

opponent of international agricultural sanctions and a strong supporter of vigorous foreign trade. He supported IMF funding, trade with China and review of the U.S.-Cuba relationship.

He joined the bipartisan effort to enact strong brownfields cleanup legislation. ROD GRAMS earned a reputation as a strong supporter of tax relief, favoring elimination of the marriage penalty and other tax cut proposals.

While ROD GRAMS and I have disagreed on a number of issues, I respect the commitment which he has brought to policy debate. Where we disagreed, I found ROD GRAMS to be a straight-talking and agreeable adversary. I wish him and his family well in the future.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, for the past six years, I have had the privilege of serving in the Senate with ROD GRAMS, a colleague who has distinguished himself on a number of important issues including budget, tax policy, and agriculture. He has served Minnesota with distinction as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Senate Budget committee, and the Joint Economic Committee.

On a national level, Senator GRAMS is perhaps best known for his "Families First" plan, first discussed as part of the 1994 Republican budget alternative. This plan included a \$500 per-child tax credit, a recommendation that eventually became part of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

On a more parochial level, I have worked closely with Senator GRAMS on issues affecting our farm communities, and in 1997 to help our states recover from the disastrous floods along the Red River Valley. Communities along the Red River were devastated by this 500 year flood which disrupted business and forced thousands of families from their homes.

Senator GRAMS worked closely with delegations from North Dakota and South Dakota to make certain that the urgent needs of so many families and communities were met. He played an important role in ensuring bipartisan support and passage of the disaster relief legislation that was so critical for our states at that time. I know that many North Dakota families and businesses are very grateful for his support.

I extend my best wishes to Senator GRAMS, and his family, and my appreciation for his support on critical agricultural, budget, and disaster issues that we have worked together on in committee and on the Senator floor together.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR SPENCER ABRAHAM

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute and recognize the accomplishments of a colleague, Senator SPENCER ABRAHAM of Michigan. Since joining the Senate in 1995, he has served with honesty, dedication, and integrity.

As members of the Budget Committee, I had the opportunity to work with Senator ABRAHAM on a number of important issues. A fiscal conservative, Senator ABRAHAM work to balance the federal budget and cut government waste. He has also been a champion of keeping our Social Security dollars locked away. This is an interest in which Senator ABRAHAM and I share a keen interest.

Most recently, Senator ABRAHAM was the lead sponsor of the American Competitiveness in the 21st Century Act, legislation that will help ensure our nation's continued growth and leadership in information technology (IT). The bill authorized visas for 195,000 high-tech professionals to work in the U.S. to meet the growing demand for skilled IT workers throughout our economy. During consideration of the bill, I was pleased to work with Senator ABRAHAM and his staff to include in the legislation long-term initiatives to ensure that Americans of all ages are trained to fill critical IT positions in our Information Age economy.

During his time in the Senate, Senator ABRAHAM also worked to curb unfunded mandates, stiffen sentences for cocaine dealers, and advocated stronger privacy protections for consumers on the Internet. His work has been thoughtful and our nation is a better place because of his efforts.

Mr. President, it has been a pleasure to serve in the Senate with SPENCE. I have the utmost respect for my friend and colleague from Michigan, and appreciate all of his contributions to the United States Senate and our nation. I would like to join with my colleagues in wishing the Senator and his family the best in the future.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of my colleague and friend, Senator SPENCER ABRAHAM from Michigan.

Senator ABRAHAM began his service in government in Washington, DC in 1990, when he had the honor of serving in President Bush's Administration as Deputy Chief to Vice President Dan Quayle. In 1993, SPENCER ABRAHAM returned to Michigan to run for the United States Senate seat vacated by Senator Don Riegle who was retiring. Senator ABRAHAM won that Senate seat in 1994 and became the first Michigan Republican elected to the United States Senate in 22 years.

I have had the pleasure of working with Senator ABRAHAM on a number of issues including high technology and immigration over the last six years. Not only is Senator ABRAHAM a colleague of mine, SPENCE and his family are friends as well.

SPENCE ABRAHAM is a dedicated public servant, and he has represented the state of Michigan well in the United States Senate. During the past six years, Senator ABRAHAM took the lead in the Senate on high tech issues and immigration. He has been a strong supporter of tax cuts. Senator ABRAHAM has also played a prominent role in

trying to protect our Social Security Trust Fund—having fought hard for a Social Security Lock Box.

The Senate is going to miss SPENCER ABRAHAM's leadership. And, those of us who know him well are going to miss his friendship in the Senate.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL IMAGING AND ENGINEERING ESTABLISHMENT ACT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to H.R. 1795, which is at the desk, having been received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1795) to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, many of us have worked throughout this Congress to bring greater fairness to our immigration laws. The Legal Immigration Family Equity Act and its amendments are a constructive compromise worked out between members of both parties to address a number of the injustices in current law that have harshly affected many immigrant families. Included in the final legislative package are three provisions that will provide long overdue relief to valued members of our communities and their families.

First, the legislation includes the partial restoration of section 245(i) for individuals who are physically present in the U.S. by the date the legislation is enacted into law. Spouses, children, parents and siblings of permanent residents or U.S. citizens will now be able to adjust their status in the U.S. and avoid needless separation from their loved ones. Similarly, persons who benefit from employer-based petitions will also be helped by the restoration of section 245(i).

Second, this legislation will benefit many of the "late amnesty" class members who have been in legal limbo for close to 15 years. Their spouses and children will be able to remain in the United States until they become eligible for permanent residence.

Finally, this legislation provides desperately needed technical corrections that will benefit persons eligible for relief under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act and the Haitian Refugee Immigrant Fairness Act.

Because these provisions were developed outside the usual committee process, they are not accompanied by committee reports on the background and purpose of the provisions. Therefore, as the chairman and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Senator ABRAHAM and I are submitting a detailed memorandum explaining the provisions, which I ask unanimous consent be printed in the RECORD at the closing of my remarks.