

today. This bill will help see this facility become a reality and help the farming and ranching communities in the valley continue to produce needed food for the state and Nation.

Second, the Colorado Northern Front Range Study Act included in the package will help Coloradans protect the scenic Front Range mountain backdrop in the northern Denver-metro area and the region just west of Rocky Flats.

Rising from the Great Plains, the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains provides a scenic mountain backdrop to many communities in the Denver metropolitan area and elsewhere in Colorado. This mountain backdrop, which includes much of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest, is an important aesthetic and economic asset for adjoining communities. It is also part of our unique culture, having beckoned settlers westward before exposing them to the harshness and humbling majesty of the Rocky Mountain West that helped define the region. The pioneers' independent spirit and respect for nature still lives with us to this day.

Yet rapid population growth is increasing recreational use of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest and adding pressure to develop other lands within and adjacent to that national forest. The bill directs the U.S. Forest Service to study the ownership patterns of the lands comprising the Front Range mountain backdrop and identify areas that are open and may be at risk of development. Additionally, it directs the Forest Service to recommend to Congress how these lands might be protected and how the Federal Government could help local communities and residents to achieve that goal.

Third, the bill includes the National Trails System Willing Seller Authority Act. This act will change the current law prohibiting people who own land associated with several units of the trail system from selling those lands to the Federal Government. Because of this act, people who want to sell land for inclusion in certain units of the National Trails System will be able to do so.

Our national trails are a national treasure, and I have enjoyed them for my whole life. We should allow property owners to sell their land along these trails to the Federal Government to be part of our public lands legacy. But we must make clear that these land sales are from willing sellers.

Finally, this legislation includes the Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness and Indian Peaks Wilderness Expansion Act. This provision will designate nearly 250,000 acres of Rocky Mountain National Park as wilderness. The provision will guarantee the backcountry of Rocky Mountain National Park will be managed so that future generations will experience the park as we know it today. The legislation will also allow the National Park Service to continue its important efforts to battle the devastating bark beetle infestation and to engage in nec-

essary wildfire mitigation efforts and emergency response actions.

The wilderness designation in this bill will cover some 94 percent of the park including Longs Peak and other major mountains along the Great Continental Divide, glacial cirques and snow fields, broad expanses of alpine tundra and wet meadows, old-growth forests, and hundreds of lakes and streams.

Examples of all the natural ecosystems that make up the splendor of Rocky Mountain National Park are included in the wilderness that will be designated by this bill. At the same time, the wilderness boundaries have been drawn so as to allow continued access for the use of existing roadways, buildings and developed areas, and privately owned land.

In conclusion, the passage of this bill in the Senate and House will mark the culmination of many years of work by a number of Coloradans, and I look forward to it becoming law.

FALMOUTH VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, this week marks the Celebrate Volunteers Week at the Falmouth Volunteers in Public Schools Program, VIPS, in Falmouth, MA. I would like to take this opportunity to commend and thank those that participate in the VIPS Program which fosters interaction between the citizens of Falmouth and their public schools. Through this connection the schools are empowered to enrich their curriculum and the community at large benefits from a greater participation in their children's future.

The volunteers in this nonprofit organization log about 40,000 hours each year in support of the students, faculty, administration, and the community. This incredible effort is also supported by the business community in Falmouth that not only invests in VIPS events but also supports employee participation.

By comprehensively involving all facets of the Falmouth community VIPS enriches the lives of all involved. They provide mentoring and tutoring programs aimed at raising children's self esteem and teaching English as a second language. They have made school to business partnerships that enhance the educational experience of students by sharing resources with local businesses and bringing in guest speakers. Their innovative Cross Age Science Teaching Program matches junior high school volunteers to help elementary school students learn about electricity.

VIPS has grown from its inception in 1982, when they only had a handful of volunteers, to a robust program with over 1,100 volunteers in all 7 schools in Falmouth. When we think about improving our education system, what we need to remember is that community involvement can make a world of difference. When you get folks in the community to volunteer and become a part

of the educational process, they become invested in the success of the students. That is what is happening in Falmouth. I congratulate all of the people who have helped make the Falmouth Volunteers in Public Service a success, and I commend the work that they do.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, due to an illness, I was forced to miss the previous two rollcall votes.

The first vote was on the nomination of Elena Kagan to be the Solicitor General of the United States. The second vote was on cloture on the motion to proceed to national service bill. Had I been present for these two rollcall votes, I would have voted aye.

Elena Kagan has the qualifications and intellect to be an outstanding Solicitor General. I am proud that she is the first woman to hold this important position.

I also support the motion to proceed to the national service bill and am disappointed that it is necessary to invoke cloture to break the filibuster against this bipartisan legislation. It is important that we act to expand opportunities for Americans who volunteer their time and talents in service to their communities.●

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

REMEMBERING FALLEN POLICE OFFICERS

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is with deep sadness that I discuss one of the deadliest attacks against California law enforcement in my State's history—an attack that took the lives of four Oakland, CA, police officers, and has left our community reeling from the shock of this terrible and senseless loss.

Every day, our law enforcement officers selflessly and bravely put their lives on the line to protect our families and our communities. If anyone, anywhere, needed a reminder of that, this tragedy puts a spotlight on the risk our police officers face every day.

On Saturday, March 21, what should have been a routine midday traffic stop for Oakland PD officers Mark Dunakin and John Hege quickly turned into a murder scene.

After fatally wounding both officers, the suspect fled the scene, leading to a frantic manhunt that involved more than 200 officers from Oakland PD, Alameda County Sheriff's Office, BART Police and the California Highway Patrol. The suspect was quickly tracked down to an apartment. But when the SWAT team entered the apartment, he fired a series of shots from inside of a closet, fatally wounding officers Daniel