one seems to be addressing it very much. We passed a prescription drug plan a while back for senior citizens on Medicare, and that actually had a little provision in it which prevents the negotiation of lower prices on prescription drugs. That is almost unbelievable to me. Health care costs are on the rise, led, incidentally, by prescription drug prices. This Congress seems to stand with the pharmaceutical industry. It wants to prevent the negotiation for lower prices.

I have stood on the floor of the Senate holding up two identical bottles of the same pill made by the same company, both FDA approved, one sent to Canada, one sent to the United States. The difference is the one sent to Canada is half the price of the one sent to the United States.

My colleague said there is a provision in Homeland Security—and indeed there is—dealing with prescription drug reimportation. It is much to do about nothing, I regret to tell you, because it will allow people to bring a 90-day supply as they cross over the Canadian border and come back. Very few Americans have the capability of driv-

ing to the Canadian border to access that lower cost FDA-approved drug. We are charged the highest prices in the world for FDA-approved prescription drugs. That is unfair to the American people.

The provision in Homeland Security is going to do very little. In fact, we have almost always allowed exactly what that provision says we should allow. We have always allowed a personal supply of 90 days to come across the border from Canada when American consumers buy that prescription drug. This is nothing new. It doesn't address the issue.

We have been blocked on the floor of this Senate for 2 years now with a bipartisan piece of legislation cosponsored by over 30—myself, Senators SNOWE, MCCAIN, KENNEDY, and many others—a big bipartisan bill. We have been blocked from getting a vote on the floor for this legislation which would allow the reimportation of lower cost, FDA-approved prescription drugs.

Why is that the case? Because on this subject the pharmaceutical industry has more influence here, regrettably, than the American people do.

We are not addressing the health care costs, and we are not addressing the issue of prescription drug costs—and we should.

Trade and jobs, think of that. Are we addressing trade issues? The only thing we are doing on trade issues is to pass more incompetent trade agreements. We just did the Oman Trade Agreement, a country that by sultan decree has said there will not be an organization of workers; it is illegal to form a labor union in the country of Oman by sultan decree. We do a trade agreement with a country that basically prohibits organized workers.

We have a \$68 billion a month trade deficit, \$800 billion a year. We are choking on red ink in international trade. Nearly 4 million jobs have been shipped from this country overseas in search of cheap labor, in search of 20-cent and 30-cent-an-hour workers working 7 days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day. Does anybody care much about that?

We not only have this running up and dramatic increase in the trade deficit, but we see the potential loss of another 40 million to 50 million American jobs, according to some leading economists. And even those that do not leave are tradeable or outsourceable jobs and competing with others in the world who are willing to work for much less, causing downward pressure on wages in this country.

Some say we see the world as it is, that it is a global economy, and there is nothing we can do about it. I see the world as it is and decide we ought to change it to what it should be—standing up for good jobs in this country, for American workers. Yet this Congress doesn't do that.

As to deficits and fiscal policy, the President made great fanfare in talking about the fact that the deficit is reduced. Interestingly enough, take a