led by a wonderful leader, a young man who has really shown his stripes and all of New Orleans is singing his praises: Doug Thornton, the general manager of the Dome. He stayed in the Superdome with his wife and children doing everything he could to help the evacuees. His heroic efforts during those harrowing days a year ago have been well reported. But what might not be known is that Doug and his wife also lost their home. He didn't see his wife for weeks because he spent his time rebuilding the Dome while Denise spent time rebuilding their house in Lakeview. That is what people all over New Orleans and South Louisiana and the Gulf Coast are doing—going to work to rebuild the refineries, the pipelines, the industries, while their spouses are at home rebuilding what is left of their houses.

Doug Thornton, general manager of the Superdome, is no exception. He deserves a tremendous amount of credit.

Tim Coulon, the chairman of the Louisiana Stadium Exhibition District, is a former Jefferson Parish president and a man I know well. Tim has always been a very quiet but competent and effective leader. His leadership doesn't come from loud speeches and pushing but from quiet determination. Tim, his staff, and other board members worked very closely with Governor Blanco, who signed executive order after executive order, to cut through the redtape and expedite the Superdome's rebuilding.

That partnership between our Governor, the stadium commissioners, and Doug Thornton was the leadership team that put this Superdome back together.

I also have to say for the record that Paul Tagliabue, former commissioner of the NFL, saw what happened at the Superdome and decided that the NFL was a service organization, and its first job was to service teams and the cities. He understands something about the emotional connection between the teams and the cities that host them. The teams become a part of the spirit of every city, and he would not allow the Saints' spirit to die.

He said the Saints will march again. He said the Dome will be rebuilt, and let's get to it. New Orleans will forever be grateful to Paul Tagliabue and his staff at the NFL for their belief in our city and for not cutting and running, not leaving when times got tough for us. They stood their ground, and we are very grateful.

I also want to go on the record to say that the Dome has been a symbol of our city for 31 years. Its origin goes back to Governor John McKeithen. He was not from New Orleans. He was actually a country boy from Columbia, LA. But as our Governor, he had a vision of what a great Dome could mean to a great American city, a great southern city. He, along with the mayor at that time, my father, Moon Landrieu, along with Dave Dixon, a local businessman, decided the Dome would mean renewal for the city. The three of them overcame all sorts of political hurdles and were able to build this great Dome.

We have hosted more Super Bowls than any building in America. It sits on 52 acres of land in the central business district. The Superdome has a seating capacity of over 70,000, depending on the event.

When Dave Dixon had a vision for this Dome, he told our Governor at the time: You know, Governor, we will have a Pope here one day and a President here one day.

Nobody believed him when he said that. But sure enough, President Reagan honored all of us when the Republican National Convention came to New Orleans 18 years ago.

It was a proud time for New Orleans and Louisiana when 19 years ago, Pope John Paul II made the first ever Papal visit to Louisiana and held a rally in front of 80,000 children in that Dome. It was a site to behold.

We have had a proud Superdome history right there on the corner of Poydras and Loyola, right across the street from city hall. It will be there for years to come because the heroic efforts of the employees at the Dome and our local contractors who put their shoulders to the wheel and their hearts into their work and decided that this would be a symbol of our rebirth.

I am proud as the Senator from the great State of Louisiana to come and honor them, to thank them, and to say that this is the beginning of our recovery. This week, we close a chapter on Hurricane Rita, which, Mr. President, hit your own State of Texas, and which did so much damage to both Louisiana and Texas. I visited Louisiana this past weekend with some of Louisiana's delegation and local leaders. It is clear that recovery has begun, but there is still a long way to go.

As we close the Rita and Katrina chapters of the last year, let the Saints go marching in tonight, and let them lead us to a new chapter of hope and recovery for New Orleans, for Louisiana, for the whole gulf coast, and for all of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEMINT). The Senator from Alabama.

BORDER FENCING

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the House and Senate have a piece of legislation more commonly known as the Fence bill, but it is really a bill to establish operational control of our borders through fencing and other means. It includes authorization for 700 specific miles fencing along the Mexican border and a study of the situation on the northern border. It is designed to help multiply the capacity of American Border Patrol agents to be effective in creating a lawful border instead of the unlawful border we have.

It passed the House with a strong bipartisan vote. They have had five formal hearings on the matter and have considered information from previous hearings. They had a number of field hearings in August and they actually talked to people in the region to find out what is going on.

The House has sent the Senate a bill they have worked on for some time and to which they have given a great deal of thought. It is very similar to the bill we passed in the Senate which authorized 870 total miles of physical infrastructure at the border.

Let me take a moment to discussion the history of the legislation in this Senate dealing with barriers at the border. I will discuss why the barriers are an important component—not all of what we need to do, but an essential component of what we need to do—to create a lawful system of immigration. But first let us talk about the votes we have had in the Senate.

On May 17, I offered an amendment that mandated the construction of 370 miles of fencing and 500 miles of vehicle barriers along the southwest border of the United States. That is a total of 870 miles of physical barriers. This is not a lot different from what the House is sending the Senate, some 700 or so miles of fencing. When we voted on my amendment, we discussed it at some length.

I did not know how we would vote. I didn't know how the vote would turn out. A number of Members said they were for fencing; a number of Members said they were against fencing. I argued that good fences make good neighbors. It clarifies where property lines are, what your rights are, and neighbors can get along pretty well. Leave them ambiguous, and people get in fusses.

At any rate, when we voted, the vote was 83 to 16 to approve my amendment mandating construction of this fence. That was part of the overall immigration bill. That immigration bill was fatally flawed. The truth is, it is not going to become law. We can all be thankful for that.

This amendment, though, was voted on 83 to 16. A lot of our colleagues say, I voted for an amendment to build a fence; I voted as one of the 83. But, we all are grownups, we know that legislation containing that amendment is not going to become law. So, now it is time to either put up or shut up about enforcement. It is time to either be honest with our constituents and say, I am not going to vote for a stand alone fence bill, or, yes, I believe a fence is an important component of border security and I will vote for this bill because it takes the first step.

So where did the Senate go after the first vote of 83 to 13? I suggest that strong vote indicated border fencing and barriers are a high priority of this Senate. This was a strong bipartisan vote, if people were voting with integrity, to build a fence.

We had a second vote. One of the things that is unusual about the Senate, to people who are not used to it, is

a vote to authorize a matter—a subject, a fence—is not the end of it. Before that construction can take place, the Congress has to vote again to appropriate the money to build it. It takes two votes. One vote can be a signal, but it does not have any reality until a second vote is a fact.

When the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill hit the Senate, we were more than a little disappointed that even though the original vote was 83 to 16, when we come along with the Department of Homeland appropriations bill, what did we see? Thirty-nine miles of vehicle barriers only. This was most discouraging.

I urged my colleagues, if they were serious about the previous vote, we ought to have a vote to actually fund it. I offered an amendment that would actually have funded this fence at $1.8 billion which we think if we get someone to run it as it ought to be run and build it in a cost-effective way, it would be enough to meet that standard. I offered that amendment on July 13. It would have reduced a percent or two of funding for other appropriations in the bill, an across-the-board reduction, and we voted on it. Unfortunately, only 29 Senators voted to actually appropriate the money to do what they had already voted to do.

That was very discouraging to me. I talked about it, particularly the fact that if there is one area where the American people are most cynical about Congress, it is about their protestations they are doing everything they can do to create a lawful system of immigration when they are actually not. They are very cynical about that. They have every right to be. The American people have understood this issue for 30 years. No President, no Congress, has listened to them and done what actually needs to be done and could be done to create a lawful system of immigration. This was most troubling.

So we continued to study what could be done to get fencing built. On August 2 the Defense bill was in the Senate. The National Guard had been deployed to the border and was making some progress, assisting those at the border—not as much as some would like and would hope, but it has made a positive step. They have the capability of building some fencing and actually were already working on some fencing projects. Again, I offered an amendment on the floor to actually fund the fencing, this time through the Defense Department, through the National Guard. The amendment would have let them either build the fencing themselves, or manage private contractors who would build a fence.

When we voted on that amendment, perhaps after my colleagues had spent some time talking to their constituents, the vote to authorize $1.8 billion for funding passed 93 to 3. So we got 93 to 3. Now we are cooking. We have money, we have actually put up money to follow through on the fencing idea. I was very happy about that.

In the course of the conference on the Defense appropriations legislation that we won the amendment vote on, I was informed they were moving $1.8 billion from the Department of Defense bill over to Homeland Security bill which was also in their conference because that was the more appropriate vehicle to put funding to build a fence for Homeland Security. So, I was told that the Homeland Security Appropriators would handle it.

Now we are hearing that less money for the fence is going to be included in the conference report, that was included in my amendment. There was an article in the paper today, one of the Web sites of the AP, saying they agreed to $1.2 billion instead of $1.8 billion. That is a 30-percent reduction. We voted to fund a $1.8 billion one-time expenditure to build miles of fence and barriers. It is something that ought to be done at one time and it will save money in great amounts over the long term.

I am worried about that reduction in funding. Some have said the numbers may even be worse than that because those in charge of the process feel an obligation to fund other things related to Homeland Security and they may not even appropriate the full $1.2 billion for fencing construction. I hope that is not so. I think that would be unacceptable. That would be inconsistent with the votes we have had and would not make Congress look good. It would not be the kind of action worthy of a Senate that is attempting to gain the respect of the American people on the subject of immigration, a subject about which they have lost the respect of the American people and deserve to get back.

So the House passed a bill. They passed an authorization bill that mandates the fencing, very similar to what the Senate voted for, and is now before the Senate. A filibuster was suggested, indicated by the several procedural votes we have had to have on this bill. The majority leader had to file for cloture on the motion to proceed. That gives 30 hours of debate. Then 30 hours later, we voted on the motion to proceed and we did not see the filibuster continue. The vote was 94 to 0 to proceed to the Secure Fence Act. It took a lot of time, not much debate. I was one of the few Members who spoke. The 30 hours slowed down everything we were doing.

The people are saying, I am for a vote, I voted for cloture. Why did we have to have cloture? Why couldn't we move straight to the bill as we do time and time again in this Senate—although less and less, as time has gone by. We are in a slowdown mode. We are moving along now. We will have a vote, I thought today, on cloture on the bill. However, it looks as though that may be tomorrow. Then we will have another 30 hours of debate. Then we will have an opportunity or complaints about how many amendments can be offered or fall. Who knows where this will go?

There are some Members who like to claim they support barriers at the border, but when the chips are down, through legerdemain in this body, manage to create logjams and headaches so it will never become law if it appears that is their wish. I suspect we will have people who say they want to add amendments on comprehensive reform, on amnesty, on agriculture jobs or other issues that would kill this amendment if adopted. They want to try to offer those amendments. Or they are complaining that virtual fencing, some sort of a satellite, unmanned aerial vehicle, can do the same thing as a fence. That is not so. It can be an asset, but it cannot replace individual people apprehending people coming across the border illegally—not a virtual fence. How silly is that? They will say they do not favor the locations where the fencing is or they will say they favor fencing, but they really favor comprehensive reform and if we pass anything such as fencing, even though the American people want it, then the American people will not pass their version of amnesty or whatever they want to see in the form of comprehensive reform.

They are afraid the American people will get what they want, and if the American people get what they want in terms of increased enforcement, they may not be so interested in their ideas about how to reach final settlement on amnesty.

We will have two real votes on fencing this week: cloture on the underlying bill and final passage. We should be able to achieve cloture and final passage. It takes 60 votes, but we have had 80, 90 votes on this before. Without this authorization language, there will be no mandate that the fencing act will be constructed or in what manner it will be constructed.

So these votes are the real test this week—not the final test, but very critical steps in the process. The American people will want to watch and see if they agree with their Senators in how they vote. I note we will also have to have some more votes somewhere along the line that are also critical that deal with actual funding of the border barriers.

I see my colleague from Oklahoma is in the Chamber, my distinguished colleague on the Armed Services Committee, who chairs the Environment and Public Works Committee. I ask my colleague, do you have a time agreement to speak? What is your schedule?

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am going to be requesting unanimous consent to be recognized for up to 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. All right. I will wrap up and be pleased to yield to the Senator. The Senator is going to ask unanimous consent to be recognized after I finish?

Mr. INHOFE. After the Senator concludes, yes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I will continue a couple more minutes.

Fencing works. We have a major problem. Last year, our Border Patrol

agents apprehended 1.12 million people along our border coming into our country unlawfully. Can you imagine that? Where we did build fencing along the San Diego border—only 14 miles, but it was one of the worst areas—that area was tremendously improved. Crime went down, drug dealing went down, violence went down, illegal immigration plummeted and property values went up.

But we have 1,800 miles along the border. This bill would not provide funding and authorization but for fencing about one-third of that distance.

I will share with my colleagues some of the debate in the House of Representatives recently, as they passed the very bill that is before us. Chairman ROYCE—he is from California—who chairs the International Terrorism and Nonproliferation Subcommittee talked about the difficulties they have had with a breach, a gap in the border fencing. He said this: It is called ''smugglers' gulch,'' a fence that runs from the foothills to the ocean through that small 3-mile breach. It has taken 8½ years to get the California Coastal Commission to go along with closing that fence in consultation—8½ years to get it done.

He talked about the problem of that gap. And he talked about the field hearings he had participated in. He said: We heard from witnesses, and we heard them express that border fencing was very effective. He quoted Darryl Griffen, who is the chief agent in San Diego for the Border Patrol—the chief agent. Mr. Griffen, referring to the fencing, said this: It is a great force multiplier. It expands our enforcement capacity. It allows us the discretion to redeploy agents to areas of vulnerability or risk. It is one component that certainly has been integral to everything we have accomplished here raising the level of security.

That is what the chief of the Border Patrol for San Diego said. So people will tell you fencing makes no difference, it is not important, it does not help. It is not so. Listen to the professionals. I know President Bush has been reluctant to support fencing, but this man works for President Bush. He testified, as has Secretary Chertoff, about the subject. Secretary of Homeland Security Chertoff supports the fence, the bill that we passed in the Senate. Indeed, it was passed on his recommendation, the details of it were.

Then Chairman ROYCE, in the House, who chairs the International Terrorism Subcommittee, said this about the dangerous people who are coming across the border: So we see people coming over the border illegally from Afghanistan, Angola, Jordan, Qatar, Pakistan, Yemen. And I will give you one example. Mohammed Karani is the brother of a commander of Hezbollah in south Lebanon. He came over the border in my State in the trunk of a car. He paid a coyote to get him across the border. He was later arrested in Dearborn, Michigan. He is serving 4½ years. He is a member of Hezbollah. He was in the process of securing funds and resources for Hezbollah in the United States.

He then goes on to say: Two border Governors have declared states of emergency over illegal immigration. Then one of the agents told him a personal story of stopping a man who had been trained in an Afghan training camp originally from Uzbekistan. This man injured the Border Patrol agent, actually bit his arm as he was trying to take him down. This agent told Chairman ROYCE one of his concerns was this was the second time the man had tried to come into the country after 9/11.

So I would say we are dealing with an important issue. I am glad to see from previous votes that the Senate is coming around to a uniform position on it. It is time for us now, as we wind up this session, to fulfill our obligation for actually making a law, legislation to authorize the building of the fence, and then, in the few days we have left, to come forward with legislation that will actually fund this requirement we authorize. Otherwise, we risk going home and even further arousing cynicism and irritation among the voters who have sent us here.

I believe we can get it done. I think we are moving in the right direction. I am optimistic. But there will be some around here who would like to see it fail in the last minute. Let's don't let that happen. Let's follow through, and let's be consistent with the wishes of the American people and the security of the United States.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for 1 hour in morning business.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me first say to my friend from Alabama that as to the last comment he made about whether at the last minute someone may come along and try to torpedo this, I suspect that might be the case. It is like when I had the amendment to make English our national language—and 89 percent of the American people were for it; 70 percent of the Hispanics were for it—and yet some of the liberals in this Chamber were catering to La Raza, an extremist group, in trying to torpedo what we are doing, and merely doing what 51 other countries have done, making English the official language.

I also want to say to my friend from Alabama, I have never been prouder to serve on the Armed Services Committee with any member more than I am to serve with him. It was you and seven other of the Republicans who tried from the very beginning to give the President everything he needed to interrogate these people, to prosecute these people, and to get as much human intelligence as possible to save American lives. I thank the Senator publicly for standing up as one of all nine of us.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield, I think the Senator has provided great leadership on security on a number of issues. You may be talking about other issues as we go forward right now, but I know the Senator would agree that our borders do represent vulnerabilities, and fixing our borders is also an aspect of national security, as I read of Hezbollah people coming across and others who have dangerous reputations.

I also thank the Senator for his steadfast leadership and his clear thinking in regard to the fundamental issue that barriers do represent a critical part of what we need to do to have a lawful border.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Alabama. And I think we will prevail. As to what you are suggesting, and what you have been suggesting over the last few minutes, the vast majority of the American people are on our side. They know as to people who say: You cannot secure our border, fences will not work—they worked for a long time up in between North Korea and South Korea. I think they will work down here, too.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise to speak today about the most media-hyped environmental issue of all time. It is the word that gets everybody upset when you say it and the word or the phrase that many politicians are afraid to say, and that is ''global warming.'' I have spoken more about global warming than any other politician in Washington today. My speech will be a bit different from the previous seven floor speeches I have made on this subject, as I focus not only on the science, as I have many times before, but on the media's coverage of climate change.

Global warming—just the term—evokes many Members in this Chamber, the media, Hollywood elites, and our pop culture to nod their heads and fret about an impending climate disaster. As the Senator who has spent more time educating about the actual facts about global warming, I will address some of the recent media coverage of global warming and Hollywood's involvement in this issue. And, of course, I will also discuss former Vice President Al Gore's movie, ''An Inconvenient Truth.''

Let's keep in mind, I do chair the committee in the Senate called Environment and Public Works, the committee that has jurisdiction. I recall so well when I first became chairman of this committee, almost 4 years ago, I was actually a believer that because I had heard it so many times there must be something to this thing, until I started looking at the science. But I have talked about that before.

Since 1895, the media has alternated between global cooling and global