

entertainment such as Las Vegas or Disney World or Duluth.

From the heartland to the coasts, every State has an economic stake in the tourism industry, which is now a major part of the American economy. Throughout the United States, many communities have discovered and developed the economic potential of travel and tourism.

I keep using the example of Duluth because at some point in the 1970s, the economy was so bad there they actually had a billboard, so when you drove out of town, it said: The last one to leave, please turn off the lights.

Well, that billboard is not there anymore, as tourism is the biggest part of their economy, on beautiful Lake Superior, with beautiful museums and an aquarium and a children's museum. It has changed the life of that town. Tourism creates good jobs that cannot be outsourced.

Mr. President, one out of every eight Americans is employed in our travel economy. Each year, travel and tourism contribute approximately \$1.3 trillion to the American economy. International visitors, as Senator DORGAN just noted, spend an average of \$4,500 per person.

In economic terms, international tourism to the United States counts as an export. Instead of shipping our product to a customer overseas, the customer is coming here to spend money on our goods and our services.

Last year, travel and tourism exports accounted for 8 percent of all U.S. exports and 26 percent of all U.S. services exports. In fact, tourism is one of the few economic sectors where we enjoy a substantial trade surplus.

Travel is a part of the fabric of our State and our country. But over the past decade, we know it has been stretched to the brink. While more people around the world are traveling, a smaller percentage of them are visiting the United States.

This is not just about our troubled economy right now. This was going on long before that. It actually started after 9/11, where, for good reasons, security measures were put in place. But some of those good reasons have turned into very difficult times for tourists to come to this country, and that needs to be fixed. That is part of this bill: to make it easier for tourists to visit our country.

Since 2000, the U.S. share of the world travel market has decreased by nearly 20 percent, costing us hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in revenue.

Last year, nearly 200,000 travel-related jobs were lost. The Commerce Department predicts we will lose another 247,000 jobs this year. Remember, this is not about airport CEOs. This is about the janitors who work at the airports. This is about the maids who are doing the beds. This is about the waitresses who are working at the restaurants. This is about the people who do the flowers for the hotels and for

the banquets and for the business travelers. These are real jobs in America.

This has always been a country that has opened its arms to people from around the world. That is why we are so great. We have to bring that back. We have to bring people in to visit this country.

The Travel Promotion Act will do just that. By boosting travel to the United States it will also give a boost to our economy. So it is a win-win for the tourism industry, for jobs for America, and for the American people.

Senator DORGAN went through the bill. I do want to emphasize that not only will this consist of travel promotion and promoting our country, like other countries have been doing for years that have been leapfrogging us in this market, additionally, this legislation will establish the Office of Travel Promotion in the Department of Commerce to work with the Corporation for Travel Promotion and the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to encourage travel and to make sure international visitors are processed efficiently.

It does not cost taxpayers a cent, as Senator DORGAN pointed out, and economists expect it to generate billions for our economy.

According to an analysis by Oxford Economics, this tourism program is estimated to attract 1.6 million new international visitors annually and create \$4 billion in new spending in our country, creating 40,000 new jobs.

We know we need to bring back business travel. We should not let a few bad actors influence the decisions of good companies around this country. We know we have to look, this summer, for affordable deals for our families, and people are staying close to home. We want our Minnesotans to go fishing in Minnesota.

I say to the Presiding Officer, I would love to ask you if you know how much money people spend alone in Minnesota on bait and worms every year. I will tell you the answer. It has probably never been uttered before in this Chamber: \$50 million a year. Minnesotans and visitors to our State spend \$50 million a year on bait and worms for recreational fishing—just to give you an idea of what we are talking about when we talk about tourism spending.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation. I am proud to be a cosponsor. I look forward to working on this bill on the floor in the days to come.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 25 minutes.

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

NOMINATION OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss President Obama's nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to be an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Judge Sonia Sotomayor has impeccable legal credentials and a record of excellence and integrity. Equally important, she has the experience not only to make an excellent Justice but also to have a significant impact on a Court that today reflects too narrow a slice of America.

Judge Sonia Sotomayor's deep appreciation for how the law affects the lives of ordinary Americans is born from her compelling personal background, as well as her time as an assistant district attorney, a commercial litigator, and later as a judge.

Once confirmed, she will become the first Hispanic Justice, and just the third woman, to serve on the Nation's highest Court.

What are we to make, then, of the assaults on the character and record of this seemingly exemplary nominee?

Unfortunately, they seem to be a remnant of more than two decades of "culture wars" over Supreme Court nominees.

As someone who was present for the beginning of these wars, I have seen them develop into elaborate political dances, where both sides trade charges that are predictable and often baseless.

Some of these attacks, such as charges of racism and bigotry, deeply undermine our national dialog.

I am encouraged to note that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have chosen not to join in these attacks, and many, in fact, have condemned them.

Other attacks are equally predictable, from the general charge of "extremist" to particular instances of political "gotcha"—wrenching statements out of context in order to paint a distorted picture of the nominee's record.

At some level, partisan assaults are expected in the Supreme Court nomination process. But in the case of Judge Sotomayor, they are especially divorced from this body's good-faith exercise of its duty to advise and consent.

It is one thing to attack a nominee's judicial philosophy when the President is trying to reshape the Court based on judicial philosophy, when the balance of the Court is at stake, or when the Senate and the President are deeply divided.

None of those situations apply to this nomination.

Judge Sotomayor is a well-qualified, mainstream jurist who does not threaten to tip the balance of the Court and