

Federal Perkins dollars, matched by States and localities, are precisely the kind of government investment that pays off over a lifetime and I salute the continuation of these important programs.

In addition, I am heartened by several of the major changes we made to update the bill. We strengthened the emphasis on assisting students in preparing for high skill, high wage or high demand occupations, ensuring that we provide our students with skills they need to remain competitive in today's global marketplace. We promoted partnerships among high schools, community colleges, local workforce investment boards, business and industry, with the twin goals of providing students with pathways toward skilled occupations and producing the trained workers that employers need. We promoted professional development opportunities for career and technical education teachers, counselors, and administrators, so that those leading our classrooms and schools remain on the cutting edge of ever-changing workplaces and economy.

I commend this bill for bolstering the reporting requirements for Perkins programs, extending this level of transparency to the local level and requiring disaggregation for important population subgroups, including individuals with disabilities; students from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children; people preparing for nontraditional training and employment; and single parents, including single pregnant women. I am pleased that States now are required to report on student rates of attainment of diplomas and GEDs, as well as annual graduation rates. Valid and reliable data serves both an accountability and diagnostic function, and I am pleased to see that this reauthorization requires states to collect and publicize this information.

I would like to thank Senator KENNEDY, Chairman ENZI, Chairman MCKEON, and Congressman MILLER for their leadership on this bill. I also want to thank Carmel Martin, Jane Oates, J.D. LaRock, Beth Buehlmann, Scott Fleming, Whitney Rhoades, and Denise Forte for their hard work. The time and effort dedicated by members and staff is evident in the quality of the final product and I am pleased to support the reauthorization of the act.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT REAUTHORIZATION AND AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2006

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have been advised by Chairman SPECTER's staff that the chairman is correcting the RECORD regarding some materials that were inserted last Thursday, July 20, 2006, during debate on reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. I thank the chairman for correcting the RECORD. Contrary to how it appeared in the RECORD, those materials did not reflect work of the bipartisan staff of the Judiciary Committee.

I understand that the chairman filed a committee report last night on S. 2703, the Senate bill reported by the committee last Wednesday. I have yet to see a copy of that final report, nor is it yet publicly available. Indeed, no draft committee report on S. 2703 was circulated to the committee until July 24, 2006, 5 days after the Judiciary Committee unanimously voted to report it and the chairman had reported it, and four days after the Senate unanimously passed H.R. 9, the bill that President Bush signed into law this morning. That draft report did not contain findings based on the extensive record created in both the House and Senate.

In this highly unusual development, as the report filed should indicate, it does not reflect the views of a majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee. This, in spite of the fact that all members voted to report the bill favorably.

Fortunately, we had the foresight to include legislative findings in the body of the legislation itself. Those findings, based on the record, were adopted by the House and unanimously by the Senate last week. I want to thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Ranking Member CONYERS, Congressmen WATT and LEWIS, and all those who worked so hard to assemble and consider that record in the House. Their outstanding work gave us in the Senate a great start, which we supplemented with nine additional hearings. The findings remained the same and were adopted in identical form by both Houses. It is that bill and those findings, based on the extensive record that 18 members of the Judiciary Committee voted to report as part of S. 2703 last Wednesday, July 19 and that 98 Senators voted for in adopting H.R. 9 last Thursday, July 20.

With regard to committee consideration, after nine hearings, the committee held a special business meeting at my request to debate S. 2703 on July 19. At our business meeting, the committee debated and voted on only one substantive amendment, Senator COBURN's amendment related to section 203 of the Voting Rights Act. It was debated and then defeated. Other than an amendment I offered at Senator SALAZAR's suggestion to add the name of César Chávez to the short title, which was adopted, no other amendments were offered. The record is the record. As reported by The Houston Chronicle the next day, Senator CORNYN said: "I decided that any amendments would be defeated, so I decided not to offer any."

As Chairman SPECTER's deadline approached yesterday for filing views to be included in a highly unusual committee report, the Democratic Senators learned that the document the chairman was prepared to sign and file had changed dramatically from the document he had circulated as a draft report on July 24, 2006. As sponsors of the Senate legislation who have supported it pressed for its enactment and

voted for it, we felt compelled to file views registering our disappointment that the views then being circulated did not reflect our views, did not properly reflect the record supporting our bill, and did not fully endorse the bill we introduced, sponsored and that we and all members of the committee voted to report favorably to the Senate. After we filed our views, I understand the report was revised even further to incorporate what had previously been styled as supplemental views into a new and not previously circulated version.

I will ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of the signature page showing that even then only nine Republican members of the committee, less than a majority, endorsed the report.

Of course, at the time of floor debate and consideration of H.R. 9 in the Senate, no Senate committee report on S. 2703 was available to Senators. Fortunately at the time of Senate floor debate and consideration of H.R. 9 in the Senate last week, Senators had available to them an extensive record to inform their votes. We had the voluminous Senate Judiciary Committee record, including thousands of pages of testimony. We had the full record before the House of Representatives, including thousands of pages of testimony. We had the House Committee Report and the full debate on the floor of the House of Representatives, including debate surrounding four substantive amendments to H.R. 9 that were all rejected.

Leading up to final passage of the Voting Rights Act reauthorization, I provided the Senate with some of the extensive evidence received in the Judiciary Committee about the persistence of discriminatory practices in covered jurisdictions that supports reauthorization of this crucial provision. I provided evidence regarding the need for fixes to two Supreme Court decisions to clarify Congress's intent regarding the Voting Rights Act to reinforce the original purpose of the act. I also pointed to evidence supporting the extension of the act's critical bilingual language assistance provisions. I included statements in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD from Tuesday and Wednesday and available to all Senators during the course of the debate. I referred to that evidence early in the debate last Thursday.

Most importantly, of course, at the time we voted, all Senators had before them the detailed findings in section 2 of the legislation based on the record and all Senators endorsed those findings with their votes. For example, those findings explicitly include:

"Evidence of continued discrimination includ[ing] . . . the hundreds of objections interposed, requests for more information submitted followed by voting changes withdrawn from consideration by jurisdictions covered by the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and

section 5 enforcement actions undertaken by the Department of Justice in covered jurisdictions since 1982 that prevented election practices, such as annexation, at-large voting, and the use of multi-member districts, from being enacted to dilute minority voting strength; . . . the number of requests for declaratory judgments denied by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia; . . . the continued filing of section 2 cases that originated in covered jurisdictions; and . . . the litigation pursued by the Department of Justice since 1982 to enforce sections 4(e), 4(f)(4), and 203 of such Act to ensure that all language minority citizens have full access to the political process." In addition, those findings include, "[t]he continued evidence of racially polarized voting in each of the jurisdictions covered by the expiring provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 demonstrates that racial and language minorities remain politically vulnerable, warranting the continued protection of the Voting Rights Act of 1965."

These findings the Senate adopted in its unanimous vote for H.R. 9 and as a reauthorization measure also incorporated the statutory findings within the following provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965: section 203(a); section 4(f)(1); section 10(a); and section 202(a).

By passing the legislation, Congress has adopted and reaffirmed the detailed findings in H.R. 9. The Senate unanimously adopted these findings. Nothing inserted in the RECORD thereafter can diminish the force of those findings contained within the enacted legislation itself. As several courts have properly recognized, postpassage "legislative history" is a contradiction in terms.

Earlier today, we celebrated the reauthorization and revitalization of the Voting Rights Act when President Bush signed that bill into law. I know that many in his party are unhappy with him, but I think he did the right thing. The Voting Rights Act is one of the most important laws Congress has ever passed. I am proud to say that our democracy and our Nation have been better and richer for it.

The Voting Rights Act is the keystone in the foundation of civil rights laws and is one of the most important methods of protecting all Americans' foundational right to vote. Several generations have kept the chain of support for the Voting Rights Act unbroken, and now our generation has done its part to continue that legacy and revitalize the act.

Keeping the Voting Rights Act intact is important, but enforcing it is equally important. Now that Congress has passed this bill—and the President has signed it—it is up to the President to ensure that this law and all of its provisions are enforced fully and faithfully. I was pleased today to hear the President commit to aggressive enforcement and to defend the act from legal attacks. Article I of the Constitution provides for the Congress to write the laws, and article II provides for the President to enforce them. Congress has done its part, and now the President must do his. I commend him for

saying that he will. That was the most important thing the President said today.

The President has not always been a supporter of this important civil rights law. While Governor of Texas, President Bush fought against some of the key antidiscrimination provisions Congress just reauthorized, as noted in a front page story in today's Washington Times. Today the President acted on behalf of all Americans and did the right thing despite the backbiting and criticism within his party. I commend him.

Now his responsibility is to faithfully execute the law and aggressively enforce its provisions. I trust we will not see another after-the-fact Presidential signing statement undercutting the commitment he made today in his public statement and by signing the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006.

The enactment of this law is a triumph for all Americans and a testament to efforts of its supporters in the House and Senate. On several occasions there were attempts by some to derail this bill. Those efforts continue. Fortunately, the findings in the act itself and the record we have built supports this important measure. We know that effective enforcement of these provisions is vital in stamping out discrimination that, unfortunately, still exists in this Nation today. As the President has acknowledged, the wound is not healed and there is more to do to protect the rights of all Americans to vote and have their votes count.

I ask unanimous consent that the signature page to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Arlen Specter
Orrin Hatch
Chuck Grassley
Jon Kyl
Jeff Sessions
Lindsey Graham
John Cornyn
Sam Brownback
Tom Coburn

NOMINATION OF FREDERIC S. MISHKIN

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly about the nomination of Dr. Frederic Mishkin to be a Federal Reserve Governor and why I voted against him.

I do not think Professor Mishkin is the right choice for the Federal Reserve. I am not convinced that he will be an independent voice.

I met with Professor Mishkin a few weeks ago and found Professor Mishkin to be a pleasant and intelligent man. I do not question his integrity or his qualifications for the job. He has spent his entire career studying and writing about monetary policy and economics. And his passion is evident.

To me, the question is not about Professor Mishkin's qualifications but about the kind of Fed we need. I do not hold Professor Mishkin's long friendship with Chairman Bernanke against him, nor do I think he will have problems speaking his mind to the chairman when they disagree. My concern is that those disagreements will be few and far between, and that the chairman hand picked him for that reason.

More than that, I am afraid the Fed has too many people with the same background. Many Fed members have spent a great deal of time studying central bank actions, but too few have experience dealing with the real-world consequences of those actions. Even Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke recently agreed that having people with different backgrounds on the Fed is healthy, and he stated his support for the next nominee to come from the financial services industry.

However, Professor Mishkin will only continue the trend toward an ivory-tower, academic Fed. Because of that, I voted "no".

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 January 23, 1981, in Chicago, IL, Stevie Lynch, a mentally retarded man, was attacked while walking to a friend's house. According to police, two men stopped Lynch on the street taunting him about his disability and trying to make him drink beer. They then pulled him into a passageway punching him and beating his head against the wall. Lynch suffered fractures to his skull and jaw. His disability appeared to be the sole motivation for the attack.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE PROBLEM WITH ILLEGAL GUNS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, over the last 10 years, there have been more than 3.7 million crimes committed with firearms in this country. That is an average of 100 violent gun crimes every day, with almost 60 percent of these violent gun crimes occurring in our Nation's major cities.