

an important piece of legislation. But also, as we have learned here in the Senate, people keeping their word is also important. I am confident it was some kind of a misunderstanding. I am hopeful that is the case. But until Senator KENNEDY and others and Senator SPECTER work this out, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, just a moment of explanation because I think this bill is, in substance, broadly supported. I am disappointed to hear the objections tonight.

Let me comment very briefly on the bill because it is an issue that I think this body does feel strongly about and that we need to move forward on because it can make a difference. This particular bill is child predator legislation, and we all need to be working together to keep our children safe from child predators. American families, as we all know, should not have to live in fear of sexual predators lurking in neighborhoods and enticing our children.

In the last 24 hours, we have all seen—actually here in the Senate and in this town—we have learned some shocking and tragic news about the growing problem of online child pornography. The abuse of the Internet has really, unfortunately, become the gateway to more serious violent sex offenses against both children and adults.

On Tuesday night, we learned of the arrest of another online child predator and the tragic plight of a child predator victim. The predator was an official from the Department of Homeland Security who was arrested for seducing a child over the Internet. Allegedly, this individual initiated a sexually explicit online chat with a detective posing as a 14-year-old girl. He allegedly described in graphic detail the sexual acts he wanted to perform with her and offered to exchange sexually explicit photos. Fortunately, law enforcement intercepted this individual before he could victimize an innocent child.

But for too many innocent children, the child predators are not caught until it is too late. Yesterday we also heard from one of the victims: 19-year-old Justin Berry from California who courageously testified before a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing on sexual exploitation of children over the internet. For 5 five years, Justin was the victim of an online child pornography ring. At 13, this lonely teenager innocently hooked up a web camera to his computer, hoping to meet other teenagers online. Instead, he heard only from adult child predators who struck up friendly chats and offered him compliments and gifts. One day, one predator offered to pay him \$50 to take off his shirt in front of the webcam. Eventually, these predators lured him into performing pornographic acts in front of the webcam for an audience that grew to more than 1,500 people who paid him hundreds of thousands of dollars.

These shocking stories are not isolated incidents. They are symptomatic of a larger problem.

I believe we should seize this opportunity to transform these tragedies into positive action.

The bill I called up tonight—S. 1086, the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act—would help protect our kids against child predators. It was introduced by Senator HATCH. It has 33 bipartisan cosponsors. It was reported unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Boys and Girls Club of America, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the National District Attorneys Association. And it is supported by the families of child predator victims.

Among its many provisions, the bill will create a national sex offender registry accessible on the Internet and searchable by zip code;

Require convicted sex offenders to register, including child predators who use the Internet to commit a crime against a minor;

Make failure to register a felony; Encourage information sharing among local, State and Federal law enforcement; and

Toughen criminal penalties for violent crimes against children under 12.

Here in the Senate, we need to act to address this issue. In light of the events this week, we should not delay. We should act now before another innocent child becomes a victim of a child predator.

It is an issue we do need to address, and I believe it will pass in an overwhelmingly bipartisan way. In light of the events of this week, we should not be delaying it any longer. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the other side in getting this bill passed as soon as possible.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, very briefly, if the distinguished majority leader will yield, Democrats support the concept of a national registry. It is important. But we also support the concept that people who are injured, maimed, or murdered as a result of hate crimes also deserve protection. We hope we can do all this at one time. I am hopeful and confident that can happen.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF BENJAMIN A. POWELL TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed en bloc to the following nominations on the calendar: No. 239, Benjamin Powell; No. 310, Gordon England; No. 485, Dorrance Smith; No. 252, Peter Flory. I further ask unanimous consent that the clerk report them individually at this time in order to file cloture motions.

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

The clerk will report the first nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Benjamin A. Powell, of Florida, to be General Counsel of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Benjamin Powell to be General Counsel of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Bill Frist, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Jim Bunning, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, Craig Thomas, Ted Stevens, David Vitter, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, Norm Coleman, Mike DeWine, R.F. Bennett, John Thune.

NOMINATION OF GORDON ENGLAND TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Gordon England, of Texas, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gordon England to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Bill Frist, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Jim Bunning, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, Larry E. Craig, Ted Stevens, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, Norm Coleman, Mike DeWine, R.F. Bennett, John Thune, Craig Thomas.

NOMINATION OF DORRANCE SMITH TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Dorrance Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. I send a cloture motion to the desk.