

DACA represents the values and heritage of this country of immigrants; it was the right thing to do and it has changed my life by replacing fear with hope. This executive action gave me an overwhelming sense of relief and hope. It lifted me from the shadows.

Karen's is one of 2 million stories of eligible young people who want to be part of the future of America.

It is time for the Senate to say no to the House on a bipartisan basis. It is time for us to reject this hate-filled amendment process they engaged in that put five riders on this appropriations bill to penalize young people such as Karen Villagomez.

Is that the face of the Republican Party of America—deporting Karen Villagomez and saying to her and others: You are not welcome in America. Leave.

I don't think so. There are many Republicans who come to me and say: I support the DREAM Act. So let's support the DREAM Act. This is their chance. Step up and defeat these horrible riders that were attached to this appropriations bill by the House Republicans. Step up and give us a chance as a nation to renew our commitment to our diversity, to our heritage as a nation of immigrants, and to renew our commitment to young people such as Karen, whom we have told: If you work hard against the odds and succeed, we want you to be part of our future.

CUBA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, earlier this month I had a chance to visit Cuba with a delegation of Senators and House Members. We met with Cuban Archbishop Jaime Ortega, who shared the wonderful story of Pope Francis's efforts to improve relations between the United States and Cuba and to secure the release of American prisoner Alan Gross.

We met with many Cuban reformers and activists, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez, foreign ambassadors from many countries, various ministry officials, agriculture, telecommunications, science and technology, and the environment—all areas of considerable potential for the greater U.S.-Cuban cooperation.

Our visit came 1 month after President Obama secured the release of Alan Gross and made the historic decision to restore full diplomatic relations with Cuba and begin rolling back over 50 years of failed policies toward that island.

As I have said many times, I am not a fan of the Castro regime. It has a troubling history of human rights abuse and suppressing peaceful political dissent. It has squandered the talents of so many of its own people with a frozen economic and political system, and it has refused to provide a full accounting of the tragic death of Cuban activist and patriot Oswaldo Paya.

But I have also argued that our policy toward Cuba, which has spanned 11 different U.S. Presidents, has failed—

and failed miserably—to bring reform and change in Cuba. Our policy toward Cuba has also hurt the United States and our diplomatic standing in the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean, where many—fairly or unfairly—regard U.S.-Cuban policy as an outdated relic of the Cold War.

So I was delighted and fully supportive when President Obama took this bold move. During my visit I could already see the dividends, most notably in the expressions of hope by the Cuban people. If you go down the streets of Havana, on their pedicabs there are American flags. That would have been unthinkable 2 months ago. Now it is part of their statement that it is time for a new relationship between Cuba and the United States.

As one Cuban activist starkly told me, her talks with others around the island highlighted something she thought had been lost to the Cuban people—a sense of hope.

We need to do all we can to fulfill the hopes of the Cuban people, and one easy way is to provide greater engagement with America, with ideas, with energy, with the vibrancy that our Nation can offer.

I am going to join today with my colleagues: Republican Senators FLAKE, ENZI, MORAN, and BOOZMAN, as well as Democratic Senators LEAHY, UDALL, and WHITEHOUSE, to introduce legislation that will lift the remaining travel restrictions on American travel to Cuba. Representatives SANFORD and MCGOVERN will have a similar bill in the House.

President Obama recently eased these restrictions, but we need to do our part in Congress. It is not only the right thing for the Cuban people; it is the right thing for America. Americans shouldn't have restrictions on their freedom to travel. We don't restrict Americans from traveling to nations with whom we fought wars such as Vietnam, and we don't restrict Americans from traveling to countries with troubling regimes—North Korea, Iran, and Uzbekistan.

During the height of the Cold War, Americans were allowed to travel to the Soviet Union. So why not Cuba? Why do we still isolate this country? Some say that this is a repressive regime, and we don't want to show recognition to this regime.

It is just within this week that our President visited Saudi Arabia to attend the memorial service for the late King of that country. I would daresay there are aspects of the human rights policy of Saudi Arabia which aren't even close to American standards, and yet we consider them a valuable ally.

There is also a lesson in history. When the Soviet Union started to come down, it was cracking on the edges, in the Baltics, and in the Warsaw Pact. As the other republics saw the outside world, they saw the opportunity and the need for change.

We have not prevailed with isolation. Let's engage the Cuban people. Let's

engage their economy. Let's engage their minds in thinking about a 21st century far different than the dark days of communism which they have lived under for so many decades.

I know that several of my colleagues here—particularly those of Cuban descent—have strong, strong personal and family feelings about our relationship with Cuba. I don't diminish that one bit. There is real suffering that has taken place by their families and many others.

But I hope we can look to the future, look to the next generation, and look to the possibility that we can engage Cuba in a positive way. Ultimately, it will be this new flow of American engagement and ideas that will help open Cuba and improve the lives of their people.

Certainly, we ought to try something different. There have been 50 years of isolation, and those 50 years have not worked. Today we are taking the first few steps on a path which I strongly support.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

The Senator from Delaware.

CUBA

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, while Senator DURBIN is still on the floor, I wish to say very briefly that we came to the House of Representatives a few years ago in 1983, and we didn't get a lot of time to speak on the House floor—maybe 1 minute a day if we were lucky. We would say when we were debating, when we agreed with somebody: I would like to be associated with the remarks of the gentleman from Illinois.

I would very much like to be associated with the remarks of the Senator from Illinois.

I served three tours in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam war. We have most-favored-nation trading status, and they enjoy most-favored-nation trading status with us today.

I like to work out and run. I like to run in the mornings. The mornings I stay here, I run down to the Lincoln Memorial, come back by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and I am reminded of the 55,000 lives that we lost in that war. Yet we enjoy normal diplomatic relations with that country, and they

enjoy most-favored-nation status with us. If we can come to this point with Vietnam—after all the loss of life and cost—we should certainly be able to move things along with Cuba. So I applaud what the Senator has said.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be added as a cosponsor to S. 299.

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to bring a clean fiscal year 2015 bill for the Department of Homeland Security to the Senate floor as soon as possible.

Earlier this month the world watched in horror as terrorists massacred journalists and other innocent civilians in and around Paris. In December we were stunned as computers at a major corporation, Sony Entertainment, were attacked by North Korea. Over the past year, as recently as last week, in fact, we witnessed brutal executions at the hands of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

These events illustrate all too well that the threats faced today by America and by our allies are real. As a former chairman and now ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, I know this to be the case.

Nearly 12 years ago, in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Congress created the Department of Homeland Security—we call it DHS—to help secure our Nation and to help ensure that our Nation is protected against these continuing and evolving threats.

Given the origins of the Department, the work the men and women do there every day to keep us safe, and the grave nature of the threats our country faces, it is shocking to me and disappointing to me that we are here today having this debate.

We are now discussing ways we can make the Department and its employees more effective. We are not discussing how we can enable them to work better. Senator Coburn and those with whom we served in the last Congress did that throughout the year.

Senator JOHNSON and I did that just yesterday with our first hearing on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee this year. Unbelievably, as we focused on cyber security attacks, we are debating whether to give this key national security agency funding for the remainder of the fiscal year.

In order for that Department to efficiently and effectively carry out its critical role, it needs adequate and reliable funding. They need it. Another short-term budget—or even worse, another shutdown—would be bad for the Department and bad for employee morale—very bad. More importantly, though, it would pose a grave threat to our security.

Instead of sending us a straightforward clean funding bill for the Department, the House has unfortunately sent us a bill that includes a number of amendments aimed at undermining the President's immigration policies.

Many of our colleagues on both sides have significant concerns with these amendments, and the President has indicated that he would veto the funding bill if the amendments stay attached to it. Thus, these amendments jeopardize passage of the bill, and they threaten to prolong the crippling budget uncertainty the Department of Homeland Security has operated under.

The Department of Homeland Security already has a lot to say grace over. We do them no favor by playing games with their budget.

I understand why some of our colleagues are upset about the President's immigration policies, and we should have a debate about those concerns. But first we should be doing what we have been asked to do by giving the Department of Homeland Security the resources that it needs to keep Americans safe in an ever more dangerous world.

Two of our colleagues, Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN and BARBARA MIKULSKI, have introduced a clean appropriations bill that mirrors funding provisions of the House bill. Overall, funding provisions in their bill, S. 272—which I understand both Democrats and Republicans on the Appropriations Committee agreed to last year, last December—in fact, provides for \$39.6 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Homeland Security. That is an increase of \$400 million above last year's funding, but this measure is more than just a funding bill.

To my colleagues who want to do what we can now to protect our country from the kinds of attacks we have been seeing around the world of late, I say: Support a clean DHS funding bill.

To our colleagues who want reforms at the U.S. Secret Service, I say: Support a clean DHS funding bill. A clean bill would provide the resources the Secret Service needs to carry out much-needed reforms in the wake of the most recent White House fence-jumper incident and other security lapses.

To my colleagues whose States need to recover from this week's blizzards or to prepare for the next storm, let me just say: Support a clean DHS funding bill.

We need to ensure that FEMA and our States have access to nearly \$2.6 billion in grants to respond to future disasters—both natural and manmade.

To my colleagues who want stronger border security and immigration enforcement, a clean DHS funding bill is what we ought to be rallying around. The clean bill put forward by Senator SHAHEEN and MIKULSKI would take additional measures to secure our border and enforce our immigration laws, something I know is a priority to me and, I think, to all of our colleagues. In fact, most of the funding increase in

the Shaheen-Mikulski bill would go to border security and immigration enforcement.

The bill our colleagues have put forward contains a little more than \$10 billion for Customs and Border Protection, an increase of approximately \$118 million above last year's enacted level. This funding level would support the largest operational force level for the Agency in its history—maintaining over 21,000 Border Patrol agents and supporting the new funding level for nearly 24,000 officers.

The Shaheen-Mikulski bill would also enable Customs and Border Protection to fly more patrols along our maritime and land borders and to continue purchasing new force-multiplying gear and equipment. It would also increase funding for critical surveillance technologies along our border, especially along areas such as the Rio Grande Valley, by some \$20 million.

As our colleagues will recall, last year our Nation saw tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors and families from Central America come to our southern border. This clean full-year funding bill would provide Immigration and Customs Enforcement \$689 million more than last year's funding to help address the additional needs associated with that surge. Specifically, it includes \$3.4 billion for immigration detention and funds 34,000 adult detention beds.

The Shaheen-Mikulski bill would also fully fund the employment eligibility verification system, known as E-Verify, which helps businesses to ensure they are hiring legal employees.

Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson recently said—and I fully agree with him—that to deny his Department full-year funding would actually hurt our border security.

We cannot continue to default to short-term continuing resolutions and force the Department to cut corners and scramble to fund its highest priorities. As we have learned over these years, stopgap crisis budgeting is an egregious waste of money. Let me say that again—an egregious waste of money. By shutting down the Department or keeping it on a continuing resolution, we will waste tens of millions of taxpayer dollars, including the cost of renegotiating contracts, lost employee and contractor productivity, and lost training. For example, it would delay the award of a \$600 million contract to build a national security cutter that the Coast Guard needs.

But there is more than just a financial impact. The dramatic consequences of failing to provide full-year funding for the Department will be felt throughout our country. While most of the Department's workforce will continue to perform essential functions in the event of a shutdown, the bulk of its management and administrative support activities would cease and front-line personnel would not receive the support they need. It would be like trying to fight a war without planners,