other Senators and make sure everybody understands and agrees before we enter that next request. But it is not applicable here.

Mr. SPECTER. As long as this unanimous consent request is not precluding further amendments to the resolution, I do not object.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, I only do so for purposes of clarification.

I think what the majority leader is proposing here goes a long way to resolving one of the issues that divided Democrats and Republicans. First, I commend him and commend those responsible for offering this amendment.

What this would do is to add the word ''improper'' at the appropriate places within the authorization to allow us to look at both improper and illegal activity. So, as I say, this goes a long way to resolving the conflict that we have discussed now for some time and that was the subject of debate this morning. So this moves this process along. I would certainly urge all of my colleagues to agree to this unanimous consent request.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for his comments. I might say, just for further clarification, it would add to ''illegal'' the words ''and improper.'' The Glenn amendment of course has a number of descriptions. We are working on a discussion here of how that might be handled in a colloquy here today. But this would just add the words ''and improper'' at the appropriate places in the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further objection in regard to this request? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I further ask unanimous consent that following the disposition of the Lott amendment, the Senate resume the Glenn amendment No. 21, and no amendments be in order prior to the vote on or in relation to the Glenn amendment No. 21 and he be permitted to withdraw his amendment if he chooses after our discussions take place.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 23

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I now send my amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT], for himself, Mr. THOMPSON, and Mr. WARNER, proposes an amendment numbered 23.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 10, line 19 after the word ''illegal'' add ''and improper''.

On page 10, line 23 after the word ''illegal'' add ''and improper''.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed as in morning business for 5 minutes to introduce a measure, after which time I will suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

Mr. DODD. Will my colleague yield to make that 6 minutes so I could get a minute in?

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent for 7 minutes and give 3 of my minutes to Senator DODD.

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

(The remarks of Mr. DOMENICI and Mr. DODD pertaining to the introduction of S. 422 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I may proceed for 12 minutes as in morning business.

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

RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, when the 94th Congress convened in January 1975, I was 93d in Senate seniority. When the 105th Congress convened this past January, I was 12th. What a difference 22 years make.

My 22 years of service to the people of Kentucky, as their U.S. Senator, has been during a remarkable period in history. We have witnessed the end of the cold war and the fall of the Berlin Wall. We have witnessed a technological boom that was unthinkable 22 years ago and we've witnessed the growth of democracy in practically every underdeveloped nation in the world.

We have also seen the cost of a college education skyrocket. We have seen the cost of medical care skyrocket. And last but not least, we've seen the cost of a political campaign skyrocket.

The average cost of a U.S. Senate race in 1974, the first year I ran, was less than $450,000. In fact, $437,482. The average cost of a Senate race last year was approximately $4.5 million. There is no job, especially the job of public servant, that is worth or deserves the effort necessary to raise and spend that much money.

The job of being a U.S. Senator today has unfortunately become a job of raising money to be reelected instead of a job doing the people's business. Traveling to New York, California, Texas, or basically any State in the country, weekend after weekend, for the next 2 years is what candidates must do if they hope to raise the money necessary to compete in a senatorial election.

Democracy as we know it will be lost if we continue to allow government to become one bought by the highest bidder, for the highest bidder. Candidates will simply become bit players and pawns in a campaign managed and manipulated by paid consultants and hired guns.

Because of the political money chase, Washington, DC is fast becoming the center of our lives, not our people back home. The money chase has got to stop. We must reform the system so that ordinary, everyday people, who want to run for political office and make our country a better place are able to do so.

I have spent a good part of my Senate career and political life working to nudge and, occasionally shove our party back toward the center of the political road. I came to Washington as a moderate Democrat, believing then as I still do, that the will of the people comes first. I've tried to be a moderate voice and will continue to do so. I love our country too much to let the extremists ram their agenda down our throats.

There are many challenges facing the Senate and our party as we march into the next millennium. More than ever, I want to be involved in addressing some of them.

I am not in the business to get my name in lights or to appear on the national TV talk shows or make headlines in the national newspapers. My philosophy has always been and will continue to be keep a low profile, work behind the scenes with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and come up with a solution that benefits everyone. Compromise is not a dirty word. I plan on working this way in the months ahead.

Now of a more immediate and personal concern. Do I run again for another term in 1998? My health is good, my mind is sharp, and I enjoy what I do as much as life itself. However, because my mind is sharp, it is quick to remind me that I am 72 years old and I will be 74 in November of 1998. The good Lord has a plan for every one of us, even me. My heart says that my love affair with the people of Kentucky is not over. My head says it has been a long ride and a good ride but now it is time to pass the reins on to a younger generation.

Today I will lead with my head and not my heart. So the time has come for me to announce that I will not be a candidate for reelection in 1998.

As you try to understand my decision, let me ask you to do something for me, if you will. Don't say that I'm ready to go because I'm not and, frankly, I never will be. I still get goose bumps every time I look up at the Capitol dome on my way to and from work.

You can say that my reelection campaign would be my most expensive race

ever. I do not relish—in fact, I detest—the idea of having to raise $5 million for a job that pays $133,000 a year. To reach that mark, I would have to raise $100,000 a week, starting today, for the next year.

Please don't say that my time has passed and I should be put out to pasture, because I don't believe that it has. The political philosophy that I embrace is just as relevant today as it was when I first entered public life 30 years ago. It is a philosophy centered on the fact that most Kentuckians cherish personal freedom more than either a liberal agenda or a competing conservative agenda that just uses Government in a different way to promote its goals.

I thank the people of Kentucky from the bottom of my heart for giving me the chance to be their voice for these four-plus terms here in the U.S. Senate. I have been blessed with good friends and dedicated supporters all around my State, who have been there time and time again when I have called for their help.

No one serves the people alone. He or she must have a good, bright, hard-working staff for support. I have been blessed with an abundance of such a staff. They have proven themselves more than capable of handling any situation thrown at them. Their unequaled loyalty and total devotion to their work, especially in handling constituent services, both in my district offices and here in Washington, is proven time and time again. My staff is simply the best, as the thousands of constituents who have used them will attest.

In announcing last month that he would not run again, my good friend and colleague, JOHN GLENN, put it in perspective when he said, ''There still is no cure for the common birthday.'' I believe that 100 percent, and I want to leave here knowing that I have a lot more birthdays to celebrate with my family.

Now, speaking of family, no one—and I repeat, no one—could ask for a more supportive and loving family than mine. My wife, Jean, has been my anchor for over 50 years. My children, Shirley and Steve, have had to grow up with an absentee father a lot of the time. But they know in their hearts how much I love them. I plan on helping them in the years to come the way they have been there for me all these many years. As for my grandchildren, I can't wait to spend more time with them and, hopefully, learn a thing or two from them. I'll finally have the time to dote on them and spoil them the way a grandfather is supposed to do.

Mr. President, let me close by reading the last paragraph from a poem entitled ''A Year,'' which I have carried with me for many, many years. My son had it right when he wrote this back during his sophomore year at Frankfort High School. He is now married and has three lovely sons and, still, he had it right much earlier than I thought he did. This is the last of four paragraphs, referring to the seasons:

Another year has passed,
the days not slow or fast,
Burned deep within our brain,
its memories will ever remain,
And although you look back and stood,
wishing there had been more good,
No one can change the seasons,
'cept God, and he's had no reason.

I thank the Chair for giving me this time. I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for about 4 minutes in reference to the speech we just heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KEMPTHORNE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have listened to my good friend from Kentucky, who has been my good friend from the time we first met as newly elected Members of the class of 1974. We came here together, and I can honestly say, Mr. President, that I have looked to Senator FORD for guidance on every issue since then. I came from a small county office, and he came from being Governor of a State much larger than Vermont ever has been or ever will be.

I remember debates we had when we were in the majority and in the minority, and back to the majority and then back to the minority. WENDELL FORD's was one of the voices we would listen to as we tried to find the answers that made sense for the country and for each other.

WENDELL FORD also had a quality that was very much the quality of all Senators, Republican and Democrat, when he first came here—a quality that, perhaps, some today should remind themselves of, because it existed universally then, and that is the quality of when a Senator gives his word, his word is gold. There is not one single person who has served here in the 22 years that WENDELL FORD has been here who has ever questioned his word. There is not one single Senator here who found him to be someone who did not keep totally to his commitments.

What I have enjoyed in our personal relationship is that he is a man I have been able to go to for counsel and guidance and know that I could discuss anything with him without it ever being given out, if I told him it was in confidence.

Marcelle and I have been privileged to be here with Jean and WENDELL FORD. They are the kind of people that future generations of the Senate should look to for the best, not just for Kentucky, but for the country. Ultimately, what is most important in this body is not whether you are liberal, moderate, or conservative, but whether you serve with integrity for the best interests of the country. I have served with many, many people who fit that description, but I have been fortunate that, for 22 years, I have served here with a man who epitomizes that—WENDELL FORD of Kentucky.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNETT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, when I came here as a freshman, I remember the first parliamentary situation I got snarled up in, and the man who stepped up to help me unsnarl it and begin to understand the way the Senate worked was the senior Senator from Kentucky [Mr. FORD]. He sits on the other side of the center aisle from the side I sit on. We have not cast very many votes in the same way. But he has been an unfailing source of good humor and good fellowship, and he has become a close friend.

I remember, as I contemplate this occasion, one night when I was called upon for late service in the Chair. As things happened that night, the two leaders, for one reason or another, could not seem to get together, and the hour went on and on and on, and they could not call anybody to relieve me in the Chair. I was there until almost midnight. Absolutely nothing was happening on the floor; indeed, nobody was on the floor—except the Senator from Kentucky, who had duty himself that night on behalf of his party. I remember asking him, as a freshman seeking wisdom, as I was looking up in the gallery, ''Why are they here at 11 o'clock at night or 11:30 at night, with nothing going on?'' They sat there patiently in the gallery. Senator FORD said, ''Because the zoo is closed.''

He has been a delight to be around. I serve now on a task force with him, and I appreciate his candor, his directness, his clear honesty, and his great respect for this institution. This is the kind of Senator we need in terms of this respect.

There are many who come here who do not recognize the great honor it is to be here and sometimes bring a degree of dishonor to this body and the work it does on behalf of the people. Senator FORD is not in that category. He is in the other category of those who will be missed on both sides of the aisle, a good friend whom we shall look forward to seeing for many years to come even after his service here has ended because we find him such good company and such a fine, fine friend.

Mr. WARNER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I join those in expressing our good wishes to both the senior Senator from Kentucky and, indeed, his wife and family for their next chapter.

Yesterday afternoon, I say to my good friend from Kentucky, I interrupted the proceedings in relation to the underlying amendment to speak briefly on behalf of our good friend and colleague, who at that time was necessarily detained in that State he loves most, Kentucky. But I have been privileged now to serve as chairman of the Rules Committee with my distinguished colleague as the ranking member, and I have been a member of this

committee for many, many years. We have all come to know and respect WENDELL FORD. And I think within the institution of the Senate, certainly as it relates to all the employees, no matter whether they are in the cafeteria, no matter whether they are here on the dais, wherever they are, he feels a very keen sense of responsibility for their welfare and their safety and for their ability to achieve their goals and care for themselves and their families.

He has done a remarkable job on the Rules Committee over these years, and I look forward to working with him the balance of this distinguished Senator's term. The Rules Committee is often thought of as housekeeping. Fine, call it housekeeping if you wish. We saw an example today where it occasionally is a little more than housekeeping. But whether it is the complicated issue like today or caring for any employees in this institution of the Senate and working with the House on the overall protection of the Capitol of the United States, where the two bodies share joint jurisdiction, Senator FORD is always there, keeping in mind what is in the best interests of the Congress and of the Senate and of those people who serve the Senate. I salute my good friend and wish him well.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. GRAMS. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to address the Senate as if in morning business for up to 12 minutes.

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

Mr. GRAMS. I thank the Chair.

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as the Senate further deliberates on the nomination of Federico Pena to become the next Secretary of Energy, I rise again to discuss an issue of paramount importance to our Nation's ratepayers and taxpayers: nuclear waste storage.

While I have already discussed on this floor the long history of this debate, I believe a brief review of this history is warranted.

Since 1982, energy consumers have been required to pay almost $13 billion into a trust fund created to facilitate the disposal of our Nation's commercial nuclear waste.

In return for such payments, nuclear utilities and their ratepayers were assured that the Department of Energy would begin transporting and storing nuclear waste in a centralized Federal repository by January 31, 1998.

This deadline is less than a year away. Over $6 billion of the ratepayer's money has been spent by the Department of Energy, with very little progress being made by the Department in living up to the Federal law which requires the DOE to accept commercial nuclear waste. In fact, late last year, the DOE politically punted their problem by notifying utilities and States that it would not meet the deadline, despite a Federal court's ruling that it must do so or be liable for substantial damages.

Since then, the Department has failed to set forth a single, constructive proposal to meet its legal obligations, thereby threatening the interests of ratepayers and ultimately the taxpayers.

Who will be most affected by the lack of DOE action? Obviously, ratepayers come to mind. As I have stated before, our Nation's energy customers have already paid almost $13 billion into the Nuclear Waste Fund. At the same time, since the DOE has not met its obligations to accept nuclear waste, utilities and ratepayers have paid and will continue to pay for onsite storage at over 70 commercial nuclear powerplants. In other words, ratepayers are being hit twice because the Department of Energy has failed to meet its legal obligations to the American people.

In addition, the Energy Department's failure to move nuclear waste out of the States affects not just our Nation's consumers; it compromises our taxpayers as well.

Last year, the Federal courts ruled that the DOE will be liable if it does not accept commercial nuclear waste by January 31, 1998. But under current law, no one at the DOE itself will have to pay the damages—that bill will go to the American taxpayers at an estimated cost of 40 to 80 billion taxpayer dollars. This staggering and irresponsible potential damage liability and the DOE's reluctance to provide specific answers to resolve this situation should be an affront to the President, the Vice President, the Congress and more importantly, the American taxpayer.

To make matters worse, DOE officials under the Clinton-Gore administration have not only avoided specific responses to this fiasco, but have openly indicated that the States—not the Department—have the responsibility to address the problem in the absence of action by the Federal Government. In other words, in the last hours, the DOE is saying that it will not meet its responsibility and is tossing the ball to the States and the ratepayers to handle the DOE's mistake.

For example, in a recent hearing before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, DOE Under Secretary Thomas Grumbly argued that nuclear waste storage problems facing States like Minnesota are not the Federal Government's responsibility.

Mr. President, I find that attitude completely arrogant, devoid of the facts, and a threat to the viability of long-term energy resources for the American public. In 1982, States, utilities and through them, ratepayers, signed a contract with the Federal Government to dispose of commercial nuclear waste, a contract upheld by the courts last year.

With that understanding, States planned for limited onsite temporary storage capacity, relying upon the Federal Government's fulfillment of its contractual obligation.

Yet, as the years passed, it became apparent that the Federal Government would not keep its word, prompting threats of potential energy crises in States with limited storage space.

For example, the depletion of storage space in my home State of Minnesota will mean that one of our utilities will lose its operating capacity by 2002 if the Federal Government does not act soon. This plainly means that consumers in Minnesota would not only lose 30 percent of their energy resources but would also have to pay higher energy prices—estimated as much as 17 percent more—as a result of Federal inaction.

Therefore, ratepayers will not get hit just once or twice, but potentially three times, if a resolution is not found on a national level.

The crisis facing both our ratepayers and taxpayers is simply unacceptable. The American people do not deserve excuses and inaction; they need real answers from the Clinton-Gore administration. They need leadership on this issue—not a crass political debate arising out of Presidential politics.

With that in mind, I took the opportunity to ask Secretary-designate Federico Peña of his specific and definitive views to resolve this issue.

Since I believe the American people deserve answers from their leaders, I sent a letter to Mr. Peña asking for a detailed response outlining the specific steps he would urge to meet the January 31, 1998, deadline.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks an exchange of letters.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. GRAMS. After this exchange of letters, I still felt troubled by Mr. Peña's inability to provide specific answers about how he and the Clinton-Gore administration intend to resolve our Nation's nuclear waste storage problem.

Because I have not received a sufficient response to date, I objected to an effort to expedite full consideration of Mr. Peña's nomination late last week.

Since that time, however, I had a telephone conversation with the Secretary-designate over the nuclear waste issue. While I am still concerned with his continued lack of specific answers, I was pleased to hear Mr. Peña agree with me and the Federal courts that any resolution of this issue ultimately involves Federal responsibility. Contradicting what DOE Under Secretary Grumbly stated before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee