

I wrote to the President following up on this provision and the comments of the Attorney General last week and weekend. We asked whether the President will continue to implement the language outreach policies of President Clinton's Executive Order 13166. A prompt and straightforward affirmative answer can go a long way toward rendering the Inhofe English amendment a symbolic stain rather than a serious impediment to immigrants and Americans for whom English is a second language. I ask consent that a copy of our letter be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. LEAHY. There are growing rumors that some who oppose comprehensive immigration reform will not be deterred by a supermajority vote for cloture and are considering various procedural points of order to delay or derail Senate action in the Nation's interest. I hope they will reconsider and join with us in a constructive way to enact comprehensive immigration reform. We do not need more divisiveness and derision. This bill is not the bill I would have designed. It includes many features I do not support and fails to include many that I do. Nonetheless, I will support cloture and will continue to work to enact bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform.

EXHIBIT 1

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, May 23, 2006.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT BUSH: Last week over my objection the Senate adopted an amendment to the comprehensive immigration bill that seeks to place restrictions on the Government and its communications in languages other than English. I was extremely disappointed that your Administration did not speak out against the divisive amendment and help us work to defeat it.

Attorney General Gonzales said after the fact that you have "never been supportive of English only or English as the official language." The Attorney General indicated over the weekend that his reading of the Inhofe amendment "would not have an effect on any existing rights, currently provided under federal law." I note that you continue to use Spanish on the official White House website, indeed you include a translation into Spanish of the radio address you gave last Saturday on immigration.

I write to ask whether you intend to continue to adhere to Executive Order 13166 if the Inhofe amendment is enacted into law. This Executive Order was adopted by President Clinton in August 2000 to improve access to federal programs and activities. In 2002, your Assistant Attorney General for Civil Right reaffirmed support for the Executive Order and indicated that your "Administration does not plan to repeal Executive Order 13166." What would be the effect, if any, on Executive Order 13166 and its implementation if the Inhofe language adopted by the Senate were to become law?

Respectfully,

PATRICK LEAHY,
Senator.

KEN SALAZAR,
Senator.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 414, S. 2611: a bill to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes.

William H. Frist, Arlen Specter, Larry Craig, Mel Martinez, Orrin Hatch, Gordon Smith, John Warner, Peter Domenici, George V. Voinovich, Ted Stevens, Craig Thomas, Thad Cochran, Judd Gregg, Lindsey Graham, Norm Coleman, Mitch McConnell, Lamar Alexander.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 73, nays 25, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 144 Leg.]

YEAS—73

Akaka	Feinstein	McConnell
Alexander	Frist	Menendez
Baucus	Graham	Mikulski
Bayh	Gregg	Murkowski
Bennett	Hagel	Murray
Biden	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Hatch	Nelson (NE)
Boxer	Hutchison	Obama
Brownback	Inouye	Pryor
Cantwell	Jeffords	Reed
Carper	Johnson	Reid
Chafee	Kennedy	Salazar
Clinton	Kerry	Sarbanes
Cochran	Kohl	Schumer
Coleman	Kyl	Smith
Collins	Landrieu	Snowe
Conrad	Lautenberg	Specter
Cornyn	Leahy	Stabenow
Craig	Levin	Stevens
Dayton	Lieberman	Thomas
DeWine	Lincoln	Thomas
Dodd	Lott	Voinovich
Domenici	Lugar	Warner
Durbin	Martinez	Wyden
Feingold	McCain	

NAYS—25

Allard	Crapo	Santorum
Allen	DeMint	Sessions
Bond	Dole	Shelby
Bunning	Dorgan	Sununu
Burns	Ensign	Talent
Burr	Grassley	Thune
Byrd	Inhofe	Vitter
Chambliss	Isakson	
Coburn	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—2

Enzi
Rockefeller

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). On this vote, the yeas are 73, the nays are 25. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I now be recognized to use my leader time and following my comments the Senate recess under the previous order.

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

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for the information of our colleagues, we will be having the joint session shortly, after which, with cloture successfully invoked, we will begin the 30 hours of debate on the immigration bill. I am pleased with the outcome of the vote that we just took. We are on a glide-path to complete the immigration bill, a comprehensive bill. Still, we will have the opportunity to have a number of amendments. In fact, there are a lot of amendments to be considered over the course of the day.

WELCOMING ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER EHUD OLMERT

Mr. President, today the Congress does have the pleasure in a few moments of welcoming Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to address a special Joint Session of Congress. This is his first visit to Washington as Prime Minister, and he will be only the fourth Israeli Prime Minister ever to address both Chambers.

The honor is mutual. We look forward to listening to his remarks in a few moments. Following his speech, the Speaker of the House, Speaker HASTERT, and I, along with a number of our colleagues, will host the Prime Minister for a bipartisan bicameral leadership lunch.

Ehud Olmert was sworn in as the 12th Prime Minister of Israel on May 4 after a tragic stroke incapacitated Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in January. In late March he assumed the leadership of Ariel Sharon's Kadima party, and led it to victory in Israel's national elections. His party won the largest share of seats in the Israeli Knesset, elevating Mr. Olmert to the Prime Ministership with responsibility for governing Israel's next coalition government. His Cabinet was sworn in this month and includes members of the largest opposition party, the Labor Party. I spoke with the Prime Minister in April to congratulate him on his and the Kadima party's victory.

Today it is my privilege to welcome him to the United States Capitol.

Since its founding nearly 60 years ago, Israel and the United States have enjoyed a special and exceptionally strong relationship. Shared historical and cultural ties have bound our countries together. For nearly six decades,

America's commitment to Israel's security has been one of the principal pillars of U.S. policy in the Middle East.

Today, Prime Minister Olmert faces great challenges. In January's Palestinian legislative elections, Hamas won a majority of parliamentary seats. Hamas is a known terrorist organization that has called publicly for Israel's destruction. It has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to employ violence and terrorism in pursuit of this objective.

On April 17, a Palestinian suicide bomber killed nine people in an attack in Tel Aviv during the Passover holiday. The Hamas government refused to condemn the bombing.

Here in Congress we share the view that Hamas is a terrorist organization and needs to take substantial steps to become a partner for peace. We are in agreement that Hamas must recognize Israel, renounce its violence and terrorism, disarm its militias, and abide by all previous agreements with Israel, including the roadmap for peace. Until Hamas meets these conditions, foreign assistance for the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority will not be forthcoming.

Since taking office, Prime Minister Olmert has repeated his desire to negotiate an end to this conflict. In fact, he has stated that negotiations with a credible peace partner that is genuinely and demonstrably committed to a peaceful two-state solution and that will end terrorism against Israel is "the most stable and desired basis for the political process."

The Prime Minister has stated that he will allow time for a credible peace partner to emerge in the Palestinian Authority, and like his predecessor, he has demonstrated the willingness and ability to make the difficult decisions necessary for peace in the Middle East. I hope Prime Minister Olmert will continue along this path and get the peace process back on track. I commend the Prime Minister for his leadership in the months since former Prime Minister Sharon's stroke. He can be assured of our continued support.

The United States is proud to be a friend and ally to the people of Israel. The Prime Minister's visit to the Capitol today underscores our strong bilateral relationship. My colleagues and I look forward to working closely with the Prime Minister and his new government to achieve the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 12 noon.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:28 a.m., took a recess, and the Senate, preceded by the Secretary of the Senate, Emily Reynolds, and the Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Lynne Halbrooks, proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representa-

tives to hear the address by the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert.

(The address delivered to the joint session of the two Houses of Congress is printed in the Proceedings of the House of Representatives in today's RECORD.)

At 12 noon, the Senate reassembled and was called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COBURN.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from Oklahoma, I suggest the absence of a quorum. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM ACT OF 2006—CONTINUED

AMENDMENT NO. 4085

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I make a point of order that the amendment of the Senator from Kentucky is not germane under rule XXII.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The point of order is sustained.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair.

Madam President, in accordance with the agreement that was entered into yesterday, the Senator from West Virginia is prepared to address the Senate on mine safety and then to debate his amendment. I look forward to that discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, what is so lovely as a day in June? I repeat my question. What is so lovely as a day in June? Of course, the Presiding Officer, who graces the Chair this afternoon, she is—I have said enough. People have caught on already. I am talking about somebody who is as lovely as a day in June. But beauty is in the eye of the beholder, they say.

MINE SAFETY

Madam President, this morning the Senate unanimously passed critical mine safety legislation in response to the coal mine tragedies that robbed the State of West Virginia of 18 of its sons this year. A process that began with the introduction of the West Virginia delegation's mine safety bill has taken a significant step forward today. We have learned from the tragedy at Sago, and we have learned from the subsequent mining fatalities in West Virginia, Kentucky, Utah, Alabama, and Maryland.

If the House acts quickly on legislation and the Federal mine regulators are quick in implementing the bill, the miners of our Nation, the miners of our country, will soon have the oxygen—yes, the oxygen—communications, and rescue teams necessary to save lives and to prevent future tragedies. We saw in Kentucky over the weekend

that these mine accidents can happen at any time, so the Senate's quick and unanimous passage of the Senate committee-reported bill this morning is greeted by all who mine coal with welcome relief.

On behalf of the many grateful coal miners and their families in West Virginia, I thank the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Senators MIKE ENZI and TED KENNEDY. I thank them, yes, I do, on behalf of these people.

I was raised in the home of a coal miner. I married, 69 years ago, the daughter of a coal miner. I know about the lives—the joys and the sadnesses that come to the lives—of the men and women who work in the mines. They are a special breed. They are going to a mine, where an explosion has just occurred, to risk their own lives for other men and women who may be trapped in that mine. A special breed.

So I thank Senators ENZI and KENNEDY for their great work. They have performed a mission. I also thank Senators ISAKSON and MURRAY, the chairman and ranking members of the full committee and the Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety, who committed themselves to the task of producing a mine safety bill. They were unyielding in that effort.

Along with Senator ISAKSON, Chairman ENZI and Senator KENNEDY visited the Sago and Alma mines in West Virginia. Yes, they did. I thank them again. Along with Senator ISAKSON, Chairman ENZI and Senator KENNEDY visited the Sago and Alma mines in West Virginia. They talked with the families of those who had perished. What a sad day. They took a personal interest in the safety of the coal miners of my State.

When it came time to draft a committee bill, the chairman and ranking member graciously solicited the ideas of Senator ROCKEFELLER and myself. Senator ROCKEFELLER has been away for a while recovering from back surgery. He has been away for several weeks now. Senator ROCKEFELLER is a true friend of the coal miners of West Virginia and the miners throughout the Nation. Senator ROCKEFELLER has been recovering from back surgery for several weeks now, but he contributed much—yes, much—to the discussions that produced this bill.

Even in recovery, JAY ROCKEFELLER, my esteemed colleague, is a strong presence. He has been and is a strong presence in the Senate, and throughout his career he has been a very forceful advocate for the safety of coal miners, the miners of West Virginia.

With Senate passage today, our hopes are high that the House of Representatives will act quickly on legislation that can be enacted into law. The sooner Congress passes legislation, the safer our coal miners will be at work, and the greater the likelihood the future disasters can be prevented. Our Nation's coal miners and their families deserve no less.