

There, they can gain insights into the obstacles and opportunities before them. I have no doubt that this new center will help democracy take root, to grow, and to flourish, and will help the world's newly emerging democracies succeed.

During our talks this afternoon, I look forward to discussing these and many other issues of mutual interest with the Prime Minister. The United States and Hungary have worked hard to build a close, cooperative relationship. I am confident that through continued exchanges and dialog, we can deepen and solidify our bond as champions and defenders of freedom.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2863.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2863) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reed/Hagel amendment No. 1943, to transfer certain amounts from the supplemental authorizations of appropriations for Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Global War on Terrorism to amounts for Operation and Maintenance, Army, Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps, Operation and Maintenance, Defense-wide activities, and Military Personnel in order to provide for increased personnel strengths for the Army and the Marine Corps for fiscal year 2006.

Coburn amendment No. 2005, to curtail waste under the Department of Defense web-based travel system.

Mr. FRIST. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to speak as in morning business. If any other Senator comes and wants to speak about an amendment on the underlying bill, I would be pleased to wrap up my remarks.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Speaking in my capacity as a Senator from Alaska and manager of the bill, I would agree to the unanimous consent that the Senator may speak but would yield the floor in the event someone wishes to call up an amendment or speak on the bill. Is that agreed?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Yes, I would.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized as in morning business.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I begin by thanking the Senator in the chair for his leadership in trying to help us move this De-

fense appropriations bill through the Congress. It is, of course, an extremely important bill, and it is a very difficult bill to manage because it is large and complicated and multidimensional and a great need. I thank the Senator from Alaska and the Senator from Hawaii for helping us to manage through this as we try to wrap up this week.

(Ms. MURKOWSKI assumed the Chair.)

HURRICANE KATRINA

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, one of the reasons I come to the floor this morning is to speak about an issue that I brought up on the floor, now many times, and so has the other Senator from Louisiana and Members of our delegation, as well as Members from the Gulf Coast States that have been affected by Katrina, to try to see what we can do to get some aid to our States, directly into the hands of people who can actually put that money to good use, so we do not leave here this weekend without having done something very clearly and very specifically.

Now, this Congress has acted with dispatch over the last 4 weeks to allocate and appropriate money to FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, that is tasked with the responsibility of managing disasters such as this when they are of such a magnitude it is really impossible for individual cities or individual counties or individual parishes or even regions to handle them.

This storm was just that. It was a category 5 storm, with a surge of tide that had the highest recorded level at 29 feet of water—a tsunami basically of 30 feet, approximately—that slammed into the gulf coast about 32 days ago and devastated the energy coast of this Nation—or a large part of the energy coast.

Assessments are being done by insurance companies, corporations, multinational companies, small companies, law enforcement, cities, parishes, and counties to try to get a handle on the damage, but it is staggering.

This special edition, which I have been reviewing since I picked it up yesterday, is done by National Geographic. It is a special edition on Katrina and Rita. It was contributed to by the Times-Picayune, the Dallas Morning News, the New York Times, and it truly is remarkable work: "Katrina, Why It Became a Man-Made Disaster" and "Where It Could Happen Next." It takes us through a series of not just the way the hurricane formed and how powerful and devastating it was, but how the levees could have been breached or how the levees might have collapsed, because that assessment is still being made about how many houses have been lost, about how many thousands of square miles were flooded in New Orleans, in Saint Bernard, in Saint Tammany Parish, in Plaquemines Parish, how the entire parish of Cameron, that had 10,000 structures 8 days ago, now has one structure standing; a courthouse that

was built by the New Deal, the only structure standing in Cameron Parish.

It talks about how the combination of these two killer storms, and the neglect on the part of many—cost cutting that obviously did not pay off—how it has now wrecked this economic powerhouse. It says, actually, the economic power has been brought to its knees. The center of that powerhouse would be the State I represent in the Senate, the State of Louisiana, that is home to the Mississippi River, the greatest delta on the continent, the greatest river on the continent.

On that river are the largest ports in America. The eye of the first storm, Katrina, went right over the Port of New Orleans, the South Louisiana Port, and barely missed the other large port, which is the Port of Baton Rouge, which hosts the energy industry, the petrochemical industry, the refining industry, the agriculture industry, the commercial industry, the maritime industry—the bulk of it in the Nation. It was a direct hit to the heart of the energy coast.

Not only is Louisiana feeling this, with 2 million people along the gulf coast displaced—hundreds of thousands of people have lost their entire home, their entire business; the people of New Orleans, in large measure, and Saint Bernard and Plaquemines have lost their entire parish—but everyone in America is feeling this because of the higher price of goods, the higher price of gasoline, and the higher price of natural gas.

There are 9,000 miles of pipeline connecting oil and gas exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. We have been struggling to get those pipelines back up and running. The trade and commerce of the Port of South Louisiana, combined with the Port of New Orleans, dwarfs the Port of Houston, the Ports of New York and New Jersey, and the Port of Beaumont, TX, which was also hit and has some destruction from Rita—thank goodness, not the same level of destruction, thank goodness that we didn't lose the Port of Beaumont or the Port of Houston.

Our ports, from the Port of Lake Charles, from the western side, to the Port of Iberia, to the Port of Morgan City, to the ports along the Mississippi River, to the Port of Fourchon, which is the only deepwater energy port in the Nation right on the gulf, the damage has been extensive and tremendous. To this day, 30 days after—and we will be for months and perhaps even years—we are struggling to stand up that infrastructure.

The long-term building effort is going to be difficult and complicated. I am sorry to say this because we have been criticized for saying it, but it is going to be expensive. There is no cheap or easy way out of it. How we pay for it, what revenues we assign, whether we raise revenues to do it, use revenues we have, assess new approaches, borrow the money, in some

way the Federal Government and State governments and industry have to come up with the billions of dollars it is going to cost to restore the infrastructure and the marshland that protects this infrastructure, that services the economy of the Nation and the world.

Let me try to be as clear as I can on some of these points. There are only a few ways to get grain out of Kansas and the Midwest. You can put it on railroads, put it on trucks, or you can put it on big barges. It is a little slower on the barges, but it is a lot less expensive. You can move the grain that we supply and literally feed ourselves and the world with it, but it has to go through on barges, down some rivers, and the Mississippi River is the River that we primarily use, that the Missouri and the Ohio run into down the Mississippi for trade around the world. If this infrastructure is left vulnerable, as it has been by exposure to the hurricane, if we don't figure out a way to invest better and more wisely, the commerce of this whole Nation will be undermined, unless you want to put all the grain that comes from the Midwest and all the wheat and the corn on trucks and put thousands of more trucks on a highway system that is already overcrowded, where people are already wondering how are we going to survive the next few years on a highway system like this, with trucks stacked up one after another.

We better keep our river channels open. We better invest in our inner waterways. We better start investing in more sophisticated lock and dam systems along the Gulf of Mexico. If we are not going to, then the other alternative is to abandon the coast and move somewhere else. Maybe we should consider that. I think it is a foolish idea because you couldn't accomplish it anyway. I don't know where we would move all the refineries. We can't even get another State anywhere in the country, except maybe Arizona, to build a refinery. Nobody wants to build refineries. Everybody wants to put gas in their car and turn the electricity on, but we can't get anybody to lay a pipeline, build a refinery, put up a petrochemical plant. I don't know how Texas and Louisiana and Mississippi would lift 40 percent of the industry and relocate it somewhere in the United States, but if some people think that is a cost-effective way, maybe we should do that.

Having studied this issue for a pretty long time and represented this State for over 25 years, it is a foolish and foolhardy suggestion. I have a better one. The better one is a little bit of money every year, smartly invested, to protect this infrastructure, to restore our wetlands, to protect one of the greatest cities in the world and the region that surrounds it and the infrastructure that supports the commerce and trade for the entire Nation—if we just do a little bit well every year. Instead, we chose to do other things with our money.

This is a picture of the gulf. This is Mississippi. The title surge hit the gulf coast of Mississippi 30 feet high, cleared everything in its path for a half a mile back. We saw this kind of destruction with Camille. We hoped we would never see it again. But there are vulnerabilities living on the coast. When a hurricane hits you directly, this is what it looks like. Right here we had houses and casinos. We also had a major shipyard that was damaged pretty badly. You can't do a lot of shipbuilding inland. You have to have some waterways and build your ships in a place where they have access to water. Thank goodness we didn't have just one shipyard on the gulf coast. Thank goodness we had two because the hurricane hit one and not the other. Avondale is today up and running and building ships for our military and the private sector.

I don't know if you can see this, but the Presiding Officer knows because she is from Alaska and they do some oil and gas drilling for the Nation, we do most of it along the gulf coast. These are the pipelines that support that industry, as we send fuel and gas and electricity to Chicago, New York, California, the Midwest, and supply the energy necessary to keep this economy functioning. We have laid these pipelines for over 100 years. Maybe we could pick them all up and move them somewhere else, but I don't think that is going to happen. We can't even find the money to get a pipeline from Alaska—or figure out how to get a pipeline from Alaska. How are we going to take up all these pipelines and move them somewhere else? We don't have a choice.

We have to take some of our general fund dollars, more than we have. We need to, as I have said for over 10 years, redirect a portion of the offshore oil and gas revenues that Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama contribute to the tune of \$5 billion, actually \$6 billion a year last year, \$155 billion since the 1950s, redirect some of that money into restoring our coast that protects this infrastructure and, working in partnership with industries, large and small, have more security around the energy infrastructure, whether it is pipelines, petrochemical plants, or refineries, not just for the protection of the industry but for the safety of the people who live and work in this region.

There is a beautiful series produced by Louisiana Public Television that I will submit for the RECORD. It is not in written form but in video form. I am hoping there is some way that I can submit that officially for the record. When Bienville and Niverville came and settled Louisiana and claimed it as a colony, they didn't come to sunbathe on the Mississippi River. They didn't come to put up condos. They came to secure the delta, the mouth of the greatest river in the country, for the strategic expansion and economic future of a nation. They asked people to

come to Louisiana in hot, mosquito-ridden territory, not to sunbathe or to vacation. Who would vacation in a swamp with mosquitos? We leave the low-lying areas and leave the mosquitos when we want to vacation and go to the mountains. If you are lucky to be able to afford a tank of gas in your car, you don't stay in Louisiana to vacation. You go to Louisiana to work, even though a lot of people do come to New Orleans to enjoy themselves because it is a wonderful city. But down in the bayou, people fish, they trap, they hunt, they skin alligators, they drill for oil and gas, and they lay pipelines. They build ships, they fabricate so that we can produce jobs for people in America as well as ourselves.

For 300 years, we have been growing crops, growing sugarcane, growing cotton, growing soybeans, shipping goods around the world, drilling for oil and gas, building ships and pipelines, and asking for a little bit of money, just a little bit, to help us invest in an infrastructure that doesn't just save us from death and destruction but supports a nation's future. I have been on this floor so many times giving this speech that I am positive that every Senator could give this speech better than I because they have heard it a thousand times. And they have not just heard it from me. They heard it from Senator Breaux when he was here. They heard it from Russell Long when he was here. They have heard it from DAVID VITTER since he has been here. How much more clear can we be? They heard it from Billy Tauzin when he was chairman of the Energy Committee in the House. They heard it from CHARLIE MELANCON who represents this district now. They have heard it from GENE TAYLOR who has represented the gulf coast of Mississippi since he was a kid.

These are the kinds of people who live along the coast. They don't have a lot. But they do have their pride and their dignity. They have waited for 31 days now, but they have waited for decades actually for the Federal Government to recognize they are not in condos, having lunch at a club, sipping tea on a balcony, watching the waves. These people don't belong to a country club. They couldn't afford the monthly dues. They could barely afford gas in their automobile to get out when storms hit. Why do they live there? No. 1, because they love it; 2, because they work; 3, because the jobs are there; and 4, you can't move the jobs. Where would you put them?

Let me show you another picture of people. This is Charlene Veillon and her son Thearon. This is a sad picture to look at. This is a picture of them after being told that Charlene's daughter—I am assuming his sister—who had been driving from Tennessee to the gulf coast to try to help her family, when no one else would come to help them, this is when they learned that she died.

For a month and a half the people of the gulf coast have been crying for

help, asking for help. I know that we didn't do everything right every minute of every day. But I can tell you one thing our delegation has done: It has come down here year after year and laid the case. We are happy to host the oil and gas industry, we are happy to build refineries, we are happy to organize our ports to transport goods all over the world so everybody can benefit. We are even glad we don't have to take a lot of vacations—some of us couldn't afford to go—to those highrises in Florida, anyway. But all we want is a little bit of support of money that we generate to protect us and to protect the Nation from something such as this disaster.

I have to read news articles from some of the supposedly smartest magazines in the world telling me the reason this happened is because the levee board in New Orleans—I am not going to support everything the levee board did, but I have to read in some supposedly elite magazines the reason this happened is because the levee board took a few hundred thousand dollars and built a fountain when they should not have built a fountain, they should have been building a levee.

I don't know about the fountain, but I can promise you this: \$100,000 or \$200,000, or \$300,000 for building a fountain when they should have put a few more sandbags on top of the levee would not have prevented this disaster. What would have prevented this disaster is better priorities in spending, smarter investments, and a better partnership between a Federal Government that has decided it has other things to do, such as building levees in Iraq, building schools in Iraq, and I cannot get 5 cents to build a school along the gulf coast.

Then I have to have magazines tell me the people in the South are not self-reliant; we don't know how to walk on our own two legs. I am going to show a picture of self-reliance. See this family. They may or may not be related. They are of different colors of skin. Some people are related who have different skin color, but I don't know. This is how people all over the gulf coast are living—helping each other out, sharing the two bedrooms they have, sharing the food they have, not complaining. But it is my job to complain. I represent them.

Before I keep talking about Louisiana, because people say the Senator only cares about her State, let me tell you what the last page of this magazine says, the National Geographic. It is the last page. Pick it up and read it.

The next Katrina? New Orleans was a hurricane tragedy waiting to happen.

It describes why this was inevitable. We knew it during Betsy. We knew it again at 9/11. We have known it for a long time. We didn't do what we needed to do. But according to NOAA—which is a very excellent organization, I must say, out of the Commerce Department for which I have a lot of respect—according to meteorologist Joe Golden,

“the five places in the U.S. at greatest risk for calamitous hurricanes are: Tampa Bay, Florida; Mobile, Alabama; Houston, Texas; New York City and Long Island, New York; and Miami, Florida.”

Wake up, delegations from these States. Many of these Senators have been helping. Many of these Senators understand the danger.

Why do we have to go through this again? Why do we have to go through it this time? You can't stop hurricanes, but you can protect yourself. You can set up a communications system so families who are trying to help each other will have their cell phones work. You can help your police officers by giving them radios that function. You can figure out how to have more redundancy so if your electricity goes down, somebody can get a message through.

The head of our National Guard from Alabama, during a CNN interview with me on this subject, said the Senator is right; we are sending runners in Alabama, as we did in the War of 1812, and it is 2005 and we do not have a communications system that protects Americans.

I know times are tough in Baghdad. Times are tough on the gulf coast.

This is a picture of a man named Pete. He is holding a 1950s picture of his grandparents' home in Empire, LA. I think Senator COCHRAN from Mississippi has fished off Empire. He knows it well. He fishes a great deal and respects the environment.

When Pete's grandparents moved here in the 1950s, this camp—which was in a vulnerable place even before the marsh eroded. It was vulnerable. I don't know if this was his grandparents' home where they lived or if they were shrimpers, trappers, or campers, or if this is a camp, as we call them, where you go on the weekend to try to relax and get out of the city. Anyway, what you can see beyond this camp is a lot of marsh. They didn't go out in the middle of the water and build this camp and come miles by boat to camp, although some do that, but very few. Most of these camps were attached to land, or they were in the 1950s. But 50 years later, there is no land around them because the salt-water has intruded because we channeled the Mississippi River, and the delta cannot replenish itself.

We laid 9,000 miles of pipeline, took all the oil and gas out of the ground, and did not give anything back to keep the land stable so that Pete could maybe have a place to take his grandchildren. Of course, the place is gone.

On page 57 of the National Geographic, there is a great article that begins “How the Defenses Break Down.” It talks about barrier islands. We have barrier islands all around the coast. We are losing them rapidly off the coast of South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Dolphin Island because we don't take care of our barrier islands, we don't protect our barrier islands, we

don't invest in coastal erosion projects. We let them wash away into the ocean. Then we wonder why, when hurricanes come, they destroy a whole region. Every time a storm comes, we throw a little sandbag on the islands and say we did something. We are not doing anything.

We used to have hundreds of miles of marshland between New Orleans and the ocean. Please don't insult the ancestors of my city to think that they would put a major metropolitan area right on the coast. If anybody would get the map of the Mississippi River, they had to go up over 100 miles from the mouth of the river, and they found the highest ground they could find, and they put the city of New Orleans there.

Amazingly, even in Katrina, Jackson Square did not flood. The cathedral is still there, and the statue of Jesus is still standing in front.

They did not put the city on low ground. Three hundred years ago, they went inland away from the coast to build a city to secure the westward expansion of the Nation. Thomas Jefferson had the sense to borrow money from the Treasury, not to spend it on tax cuts, but to invest it in the Louisiana Purchase at 3 cents an acre. Then Andrew Jackson went there in 1803 and fought the British again. Not once; we fought them twice because they knew when we beat them in 1776, they could come back and take New Orleans and take the country away, and we fought them again.

But we have a Federal Government for the last couple of years—I have made some mistakes since I have been here, so I am not the only one; I am not saying I have not made mistakes. But we have a Federal Government whose only answer to any problem we have had, whether it is a recession, depression, or irrational exuberance, a high stock market, a low stock market, a war or no war, is to give tax cuts.

Let me ask something: Could anybody describe to me how this woman could take advantage of any tax cut? What would she do? Do you think she has any money in her IRA she could borrow to help her rebuild her house? Do you think maybe she could call her accountant and see if he could figure out a strategy for her to save a few dollars on the next income tax check she pays? I don't think so.

This woman—I don't know her name, but she looks a lot like my grandmother before she died. There are grandmothers and grandfathers all over the gulf coast sitting in chairs just like one looking at total destruction, and they have to hear from this Congress that we are about ready to pass yet another tranche of tax cuts, but we cannot send somebody to help her pick up the debris.

And please don't tell me you are sending faith-based organizations. And I say that with the greatest respect. You know why? Because the church that used to be here does not exist any longer. I am certain some church could

come from New Jersey or come from New York or come from California, but this woman's church does not stand any longer.

In my State—this may be Mississippi, I don't know—but in the State of Louisiana, the Catholic Church, which is the largest church in New Orleans, is basically telling me and our delegation and any leaders who will listen that they may have to lay off thousands of workers at the archdiocese because their churches are destroyed and their schools are destroyed. But yet we have a Government that wants to say: Let the faith-based organizations do it. They are faith-based organizations. They are the Catholic Church. They need help.

We have a bill we have been asking for—and the President has asked for it as well—and we cannot get this Congress to move to give some help to some of the children who were in Catholic schools so they can get through this school year—70,000 of them. We cannot move that bill.

That is why I am on the floor today to talk about a lot of issues. As Senators come, they may want to talk about the Defense bill, but our war is right here at home. Our war is right here in the gulf coast. This debate is about the protection we seek, our security, our way of life. Millions of people from the gulf coast have given their lives for this country in war after war, in crisis after crisis, and now we ask for help and we get \$63 billion to FEMA, which cannot seem to function well enough to get anybody help. So I have come to the floor to say: OK, let's catch a breath. FEMA is not working that well. Let's not worry about why now, let's try to fix the problem and take \$10 billion of the \$43 billion FEMA has that is sitting there, not getting to any of the people I showed, take it, and give it through whatever accountability mechanisms we can come up with, to give people health care they desperately need, to give relief to our schools that are about to stagger and collapse—elementary, secondary, and our universities that are also our major employers, that also have the brain power that is going to help us rebuild this region; they are about ready to close their doors—to give direct aid to our sheriffs, our police, and our firefighters who are desperately trying to keep the doors open on the cities and counties and communities, large and small, throughout the gulf coast. Give us a few of those billion dollars we have given to FEMA, which cannot function, and let us use that money. And if FEMA needs more money down the line, we can always give them some more.

But we cannot do that. All we can do is pass a Defense bill, argue about Defense authorization, take care of the war in Iraq, rebuild Iraq, but we cannot even focus on rebuilding the gulf coast where Americans have paid taxes their whole life and cannot get the Federal Government to act effectively.

I compliment the Senator from Alaska for moving our Defense appropriations bill. It is an extremely important bill for our Nation, and he has been very gracious to allow me this time. I am looking to see if another Senator shows up. I will be happy to end my remarks and take some time later today. We are on the Defense bill, and we have to move this bill and, of course, under the rules we only have 30 more hours of debate and we have to vote on that bill.

The bottom line, I guess, is this: We have been in negotiations with the White House and with the Republican leadership to pass something before we leave, something that is substantive but also in some ways symbolic, that somebody in Washington is hearing what people from the gulf coast are saying, which is, We know FEMA was funded, but we need help now.

FEMA is not well led, even though we have a new leader and he is doing a better job than the former one. It is not well resourced. It is not well organized, and it is not being that well coordinated at home. We can fix that, I am confident, over time. I am certain we have learned some of the mistakes that we have made with FEMA, and we can fix it; FEMA can be fixed, and we will have some time to do that. But right now, we need to get help to the people of Louisiana and the gulf coast.

We have asked for \$1.5 billion for our State and local governments so that they can keep their doors open, not lay off their core workforce, either their police, their fire, their permitting offices, the support that a city or county needs to function, so that over the next few months and few years, we can actually rebuild our towns.

Last night, from what I understand, the White House offered \$300 million, but \$300 million is not enough to help the towns that are about to have to close their doors, including the city of New Orleans, which is struggling to stay open and to track people back to the third or fourth of the city that can function that is out of water.

The mayor announced yesterday that he has to lay off 3,000 people. We do not need to be laying off people. We need to be hiring people. There is enough work to be done. Just imagine 90,000 square miles of destruction. Does anybody doubt that there is not a lot of work that could be done? We do not need to be laying off public employees and laying off people in the private sector. We need to be stabilizing those who are working now and then be smart, strategic, wise, careful, and accountable as we hire help to stand up a region that is not just for the people who live there but for the whole Nation. Does anyone doubt that there is enough work to be done?

Let me show a picture of New Orleans. This is what parts of it looked like only a few weeks ago. It goes on for miles and miles, water standing 6 feet, 8 feet, 10 feet, interstates underwater. Does anybody doubt that there is a lot of work to be done? Why are we laying

off people anywhere? I will say why—because sales taxes cannot be collected from empty buildings. Sales taxes cannot be collected from people who no longer live in their house and there is not a WalMart or a mom-and-pop store to shop within miles. How does a city with a \$40 million monthly payroll exist for more than a month or two?

If somebody says, Well, they can borrow the money, let me talk about that for a minute because I was a State treasurer. I know a little bit about this issue. The constitution of the State of Louisiana smartly does not allow the State to borrow for operating expenses. Isn't that unique. We can only borrow money to build highways and invest in capital infrastructure. It is a very smart and wise restriction because if there are not restrictions like that, we end up being like the U.S. Government, which borrows to give tax cuts to people who did not even ask for them.

I am sorry we cannot organize a constitutional referendum in the next 30 days. Even if we could organize a constitutional referendum in the next 30 days, there are no polling places for people to vote, and if we tried to find our voters, we could not find them. So I am a little confused about how we would do that.

The State of Mississippi does not have that same restriction. I understand they have borrowed \$500 million. So this woman right here, who I am pretty sure is from Mississippi—and I am not criticizing Mississippi. They have their own plans, and maybe they are great. But this woman will have to pay that \$500 million back. I do not believe that is a great idea. I do not think she has enough money to put food on her table the next couple of months. If that is what they want to do, I do not know how they are going to pay this \$500 million back, but I promise they are either going to cut programs this woman benefits from or she is going to get charged directly for it. That might be a good plan. I would not support something like that.

My State cannot borrow the money, and even if we could, we have a billion-dollar shortfall at the Federal level because the income is not coming in. The oil wells are not producing, so we do not get our severance taxes. The ports are crippled, so we are not getting that revenue. The sales taxes are way down, and the expenses are way up.

I have listened to the Washington Post, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal tell me the people of Louisiana are not self-reliant. Why can't we just fix our own problem? First, it is not our problem, it is the Nation's problem. The last time I looked, we were the United States of America. I am not sure we are anymore, but that is what we were the last time I said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Either people want me to keep talking or they do not have anything to say because nobody else is on the floor, so I will talk for a few more minutes and then I am going to sit down and just

hold my time. I will talk more about the general subject, but I wish to be clear about why I am standing here and what we have asked for. We have asked for some help, just anything that we can take home before we leave so that people will have some hope that somebody up here is listening to them.

I have asked to pull up the Grassley-Baucus bill, which has been unanimously approved by Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, not a Democratic bill—thank God led by a great Senator, a Republican from Iowa who is the chairman of the Finance Committee. He understands, even though he is not from Louisiana, how much people are suffering, and he wants to help. So he and Senator BAUCUS, leaders that they are, 3 weeks ago, with the help of Senator LINCOLN from Arkansas, put a good bill together. It cost about \$13 billion. If there were some things eliminated, we could scale it back to about \$6 billion or \$7 billion. When I say eliminated, there is some help for all the States. Maybe we just eliminate helping everyone else and help ourselves. We are trying to be generous. If other Senators want to try to help their States, who am I to say they cannot help their States. But if the Senate agrees to just help Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Texas, fine with me. They put a bill together, we passed it unanimously, and we cannot get any action on that bill. So we have asked for that.

We have asked for some education money to keep our schools open. We are trying not to ask too much because every time we ask for something, we are told we are greedy, we are looters, we are not self-reliant, how dare we ask on behalf of the people who have nothing for a little money out of the treasury, from their own money that they put in the treasury, how dare we ask for it. I am not going to stop asking, and I do not care how many editorials are written about me and my State at this point. Just go ahead and keep writing them.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator from Louisiana yield for a question?

Ms. LANDRIEU. I would be happy to.

Mr. DURBIN. At the outset, I would like to say that I left the floor last night, about 12 hours ago, around 11. Senator LANDRIEU of Louisiana was on the floor last night. As I left, I said that she has shown such a passion and commitment to the poor people of her State of Louisiana who have been through this hurricane. I know she has tried to work within the system, she has tried to work within the Senate, and she has tried to move things along in a peaceful, bipartisan way. I sensed in her appearance last night and her appearance on the floor now that she is reaching a level of frustration and concern that this Senate is going to go home tonight or tomorrow and be gone for 10 days having done nothing to address the important issues she is raising.

What the Senator has brought to our attention is the fact that we have a bi-

partisan proposal. Senator GRASSLEY, a Republican of Iowa, and Senator BAUCUS, a Democrat of Montana, on the Finance Committee, have come up with a proposal to provide basic health care for the evacuees and survivors of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita, basic health care. The Senator has come to the Chamber repeatedly—I have seen it—trying to at least bring this to a vote. That is all she is asking for, bring it to a vote.

It is my understanding that at this moment in time, she has no commitment from the Republican leadership in the Senate to even bring this matter for a vote before we go home for 10 days on a break. I ask the Senator from Louisiana if she could in the most general terms tell us what kind of health care she is trying to provide to these people. Some have characterized it as luxurious, over-the-top health care for people who do not really need it. In fact, I heard on the floor last night one of the Senators say: Well, they do not really need this.

Could the Senator from Louisiana spell out for us what she is looking to achieve, what this bipartisan proposal would mean to the poor people who have lost their homes, lost their worldly possessions, seen their families torn apart, and are living in shelters somewhere around that part of our country?

Ms. LANDRIEU. I would be happy to, and I thank the Senator for his leadership because the Grassley-Baucus bill does a couple of important things that are essential for the rebuilding and emergency needs of a population—not just the poor but the middle income and those who had private insurance the day before Katrina hit. The Baucus-Grassley bill allows the States to know that they are going to be reimbursed for the care they are providing to people who have virtually no insurance. For a State such as Louisiana, whose legislature may be meeting in the next few weeks, with a billion-dollar shortfall looming, I say to Senator DURBIN, it is critical that the States of Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama and Texas have some idea now about what the Federal Government is going to do regarding their insurance. We share it 70/30. The State cannot put up a 30-percent match. This bill waives that match so that our States can start making good budget decisions at a very difficult time, in addition to providing health care for those who are 200 percent or below of poverty—which in our State is only \$18,000 or \$20,000—to make sure that people have health insurance.

But for middle-income families, working families, and even wealthy families that had health insurance, this bill allows them—even if their employers have gone under or taken bankruptcy or closed their doors and laid them off—to keep their health insurance for a few months, for 6 months or 12 months, depending on their category.

A Senator said on the floor, Senator DURBIN, that people can get health in-

surance, they can get health care. Yes, in some way; they can go to an emergency room and wait for 3 days. But if they want to go to their doctor's office to whom they have been going for their whole life, and take their child to their pediatrician and they now don't have health insurance, unless we pass this bill, they can't go knock on the door of their pediatrician, for example, unless they give them a credit card or cash because there is no health insurance without the Baucus-Grassley bill. People who don't have a home, don't have a church or don't have a school now do not even have health care because we have to go home on a 10-day break and leave them wondering where they are going to get their medicine. That is what the bill does, I say to Senator DURBIN.

Mr. DURBIN. I would like to ask the Senator from Louisiana, through the Chair, we have been through disasters before in America. We faced 9/11, that terrible day in our history when 3,000 Americans lost their lives. I would like to ask the Senator from Louisiana, if I am not mistaken, didn't we say we were going to come in and help those families who may have been in the same circumstance, where their place of employment just exploded and disappeared? Also, I would ask the Senator from Louisiana, when we had an earthquake in California, in Northridge, didn't we step in and say we are going to provide housing vouchers to people displaced because of earthquakes?

I ask this of the Senator because I don't quite understand this double standard. Why, if the worst natural disaster in modern memory occurred a few weeks ago, are we in the midst of debating the most basic things people need in crisis: health care, housing, cash so they can buy the basic necessities of life? Why are we facing this double standard, when America's heart was broken by the scenes we saw day after day and night after night on the television screen, coming from your hometown, your neighbors and their suffering?

Ms. LANDRIEU. I do not know, I say to Senator DURBIN. That is a puzzlement for us. I do not have a good answer for that. All I can say is there are 2 million people displaced, many towns are destroyed, many communities, both urban and suburban, rural as well as highly dense. Neighborhoods of black and white, Hispanic and Asian, poor and middle-income are wondering the same thing.

Why does Congress keep giving money to FEMA? FEMA is not functioning very well. So when our Governors and our mayors and our sheriffs ask for a little bit of help with health insurance and education and the basics to turn running water on—we have had enough bottled water. Please don't send us any more bottled water. We have plenty.

We need to turn the faucets on so water will come out so a small business

that wants to operate can actually function with some water. You cannot have a business operating without water. That is what we need.

We have asked for these emergency things, to be told we do not have the money. I am going to sit down. In this amendment, we are asking for four or five things, for education, for health care, for immediate needs, for help for some hospitals that stayed up. Three hospitals stayed up the whole time in the region. If we do not help them, these hospitals will close, employees will be laid off, and whatever modest health care system we have for the region will basically be dysfunctional.

But what we really want—we want those things, but what we want is some action taken before we leave. We can vote on these individually. We did get a commitment from the administration that they will do more than \$300 million. Because if we do not get more than \$300 million before we leave here, the city of New Orleans, the Archdiocese—the Catholic Diocese—or St. Tammany Parish, or some parts of it, or Plaquemines or St. Bernard or any number of other places, I say to Senator DURBIN, will have to lay off workers who then will lose their health insurance, lose whatever means they have of keeping themselves and their families intact, and the situation will be spiraling downward, not spiraling upward.

The Senator has been very gracious. I am going to reserve the remainder of whatever time I have, but that is what we are asking for, and I hope we can get something done before we leave for this week-and-a-half break.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, we now have the preliminary scanning of the amendments that have been passed by the Parliamentarian. We would be pleased to share that information with any Senator who has an amendment. The Senator from Louisiana does have the floor until someone is ready to offer an amendment or speak on the bill. We urge Members to come and start the process. We are prepared to handle amendments. On some amendments we will make a point of order as to germaneness, but we are trying to be as broad as possible in consideration of Members' amendments so we can finish late today, if possible.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield to Senator LANDRIEU at a later moment when she comes to the floor, 30 minutes or more of the hour—30 minutes, I will yield to Senator LANDRIEU, postcloture.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENSIGN). The Senator from Washington.

TRANSPORTATION, TREASURY, HUD, AND
GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to urge the Senate leadership to call up H.R. 3058, the Transportation,

Treasury, HUD, and General Government appropriations bill for fiscal year 2006, once the Department of Defense appropriations bill is done.

We all want to make our country strong again. We all want to make our communities strong again. One way to do that is to invest in our transportation infrastructure, in public housing, and in the other priorities that are part of that important bill.

Every day we go without a Transportation-Treasury bill is a day that we fall short of making the investments we need to make to strengthen this country. We are not talking about our physical infrastructure, we are talking about our own safety. As I will show in a moment, the failure of the Senate to bring up the Transportation-Treasury bill could actually be threatening the safety of every American who flies on a commercial air carrier.

A floor debate on the Transportation-Treasury bill is long overdue. The House of Representatives passed this bill more than 3 months ago. The Senate Appropriations Committee reported this bill almost 2½ months ago. Today we are almost a full week into fiscal year 2006, and still the Senate has been denied an opportunity to consider and debate and pass this important bill. The Senate needs to debate and pass this bill so we can avoid the unruly and unfair process of funding the Government through another Omnibus appropriations bill. The Senate needs to debate and pass this bill so all of the Senators, not just those on the Appropriations Committee, can have an opportunity to consider and, if necessary, amend that bill. The Senate needs to debate and pass this bill so we can urgently address the critical needs of our transportation and public housing sectors, including the pressing need to protect the safety of all of our citizens.

Mr. President, 2002 was the most recent year in which the Transportation appropriations bill was sent to the President as a freestanding measure. I was chair of the subcommittee at that time. Ever since then, the funding for the agencies under the subcommittee's jurisdiction has been enacted as part of a series of unwieldy Omnibus appropriations bills. The process by which these bills were put together did not reflect well on the Senate. It did not reflect well on the Congress as a whole.

Last year's process was the worst of all. Last year, the Transportation, Treasury, and General Government appropriations bill for fiscal year 2005 was never even debated in the Senate. Once the appropriations bill was reported by the Appropriations committee, the bill languished for months before Congress went home for an election. Then, just before Thanksgiving, Congress reconvened and tried, in 3 days, to assemble a final conference report for dozens of major Federal agencies, even though the Senate had never even passed many of the appropriations bills that funded those agencies.

I think Members of all political stripes in both the House and in the Senate recognized how poorly the public and the Congress were served by that process. In January, everyone said we will not do that again. We heard it from the leadership of both the House and the Senate and from the new leadership of the House and the Senate appropriations committees. I am glad they said it back in January. But from where I sit as the ranking member of the Transportation-Treasury Subcommittee, it sure looks to me as though we are now heading toward another Omnibus appropriations bill.

The bottom line is this. The Transportation-Treasury bill has been sitting on this calendar, ready to be called up, for almost 2½ months. If we want to avoid another Omnibus appropriations bill, we need to call up and pass that bill as soon as we are done with this Defense bill.

This process of sending bills approved by the Appropriations Committee directly to conference without appropriate debate on the Senate floor is not just grossly unfair to Democratic Senators, it is grossly unfair to all of the 72 Senators who do not sit on the Appropriations Committee. The appropriations bill that Senator BOND and I are recommending to the Senate was approved unanimously by the Appropriations Committee back in mid-July. It proposes to spend over \$137 billion.

These are not just tax dollars that were collected in Missouri or collected in Washington or collected in States represented by members of the Appropriations Committee, these are tax dollars that were collected from all Americans. Since that is true, every Senator should have the opportunity to debate this bill and pass judgment on our recommendations. Every Senator should be given an opportunity to amend that bill.

We need to avoid another Omnibus to ensure a fair process. There are also some very practical programmatic reasons why we must call up and, importantly, pass this Transportation-Treasury bill as soon as possible. Now the Government is functioning under a continuing resolution. Under the requirements of that resolution, programs that are funded in the Transportation-Treasury bill are all operating at either the lower of the funding levels passed by the House of Representatives back in June or at the level the program was funded in fiscal year 2005. Some observers have speculated we could be operating under this continuing resolution until Christmas.

It would take hours for me to list all the programs and national needs that will suffer if they are required to operate for any length of time under the funding restrictions of this continuing resolution. If we do not get agreement soon to debate the Transportation-Treasury bill, I may well take up a lot of the Senate floor time to explain each and every one of them.

But today I want to focus on one topic and that is the topic of aviation

safety and what our failure to move this Transportation-Treasury appropriations bill means for millions of Americans who travel by air in this country today. Over the last few years, our national aviation enterprise—our airlines, our airports, and the FAA—have been under an unprecedented amount of financial pressure. We now have no fewer than six airlines in bankruptcy. If jet fuel prices do not start declining soon, that number could grow even higher.

In the interests of cutting costs, airlines on which you and I travel have been cutting back on staff, have been renouncing their pension plans, and have been outsourcing an increasing percentage of their aircraft maintenance.

I know many other Senators, including myself, travel home almost every weekend, and we have all noticed the changes in the service the airlines offer. Staffing is leaner than ever and we have a lot of flight delays. Mechanical problems are on the rise. One important area of cost cutting has been the airlines' continuing efforts to contract out their aircraft maintenance activities to third parties, including, you all should know, overseas vendors known as foreign repair stations.

In the past, airlines maintained their planes with experienced veteran unionized mechanics. Today, they outsource more than 50 percent, more than half of their maintenance work, to independent operators. Airlines such as Northwest send some of their aircraft as far as Singapore and Hong Kong for heavy maintenance.

We have one major carrier, Jet Blue, that sends a large portion of their Airbus fleet to be maintained in El Salvador, Central America. That is where their planes are maintained.

America West Airlines, now merged with U.S. Airways, does the same thing.

Many of us watched in fear a few weeks ago when a Jet Blue A-320 was required to make an emergency landing at the Los Angeles International Airport. As we all watched on television, we saw its front landing gear facing sideways, at 90 degrees. That was not the first time the landing gear didn't engage correctly. In fact, it was not the 5th time, it was not even the 10th time, it was the 14th time that the FAA learned of the front landing gear of an A-320 aircraft not engaging correctly.

According to the FAA, these 14 dangerous and frightening mishaps have occurred as a result of 5 separate and distinct causes.

It is the job of the FAA inspectors to find out why these problems happen and to force the plane's manufacturer to fix that problem. We cannot afford to have an understaffed or an overwhelmed FAA safety office.

Our airlines are going through a period of dramatic and rapid change. That puts an extraordinary amount of stress on the aircraft inspection func-

tion of the Federal Aviation Administration.

We have received a disturbing series of reports from the DOT Inspector General, from the Government Accounting Office, and the National Transportation Safety Board citing deficiencies with the FAA's inspection effort.

In 2004, the NTSB found that deficient maintenance by an outside contractor and inadequate oversight by the airline and the FAA contributed to the 2003 crash of a commuter flight to Charlotte, NC. That crash killed 21 people.

The DOT Inspector General first identified serious deficiencies with the FAA's inspection efforts back in 2002. Just this past June, the IG reported that many of those deficiencies have still not been adequately addressed.

The IG found that the FAA focused too much attention on the airline's dwindling in-house maintenance function and not enough attention on the outsourced maintenance activities of their foreign contractors.

The IG found that the FAA inspectors were spending too much time inspecting maintenance facilities during the day, while a majority of the maintenance activities are actually conducted at night.

The IG found the FAA was doing an insufficient job of its surveillance of financially distressed or rapidly growing airlines. And the IG found the FAA was not able to meet its own standards for frequent inspections because it was short staffed.

In just the last few weeks, the FAA staffing shortage has become even more critical. As these airlines enter bankruptcy, the FAA is automatically required to step up its inspections of bankrupt carriers.

Today, the FAA must give heightened scrutiny to the six bankrupt carriers, as well as four other carriers that are in merger proceedings.

Following the liquidation of Eastern Airlines several years ago, a number of dramatic and horrifying revelations came out regarding the maintenance shortcuts that Eastern took in the interest of conserving cash in its waning days. The entire aviation community vowed that there would not ever be a repeat of the Eastern Airlines experience.

I would think with the external recommendations and the record that I have just cited, the FAA would now be rapidly hiring more inspectors to keep up with its growing and challenging workload. Unfortunately, over the course of the last year, the exact opposite has been the case.

Despite the fact that the Congress granted the FAA's inspections office every penny that was sought in the President's budget for fiscal year 2005, the office has been required to downsize by roughly 300 inspectors over the course of just this last year. That is right. As the requirements on our FAA inspectors to maintain safety in our skies has increased dramatically,

the FAA has been downsizing its inspection force each and every month.

This unacceptable situation is one that Senator BOND and I pursued as part of our hearings with Secretary Mineta this year—and the House Appropriations Committee did the same. I am proud to say that on a bipartisan and bicameral basis, both the Transportation-Treasury bill passed by the House and the bill that has been reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee seeks to rectify the situation.

The House Appropriations Committee provided this office with an increase of \$4 million over the President's budget request and committed those funds to the hiring of additional inspectors.

The Senate provided an increase of \$8 million over the President's request, and we directed that funding be used to restore safety inspector staffing reductions that occurred during fiscal year 2005.

Personally, I still question whether we should be doing more in this area since we have now had two more airlines in bankruptcy since we marked up that appropriations bill.

But still, these actions on the part of the House and Senate committees indicate that Congress, on a bipartisan and a bicameral basis, is prepared to address this glaring safety vulnerability, even if the administration is not.

With that said, we can't make any progress in tackling this problem if we do not call up and pass the Transportation-Treasury appropriations bill.

Under the current continuing resolution, the agency can make no progress in restoring the necessary FAA inspectors to a level that could better protect us.

As I said, this was just one of several reasons it is imperative for the Senate leadership to call up the Transportation-Treasury bill.

I again implore the Senate Republican leadership to call up the Transportation-Treasury bill immediately upon the completion of this Defense appropriations bill.

We have to have the opportunity to debate this bill, not just for the fairness of our colleagues and to maintain the integrity of the Senate, but we must debate this bill and pass it so we can ensure the safety of our citizens.

VAWA REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Violence Against Women Act, which the Senate this week passed by unanimous consent.

For the last few months, we have been talking about reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act, or VAWA, as it is better known.

Back in 1994, through this historic legislation, we created a national strategy for dealing with domestic violence, establishing a community-wide response. Since we took that historical step, VAWA has been a great success in coordinating victims' advocates, social service providers, and law enforcement

professionals to meet the immediate challenges of combating domestic violence. We can clearly see that VAWA has been tremendously effective.

But there is still work to be done to protect victims of domestic violence—particularly when it comes to helping victims break the cycle of violence. And that is what I am here to talk about today—breaking the cycle of violence.

Financial insecurity is a major factor in ongoing domestic violence.

Too often, victims who are not economically self sufficient are forced to choose between protecting themselves and their children on one hand, and keeping a roof over their head on the other hand. It is critical that we help guarantee the economic security of victims of domestic or sexual violence who cannot pay the rent without their abusive partner, or who have been forced to leave their job because of abuse. Without our help, economic dependency will continue to force these victims to stay in abusive relationships.

The purpose of the Violence Against Women Act is to reduce domestic violence. The reauthorization legislation addresses several new issues that will help prevent and reduce domestic violence. One such—way as I already mentioned—is a national health care strategy. But the legislation as introduced contained another important tool to helping reduce domestic violence—it contained provisions that would have allowed victims to take up to 10 days of unpaid leave per year to address domestic violence.

Over 40 percent of American workers get no paid time off. They can't use vacation time to address their abuse, and missing work puts them in danger of losing their job.

This provision would have allowed these victims, and many others, to take unpaid leave to get a protective order, see a doctor, or make a safety plan to address their abuse. But sadly, amidst opposition and complaints of jurisdictional issues, these provisions were stripped from the bill during consideration in the Judiciary Committee.

The legislation that was reported out of committee—which the Senate just passed by unanimous consent—does not contain any economic protections for victims.

I did not give up on these protections easily. After the leave provisions were dropped, I asked the managers of this bill to include another economic security provision, unemployment insurance. Specifically, I asked them to provide victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking with unemployment insurance if they have to leave their job or are fired because of abuse.

We know that a job is often the only way for victims to build up resources for themselves to eventually leave a violent relationship, but abuse and stalking can make it impossible for a victim to keep a job.

We know of cases where abusers will deliberately sabotage a victim's ability to work, placing harassing phone calls, cutting off their transportation, showing up at the workplace and threatening employees.

When a victim loses a job because of violence, that victim should have access to unemployment insurance compensation benefits.

Are you aware that a woman is eligible for unemployment benefits if she has to leave her job because her husband had to relocate? But in many States, if a woman has to leave her job because she is fleeing a dangerous situation, she cannot receive the same benefits. That is unacceptable.

Currently, 28 States plus the District of Columbia already provide some type of unemployment insurance assistance for victims of domestic violence. We can offer that same protection to victims in every State, and we have an obligation to do it. But, since this provision is not included in VAWA either, we need to do it here and now.

It is important to recognize that this violence goes far beyond the home, too often following victims into the workplace, where it doesn't just hurt victims—it hurts their employers, too.

In fact, from decreased workplace productivity to increased health insurance cost, the data shows that domestic violence is bad for business. It has real and painful costs on employers. So for those Members who want to weigh this measure against its economic merits, the facts are clear.

Providing the tools that will allow abused women to escape abusive relationships can help offset billions of dollars in costs that domestic violence imposes on businesses.

As many of my colleagues know, I have been working on the issue of economic security for victims for many years. I have spoken with victims and their advocates, and employers. In fact, just this past Tuesday in my State of Washington, I held a roundtable discussion to meet with stakeholders. I heard from an employer—and owner of a small business in Snohomish County—who talked about the importance of flexible schedules and leave policies that allow employees to address their abuse. He said that helping them address their situations helps his bottom line.

I also heard from someone who works at the employment security department, who said that the numbers do not suggest that women are abusing unemployment insurance. And I heard from a survivor, who shared her story and talked about the crucial importance of these economic protections.

These are the voices we must hear. And these are the stories we must learn from and let guide our work here in the Senate.

I am going to keep coming to the Senate as many times as it takes, and I will tell these stories until my colleagues realize this is an issue that needs to be addressed. We need to pro-

vide these victims with the economic tools to help escape their dangerous situation.

For a long time, violence against women was considered a private matter. That attitude hurt women. Today, stopping domestic violence is everyone's business. That is in large part due to the Violence Against Women Act which I was very proud to work on and help pass. For the first time, the Violence Against Women Act recognized domestic violence as a violent crime and a national public health crisis.

Economic protections are the next logical step in the progress we have been making in fighting domestic violence. Unfortunately, many of my colleagues have not realized the critical importance of providing these economic protections. I brought this issue up last year when the Senate was considering the Unborn Victims of Violence Act. I tried to amend that bill with my Security and Financial Empowerment, SAFE, Act, which contains all the economic protections I have talked about today. I was told then it wasn't the right time to address preventing violence against women. My amendment was defeated on a party-line vote. I am here again talking about how the Senate is failing to address this issue and failing to help prevent domestic violence by overlooking these economic provisions.

I reiterate to my colleagues that I will continue to come to the Senate and talk about how critical this issue is in helping victims get out of abusive relationships. I will continue to introduce legislation and offer amendments providing economic protections to victims. I will continue to ask whether the Senators in this Chamber are serious about talking about the next crucial step to help victims of abuse. I urge the conferees on the Violence Against Women Act to send the powerful message to victims that they understand how important these economic protections are by including them in the conference report on VAWA.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. STEVENS. 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. STEVENS. Mr. President, is the Coburn amendment the pending amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote on the Coburn amendment commence at noon and prior thereto there be a period of 10 minutes equally divided with no second-degree amendments in order.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, in the interim, if any Senator wishes to discuss an amendment, we are pleased to

proceed. We will accommodate any Senator with regard to amendments they wish to discuss. We discussed this matter last night with Senator COBURN, and he agreed we could initiate a vote on his amendment sometime around noon. We would like to proceed on that basis.

I once again urge Senators to present their amendments or work with us with regard to the package we are now discussing on amendments which will be accepted without debate.

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. STEVENS. 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. STEVENS. I wish to announce to the Senate my intention to move to make a point of order against all amendments that have been indicated by the Parliamentarian to be not germane commencing at 2 o'clock. So if any Senator wishes to discuss that category of amendments, we would be pleased to discuss them either prior to this vote or after the vote. We would like to have a decision made, if possible, as to how many more amendments we will deal with today.

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

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

AMENDMENTS NOS. 1943, AS MODIFIED; AND 1997, EN BLOC

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I send to the desk the first managers' package for the day. I will present it now. We offer, for Senator REED of Rhode Island, amendment No. 1943, a sense of the Senate on increased personnel end strengths, and it has been modified; for Senator MIKULSKI, amendment No. 1997, for laser marksmanship training. I ask unanimous consent that these amendments be considered en bloc.

Mr. INOUE. No objection.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendments be agreed to en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The amendments are agreed to en bloc.

The amendments were agreed to en bloc, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1943, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate on the transfer of amounts for increased personnel strengths for the Army and the Marine Corps from Additional War-Related Appropriations to the recurring appropriations for fiscal year 2006)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ SENSE OF SENATE ON TRANSFER OF FUNDS FOR INCREASED PERSONNEL STRENGTHS FOR THE ARMY AND MARINE CORPS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) A long-term increase in the personnel end strengths for active duty personnel of the Army and the Marine Corps is necessary in order to carry out the current missions of the Army and the Marine Corps and to relieve current strains on Army and Marine Corps forces.

(2) The cost of the increase in such end strengths is foreseeable and should be included in the annual budget of the President for each fiscal year, as submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, in order to provide a full and honest accounting to the American people of the personnel costs of the Army and the Marine Corps.

(3) The inclusion in the annual budget of the President for each fiscal year of the costs of an increase in such end strengths will permit the Army and Marine Corps to plan for and accommodate the additional troops contemplated by such increased end strengths without reducing other important programs.

(b) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the additional amounts to be required for increases in the personnel end strengths for active duty personnel of the Army and the Marine Corps for fiscal year 2006 should be transferred from amounts appropriated by title IX for the Military Personnel, Army, Military Personnel, Marine Corps, Operation and Maintenance, Army, and Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps, and Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide, accounts to the amounts appropriated for the applicable accounts in titles I and II.

AMENDMENT NO. 1997

(Purpose: To provide that, of the amount made available under title III for the Air Force for other procurement, up to \$3,000,000 may be made available for the Laser Marksmanship Training System)

On page 220, after line 25, add the following:

SEC. 8116. Of the amount appropriated by title III under the heading "OTHER PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE", up to \$3,000,000 may be made available for the Laser Marksmanship Training System.

Mr. STEVENS. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. INOUE. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2005

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, Senator LEVIN and I are currently conducting a hearing of the Armed Services Committee. Both of us believed it was imperative to come to the Chamber and express to the Senate our strong objection to the amendment offered by our distinguished colleague, Senator COBURN. I give this by way of background.

The Committee on Armed Services for some time has been, frankly, encouraging the Department to take steps to try to put in place a system that would revise the older means by which travel was accommodated for members of the Department and others. It is a very extensive number of individuals who are affected. The Department did put in place a program, albeit rather slowly. Nevertheless, it is now in place.

Congress, through the years, has criticized the Department for not providing better business practices, specifically for the inadequate oversight of their travel programs. Criticism centered around a growing number of separate, nonintegrated travel systems which did not provide the information required for DOD or congressional oversight. Therefore, the Defense Travel System was created by the DOD to address these criticisms and the desperate need to make this system work more cost-effectively.

Comparing the Defense Travel System to the legacy systems is inappropriate because the Defense Travel System performs different functions. The legacy systems are travel reservation systems. The DTS, as it is known, re-engineers these legacy systems into a travel and financial management system which links 30 defense data and financial processing systems with the consequent lower transaction and processing fees and lower personnel costs. DTS is saving both people and money. A return to the legacy systems will require additional people, which is not funded. As DTS is further implemented, additional savings will be achieved.

Our joint plea is to allow DTS to remain in place and give it a reasonable chance to function and prove its goals. According to the GAO, the "continued use of the existing legacy travel systems results in underutilization of DTS and affects the savings that DTS was planned to achieve." This includes paying higher processing costs through the legacy systems' manual travel vouchers as opposed to the processing of the travel vouchers electronically through DTS.

The GAO and the Department of Defense have briefed the Armed Services Committee staff that they believe DTS should be given a reasonable opportunity to continue to resolve the Department's travel programs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Virginia for his comments.

This amendment does not eliminate DTS. It says that instead of continuing to pay \$40 or \$50 million a year for the 5.6 million travelers who travel, we will pay a fee based on DTS's operations. The Federal Government doesn't own this program. In fact, anybody who looks at the development of this program will say it is way too expensive

to have been accomplished in the way it was accomplished. That is another issue. That is contracting within the DOD, and there are problems with that.

I remind the most distinguished Senator from Virginia, this doesn't eliminate DTS. It allows it to continue to function. But what it says is we are not going to continue to pay money for a program we don't own, and we will start paying it on a per-travel basis.

What are the facts around it? Three hundred and seventy-five thousand out of 5.6 million travel vouchers last year went through the DTS system. That is \$1,500 per episode, not including the travel. So what we actually have is a system way more expensive than any system that has been developed in the private sector.

I am not against using the DTS system. I am all for giving it a chance to save us money. We have invested in it. What this amendment says is that we don't eliminate DTS; we just start paying on a per-travel basis and a per-utilization basis. That way, we don't continue to spend \$50 million a year for a program we don't own. We should own it for what we pay for it, and there shouldn't be any cost.

I would be happy to modify my amendment to what would meet with the needs of the Senator from Virginia, but I don't believe we should continue to spend, in the contracting sequence this has gone through, the same amount of money. If we allow DTS to continue to be out there and utilize the reporting capability of it but pay it on a per-ticket use rather than a blank check for a contract, the taxpayer will get much more benefit from it. If it performs, the contractor will make more money. If it doesn't perform, we will save a ton of money for the country. That is the purpose of the amendment.

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield for a moment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma has the floor.

Mr. COBURN. I am happy to yield.

Mr. STEVENS. We entered a time limit to have this vote occur at 12. In view of the exchange that is going on—and another Senator also wants to talk—I ask unanimous consent that the vote take place at 12:10 and the time between now and then be divided between Senator COBURN and anyone who wishes to speak on this amendment.

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

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I must say, I am impressed with the thoroughness with which our colleague has researched this issue and the fervor with which he speaks. But I pose this question: The Department of Defense estimates it will cause a 3-year delay and cost some \$65 million to change the contract structure. I reiterate my strong opposition to the amendment because I don't think the Department has had the time operating DTS to adequately prove the principles and the goals they wished to achieve.

I recognize other colleagues wish to speak. I thank my colleague for the opportunity to have a colloquy.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, 3 more years? We have spent 7 years and \$500 million on this system. That is a half a billion dollars. That is \$2 for every man, woman, and child in this country for a travel system that you could have bought off the shelf for \$150 million in 2 or 3 years. The contracting issue is a different issue. If it is going to take 3 more years at \$50 million a year, that means we are going to be at \$650 million for this travel system. That is unacceptable. I believe we ought to say perform or don't perform and put it at a per-unit cost. Why is it that only 370,000 out of 5.6 million travel episodes were used on this system at the end of 7 years?

We have a structural problem in contracting through the Defense Department, as well as many other departments in our Government. What started out to be a \$60 million project is now going to end up being \$650 million. It is the same issue we face with FEMA today in terms of being efficient.

I ask my colleagues to think about how this will still continue if we do it on a per-travel basis. First, it will increase the stimulus to get the job done and completed because there will be more revenue, the more people who use it. Two, it will limit the total amount of money the taxpayers are going to end up having to pay for this system. Three, it will send a message to the contract officers at the Pentagon that creep in terms of contracting is not acceptable. There are some real questions on whether this process violated the contracting laws at the Pentagon. I assure my fellow Senators, through the Federal Financial Oversight Committee, if this continues, we are going to have some hearings to look at the issue of violation of the contracting laws at the Pentagon. We should not have to do that.

Let's limit the exposure of the American people to the cost. I am not upset at the contractor who is doing this. The problem is, it is a big task, but it has cost way too much. Let's provide some stimulus to finish the job and make sure the job is done well rather than continue to throw money at it.

With that, I yield the floor at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I very much respect the Senator from Oklahoma. He is a man who is a watchdog on the taxpayers' money, and so am I. I know he is very conversant on a variety of issues. It is one of those occasions I must rise in opposition to the Senator's amendment.

Congress, several years ago, authorized the Defense Travel System with the aim of saving taxpayers' dollars, and that makes a great deal of sense to make sure that travel administration by the Department of Defense has

greater scrutiny. In fact, as I understand it, they have found by doing it this way—and it is only being field tested; it is not fully implemented—those who are traveling at first-class and tickets being paid for where travel wasn't used. This system is actually helping save the taxpayers money and also identifying when Government workers are flying at a higher cost than they ought to.

I am told that it is now used at a little bit more than half of the Department of Defense 11,000 sites by nearly 700,000 uniformed and civilian personnel. It appears, from what I have looked at, that DTS has not only met but exceeded its original objectives. It is not fully put in place. It is being field tested. As a practical matter, we would like another year or so to see it fully implemented. I am told that it has handled more than a million transactions, and it is well on its way to saving the projected \$56 million a year for the American taxpayers.

As to efficiency and savings, any GSA solution will strip away what are planned savings and actually increase operations costs. This is the information I have been trying to gather on this since Senator COBURN offered the amendment. It would actually increase operation costs from \$40 to \$60 million annually. Senator WARNER used the figure of \$65 million. Regardless, there would be an added cost.

One thing the Senator from Oklahoma mentioned is that the Department of Defense does not actually own this software system and that what the Department of Defense, though, has done is it has appropriate license rights to the DTS software system in accordance with Federal acquisition regulations. While there are these allegations from outside parties that criticize the DTS program on the basis that the Government failed to obtain title to the DTS software, what is ignored is that the Federal acquisitions regulations provide that in the vast majority of Federal contracts, the Government does not take title, but instead it is given a license to the software. And the Department of Defense has secured appropriate license rights to all the developed software and third-party software products used by DTS.

The Senator from Oklahoma stated that this contract may violate the very laws that were put on the books to try to maintain competition in contracting. I don't know whether it was an assertion or a conclusion.

I respectfully disagree. The legality of the restructuring of the DTS contract has been challenged in court. From what our research has shown, no court has found that the entire restructured contract was illegal. It simply stated no part of the contract, as currently configured, has been found by any court to be illegal. Maybe it will be in the future, and we will see.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. ALLEN. Let me finish and then the Senator can respond. I say to my

friend from Oklahoma, I do have a great deal of respect for him. He is truly a steward of the taxpayers' money. I pride myself, also, in being a good steward of the taxpayers' dollars. I know there have been hearings on this DTS program. We need to continue to examine this issue and, in fact, a lot of others. To cut funding right now for this program would be a hasty action and, from all the information I have been able to glean, would actually increase the cost to the taxpayers.

The Department of Defense does oppose this amendment. They called my office a short time ago expressing this opposition. They promised to review the GAO report as soon as possible. I do think the more prudent approach is to, of course, commend the Senator from Oklahoma for any kind of scrutiny. No spending should not be under the watchful eye of us as stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. But because of a lack of understanding on the part of the Senators on the floor and this amendment, this should continue to be studied.

I will oppose this amendment and work, such as all of us, to study this issue further. I hope my colleagues will oppose the amendment.

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. ALLEN. I yield to the Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. I underestimated the amount of time needed. Senator LEVIN wishes to speak. I ask unanimous consent that the vote take place at 12:15 p.m. and that the additional time be divided between the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, and the Senator from Michigan, Mr. LEVIN.

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

Mr. ALLEN. I yield the floor.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. ALLEN. Yes, I yield to the Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. I don't have any problems in putting a lid on this contract, but let's have a little history. The reason the judge could not find a violation in the Competition in Contracting Act was because the Pentagon did not own the software. By design, they cannot have it if they do not own it.

It was interesting, before the hearing last week, the contractor offered to give the property rights to the Pentagon. In the testimony last week, it was noted that DTS performs less effectively than almost every other civilian e-travel system.

We are 7 years into it. We are going to spend another \$150 million. Also, in the history of the contract, this is another no-bid contract that I know Senator LEVIN is very interested in. It is a cost plus—\$43.7 million in the first year, that was not in the contract, and we went on and paid it for anyway.

Based on what is happening with the contracting and how we are getting around the Competition in Contracting Act, I believe we need some real sunshine on this.

The fact is, we are going to spend another \$150 million. If the Defense Department would guarantee me that we are not going to spend more than another \$100 million to get a travel system that we own, not licensed, but we own, since we are going to pay \$650 million for something that should have cost \$150 million, then I would be happy to withdraw this amendment. But you cannot get an assurance out of the Pentagon what the cost is going to be because there is not any end in sight in the cost.

We don't own it. They have offered to because of that, but once the Pentagon owns the contract and the rights to this, then the Competition in Contracting Act goes into force, and then there is a basis for the violation.

So the reason the judge ruled the way he ruled was because we did not have ownership to the property. So, therefore, there was no basis for the claim. I understand that, but that is the reason that was not given to the Pentagon, that the Competition in Contracting Act could not be enforced.

I am happy to drop this issue if somebody will stand up and say there is a limit to how much we are going to spend. We have already spent four times what the public should have spent on any system. No private business would have spent this amount of money for this system. Nobody would have.

We ought to look at it very hard. Give me the assurance that there is an end to this and that it is more efficient than anything we could have done otherwise, and I will drop my look at it.

I believe the way to stimulate responsibility in this contract is to put it on a per-issue basis now to make it work.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I reclaim my time and then I will yield. I also share with my colleagues that the judge who reviewed this case did not find a violation, for whatever technical reasons Senator COBURN may say, but the adjudication was there is no violation. The judge also said that to start over would be a mistake.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield for one comment?

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The opposition has 6 minutes. The Senator from Oklahoma has 3 minutes 21 seconds.

Mr. COBURN. I will be happy to claim my time.

Mr. LEVIN. If the Senator is seeking recognition on his time, I have no objection.

Mr. COBURN. I will be happy to.

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, are we going to have a judge decide on the basis of economics whether we start over? What does that have to do with adjudication? He is making an eco-

nomical decision for us. That is our job. That is not the judge's job. It doesn't matter whether he says it will be more expensive; that is not his role. That is part of our problem in the judiciary today. That is not his role. That is our role.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the amendment of the Senator from Oklahoma. I do so with some reluctance, actually, because I have great admiration for the Senator from Oklahoma and his efforts to curtail waste in the Government. I have joined him on a number of those efforts. As a matter of fact, I very much admire his efforts and the efforts of the subcommittee he chairs to go after waste. I think he is going too far in this particular case, and he is going after an effort to try to integrate the thousands—literally thousands—of financial management systems in the Department of Defense.

We had a chart a few years back with a box for each financial management system in the Department of Defense, perhaps half the size of the curtain behind the Presiding Officer. There were thousands of boxes on that chart. We told the Department of Defense: You have to get your house in order; you have to get some financial management in the Department of Defense so that we can tell whether your expenditures—so that you can tell and then we, as oversight people, can tell—are those expenditures authorized; do your managers know how much you are spending on what; is the payment automatic when these expenditures are made?

For instance, for travel, when a ticket is purchased, is that ticket paid for automatically the way it should be by a computer if it is authorized or is there going to have to be someone, as the status quo provides, cutting a check for the travel? That costs money. It may not appear in the cost of the ticket of the one transaction that may be the "cheapest" transaction, according to some system, but there is a cost to pay for that transaction.

We want the payment to be automatic when the transaction is authorized. We want the ability of managers to know what is being spent, is the travel authorized, can you go back and track the travel automatically?

Now we have thousands of systems out there, with thousands of managers, not integrated into a system, where the kind of management that is so essential in the Pentagon can occur.

That is the problem with the amendment. It goes back to a focus on individual transactions to purchase tickets rather than to make a system to buy the travel part of an integrated management system.

Look, we put a lot of pressure on the Pentagon. We have put a huge amount of pressure on it to come up with some

financial management capability. They have been a failure at it. Now they are trying to do it—they have not succeeded, by the way. This system has plenty of bugs in it. As the Senator from Oklahoma properly points out, there are bugs in this system. But we don't kill the effort to try to get integrated financial management so there is some accountability for the funds that are spent by the Pentagon.

We do not want to go back to ground zero. We want to try to make this work. And the problem with this amendment is that it goes too far because it says:

None of the funds appropriated by this Act may be obligated or expended for further development, deployment, or operation of any web-based, end-to-end travel management system, or services under any contract for such travel services that provides for payment by the Department of Defense to the service provider—

Except for a fixed-fee transaction payment.

That puts us back to millions of individual transactions which are unaccountable and for which we cannot have proper oversight. That is the problem.

I admire the Senator's goal in trying to come up with a system which is better than the one we are now proceeding to acquire. We are going to work out the bugs, hopefully, in that system. But I disagree to going back to ground zero because we have to get some integrated financial management at the Pentagon. That is the purpose of this DTS system.

It has not yet been achieved. I agree with the Senator from Oklahoma, it has not been achieved, but I don't think we ought to blow up the effort and go back to ground zero.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Michigan for his comments. This does not go back to ground zero. This leaves the DTS system intact. What it says is we are going to pay a fee for every transaction you do. We have spent \$500 million on this and, as the Senator from Virginia said, we are up to \$600,000 out of the 3.6 million transactions.

I can think of no better incentive to have the bugs worked out of it by the contractor than to get more of the 3.6 million transactions. It does not eliminate this. It does not take us back to ground zero. It leaves DTS intact. It says the way we are going to pay for it, from now on, is on a per-transaction basis, rather than a fixed amount or \$50 million plus cost that is going to run, which we see now is at least 3 years, at least another \$150 million.

We have 3.6 million transactions per year that are going to go through there. It does not do what the Senator claims. It does not eliminate DTS. It does not cause any change in the implementation of the program, other than pay for it on a per-transaction basis. The taxpayers ought to be will-

ing to say: Hey, if it is going to work, it is going to work, and we will pay for it as it works now. We have spent half a billion dollars.

I reserve my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute 22 seconds remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, again, I thank my friend from Oklahoma. This is a prohibition on spending any additional money to operate any Web-based, end-to-end management system. That is what is in the language. It says you cannot spend any more money. We can't get the bugs out, which is what we should do if you can't spend any more money to improve this system.

The Senator from Oklahoma goes back to an individual transaction system which does not provide the ability to determine whether travel is authorized, does not permit the people who are responsible to pay for the travel to know whether it is authorized and to pay for it by computer automatically. We have millions of transactions that are going to have to be paid for individually instead of part of the end-to-end system.

So if the Senator had allowed for the correction of this system to work out the bugs, that would be one thing. But it does not. This says you cannot spend any more money on a Web-based system, and that is the mistake of this amendment. That is why it goes too far, although it is well intended.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, will my colleague from Michigan yield time? I wish to speak on this issue in support of it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has no more time to yield. The Senator from Oklahoma has 1 minute 20 seconds.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I will speak for a short time and then give my colleague from Minnesota a chance to finish, even though he opposes my amendment.

The Pentagon has the ability to set that transaction fee on a per basis. They will be able to still fund it. If there ends up being a million people this next year and they charge \$30 per fund, they will get \$30 million out of it.

The point is, the Pentagon has the flexibility to do it that way.

I yield the remainder of my time to the Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I support the intent of what my colleague from Oklahoma wants to do. He wants to clean up this system. We had a hearing on this issue last week. The Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations had a hearing on this issue, and we have questions out to the DOD, out to the GAO, and we have a commitment from the Under Secretary of Defense to work with us.

I have said if we cannot get the right answers we should pull the plug, but now is not the time to pull the plug. We do oversight for a reason. We are in the process of oversight. Let us get an-

swers to the questions, but clearly then we want to have the right kind of system. So I agree with the intent of what my colleague is trying to accomplish, but this is not the way to do it or the time to do it. Let us finish our investigative work. Let us get the answers, and then we can bring this issue up at another time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. On behalf of Senator INOUE and myself, I move to table the amendment of the Senator from Oklahoma and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), and the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) was necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 253 Leg.]

YEAS—65

Akaka	Dorgan	Mikulski
Alexander	Ensign	Murkowski
Allen	Enzi	Murray
Baucus	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Frist	Pryor
Biden	Hagel	Reed
Bond	Harkin	Reid
Bunning	Hutchison	Roberts
Burns	Inouye	Rockefeller
Carper	Isakson	Salazar
Chafee	Jeffords	Santorum
Chambliss	Johnson	Sarbanes
Clinton	Kennedy	Schumer
Cochran	Landrieu	Shelby
Coleman	Lautenberg	Smith
Collins	Leahy	Specter
Conrad	Levin	Stevens
Cornyn	Lieberman	Talent
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Voinovich
DeWine	Martinez	Warner
Domenici	McConnell	

NAYS—32

Bayh	Dole	McCain
Bingaman	Durbin	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Feingold	Obama
Brownback	Graham	Sessions
Burr	Grassley	Snowe
Byrd	Gregg	Stabenow
Cantwell	Inhofe	Sununu
Coburn	Kerry	Thomas
Dayton	Kohl	Thune
DeMint	Kyl	Wyden
Dodd	Lincoln	

NOT VOTING—3

Allard	Corzine	Hatch
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The motion was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. INOUE. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 1896

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now call up the Dayton amendment, No. 1896.

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

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. DAYTON] proposes an amendment numbered 1896.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To appropriate, with an offset, an additional \$120,000,000 for Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide, for certain child and family assistance benefits for members of the Armed Forces)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE.—The amount appropriated by title II under the heading "OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE" is hereby increased by \$120,000,000.

(b) AVAILABILITY FOR CHILD AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE BENEFITS.—Of the amount appropriated by title II under the heading "OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE", as increased by subsection (a), \$120,000,000 may be available as follows:

(1) \$100,000,000 may be available for childcare services for families of members of the Armed Forces.

(2) \$20,000,000 may be available for family assistance centers that primarily serve members of the Armed Forces and their families.

(c) OFFSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act for the Missile Defense Agency is hereby reduced by \$120,000,000.

(2) LIMITATION.—The reduction in paragraph (1) shall not be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act for the Missile Defense Agency and available for missile defense programs and activities of the Army.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time between 2 p.m. and 2:15 be equally divided between the sponsor and the managers of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. STEVENS. And that there be no second-degree amendments but any motion in relation to this amendment be in order.

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

AMENDMENTS NOS. 1929, 2000, AND 1924, EN BLOC

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I have a managers' package. I send it to the desk. In this package is an amendment for Senator LEVIN, No. 1929, for the medium tactical vehicle modifications; Senator LEVIN, No. 2000, pertaining to Indian tribes; and, Senator KENNEDY, No. 1924, for humvee integrated starters.

I ask unanimous consent that these three amendments be considered en bloc.

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

Mr. STEVENS. I ask for consideration of those amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments were agreed to en bloc, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1929

(Purpose: To make available \$5,000,000 from Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Army, for Medium Tactical Vehicle Modifications)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Of the amount appropriated by title IV under the heading "RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION, ARMY", up to \$5,000,000 may be used for Medium Tactical Vehicle Modifications.

AMENDMENT NO. 2000

(Purpose: To provide that the governments of Indian tribes be treated as State and local governments for purposes of the disposition of real property recommended for closure in the report to the President from the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, July 1993)

On page 220, after line 25, insert the following:

SEC. 8116. Section 8013 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1994 (Public Law 103-139; 107 Stat. 1440) is amended by striking "the report to the President from the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, July 1991" and inserting "the reports to the President from the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, July 1991 and July 1993".

AMENDMENT NO. 1924

(Purpose: To make available \$1,000,000 from Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Army, for Integrated Starter/Alternator for Up-Armored High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Of the amount appropriated by title IV under the heading "RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION, ARMY", up to \$1,000,000 may be used for Integrated Starter/Alternator for Up-Armored High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. INOUE. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, we are going to try to work through this bill. The bill is open to debate. I will be pleased to take up any other amendments Senators might bring before us. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARTINEZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the time continue to run but that the Senate stand in temporary recess until 2 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:56 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ALEXANDER).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 1896

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time between now and 2:15 is evenly divided on the Dayton amendment.

Who yields time?

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, the time is equally divided on this amendment. This amendment would add \$100 million to childcare services and \$20 million for family assistance centers.

I will speak in response to the Senator's explanation of this amendment when he is finished.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

AMENDMENT NO. 1896, AS MODIFIED

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I send a modification of my amendment to the desk, and I ask unanimous consent it be so modified.

Mr. STEVENS. We would like to see the modification before it is accepted.

Mr. DAYTON. The staff is working on slight adjustments to the amendment so it meets the concerns of the chairman. I thank the chairman for his willingness to consider the amendment as part of the managers' amendment as modified. It needs to be further modified to conform to the desire of the chairman to have the language read up to the particular amounts which are \$40 million for the increased antinarcotics efforts of the National Guard, \$50 million for increased funding for childcare, and \$10 million for increased funding for family assistance centers.

If it is agreeable to the chairman, I will spend about 5 minutes discussing the amendment at this time, and I will proceed on that basis and recognize the amendment itself is still subject to further discussions.

Mr. STEVENS. We have no objection to the modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The amendment (No. 1896), as modified, is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) CHILD AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.—

(1) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE.—The amount appropriated by title II under the heading "OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE" is hereby increased by \$60,000,000.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNT.—Of the amount appropriated by title II under the heading "OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE", as increased by paragraph (1), not less than \$60,000,000 shall be made available as follows:

(A) Not less than \$50,000,000 shall be made available for childcare services for families of members of the Armed Forces.

(B) Not less than \$10,000,000 shall be made available for family assistance centers that primarily serve members of the Armed Forces and their families.

(b) NATIONAL GUARD COUNTERDRUG SUPPORT ACTIVITIES.—

(1) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR DRUG INTERDICTION AND COUNTER-DRUG ACTIVITIES.—The