

I am also disappointed that the House's visa waiver language was accepted—rather than Senator FEINSTEIN's language that I supported.

But in the end, that is what a compromise is—and that is what it means to negotiate and to govern.

I want to praise Senator REID, Leader PELOSI, Senator MIKULSKI, and all of my fellow Democrats who fought so hard to make this the best agreement we could reach. I also praise their Republican counterparts.

I believe this is a good deal for the American people. It is good for our families, our children, our economy, and our environment, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to move forward with the Senate language on the Toxic Substances Control Act, TSCA, which has been a difficult, multiyear odyssey.

I did this for two reasons. First, the bill has been vastly improved over the original bill, which in my opinion would have been harmful to our families because it overrode our State laws and set up an ineffective and non-existent way to regulate most toxic pollutants. Secondly, I have been assured that, as the House and Senate bills are merged into one, the voices of those who have been most deeply affected—including nurses, breast cancer survivors, asbestos victims, and children—will be heard. I will have the opportunity to be in the room at every step and express their views.

This is very important to me because the history of this bill has been so contentious. I want to assure my colleagues, my home State of California, and the people of this Nation that I will stay intimately involved as the bill moves forward, and I will share my views openly. I look forward to the work ahead, and I am optimistic that we can reach a fair and just conclusion.

THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF LIGHT AND LIGHT-BASED TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, as the year comes to a close, I would like to highlight a proclamation from the U.N. General Assembly recognizing 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light-Based Technologies. This global initiative is aimed at raising awareness of the vital role of light in our daily lives and its importance to 21st century technology and innovation. For centuries, light has transcended all boundaries from geography and gender, to age, culture, and race.

For centuries, light-based technologies have provided solutions to worldwide challenges in energy, agriculture, telecommunications, security, and health. To start, light has revolutionized medicine through technologies such as x ray imaging, laser surgery, and cancer treatments. Light has

transformed international communication via the Internet, a tool we cannot imagine living without today. It has helped us improve safety through sensors in cars and aircraft, advanced infrastructure monitoring, and weather prediction. Furthermore, light has helped millions around the globe work, study, and play after dark through low-cost and sustainable light sources for families who do not have access to grid electricity. From agriculture to forensics to virtual reality, light and light-based technologies continue to fuel innovations and improvements that touch nearly every aspect of lives around the world.

In fact, the science of light is becoming increasingly critical in growing our economy and keeping American manufacturing competitive on a global scale. The contribution of light-based technologies to our economy starts with fundamental optics and photonics education and research. Look no further than the work being done in my home State at Delaware State University's Optical Science Center for Applied Research, OSCAR, where researchers are developing new detectors for night vision technologies, methods for determining the composition of complex materials, and technologies with applications in space exploration, to name just a few. These economic contributions continue with investments in manufacturing to increase the development and production of new optics and photonics applications and technologies, a market that supports more than 7.4 million jobs and \$3 trillion in annual revenue in the United States.

The transformative value of light-based technologies was reaffirmed earlier this summer with the establishment of the American Institute for Manufacturing Integrated Photonics, AIM Photonics, as part of the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation. Continued investment in public-private partnerships like AIM Photonics accelerates research and development that leads to technologies like integrated photonic components and circuits. This vital work helps ensure that breakthroughs in related fields like biophotonics, high-resolution imaging, next generation wireless communications, and quantum computing will not only occur, but also be built right here in America.

The International Year of Light is also a real opportunity to provide the general public with a better understanding of the science of light; promote STEM education; and inspire the next generation of scientists, researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs. This past year, optics and photonics organizations have held events around the United States such as the Light for a Better World symposium held in September in Washington, DC, that featured two Nobel prize winners as keynote speakers, Dr. Eric Betzig and Dr. Shuji Nakamura. In October, the University of Delaware also hosted Green

Light: Prospects in Lighting Design and Technology, which brought together artists and scientists from around the world, while other groups across the country have hosted similar symposia through local sections and student chapters of organizations. Events such as these provide public outreach on the importance of optics and photonics, promote youth interest and engagement in science, and educate us all on the crucial role that light-based technologies play in the U.S. economy and in everyday life.

Events like these have been happening not just here in the United States, but all over the world throughout 2015. Across the globe, events have been organized to learn more about the science of light and to celebrate the innovation and imagination that has fueled incredible discoveries and inventions. The storied history of innovation in light dates back to the first studies of optics 1,000 years ago and continues today with breakthroughs in the field of optical communications.

These activities would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of people in the optics and photonics field, both in industry and in academia. This includes the optics and photonics based societies and organizations that have sponsored the initiative, including the Optical Society, the American Institute of Physics, the American Physical Society, the European Physical Society, the German Physical Society, the Abdus Salam International Centre of Theoretical Physics, the IEEE Photonics Society, the Institute of Physics, Light: Science and Applications, Lightsources.org, 1001 Inventions, and the International Society for Optics and Photonics. In fact, the International Year of Light has been endorsed by the International Council of Science, as well as several international scientific unions and professional societies, and has more than 100 partners from over 85 countries.

By highlighting the critical role light plays in our everyday lives and its unique potential to improve the world in ways we cannot yet imagine, celebrating the International Year of Light provides a valuable opportunity to inspire, educate, and connect all of those who are fighting to make the world even brighter. From scientific societies to educational institutions to trade groups, from nonprofit organizations to private sector partners, the global community has recognized 2015 as the International Year of Light not only to commemorate achievements past, but also to set the stage for technologies of the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE CRAWFORD-SEBASTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, it is my honor to congratulate the