

us in Congress and to the American people how their decisions affect good-paying jobs and the long-term strength of our industrial base.

My amendment will help to ensure that our industrial base is capable of meeting our national security objectives. It took us a very long time to build our industrial base. We have machinists who have past experience and know-how down the ranks for more than 50 years. We have engineers who know our mission, know the needs of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. We have a reputation for delivering for our military. But once those plants shut down, those industries are gone. We not only lose the jobs, but we lose the skills and the potential ability to provide our military with the equipment to defend our Nation and project our might worldwide. Preserving a healthy domestic base also breeds competition. That is good for innovation and, ultimately, for our taxpayers.

So today, as we begin this very serious and necessary conversation on procurement reform, we cannot afford to forget the needs of our industrial base. We have to consider how we achieve reform while continuing to support the development of our industrial base here at home.

It calls for thoughtful planning and projection about who our future enemies might possibly be and how they might possibly try to defeat us in this Nation. It is critical that our country and our military maintain a nimble and dynamic base. Once a new threat is identified, a solution has to be close at hand.

The discussion we are having on procurement reform in the Senate is happening as our country faces two difficult but not unrelated challenges: winning an international war on terror and rebuilding a faltering economy. It would be irresponsible not to include the needs of our industrial base as we move forward because unless we begin to address this issue now, we are not only going to continue to lose some of our best paying American jobs, we are going to lose the backbone of our military might.

I will be offering this amendment, and I would love to have the support of our colleagues to make sure we have a strong nation in the future.

#### ACADEMIC EXCHANGE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in early April of 2003, a professor of engineering at United Arab Emirates University contacted an American professor at the Worcester, MA, Polytechnic Institute about spending the summer in Worcester as a visiting professor. By late May his visit had been arranged—he would come for the months of July and August, the time when he was not teaching in the UAE, and they would collaborate on research on axiomatic design and fractal analysis of manufactured surfaces.

On June 7 the UAE professor applied for a nonimmigrant visa for June 27—

August 26. Apart from being called back to the consulate for fingerprinting on June 22 and told that he would receive an answer in the next 2 to 3 weeks, he heard nothing in response to his inquiries other than a reminder to check his visa application status on the embassy Web site. On August 9, with still no sign of his record on the Web site and the beginning of his fall semester approaching, he cancelled his plans and stayed at home in the UAE.

Without any information about the reason for the delay it is impossible to determine whether it was due to some legitimate concern or more likely the result of a bureaucratic logjam. But at a minimum, the professor should have received a response informing him of the status of his application before June 27. Instead, he and his American colleague were left in the dark to wonder, and had no choice but to cancel their research plans which would have been mutually beneficial, as well as for their students.

This is one incident; however, it is illustrative of the larger problem of foreign scholars and teachers being denied entry into the United States not because of travel bans, but because of delays and inefficiencies in the visa application process, particularly in geographical regions of concern for the Department of Homeland Security.

Transnational academic collaboration is, if not politically blind, politically myopic. Diplomats sit across from each other, even when meeting in friendship, to resolve differences. To study, the parties sit on the same side of the table and, irrespective of national, religious, ethnic or political backgrounds, focus on what they have in common. Some fields of study are so universal that they transcend language—mathematics does not need a common tongue for collaboration to happen.

This is in no way meant to disparage diplomacy, which has been and will continue to be the keystone of how governments interact. It emphasizes differences because it addresses them—academic collaboration will never negotiate an arms reduction treaty. But neither should we be limited by thinking that diplomacy is the only way of working towards understanding between two societies.

Nor is this type of academic exchange limited to technical or scientific work. I am reminded of when, after Robert Frost's visit to the Soviet Union in 1962, Siberian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko wrote to him "I have read your poems again and again today, and I am glad you live on Earth." I picture Frost and Yevtushenko talking about the rural beauties of their homeland, Frost of Ripton, VT and Yevtushenko of Stantsiya Zima, Siberia.

It is not only relations that we damage and the resentment we create by limiting these partnerships. The United States and the world also lose the body of scholarship that would

have been produced. In no academic discipline is anyone so bold as to suggest that knowledge lies only on one side of a fence or of an ocean.

To the foreign scholars who would study and do research here, I would say that in the post-9/11 world our immigration laws and procedures have indeed become more stringent, burdensome and time consuming. But do not interpret that as a sign that you are not welcome or that your presence is not desired. To the contrary, it is valuable—indispensable to you, to us and to the rest of the world.

It is also undeniable that during the Bush administration some of the immigration laws and regulations, enacted in haste to respond to 9/11, crossed the line between keeping a vigilant watch over our borders and creating unnecessary and illogical barriers to entry for those who pose no danger. The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State deserve credit for their efforts to keep our borders secure, but I also urge them to continually review their policies and procedures to make sure they are keeping out those who need to be kept out, but facilitating the entry of those whose presence we want and need.

The case of the UAE professor is, again, one example. But it did not only inconvenience the two professors; such cases can have a compounding, ripple effect as family members, friends and colleagues conclude that it is pointless, and potentially humiliating, to apply for a visa to study, teach or conduct academic research in the United States. At a time when we should be doing everything possible to rebuild our image abroad, particularly in predominantly Muslim countries, this is not the message we should be sending.

As the Departments of Homeland Security, State and Justice continue to review their policies they should look closely at these issues. If existing laws regarding who and what constitute legitimate security risks need to be clarified, then the administration should come to Congress with a recommendation. If the problem is a lack of staff or other resources to process visa applications in a timely manner, we can allocate the funds necessary to ensure that legitimate visa applicants get the prompt and fair consideration they are due. But whatever the cause of the problem, it needs to be fixed.

#### IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me