

will be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 1 hour, with the first half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee, and the second half of the time under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the importance of national and homeland security and specifically to ensure that we enact the key legislation that we have under consideration necessary to protect our great Nation.

While we have achieved a great deal since 9/11 in the area of homeland security, and we need to acknowledge what we have accomplished, and while we are making great strides, there is still more left to do. The terrorists we are dealing with are not going to cease planning attacks against our country, which is why we are working hard to continually improve the national security of the United States. The fact that there has not been another terrorist attack on domestic soil since September 11, 2001, shows that we have been successful to this point.

To date, we have implemented 37 of the 39 9/11 Commission findings. We have enacted 71 laws on homeland security. We have increased the terrorist watch list to 400,000 persons. We have disrupted at least 15 major terrorist plots or potential plots against America. We have required that every visa holder be fingerprinted before entering the United States. We have frozen nearly \$1.5 billion in terrorist assets. We have convicted 261 accused defendants in terrorism-related cases, and we have killed or taken prisoner a number of al-Qaida leaders around the world, particularly in Iraq, including Al Zarqawi, who was the No. 1 al-Qaida leader in Iraq; including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, whom we have captured and from whom we have received very valuable information. We have to remember that he was the mastermind of the 9/11 plot.

In the area of port security, Georgia has three ports and is one of the top five States in the handling of some 11 million containers that reach our Nation's shores every year. Georgia plays an important role in the commerce of this country, and that is why I am pleased that Congress has completed a comprehensive port security conference report, which will continue to improve the security of our seaports all around America.

This bill improves a layered security approach to cargo screening and scanning. In Georgia, we will begin augmenting the existing cargo security detection equipment with radiation portal monitors next month to ensure the screening of high-risk containers to stop the illicit import of nuclear and radiological materials. This important

piece of legislation also provides for the development of a plan to ensure the successful resumption of shipping in the event of a terrorist attack. In addition, it mandates a plan to determine when it is feasible to scan containers prior to their reaching the United States. With our national security at stake, we will continue the necessary steps to protect our citizens and, at the same time, balance the flow of commerce.

In the closing weeks of this session, I think it is especially important to ensure that we have the opportunity to take final action on the Defense appropriations bill and the Defense authorization conference report. These vital pieces of legislation will continue to ensure that our military personnel involved in the global war on terrorism, as well as our National Guard personnel at home, have the necessary equipment and resources to do their jobs. We need to ensure that our Guard personnel stationed on the U.S. border can continue in their homeland security and defense roles, enhance the efforts of Border Patrol agents, and be available to support Governors in the case of any natural disaster that may arise.

The Defense appropriations conference report which we will be considering later this week provides \$86 billion for military personnel, \$120 billion for operations and maintenance, \$80 billion for procurement, and \$75 billion for research and development, all to ensure that our Nation's military has the resources they need to carry out the responsibilities that we as a nation have asked of them.

I would also like to ask the leadership in both the House and the Senate to make every effort to take final action on the national Defense authorization conference report this week. It would be a shame on our part not to provide these urgent policies and funding for our troops who so valiantly are defending our Nation today.

In closing, I would like to remind my colleagues what is at stake as we consider these bills and urge them to work to pass legislation this week in support of our Armed Forces. In Iraq, the combined coalition on Iraqi operations continues to target and eliminate al-Qaida operations. Since August 30, over 150 operations have been conducted, resulting in 66 terrorists being killed and over 830 suspected terrorists being detained. On September 12 alone, there was a series of 25 raids in and around Baghdad targeting al-Qaida and Iraqi activities. These raids resulted in the capture of over 70 suspected terrorists, including an associate of Abu Ayyub al-Masri, the new head of al-Qaida in Iraq. The associate was a leader of assassination, kidnapping, and I.E.D cells in Baghdad. Iraqi and coalition forces continue to make tremendous progress in clearing suspect buildings, seizing weapons, moving trash out of neighborhoods, improving electricity, wastewater disposal, and educational opportunities for the Iraqi people.

On the military front, by the end of this month the Iraqi Ground Forces Command, which recently became operational, will assume control of a second Iraqi Army division. And later this month, the Government of Iraq plans to assume control of the Dhi Qar Province. These are the activities that we are funding and supporting by doing our job in the Senate. I commend the work of our military personnel, the Appropriations Committee, and the Armed Services Committee for completing these bills, and I urge my colleagues to adopt them expeditiously.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, first I want to commend the Senator from Georgia for his excellent statement and discussion on what we are doing on the border and what we are doing generally in the area of fighting terrorism. I simply wanted to bring the Senate up to speed, and to the extent people are observing the Senate operations, the country up to speed—the listeners, anyway, up to speed on what we are doing on the border.

Last night we completed the conference between the House and the Senate on the Homeland Security bill, with Congressman ROGERS chairing the committee for the House and myself chairing it for the Senate. This is a bipartisan bill. It is a bill that passed the Senate 100 to nothing. It is a continuum of a lot of effort that we have made as a Congress to try to upgrade and significantly improve and make much more robust our efforts in order to secure our borders.

I think we all understand that the threat to America comes from many different directions. But as we prioritize threats, the No. 1 issue we have to worry about is someone coming into this country with a weapon of mass destruction.

The No. 2 thing we need to worry about is who is coming into the country and what products are coming into the country. What do those people intend? Hopefully, they are coming in legally. And what are the purposes of the products coming in? Hopefully, the purpose of the products is general commerce. But it is, first, to protect yourself from weapons of mass destruction and, second, to make sure our borders are secure.

In order to accomplish both of those goals, we need to put significant resources into those agencies and efforts which are responsible for addressing those two major issues. This bill, the Homeland Security bill, does exactly that. It puts significant new energy and dollars into detecting and being able to manage a potential weapon of mass destruction that will come into this country. Equally important, it

continues a 2-year effort that began in 2005 when we reorganized the flow of dollars within the Department of Homeland Security. It continues an effort to dramatically increase the boots on the ground and the physical and capital support efforts necessary to support the individuals who are protecting our borders and managing our borders.

This chart reflects the dramatic increase, using a baseline of when President Clinton left office to today. In the area of border agents specifically, over 6,000 agents have been added, 4,000 just in the last 2 years. That is a 40-percent increase in border agents in the last 2 years.

In addition, the bill we passed last night, while continuing the effort in the area of adding border agents, continues an aggressive effort to add detention beds. We understand, if you have agents on the ground who are hopefully catching people who are coming across our borders illegally, it does no good to catch those people unless you have some way to hold them. Up until this month, in fact, we had a policy known as catch and release because we simply did not have enough holding space for people who came into this country illegally.

This bill continues the effort in the area of adding detention beds. Over the last 2 years, we will have added over 9,000 beds, almost 10,000 beds. The practical effect of this is we are getting real results. Beginning next month, the Department of Homeland Security will no longer have a policy of catch and release. They will be able to hold the people they catch and detain them, which is exactly what should be happening. In addition, we have dramatically increased the number of Customs agents, we have increased the number of detention personnel, and we have significantly increased our commitment to fencing along the border.

This bill, as it was worked out last night, has \$1.2 billion in it for putting up either physical fencing, vehicle barriers, or what is known as a virtual fence, which is the Secure Border Initiative where in some parts of the southwest border, where a physical fence doesn't make any sense, there will be significant electronic monitoring of the border, which will allow us to see who is coming across the border. Once they come across the border, because we have added all these new border security personnel—the totals of which are here, 14,000 border security personnel, almost 15,000—we will be able to catch them if they are coming across illegally.

In addition, we have dramatically increased our efforts to recapitalize and support the Coast Guard. I think everyone understands the Coast Guard is one of the premier agencies in our Government. Their efforts during Katrina were exemplary. They have the primary responsibility for making sure people coming toward the United States over the seas are coming here as

part of reasonable commerce or simply as tourists and are not coming here to harm us. In order to accomplish that, they have dramatically increased the review of shipping as it comes toward the United States at the port of embarkation—whether that is in Asia or somewhere else—and they have increased their interdiction capabilities should there be a suspicious cargo on a ship headed toward the United States. To accomplish this, we have significantly increased the commitment to the Coast Guard in the area of purchasing more cutters, fast boats, arming their helicopters, and just generally upgrading their capacity to do their job well, as they do it well. Over \$7.5 billion has been put into the Coast Guard as a result of this effort.

The practical result of all this new funding, all these new agents, new commitment to detention beds, is that we are moving toward a secure border. In the very foreseeable future, short term rather than long term, we will be able to manage this border in a way that is appropriate, making sure people do not cross it illegally. We will also manage our ports, making sure they are secure. We have a way to go there, but we are making significant progress.

At the same time, in this bill we have made a commitment to reorganize the Department in some areas where it has not been functioning all that well, specifically in FEMA. I congratulate Senator COLLINS for her leadership. She orchestrated a bipartisan, bicameral effort to reach an agreement on how FEMA should be reorganized. The language of that reorganization is in this bill.

In addition, we have put in this bill significant language in the area of chemical plant security. The Department of Homeland Security today does not have adequate authority to secure our chemical plants. It simply cannot do it because it doesn't have the legal authority necessary to force our chemical plants to undertake policies which will secure them. With this new language—again, this language was brokered by Senator COLLINS working with Congressman BARTON and Congressman KING—we have put in place a regime which will allow the Homeland Security agency to monitor and to require that high-risk chemical plants now have a decent security plan in place.

There are other ideas out there for chemical security, some good ones. Senator BYRD has a significant number of good ideas in this area. Therefore, Senator COLLINS looked on this language, basically, more as a stop-gap language, to get things going, to make sure there was at least some initial authority for the Homeland Security Department, and thus this language sunsets in 3 years, so the Congress will have to reauthorize, and other thoughts and ideas in the area of chemical security can be pursued.

This bill is a comprehensive, broad, and extraordinarily robust effort to

tightening up and making a stronger commitment to securing our country and especially our borders and to make sure we have a Department of Homeland Security which has the resources it needs in order to accomplish that goal. There is a dramatic increase in the number of agents, dramatic increase in the number of detention beds, dramatic increase in the commitment to the Coast Guard, dramatic increase in the commitment to the monitoring and the capacity to handle a nuclear threat, and a dramatic increase to the issue of building a fence along the southwest border.

We still have a long way to go. Nobody is going to argue about that. But in this debate, while we constantly hear this constant rumbling of negativity out there about border security—we aren't doing this, we aren't doing that—it should be acknowledged that significant progress is being made and a dramatic amount of resources is being focused on this effort by this administration and this Congress.

In addition, as an aside, this bill had one item I would like to point out which I think is important, especially to people who live along the northern border. There is language in this bill which was worked out between myself and Congressman ROGERS but primarily between Congresswoman EMERSON and Senator VITTER. The purpose of this language will be to allow American citizens to cross into Canada and purchase drugs at a Canadian drugstore—Senator DEMINT was also involved in this—purchase drugs at a Canadian pharmacy and bring them back to the United States without being subject to legal prosecution.

There are a lot of people who believe they can go into Canada and buy American-made drugs which are being sold through Canada at a much higher discount than they can get those drugs in America. It may not be the case any longer because of what Wal-Mart is doing because Wal-Mart is putting in place a very robust, low-cost drug program. In any event, if Wal-Mart doesn't underprice Canada, people will be able now to go to Canada and purchase those drugs. I see Senator DORGAN here, and he has been a major player in this effort, also. They can purchase those drugs and not be subject to prosecution.

This language took a long time to work out. It has the safeguards in it that I believe always were necessary before we could take this language and move it forward, and I am glad we were finally able to resolve this part of that puzzle. It is a bigger issue, but at least relative to people crossing the borders and purchasing drugs, which happens fairly regularly in New Hampshire and I know North Dakota and other places along the northern border, this is a step in the right direction. I congratulate all the people who have worked so hard to make this come to fruition.

On balance, this is a truly excellent bill. We will be voting on it here, hopefully before the week is over. Absolutely I hope that is the case. It is very important we get these funds in place. As a result of that, we will continue this rather significant—I would call it dramatic—progress toward putting in place the capital, the resources, and the people necessary to secure our borders.

But I would point out this caveat. No matter how many people we put on the border and no matter how much capital resources we put behind this—and we are going to do whatever it takes on those two counts—you still have the issue of human nature to deal with, which is, if a Mexican is making \$5 a day and he can come to the United States and make \$50 a day and he has a family to support, he is going to come to the United States. We have to figure out a comprehensive approach which will allow somebody to come to the United States, work a job that Americans are not willing to work or we don't have enough Americans to work, and be able to do that under a guest worker program that is responsible and allow employers the capacity to be able to verify that the individual is in this country legally. That is a critical element to securing our borders and making sure we do this right.

So comprehensive reform should not be ignored. It has to be part of this whole package. But pending comprehensive reform, this bill, which we will vote on, the Homeland Security appropriations bill, is a significant, robust—actually, you could even call it dramatic—step forward in making sure our borders are secure.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, how much time do we have remaining on our side of the aisle in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority has 9½ minutes.

HELPING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I wish to say, while he is still on the Senate floor, what an outstanding job the Senator from New Hampshire, Mr. GREGG, has done in this area of homeland security and border security. I doubt there is any other Member of the Congress, House or Senate, who has done more to actually produce results.

There is very little we could be doing in the Congress, now and in the foreseeable future, more important than security for our homeland. It is an integral part of the War on Terror. It is a part of why we have not had another major attack since 9/11.

Once again, the Senator from New Hampshire has shown real leadership. He has produced a bill we have to have this year, to provide the appropriations for this important Department and the agencies within it and to put funding in it for border security. This is a

major achievement. No matter what else we get accomplished this week, this will probably be, overall, the most important. I thank him for it.

I have been very involved in the reform of FEMA because I have seen how FEMA did not always have the authority and didn't have the power, if you will, didn't have the people or the money to do the job after Hurricane Katrina. This reform will help make FEMA stronger, and I believe it will be a benefit to the Department of Homeland Security.

There are a lot of those saying we should be accomplishing more. I am hoping before this week is out we will pass a major border security bill. I am hoping we will pass the Outer Continental Shelf energy package. I believe we will get Defense authorization and Defense appropriations and hopefully several other good bills.

I have never seen a Senate more paralyzed than I have seen over the past few months. There is no doubt in my mind that a conscious decision was made by the Democratic leadership January a year ago to slow-roll, obstruct, delay everything. Every time you take a week or two on a bill that should be done in a day or two, that is that many days you cannot use to do other things which need to be accomplished. But I think, rather than trying to have a list with a whole lot of things on it—little things, in many instances—it is more important to keep a focus on the big issues.

What have we done to really help the American people?

Quite often some people say, please don't pass more laws. Leave me alone; allow the private sector, allow the markets, allow us to do our job, and let the States and localities do their jobs.

I think we overemphasis sheer numbers. But I think it is important that we look at the list of what this Senate has passed this year. When you add to that the other things which we hope we will complete this week—the most effective week of a session is always right before the end of the year. I remember one night when we passed something like 67 bills after almost everybody had gone home. The Democratic and Republican leadership had a blast. We passed a lot of good legislation.

Look at what we have already done. The Patriot Act. Under the title of Homeland Security, we have taken major actions and they have made a difference in securing our country and have been a critical part of the War on Terrorism. The Patriot Act, border security, and we have funded the war on terror.

On taxes and in the budget area, once again Senator JUDD GREGG did a great job as chairman of the Budget Committee. We cut entitlements somewhat. We cut taxes by \$70 billion. Other than Homeland Security and Defense, we have basically held the line on appropriations. A lot of the credit goes to my colleague from Mississippi, Senator COCHRAN.

We passed a comprehensive energy policy bill last week. It is having a positive effect. It takes time for legislation in that area to have an effect.

We passed the Pell grants in the area of math and science competitiveness in education.

We passed lawsuit abuse reform.

In the area of health for the benefit of Americans, health information technology, it sounds as though it wouldn't make that much difference, but it is going to control costs and make information more available to the patients so they can make the right decisions for their health needs.

We have tremendous fights over judges. We have confirmed two Supreme Court judges—outstanding judges. We have confirmed 14 circuit court judges and 34 district court judges. Hopefully, we will confirm more this week. But there again, the Democrats chose to filibuster on judges—in my opinion, clearly unconstitutional. In fact, the majority leader now on almost every bill has to file cloture. Why? Because otherwise you can't get to the substance of a bill.

When you spend 30 hours on a motion to proceed to a bill which has major consequences for border security, then you know there is something wrong with the institution. Instead of us finding ways to work together, we find ways to expound and put out more hot air instead of taking action.

We have done some other things in protecting families, and also moving toward sound government.

We passed the Voting Rights Act.

I am here today for some reasons and for efforts that are not listed on this board. One year ago, I was standing on this floor pleading with my colleagues to help us in dealing with the aftermath of the biggest natural disaster to ever hit this country. We tend to forget about it. But most of last fall we spent on passing in a bipartisan, bicameral way Katrina relief legislation. We passed major appropriations. I am not talking about a few millions. I am talking about well over \$100 billion.

When we came back from the August recess, instead of going to some of the things that were scheduled—such as repeal of the death tax—we went immediately to Katrina legislation. But in providing appropriations, in providing tax incentives for businesses and industries to rebuild, to stay in the area, or come to the area to help us recover, we did that.

Medicaid changes—we allowed the States of Louisiana and Mississippi to cope with the great increase in the number of people who needed Medicaid assistance; assistance through that bill to help many of our hospitals that were primary care hospitals. They treated everybody who showed up. It ran into hundreds of millions of dollars.

And right across the board, we have Stafford Act changes in the law, help for our schools and colleges. All of our schools in Mississippi were back and