

impossible, possible. Finally, it celebrates the courageous spirit of the American people.

#### PENDING NOMINATION OF BILL LANN LEE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today in communities all around the country and here at the United States Capitol, Asian Pacific Americans are leading all Americans in a demonstration of our commitment to one America, equal opportunity and equal justice under law by urging the Senate to vote on the nomination of Bill Lann Lee to head the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice. I hear the call of the Congressional Asian Pacific Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for prompt Senate consideration and a vote on this highly-qualified nominee and dedicated public servant. I commend the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans and their Chair Daphne Kwok, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association and the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium for their leadership in connection with this matter and their commitment to fundamental fairness.

Today is the second anniversary of the initial nomination of Bill Lann Lee to the office of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. I repeat today what I have said before: It is past time to do the right thing, the honorable thing, and report this qualified nominee to the Senate so that the Senate may fulfill its constitutional duty under the advice and consent clause and vote on this nomination without further delay. Two years is too long to wait for Senate action on this important nomination.

Yesterday, I was privileged to attend a meeting with the President of the United States in the East Room of the White House in which he issued a challenge to the lawyers of our country to rededicate themselves to help build one America and realize the American dream of equality for all under the law. What kind of message is the Senate sending when it refuses to act on the nomination of this outstanding Asian Pacific American?

After Bill Lann Lee graduated from Yale and then Columbia Law School he could have spent his career in the comfort and affluence of any one of the nation's top law firms. He chose, instead, to spend his career on the front lines, helping to open the doors of opportunity to those who struggle in our society. His is an American story. The son of immigrants whose success can be celebrated by all Americans.

In my view, Bill Lann Lee should be commended for the years he worked to provide legal services and access to our justice system for those without the financial resources otherwise to retain counsel. His work should be a source of pride and a basis for praise. His career should be a model for those who take up the challenge that the President

enunciated yesterday to lawyers across this country. I say that Bill Lann Lee represented the best of the legal profession while serving those without means.

It appears that some on the Republican side want to hold the Lee nomination as a partisan trophy—to kill it through obstruction and delay rather than allowing the Senate to vote up or down on the nomination. This effort started with a letter from the former Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, to the Republican Majority Leader of the Senate in 1997. Over the ensuing weekend progress toward confirmation of this nomination ground to a halt. Speaker Gingrich is gone but the disastrous consequence of his unjustified opposition to this nomination lingers. It is past time to put past injustice to rest. As speaker after speaker reiterated today across the country, it is time for the Senate to vote on the nomination of Bill Lann Lee.

Bill Lann Lee's skills, his experience, the compelling personal journey that he and his family have traveled, his commitment to full opportunity for all Americans—these qualities appeal to the best in us. Let us affirm the best in us. Let the Senate vote on the confirmation of this good man. We need Bill Lann Lee's proven problem-solving abilities in these difficult times with apparent hate crimes on the rise across the country. He is spearheading efforts against hate crimes, against modern slavery and for equal justice for all Americans.

If the Senate is allowed to decide, I believe he will be confirmed and will move this country forward to a time when discrimination will subside and affirmative action is no longer needed; a time when each child—girl or boy, black or white, rich or poor, urban or rural, regardless of national or ethnic origin and regardless of sexual orientation or disability—shall have a fair and equal opportunity to live the American dream.

Earlier this year Congress voted to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Mrs. Rosa Parks. I heard Mrs. Parks, Reverend Jackson and the President each take the occasion to remind us that the struggle for equality is not over.

I will ask the Judiciary Committee again tomorrow, in the spirit of fairness, that the Committee recognize the 18-month stewardship of the Civil Rights Division of Bill Lann Lee, his qualifications, and his quiet dignity and strength and send his nomination to the full Senate so that the United States Senate may, at long last, vote on that nomination and, I hope, confirm this fine American to full rank as the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

When confirmed Bill Lann Lee will be the first Asian Pacific American to be appointed to head the Civil Rights Division in its storied history and the highest ranking Federal Executive officer of Asian Pacific American heritage in our 200-year history.

I have previously brought to all Senators' attention a June letter from the Assistant Attorneys General for Civil Rights from the Eisenhower through Bush Administrations in support of this outstanding nominee: Harold Tyler, Burke Marshall, Stephen J. Pollak, J. Stanley Pottinger, Drew Days and John R. Dunne note in their letter:

Over the past eighteen months, Mr. Lee has shown that he honors the Civil Rights Division's mission to safeguard equal justice for all. He has enforced the nation's civil rights laws fairly and effectively. He has demonstrated that he can and will meet the demands of the position with distinction and thus merits the Senate's confidence.

Civil Rights is about human dignity and opportunity. Bill Lann Lee ought to have an up or down confirmation vote on the Senate floor. The Senate should fulfill its constitutional duty under the advice and consent clause and vote on this nomination. Twenty-four months and three sessions of Congress is too long for this nomination to have to wait. He should no longer be forced to ride in the back on the nominations bus but be given the fair vote that he deserves.

I have often referred to the Senate as acting at its best when it serves as the conscience of the nation. I call on the Judiciary Committee and the Senate to bring this nomination to the floor for an up or down vote without obstruction or further delay so that the Senate may vote and we may confirm a dedicated public servant to lead the Civil Rights Division into the next century. Racial discrimination, and harmful discrimination in all its forms, remain among the most vexing unsolved problems of our society. Let the Senate move forward from the ceremonial commemorations earlier this year by doing what is right and voting on the nomination of Bill Lann Lee.

#### SWEARING IN OF DIANE WATSON AS AMBASSADOR TO MICRONESIA

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, it is with real pleasure that I rise today to note the swearing-in this afternoon of California State Senator Diane Watson as United States Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia. Senator Watson's confirmation was a long time coming, and I am proud that today she will finally come to occupy the Ambassadorial posting which she so well deserves.

State Senator Watson was the first African-American woman elected to the California State Senate, and has represented California's 26th District—which includes Los Angeles, Culver City, Ladera Heights, Baldwin Hills, Palms, Miracle Mile, Mar Vista, Cheviot Hills, and Koreatown—since 1978. Senator Watson has been a real leader in California politics and community life, and has been in the forefront of the fight for civil rights and human rights in Los Angeles and the entire state of California for her entire career. She was a dedicated crusader in

the desegregation of Los Angeles school, and, in 1975, became the first elected African American to serve on the Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Prior to her elected office, Senator Watson led a distinguished career in the field of education, including service as an assistant superintendent of child welfare, a school psychologist, and as a member of the faculty at both California State University Los Angeles and Long Beach. She has also traveled extensively, participating in numerous international conference on women's health issues, democracy building, and trade.

As a member of the State Senate and as an educator, Diane Watson has always brought honor to the organizations and people she has represented. For many years now she has been a leader in improving the lives of Californians, and I am pleased that the people of the United States will now also be able to benefit from her experience, energy, and talents as our Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, July 20, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,630,644,963,071.99 (Five trillion, six hundred thirty billion, six hundred forty-four million, nine hundred sixty-three thousand, seventy-one dollars and ninety-nine cents).

One year ago, July 20, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,532,950,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred thirty-two billion, nine hundred fifty million).

Five years ago, July 20, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,626,395,000,000 (Four trillion, six hundred twenty-six billion, three hundred ninety-five million).

Ten years ago, July 20, 1989, the Federal debt stood at \$2,803,321,000,000 (Two trillion, eight hundred three billion, three hundred twenty-one million).

Fifteen years ago, July 20, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,534,688,000,000 (One trillion, five hundred thirty-four billion, six hundred eighty-eight million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,095,956,963,071.99 (Four trillion, ninety-five billion, nine hundred fifty-six million, nine hundred sixty-three thousand, seventy-one dollars and ninety-nine cents) during the past 15 years.

#### HIGH TECH AWARD FOR SENATOR ABRAHAM

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to inform my colleagues of a significant honor recently bestowed upon our colleague, the Senator from Michigan, Mr. ABRAHAM.

On June 16, Senator ABRAHAM became the first United States Senator to receive the "Cyber Champion" award, from the Business Software Alliance. He was recognized for his legislative accomplishments in support of

America's high-technology economy. I would like to congratulate Senator ABRAHAM on receiving this well-deserved honor.

Senator ABRAHAM has been a champion of high-tech since coming to the Senate. He has worked hard on a high-tech agenda to keep Americans employed in good jobs at good wages, and to help our nation keep the edge we need in the global marketplace. It has been my pleasure to work with him on many of these issues.

Whether fighting to expand and rationalize the use of electronic signatures, expanding high-tech visas, increasing charitable giving to our schools so that we can train our kids in the uses of high-technology, keeping the Internet free from unnecessary interference and taxation, or seeing to it that we are prepared for the year 2000, Senator ABRAHAM has been a leader on high-tech issues.

Now Senator ABRAHAM is working to protect property rights on the Internet through his anti-cybersquatting legislation. His bill would empower trademark owners to protect their marks, at the same time protecting consumers from potential fraud.

There is no doubt in my mind that Senator ABRAHAM's efforts will help workers and the economy in Michigan and across the United States. Once again, I congratulate him on this honor, and on the accomplishments that have earned it for him.

#### PROTECT ACT

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue of increasing national and international importance.

Mr. President, encryption may not yet be the most common term in the American lexicon, but it may well affect every American as we progress in this Information Age. Encryption systems provide security to conventional and cellular telephone conversation, fax transmissions, local and wide area networks, personal computers, remote key entry systems, and radio frequency communication systems. As we become more reliant on these technologies, encryption becomes a more important application.

For these and other reasons, I come to the floor today to discuss my decision to cosponsor S. 798, the Promote Reliable Online Transactions to Encourage Commerce and Trade, or PROTECT Act. This bill pushes us toward a thoughtful debate on encryption policy.

I appreciate the efforts of the Chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator MCCAIN, to push this important legislation forward. As the chairman knows all too well, balancing competing interests, regardless of issue, is a difficult, and often thankless, job. In this case, we must find an equitable balance between personal privacy, technological innovation and public safety.

The rapidly expanding global marketplace and our increasing reliance on

new technology has resulted in the almost instantaneous transfer of consumer information. Bank information, medical records, and credit card purchases are transferred at lightning speed. But these transactions, and even browsing on the Internet, can leave consumers vulnerable to unwanted and illegal access to private information. Encryption technology offers an effective way consumers can ensure that only the people they choose can read other communications or their e-mail, review their medical records, or take money out of their bank accounts. Plain and simple, encryption products protect consumers.

Over the past couple of years, we have seen the power of Internet commerce. From amazon.com to eBay to drugstore.com, companies with a dot com have become the darlings of the investment world. For consumers, online commerce provides viable competition and, thus, a cost-effective alternative to traditional brick-and-mortar stores.

The Internet, however, will never achieve its full potential as a center of commerce if consumers do not trust that their transactions and communications remain confidential. If we ever are to realize the commercial and communications potential of the Internet, we must have sophisticated and effective encryption.

For these precise reasons, consumers have an economic interest in the use of strong encryption technology. That economic interest necessitates more research and more development of stronger technology. The current export control climate, however, stifles development of domestic encryption technology. I believe that expansion of the market for U.S. developers will serve to quicken the pace of innovation.

Two recent reports bear this out. The Electronic Privacy Information Center found that the United States is virtually alone in its restrictions on encryption. Another report by researchers at George Washington University found that 35 foreign countries manufacture 805 encryption products. The same GWU report found that of the 15 algorithms now being considered by the National Institute of Standards for a new American encryption standard, 10 have been developed outside the U.S. Clearly, our outdated policies are doing more to exclude U.S. manufacturers from the marketplace than they are doing to keep encryption technology out of the hands of criminals.

I do not mean to belittle the serious law enforcement implications of encryption. As the FBI has stated, "encryption has been used to conceal criminal activity and thwart law enforcement efforts to collect critical evidence needed to solve serious and often violent criminal activities." The same technology that prevents a computer hacker from stealing one's credit card number can prevent a law enforcement officer, even one with a properly