

Nebraska, South Dakota, Iowa, Oklahoma, Illinois, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Kansas, and California. Adding insult to injury, in those States where the agency declares drought disasters, it limits assistance to only farm-related small businesses. Take, for instance, South Carolina. A couple of years ago that entire State had been declared a disaster by the SBA, but the administration would not help all drought victims. Let me read to you from the declaration:

Small businesses located in all 46 counties may apply for economic injury disaster loan assistance through the SBA. These are working capital loans to help the business continue to meet its obligations until the business returns to normal conditions. . . . Only small, non-farm agriculture dependent and small agricultural cooperatives are eligible to apply for assistance. Nurseries are also eligible for economic injury caused by drought conditions.

The SBA has the authority to help all small businesses hurt by drought in declared disaster areas, but the agency won't do it. For years the agency has been applying the law unfairly, helping some and not others, and it is out of compliance with the law. The small business drought relief provision that passed yesterday as part of the Defense Authorization Act—and that I introduced this July as the Small Business Drought Relief Act of 2005 S. 1463—would force SBA to comply with existing law, restoring fairness to an unfair system, and get help to small business drought victims that need it.

This legislation has been thoroughly reviewed, passing the committee of jurisdiction and the full Senate three times, with supporters numbering up to 25, from both sides of the aisle. In addition to approval by the committee of jurisdiction, OMB, the Office of Management and Budget, approved virtually identical legislation in 2003. The legislation passed yesterday includes those changes we worked out with the administration, and I see no reason why this should not be retained in the final conference report and sent to the President for his signature.

I thank Senators SNOWE and BOND, our current and past chairs, both of whom have been supportive of this legislation each time it was introduced and passed. And I again thank Senators LEVIN and WARNER.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On September 3, 2003 in Bridgeport, CT, George Hamilton hosted an after-

noon picnic at his home. During the picnic, Hamilton and another guest discovered that one of the other men at the event was gay. They attacked and beat the gay man, causing injuries to his face and ribs. According to sources, throughout the attack the men shouted anti-gay slurs.

I believe that our Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, in all circumstances, from threats to them at home. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a major step forward in achieving that goal. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to speak briefly on some of the votes that this body held yesterday related to the fiscal year 2006 Department of Defense authorization bill. Overall, this year's Defense authorization bill was a step in the right direction—for supporting our troops, for strengthening our military, and for securing our country. While I regret the limited time that we had to debate amendments, the end result here is, on balance, positive.

There are, however, a couple of important votes on amendments that I would like to take this opportunity to discuss. First, the two amendments on Iraq—one offered by Senator LEVIN, which I cosponsored, and the other a Republican alternative offered by Senator WARNER, which I voted for.

These two amendments were very similar, and they were both steps in the right direction. They both express the Senate's belief that U.S. forces should not remain in Iraq indefinitely. They both establish expectations that calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq. They both stress the need for compromise among Iraqis to achieve a sustainable sovereign government. And they both require the President to begin sharing with the American people his campaign plan for success in Iraq.

But these two amendments, despite all of their similarities, have a fundamental difference. The Democratic amendment would have gone one important step further than the Republican amendment that we ended up adopting. It would have required the President to tell the American people not only his campaign plan, but estimated dates for the redeployment of U.S. forces—in other words, a timetable and strategy for success in Iraq. The Levin amendment acknowledged that unexpected contingencies might arise, and that such contingencies might change some of the projected redeployment dates, but I still believe that without these projected dates, we have left ourselves in an open-ended

commitment. That is not good for us, it is not good for Iraq, and it is not good for stability in the region.

Ultimately, I supported the Warner amendment because, as I have said, it is a step in the right direction. But it frankly doesn't take us any closer to convincing the American people that the President has a plan or a timetable for bringing our operations in Iraq to a successful conclusion. And I believe that our soldiers and the American public deserve better.

I would also like to briefly address three related amendments offered by Senators GRAHAM, BINGAMAN, and one by both Senators GRAHAM and LEVIN, dealing with the issue of habeas corpus and detainees who are in U.S. custody at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

I voted against Senator GRAHAM's underlying amendment on this issue because I believe that it would have been a step in the wrong direction for our country. That is not to say that we should be providing sanctuary to terrorists. We shouldn't. Any coward who is complicit in terrorist attacks against the U.S. and the civilized world must be brought to justice.

I also recognize that the new threat posed by international terrorist organizations such as al-Qaida, and their murderous henchmen, requires law-abiding nations to adapt in how they combat this threat.

But as we adapt to the terrorist threat, we have to make sure that we don't hurt ourselves, and the cause of freedom, in the process. America's judicial system is part of the bedrock of our country. Protecting its integrity should be a cause of highest concern. That is why I voted for Senator BINGAMAN's second-degree amendment to strike the Graham amendment's text that would have stripped U.S. courts of the ability to review writs of habeas corpus submitted by or on behalf of foreign detainees at Guantanamo Bay. I regret that Senator BINGAMAN's amendment failed on a party line vote.

I commend, however, Senator LEVIN for working with Senator GRAHAM to strike a compromise on this issue. The Graham-Levin compromise is not perfect. It certainly doesn't go as far as this Senator would have liked in fixing the underlying text. But faced with the prospect of the original Graham amendment being sent to conference in its original form, I chose to support the Graham-Levin compromise, which is a definite improvement over the underlying text. What is particularly heartening is that Senator GRAHAM, upon reflection, realized that his amendment went too far and accepted the moderating suggestions proposed by Senator LEVIN. My hope is that the conferees on this bill will continue to improve upon the Graham-Levin text.

Mr. President, as I said at the outset, the Defense authorization bill that the Senate passed yesterday is not perfect. But on balance, I believe that it sends a message to our troops that we are here to support them, and that we remain committed to providing them