

reasons have turned into very difficult times for tourists to come over, and that is what needs to be fixed. That is why part of this bill would make it easier for tourists to get their visas, make it easier for them to visit the country. A lot of times it is just expediting the checks that need to be made, making sure they can get their visas, just as they can get one to go to Canada or Mexico or other countries.

The bill will establish the Office of Travel Promotion in the Department of Commerce to work with the Corporation for Travel Promotion and secretaries of state and homeland security to make sure that international visitors are processed efficiently.

America is a country that wraps its arms around those who come to visit us, and this bill will make sure international visitors know they are welcome and wanted. The Travel Promotion Act is about more than just encouraging travel. It is also about building our economy. This bill is expected to bring in 1.6 million new international visitors each year. Since international visitors, as I noted, spend an average of \$4,500 per person while they are here, this is a huge boost to our economy. That money from overseas coming into our economy, into our towns and cities, into our small businesses is new money. If they are not going to come and spend it here, they are going to go to one of these countries—to the Bahamas, South Africa, Australia. That is new money coming into our country.

The U.S. Travel Association estimates this bill will create 40,000 new jobs, and economists at Oxford Economics expect the bill to generate \$4 billion in new spending and \$321 million in new tax revenue.

Just as important as how much it will generate is how much it will cost, which is zero for American taxpayers. This bill comes at no cost to the taxpayer. It will be paid for by a combination of private sector contributions and a \$10 fee on international travelers entering the United States of America—zero cost, big benefit.

The Congressional Budget Office just released a report that estimates that this bill will reduce budget deficits by \$425 million over the next 10 years—that is the bill pending before this body today. The math is undeniable. For no cost to the taxpayer, we can boost travel, boost the economy, and reduce the deficit. That is why this bill has such strong bipartisan support in the Senate. It also has the support of numerous organizations such as the U.S. Travel Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

It has many newspaper endorsements. As you can see, newspapers in every part of the country support this legislation. I will read just a few. The Sacramento Bee:

The country needs to reclaim its status as a global magnet for visitors, even in the post 9/11 climate, and Congress can help by pass-

ing the Travel Promotion Act by the end of this year.

Dallas Morning News, September 6:

The Travel Promotion act is a sensible first step toward putting the welcome mat back on America's doorstep.

Orlando Sentinel:

Our position, charging international travelers \$10 to pay for promotion of travel to bring in all that money makes sense.

Detroit Free Press, September 25, 2008:

Doesn't it make sense to encourage, at no cost to taxpayers, foreign visitors to come here and leave some money? There's no good reason not to pass this bill.

Finally, I leave the best to last, Duluth News Tribune, Duluth, MN, May 18, 2009:

Ideas to bolster economic recovery without plunging the nation any deeper into debt would be welcomed by taxpayers from coast to coast.

I know firsthand how important tourism is for the city of Duluth. It has had some very difficult economic times in the seventies and eighties. At one point it was so bad there was a time there was a billboard that someone put outside Duluth that said, "The last one to leave, please turn off the lights."

That is what they were dealing with. They bolstered their economy through tourism.

I was just up there. I did a field hearing there and they have actually seen an increase in their convention and business travel this year. Maybe a few people are going to places such as Duluth. Businesses are cutting back a little. But the important part of this is that you have one town just like so many across the country that has benefited from tourism.

This is what we are talking about across the country. I wonder why we didn't pass this earlier, why we haven't been able to get this through. I can't answer this question. It makes no sense to me. Sometimes people don't want to talk about tourism because they don't think it is important, but when one out of eight Americans is employed in this business it is important.

I urge my colleagues to support it. I hope we can get it through intact. I hope we will have a minimum number of amendments and we can simply do something good in a bipartisan way that will help increase jobs in America where one out of eight people is employed.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask that the Senate recess until 2:15, as under the previous order.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:28 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT OF 2009— MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, just prior to lunch, we had a vote on a cloture motion. The vote was 90 to 3. It was not some significant piece of public policy that will shake the Earth, it was a vote on the question of whether we could actually proceed to something called the Travel Promotion Act.

For those who do not know how the Senate works, you have to have a motion to proceed. Normally, a motion to proceed to a bill such as this would be done by unanimous consent and take just a nanosecond, no problem, a motion to proceed approved, proceed then to the bill, have a debate on the bill, and then vote on the bill.

But this is something called the Travel Promotion Act, which I will describe. It is bipartisan. I have offered it along with Senator JOHN ENSIGN, a Republican from Nevada. The two of us, along with many other cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, believe this is an important piece of legislation for the Senate and for the Congress to pass. Despite that, we had to have a vote this morning on the motion to proceed: Shall we proceed to this? A cloture motion had to be filed. It took 2 days to ripen, and then we had a vote. It was 90 to 3. The answer was yes by 90 to 3. And now we have 30 hours postcloture that we have to wait until we can get to the bill. And then have another cloture motion filed. It is the most unbelievable, Byzantine example of how this place has sort of fallen off the rails—requiring cloture motions to be filed on things that then get a 90-to-3 vote, and then there is a requirement that we have to spend the next 30 hours waiting until we can actually get to the bill. Unbelievable. But it is an example of what has happened here. And the minority is requiring this of every single piece of legislation. It is a way to require the Senate to walk through wet cement and make almost no progress at all. I guess when you get nothing done and then you are able to boast that nothing has happened, maybe some people feel good. It does not make me feel very good.

But having complained about it, now let me at least describe what this bill is. We will get to the bill this week. It will have taken a difficult route to get there. Judging by the 90-to-3 vote, I assume ultimately, when the Senate passes this legislation, we will have very strong support because it is a bipartisan piece of legislation.

I am told Senator ENSIGN has had to leave today as a result of a family matter. I think Senator MARTINEZ will be coming to the floor, who is also a cosponsor of this legislation. I appreciate