

Baca, and the Sheriffs' Association of Texas.

Our colleagues on the House Judiciary Committee unanimously passed a companion bill, H.R. 1512, and I urge you to do the same.

Another problem with SCAAP is the significant delay in reimbursement. Recently, State and county governments that foot the bill for holding criminal aliens between July 2004 and June 2005 had to wait until June 21, 2007, before they were reimbursed.

For example, Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, and Riverside County waited 2 years to receive their reimbursement—totaling \$85.9 million. While they were waiting, public safety offices had to cut back on critical services. This delay is worse when one considers that even when localities receive the federal funds, they are only reimbursed for pennies on every dollar spent.

Delays place unreasonable budgetary burdens on States, counties, and municipalities that already shoulder most of the costs of housing criminal aliens.

California is not alone. Every other State depends on these funds to perform what is ultimately a federal responsibility—to control illegal immigration and its effects in our communities. These delays affect every State.

The Ensure Timely SCARP Reimbursement Act would help ease this burden on States and localities by requiring the Justice Department to disburse funds within 6 months of the application deadline.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting these much needed amendments to the SCAAP statute. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of these two bills be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2587

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "SCAAP Reimbursement Protection Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. ASSISTANCE FOR STATES INCARCERATING UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS CHARGED WITH CERTAIN CRIMES.

Section 241(i)(3)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1231(i)(3)(A)) is amended by inserting "charged with or" before "convicted".

S. 2588

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Ensure Timely SCAAP Reimbursement Act".

SEC. 2. DISTRIBUTION OF SCAAP COMPENSATION.

Section 241(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1231(i)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(7) Any funds awarded to a State or a political subdivision of a State, including a municipality, for a fiscal year under this subsection shall be distributed to such State

or political subdivision not later than 120 days after the last day of the application period for assistance under this subsection for that fiscal year."

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 439—EXPRESSING THE STRONG SUPPORT OF THE SENATE FOR THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION TO ENTER INTO A MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN WITH GEORGIA AND UKRAINE

Mr. LUGAR (for himself and Mr. BIDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 439

Whereas the sustained commitment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to mutual defense has made possible the democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas NATO members can and should play a critical role in addressing the security challenges of the post-Cold War era in creating the stable environment needed for emerging democracies in Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas lasting stability and security in Europe and Eurasia require the military, economic, and political integration of emerging democracies into existing European structures;

Whereas, in an era of threats from terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, NATO is increasingly contributing to security in the face of global security challenges for the protection and interests of its member states;

Whereas the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine have each expressed a desire to join the Euro-Atlantic community, and Georgia and Ukraine are working closely with NATO and its members to meet criteria for eventual NATO membership;

Whereas, at the NATO-Ukraine Commission Foreign Ministerial meeting in Vilnius in April 2005, NATO and Ukraine launched an Intensified Dialogue on membership between the Alliance and Ukraine;

Whereas, following a meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in New York on September 21, 2006, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced the launching of an Intensified Dialogue on membership between NATO and Georgia;

Whereas the Riga Summit Declaration, issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in November 2006, reaffirms that NATO's door remains open to new members and that NATO will continue to review the process for new membership, stating "We reaffirm that the Alliance will continue with Georgia and Ukraine its Intensified Dialogues which cover the full range of political, military, financial, and security issues relating to those countries' aspirations to membership, without prejudice to any eventual Alliance decision. We reaffirm the importance of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, which has its 10th anniversary next year and welcome the progress that has been made in the framework of our Intensified Dialogue. We appreciate Ukraine's substantial contributions to our common security, including through participation in NATO-led operations and efforts to promote regional cooperation. We encourage Ukraine to continue to contribute to regional secu-

rity. We are determined to continue to assist, through practical cooperation, in the implementation of far-reaching reform efforts, notably in the fields of national security, defense, reform of the defense-industrial sector and fighting corruption. We welcome the commencement of an Intensified Dialogue with Georgia as well as Georgia's contribution to international peacekeeping and security operations. We will continue to engage actively with Georgia in support of its reform process. We encourage Georgia to continue progress on political, economic and military reforms, including strengthening judicial reform, as well as the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts on its territory. We reaffirm that it is of great importance that all parties in the region should engage constructively to promote regional peace and stability.";

Whereas, in January 2008, Ukraine forwarded to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer a letter, signed by President Victor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and Verkhovna Rada Speaker Arseny Yatsenyuk, requesting that NATO integrate Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan;

Whereas, in January 2008, Georgia held a referendum on NATO and 76.22 percent of the votes supported membership;

Whereas participation in a Membership Action Plan does not guarantee future membership in the NATO Alliance; and

Whereas NATO membership requires significant national and international commitments and sacrifices and is not possible without the support of the populations of the NATO member States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Senate—

(A) reaffirms its previous expressions of support for continued enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to include qualified candidates; and

(B) supports the commitment to further enlargement of NATO to include democratic governments that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership;

(2) the expansion of NATO contributes to NATO's continued effectiveness and relevance;

(3) Georgia and Ukraine are strong allies that have made important progress in the areas of defense, democratic, and human rights reform;

(4) a stronger, deeper relationship among the Government of Georgia, the Government of Ukraine, and NATO will be mutually beneficial to those countries and to NATO member States; and

(5) the United States should take the lead in supporting the awarding of a Membership Action Plan to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the NATO Membership Action Plan Endorsement Act of 2008. This resolution is intended to express strong Senate support for Administration leadership in ensuring that NATO extends Membership Action Plan, MAP, status to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.

NATO has a long track record of support for continued enlargement of NATO to democracies that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership. The leaders of Georgia and Ukraine have clearly stated their desire to join NATO and both have made remarkable progress towards meeting NATO standards.

The Membership Action Plan was launched in April 1999 to assist countries in preparations for possible NATO membership by providing advice, assistance, and practical support on all aspects of membership requirements. NATO has identified four main categories of cooperation and assistance through MAP. First, NATO assists in the development of a national program that covers political, economic, defense, resource security, and legal requirements for membership. Second, NATO experts provide focused and candid feedback and political and technical advice to the governments. Third, NATO provides an organizational structure to assist in the coordination of defense and security assistance received from NATO member states and other allies. Fourth, NATO provides assistance in the construction of an individual approach to defense planning to include force, personnel, and capability reforms.

MAP implementation is no longer simply an activity that focuses on military and security issues. Interministerial meetings engage other governmental departments in a coordinated and systematic approach with the goal of government-wide reform and progress. These goals include settling international, ethnic or external territorial disputes by peaceful means; demonstrating a commitment to the rule of law and human rights; and promoting stability and prosperity through economic reform, social equality, and environmental responsibility. Each participant is free to choose the elements of MAP best suited to their own national priorities and circumstances. In other words, if approved at the NATO summit at Bucharest, Romania in April, Tbilisi and Kyiv will set their own objectives, targets, and work schedules.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been evolving to meet the new security needs of the 21st century. In this era, the threats to NATO members are transnational and far from its geographic borders. NATO's viability as an effective defense and security alliance depends on flexible, creative leadership, as well as the willingness of members to improve capabilities and address common threats.

If NATO is to continue to be the preeminent security Alliance and serve the defense interests of its membership, it must continue to evolve and that evolution must include enlargement. Potential NATO membership motivates emerging democracies to make important advances in areas such as the rule of law and civil society. A closer relationship with NATO will promote these values and contribute to our mutual security.

Three years ago, the U.S. Senate unanimously voted to invite 7 countries to join NATO. Today, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia are making significant contributions to NATO and are among our closest allies in the global

war on terrorism. It is time again for the U.S. to take the lead in urging its allies to recognize the important efforts underway in Georgia and Ukraine, and to offer MAP to both countries this spring.

Both countries have significant amounts of work to accomplish before they can be offered NATO membership. Let me be clear, MAP participation does not guarantee future membership, nor does it consist of simply a checklist for aspiring NATO members to fulfill. It is a guide, not an endorsement to NATO membership.

I am confident that Presidents Saakashvili and Yushchenko understand that NATO membership will not be possible without the support of their respective electorates. In Georgia the issue was put to a referendum earlier this month and 76.22 percent of voters supported NATO membership. Ukrainian leaders have identified the need for a national referendum on this important issue in the future. Alliance membership requires commitment and sacrifice that must have the support of the local population if they are to be successfully implemented.

Last week, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Steven Pifer, outlined in the International Herald Tribune several compelling arguments for extending MAP to Ukraine. He said, in part: "Granting Ukraine a MAP at the Bucharest summit . . . would enhance European security and stability . . . [N]one of the arguments against the measure stand up to scrutiny . . . Ukraine has made as much progress on democratic, economic, and military reform as Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Albania when they received MAPs in 1999 . . . Kyiv has demonstrated that it has serious military capabilities and the political will to use them. In recent years, the Ukrainian military has provided the alliance with strategic airlifts; participated, often side-by-side with NATO troops, in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and elsewhere; and made a significant contribution to coalition ground forces in Iraq during 2004-05. Ukraine would be a net contributor to Euro-Atlantic security."

Mr. President, I ask that my colleagues support this important resolution. It sends a strong message to the administration, our NATO allies, as well as to the people of Georgia and Ukraine that we are prepared to work closely with each to contribute to the strengthening of peace and security in Europe and Eurasia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 440—RECOGNIZING SOIL AS AN ESSENTIAL NATURAL RESOURCE, AND SOILS PROFESSIONALS AS PLAYING A CRITICAL ROLE IN MANAGING OUR NATION'S SOIL RESOURCES

Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. RES. 440

Whereas soil, plant, animal, and human health are intricately linked and the sustainable use of soil affects climate, water and air quality, human health, biodiversity, food safety, and agricultural production;

Whereas soil is a dynamic system which performs many functions and services vital to human activities and ecosystems;

Whereas, despite soil's importance to human health, the environment, nutrition and food, feed, fiber, and fuel production, there is little public awareness of the importance of soil protection;

Whereas the degradation of soil can be rapid, while the formation and regeneration processes can be very slow;

Whereas protection of United States soil based on the principles of preservation and enhancement of soil functions, prevention of soil degradation, mitigation of detrimental use, and restoration of degraded soils is essential to the long-term prosperity of the United States;

Whereas legislation in the areas of organic, industrial, chemical, biological, and medical waste pollution prevention and control should consider soil protection provisions;

Whereas legislation on climate change, water quality, agriculture, and rural development should offer a coherent and effective legislative framework for common principles and objectives that are aimed at protection and sustainable use of soils in the United States;

Whereas soil contamination coupled with poor or inappropriate soil management practices continues to leave contaminated sites unremediated; and

Whereas soil can be managed in a sustainable manner, which preserves its capacity to deliver ecological, economic, and social benefits, while maintaining its value for future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes it as necessary to improve knowledge, exchange information, and develop and implement best practices for soil management, soil restoration, carbon sequestration, and long-term use of the Nation's soil resources;

(2) recognizes the important role of soil scientists and soils professionals, who are well-equipped with the information and experience needed to address the issues of today and those of tomorrow in managing the Nation's soil resources;

(3) commends soil scientists and soils professionals for their efforts to promote education, outreach, and awareness necessary for generating more public interest in and appreciation for soils; and

(4) acknowledges the promise of soil scientists and soils professionals to continue to enrich the lives of all Americans by improving stewardship of the soil, combating soil degradation, and ensuring the future protection and sustainable use of our air, soil, and water resources.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3973. Mr. ROCKEFELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5140, to provide economic stimulus through recovery rebates to individuals, incentives for business investment, and an increase in conforming and FHA loan limits; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3974. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5140, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3975. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5140, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.