

seeking a 90-day supply, since the prescriptions are so much cheaper ordering them through Canada, there was not going to be the harassment of the confiscations.

That has dramatically changed. Over the course of the last week and a half, I have received over 100 complaints of senior citizens from all over Florida having their prescriptions, when ordered by mail or Internet from Canada, confiscated. This is serious business. This could be a matter of life and death for senior citizens who cannot afford to pay the retail price and are depending on that medicine in order to help them with whatever their ailments are—in some cases, life-threatening situations. Fortunately, we have not had any one of those reported to me, but the harassment has started.

I certainly hope there is no connection between this spike in the number of instances with Customs taking senior citizens' prescriptions. I hope there is no connection between that and trying to force senior citizens into the Medicare prescription drug benefit, the Medicare Part D. Naturally, seniors are quite resistant to the new plan.

We have talked in the Senate over and over, and I have offered amendments, all of which have had a majority vote, but under the parliamentary procedure of having to waive the Budget Act, I had to get 60 votes. I have gotten over 50 but not the 60 votes needed in order to delay the implementation of the prescription drug benefit, the deadline for signing up, which is May 15.

Naturally, seniors are resistant because they do not understand it. They are confused and in some cases bewildered. They have 40 to 50 plans to pick from. They are confused and they are frightened because if they do not pick a plan by the May deadline, they will be penalized 1 percent a month or 12 percent a year, or if they pick the wrong plan, they are stuck with that plan for a year and they have the fear that suddenly the need to change their prescription by their doctor may occur and the formulary they pick may not cover the new prescription.

This resistance is a fact. I hope we do not see any of this harassment connected with trying to force seniors into the prescription drug bill.

I call on the Department of Homeland Security, Customs, to stop harassing our senior citizens by confiscating their prescriptions for purchase of a short supply, which is bought at so much of a reduced cost.

That is not the total answer, just getting the drugs from Canada. That is bandaiding the problem. The problem is having a Medicare prescription drug benefit offered to senior citizens where Medicare can use its huge buying power of bulk purchases in order to bring down the price of the drugs, as the Veterans' Administration has been doing for the last two decades. But until we can get to that point, until we can change the law, until we can get

the votes to change the law, in the meantime, some of our senior citizens who have trouble making financial ends meet have to buy their drugs through Canada at a much reduced price.

I bring this to the attention of the Senate. I bring it to the attention of Customs, as I have through correspondence. It is time to stop harassing our senior citizens.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COLEMAN). The clerk will call the roll. The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. 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. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent to have 12 minutes in morning business.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. MENENDEZ pertaining to the introduction of S. 2334 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

#### ORDER FOR FILING DEADLINE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the filing deadline for all amendments to S. 2271 occur at 12 noon today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I yield back the remaining Republican time for morning business.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

#### USA PATRIOT ACT ADDITIONAL REAUTHORIZING AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2006

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2271, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2271) to clarify that individuals who receive FISA orders can challenge non-disclosure requirements, that individuals who receive national security letters are not required to disclose the name of their attorney, that libraries are not wire or electronic communication service providers unless they provide specific services, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Frist Amendment No. 2895, to establish the enactment date of the Act.

Frist Amendment No. 2896 (to Amendment No. 2895), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided.

The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the USA PATRIOT Act. As you know, the Senate has recently agreed to another temporary extension of this act. We have twice since December been in a position of having to offer, instead of permanent reauthorization, a temporary fix. Yet at a time when so many in this body are continuing to talk about security, this one piece of legislation, in my humble opinion, has been more important in terms of protecting the security of the United States than anything else we have done since September 11.

This critical law, which, of course, provides law enforcement agencies with the vital tools necessary to fight and win the war on terror, should not be allowed to expire. I, frankly, am at a loss to explain why we are spending so much time trying to get to final closure on this legislation when the merits of the legislation seem to be so obvious—primarily by providing tools to law enforcement and intelligence agencies of this country, tools that are already in broad use in other aspects of law enforcement investigations.

Unfortunately, it seems to me that there has been a certain amount of hysteria whipped up over this to cause people to have unreasonable fear and concern about civil liberties, when, in fact, the balance between security and civil liberties has been struck in an entirely appropriate way in this legislation.

We must make it a top priority of the Senate to reauthorize this legislation as soon as possible, as it would be unconscionable to compromise the safety of the American people and undermine the progress we have made since 9/11 and delay critical investigations.

An agreement reached in December between the House and Senate conferees preserved the provisions of this act which have made America safer since 9/11 while increasing congressional and judicial oversight, which should alleviate the concerns of those who believe the law enforcement tools somehow endanger civil liberties. And even recently, the White House and leaders of the House and Senate have made additional concessions in an attempt to reach a final agreement to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

Unfortunately, it seems that there are a few who are continuing in their effort to stop reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act, insisting on imposing their will on a bipartisan majority of the Senate, the House, and the President of the United States. The handful of diehards who continue to oppose this legislation are simply unwilling to accept the compromise that has been agreed to by both Houses of Congress, despite efforts from all quarters to try to accommodate reasonable concerns. Most reasonable people would agree