suggestions of the Senator from Vermont, 50,000 American lives might have been spared. By the end of the Vietnam war, almost 3,000 Illinoisans had given their lives in Vietnam. Some were my buddies in high school, my friends with whom I had grown up. I still remember to this day and wonder, if the Senate at that moment in time had made the right decision, a decision Senator Aiken had called for, whether they might be alive today. That is the reality of war, and it is the reality of these foreign policy decisions.

ETHICS REFORM

Our business before the Senate now is the Senate ethics reform bill. We have a big task ahead of us. The leadership has made it clear to Senators on both sides of the aisle that we are going to finish this bill this week. It could mean long sessions, as Senator REID said earlier today. It could mean we are in late in the night, perhaps even on the weekend, but we want to get this important part of our business behind us. The culture of corruption, the climate of corruption which has been on Capitol Hill over the last several years has to come to an end.

There will always be Members of the House and Senate who can think of another way to improve the way we do business. Each of us has our own ideas. I was fortunate, as I said before on the floor of the Senate, to start my Senate and public career with two extraordinary men, Senators Paul Douglas and Paul Simon of Illinois, who tried to set new standards of ethical conduct in national service. Back when I was fresh out of law school and penniless, I went to work for Lieutenant Governor Paul Simon, who insisted that every member of his staff make a complete income disclosure every year and a complete net worth disclosure.

My first disclosure brought real embarrassment to me and my wife because we had nothing and with student debts would have qualified for bankruptcy under most circumstances. We didn't file bankruptcy, but those annual disclosures were embarrassing until we finally passed a point where we had a few meager possessions and were on the positive side of the ledger.

I have continued to do that every year. I make the most detailed disclosure I can in my financial statement, not categories of wealth or income but actual dollar amounts. I have done it every single year. I know it serves up to my critics a ready menu of things on which to attack me. That's OK. I want to make it clear that in the time I have been in public service, the decisions I have made—good, bad, whether you agree with them or not—have not been driven by any desire to come away from this experience wealthy.

I have not imposed that on my colleagues here, or suggested it by way of amendment, that they do a detailed income disclosure, put their income tax returns with that disclosure, and a net worth statement each year. But I feel comfortable doing it. I am glad I got started. Now that my family is beyond the embarrassment of those early disclosures when we had nothing, they have come to accept it every year as just a routine. It is a small thing, but it is voluntary on my part, and I hope that others, if they see the need, will accept voluntary changes in the way they approach this to demonstrate their commitment to ethics in public service.

The amendment before us by Senator REID, Senator HARRY REID, our majority leader, is one that deals with the use of corporate airplanes. That has been a source of some embarrassment and question before. I believe that Senators REID and MCCONNELL have shown real leadership in moving this amendment forward. We will consider some changes to it during the course of our debate but, once again, it is a step in the right direction.

Finishing this, we will move to the minimum wage bill and then to a debate on Iraq and then probably to the stem cell issue, so we have quite an agenda before us. Our friends in the House are benefited by something known as the House Rules Committee, which can expedite the process. The Senate doesn't work that way. We have a unanimous consent process which is slow, ponderous, deliberate, and, for Members of the House, absolutely maddening. It will take us longer.

At the end of the day, though, I hope we end up with a good work product for the American people.

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. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to provide greater transparency in the legislative process.

Pending:

Reid amendment No. 3, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid modified amendment No. 4 (to amendment No. 3), to strengthen the gift and travel bans.

DeMint amendment No. 12 (to amendment No. 3), to clarify that earmarks added to a conference report that are not considered by the Senate or the House of Representatives are out of scope.

DeMint amendment No. 14 (to amendment No. 3), to protect individuals from having their money involuntarily collected and used for lobbying by a labor organization.

Vitter/Inhofe further modified amendment No. 9 (to amendment No. 3), to prohibit Members from having official contact with any spouse of a Member who is a registered lobbyist.

Leahy/Pryor amendment No. 2 (to amendment No. 3), to give investigators and prosecutors the tools they need to combat public corruption.

Gregg amendment No. 17 (to amendment No. 3), to establish a legislative line item veto.

Ensign amendment No. 24 (to amendment No. 3), to provide for better transparency and enhanced congressional oversight of spending by clarifying the treatment of matter not committed to the conferees by either House.

Ensign modified amendment No. 25 (to amendment No. 3), to ensure full funding for the Department of Defense within the regular appropriations process, to limit the reliance of the Department of Defense on supplemental appropriations bills, and to improve the integrity of the congressional budget process.

Cornyn amendment No. 26 (to amendment No. 3), to require full separate disclosure of any earmarks in any bill, joint resolution, report, conference report or statement of managers.

Cornyn amendment No. 27 (to amendment No. 3), to require 3 calendar days' notice in the Senate before proceeding to any matter.

Bennett (for McCain) amendment No. 28 (to amendment No. 3), to provide congressional transparency.

Bennett (for McCain) amendment No. 29 (to amendment No. 3), to provide congressional transparency.

Lieberman amendment No. 30 (to amendment No. 3), to establish a Senate Office of Public Integrity.

Bennett/McConnell amendment No. 20 (to amendment No. 3), to strike a provision relating to paid efforts to stimulate grassroots lobbying.

Thune amendment No. 37 (to amendment No. 3), to require any recipient of a Federal award to disclose all lobbying and political advocacy.

Feinstein/Rockefeller amendment No. 42 (to amendment No. 3), to prohibit an earmark from being included in the classified portion of a report accompanying a measure unless the measure includes a general program description, funding level, and the name of the sponsor of that earmark.

Feingold amendment No. 31 (to amendment No. 3), to prohibit former Members of Congress from engaging in lobbying activities in addition to lobbying contacts during their cooling off period.

Feingold amendment No. 33 (to amendment No. 3), to prohibit former Members who are lobbyists from using gym and parking privileges made available to Members and former Members.

Feingold amendment No. 34 (to amendment No. 3), to require Senate campaigns to file their FEC reports electronically.

Durbin amendment No. 36 (to amendment No. 3), to require that amendments and motions to recommit with instructions be copied and provided by the clerk to the desks of the majority leader and the minority leader before being debated.

Cornyn amendment No. 45 (to amendment No. 3), to require 72-hour public availability of legislative matters before consideration.

Cornyn amendment No. 46 (to amendment No. 2), to deter public corruption.

Bond (for Coburn) amendment No. 48 (to amendment No. 3), to require all recipients

of Federal earmarks, grants, subgrants, and contracts to disclose amounts spent on lobbying and a description of all lobbying activities.

Bond (for Coburn) amendment No. 49 (to amendment No. 3), to require all congressional earmark requests to be submitted to the appropriate Senate committee on a standardized form.

Bond (for Coburn) amendment No. 50 (to amendment No. 3), to provide disclosure of lobbyist gifts and travel instead of banning them as proposed.

Bond (for Coburn) amendment No. 51 (to amendment No. 3), to prohibit Members from requesting earmarks that may financially benefit that Member or immediate family member of that Member.

Nelson (NE) amendment No. 47 (to amendment No. 3), to help encourage fiscal responsibility in the earmarking process.

Reid (for Lieberman) amendment No. 43 (to amendment No. 3), to require disclosure of earmark lobbying by lobbyists.

Reid (for Casey) amendment No. 56 (to amendment No. 3), to eliminate the K Street Project by prohibiting the wrongful influencing of a private entity's employment decisions or practices in exchange for political access or favors.

Sanders amendment No. 57 (to amendment No. 3), to require a report by the Commission to Strengthen Confidence in Congress regarding political contributions before and after the enactment of certain laws.

Bennett (for Coburn) amendment No. 59 (to amendment No. 3), to provide disclosure of lobbyist gifts and travel instead of banning them as proposed.

Bennett (for Coleman) amendment No. 39 (to amendment No. 3), to require that a publicly available Web site be established in Congress to allow the public access to records of reported congressional official travel.

Feingold amendment No. 63 (to amendment No. 3), to increase the cooling off period for senior staff to 2 years and to prohibit former Members of Congress from engaging in lobbying activities in addition to lobbying contacts during their cooling off period.

Feingold amendment No. 64 (to amendment No. 3), to prohibit lobbyists and entities that retain or employ lobbyists from throwing lavish parties honoring Members at party conventions.

Feingold/Obama amendment No. 76 (to amendment No. 3), to clarify certain aspects of the lobbyist contribution reporting provision.

Feingold amendment No. 65 (to amendment No. 4), to prohibit lobbyists and entities that retain or employ lobbyists from throwing lavish parties honoring Members at party conventions.

Bennett (for Lott) amendment No. 78 (to amendment No. 4), to only allow official and officially related travel to be paid for by appropriated funds.

Bennett (for Lott) amendment No. 79 (to amendment No. 4), to only allow official and officially related travel to be paid for by appropriated funds.

Bennett modified amendment No. 81 (to amendment No. 4), to permit travel hosted by preapproved 501(c)(3) organizations.

Obama/Feingold amendment No. 41 (to amendment No. 3), to require lobbyists to disclose the candidates, leadership PACs, or political parties for whom they collect or arrange contributions, and the aggregate amount of the contributions collected or arranged.

Nelson (NE)/Salazar amendment No. 71 (to amendment No. 3), to extend the laws and rules passed in this bill to the executive and judicial branches of government.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, we, as Members of Congress, owe it to the American people to conduct ourselves in a way that reinforces, rather than diminishes, the public's faith and confidence in Congress. An informed citizenry is essential to a thriving democracy. And, a democratic Government operates best in the disinfecting light of the public eye. With this bill, we have an opportunity to balance the right of the public to know with its right to petition Government; the ability of lobbyists to advocate their clients' causes with the need for truthful public discourse; and the ability of Members to legislate with the imperative that our Government must be free from corrupting influences, both real and perceived. We must act now to ensure that the erosion we see today in the public's confidence in Congress does not become a collapse of confidence.

I am pleased with the progress we have been making on this bill. We have been having a good debate on a range of proposals to further improve this bill, including requirements to reign in wasteful spending such as by more fully disclosing earmarks and granting the President's enhanced recision authority. We have recognized the need for increased disclosure and more timely reporting of lobbyists' activities. And, I am pleased that we are considering an amendment—one that I fully support—to require Members of Congress who use corporate aircraft to reimburse the full charter rate for a flight, instead of simply paying the cost of a first-class ticket, as required under the current rules. These are all solid proposals, but we need to do more.

Madam President, on this issue of the first-class airfare, I don't think there is a more dramatic example of the difference between we Members of Congress and the average American citizen. No American citizen can today call up a corporation and say: Please let me use your airplane, and, by the way, I am only going to pay first-class airfare. Nothing is more egregious. There are worse abuses that go on around here, but there is no more egregious an example than the ability of a Member of Congress, who many times has oversight of the corporation that provides the aircraft, taking advantage of a situation where they only have to pay first-class airfare, with a difference of sometimes tens of thousands of dollars. It is remarkable.

We need to reform earmarking beyond mere disclosure requirements. We need to curtail this practice, which cost American taxpayers $64 billion in FY 2006, and I have offered an amendment to help do that. Above all, we need to ensure the enactment and enforcement of comprehensive lobbyist, ethics and earmark reforms. That is why we need to establish an Office of Public Integrity to help provide enforcement measures for the reforms that we are advocating. We can pass all the rules changes we want but unless we back them up with a tough enforcement mechanism, they are useless.

On the issue of earmarks, Madam President—and I obviously have a long record of being opposed to these egregious examples of porkbarreling—I think that it is important for us to recognize that there are two ways we can address earmarking. One is to eliminate them and the other is to watch them grow. Over the previous 20 years, I have watched them grow and grow and grow and grow.

I was intrigued by getting a call from an administration official who said the President is for cutting them in half. That is like saying we want to cut half of the drug dealers in America. There is an addiction in Congress to porkbarreling, and we have to cure the addiction or it will continue to grow.

It is because of this need that I am pleased to again join my colleagues, Senators LIEBERMAN and COLLINS, in cosponsoring an amendment to create an Office of Public Intergrity to investigate complaints of ethical violations by Senators, staff, or officers of this Chamber. Headed by a Director appointed by the President pro tem of the Senate upon the joint recommendation of the majority and minority leaders, the Office of Public Integrity would investigate complaints of rules violations filed with or initiated by the office. To ensure swift action, within 30 days of receiving a complaint, the office would be required to make an initial determination whether to dismiss or investigate it. Although a determination by the office to investigate may be overridden by the Select Committee on Ethics, the amendment stipulates that this can occur only if the Ethics Committee overrides the decision by a two-thirds vote and makes this vote public.

To assist it in its investigation, the Office of Public Integrity would be empowered to issue subpoenas, take statements, and compel the attendance of witnesses. If, after investigation, the Director of the office determines that there is probable cause that a violation occurred, he or she must inform the Ethics Committee, which again, can decide not to proceed on a complaint, but only upon a two-thirds vote that must be made public. If the Ethics Committee does not overrule the office's determination of probable cause, the office shall present the case to the Ethics Committee which shall vote on whether the subject of the investigation violated any rules or other standards. Again, this vote must be made public. If the Ethics Committee finds there was a violation, the Director of the Office of Public Integrity shall recommend appropriate sanctions and whether the matter should be referred to the Department of Justice for investigation.

For 2 years, the Committee on Indian Affairs which I chaired at the time, investigated the actions of Jack Abramoff and Michael Scanlon, and

brought to light their efforts to manipulate the political process. If there is a silver lining to the Abramoff affair, it is that it helped to compel Congress to reassess the rules that govern our dealings with lobbyists and others who seek to influence us, and to do so through the eyes of the public, not through our own jaundiced perspectives. Frankly, I also believe the American public sent a clear message that business as usual in an unacceptable proposition. That is what drives our amendment today.

Again, I point out that we investigated in the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Mr. Abramoff and his connection, frankly, with both sides of the Capitol. There was never an Ethics Committee investigation. It was the Justice Department that finally had to take action. There was ample evidence of misbehavior in violation of the rules of both Houses, and here we are with people in jail and, as far as I know, the Ethics Committee never ruled on their behavior. So when I hear people say the Office of Public Integrity would somehow cause us embarrassment, are we not embarrassed by what already happened? Are we not embarrassed that Members of Congress violated their oath of office to the degree that they are in jail and the investigation continued on the part of the Justice Department?

I say to the opponents of this amendment, in a perfect world, maybe you are right. In the world that we live in today, you are not right. We owe the American public a better system than the one that has been in place for the past several years.

While strengthening the Senate rules regarding disclosure, gifts, meals, travel and post-employment lobbying is necessary and overdue, it is also of little importance if the rules are not enforced. Instances of apparent violations of congressional rules by Members and staff who were the beneficiaries of Mr. Abramoff's largesse were widely reported. Press accounts of luxury trips, high-priced tickets to sporting events, meals at expensive restaurants, and other gifts suggest that there had been flagrant, if not widespread, violations of our rules, and that these violations had been occurring for some time.

As the columnist and scholar Norman Ornstein has observed, Congress has ''regularly struggled with its constitutional responsibility to police itself, sometimes verging on partisan vendettas—what we called in the 1980s and 1990s 'the criminalization of partisan differences'—but more often erring on the side of doing nothing, or as little as humanly possible, to deal with ethical violations.''

At a time when the public is demanding change, the Senate needs to more aggressively enforce its own rules. We should do this not just by making more public the work that the Senate Ethics Committee currently undertakes, but by addressing the conflict that is inherent in any body that regulates itself. By creating, as this amendment would do, a new office with the capacity to conduct and initiate investigations, and a perspective uncolored by partisan concerns or collegial relationships, I believe we can address this long-standing structural problem.

This amendment strikes a good balance by keeping with the Select Committee on Ethics the final decisions on whether to conduct an investigation, whether a violation has occurred, and whether to refer the matter to the Department of Justice, while adding an independent voice to the process to ensure that the reputation of the institution is not sacrificed for the understandable concern for the reputation of one's friends and colleagues.

The Office of Public Integrity would not only assist in performing existing investigative functions, but would also be charged with the new function of approving or denying requests for travel by Members and staff. The purpose of this pre-clearance is to ensure that the trips serve a legitimate Governmental interest, and are not substantially recreational in nature. I believe that the Office of Public Integrity would be an appropriate entity to conduct these reviews.

I urge the majority and minority leaders to allow an up or down vote on this amendment. The American public is watching.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment offered by Senator LIEBERMAN.

Madam President, there are many organizations that are observing our activities. I think, as I said earlier, we can be pleased at some of the progress we are making. But this would be a seminal vote. This will be an indication that we are really serious, if we are really serious, about making sure that decisions made by the Ethics Committee are untainted by personal relationships or by other factors. I think it is long overdue.

I want to point out again that in the exit polling from the 2006 election there were two major issues that affected the voters' opinion and vote. One, as we all know, was the war in Iraq. The other was the issue of ''corruption in Washington.''

The American public are very dissatisfied with the way Congress conducts its business. I have seen polls in the low twenties and even in the high teens of their approval rating of Congress. They don't think we conduct our business in an honest and straightforward manner, and they believe the special interests have way too much influence in determining both our priorities and the outcome of legislation.

I believe the Lieberman amendment can go a long way toward restoring the very badly tarnished image of the Congress of the United States.

I yield the floor, and 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. VITTER. Madam 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. 9

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise to take a few minutes to urge my Senate colleagues to carefully study and support my amendment to ban spouses of sitting Members of the Senate from lobbying any Member of the Senate or any Senate staff person.

This is a very important debate. It goes to the heart of rebuilding confidence of the American people in our institutions—Senate, House, all of Congress, all of the Federal Government.

As we all know, we have seen scandal after scandal over several years, certainly involving both parties, that has, for obvious and good reason, rocked people's confidence.

At the heart of almost all of these scandals is a very simple, basic issue and that is public officials using their public position to enrich themselves, to enrich their family, and, of course, the public interest being sold down the road.

That is at the heart of this debate, and that concern is at the heart of my amendment. Again, my amendment—we will vote on this later this week—says very simply: No spouse of a sitting Member of the Senate can lobby the Senate, can lobby that Senator, can lobby that Senator's office, can lobby any Senator, can lobby any Senate office, can lobby any Senate committee.

Again, I don't think this is a peripheral issue. I think it goes to the heart of the matter: People using public office to enrich themselves, to enrich their families.

For the same reason, I thought it was important that we prohibit family members from going on the campaign payroll. Unfortunately, that was voted down. I think this is even more in need of strong action because certainly lobbying connections were at the heart of so many of the scandals that got us to this debate.

There are two big problems, two big conflicts we are talking about that this amendment can largely solve. One is for certain lobbyists to have undue influence. That is clearly an issue with regard to lobbying of spouses of sitting Members of the Senate.

The underlying bill would prohibit those spouses from lobbying their spouse Member, that office. That is fine. But clearly, any Senate spouse is going to have an enormous advantage in terms of access and influence to other Senators and other Senate offices. Imagine if a spouse lobbyist walks in the door and his or her spouse happens to be the chair of a committee on which the Member she is lobbying sits. That is a pretty significant power relationship right in the midst of that lobbying. Clearly, there is that real danger of undue influence and access.

There is a second problem too. In my opinion, the second problem is even

bigger than the first, and that is for a special interest, for a monied interest, to have a mechanism to write a big check straight into the family bank account of a sitting Senator, to directly and dramatically increase the income, the personal wealth of a sitting Senator. That absolutely happens whenever you are going to allow spouses of sitting Senators to lobby.

Again, that I think is an even bigger issue and certainly has been front and center in terms of a number of problems and scandals that have come up and reported fully in the media in the last couple of years on both sides of the aisle.

In that regard, I ask unanimous consent that this recent article about the problem, about that very issue in the Washington Post be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 17, 2007]

LAWMAKERS' LOBBYING SPOUSES AVOID HILL REFORMS

(By John Solomon)

When Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D–N.D.) rose to the Senate floor last summer and passionately argued for keeping the federal estate tax, he left one person with an interest in retaining the tax unmentioned.

The multibillion-dollar life-insurance industry, which was fighting to preserve the tax because life insurers have a lucrative business selling policies and annuities to Americans for estate planning, has employed Dorgan's wife as a lobbyist since 1999.

A few months earlier, Sen. Elizabeth Dole (R–N.C.) had pleaded for restraint as she urged colleagues to avoid overreacting to the news that the Bush administration had let a United Arab Emirates company take over operations at six U.S. ports. At the same time, her husband, Robert J. Dole, a former senator and presidential nominee, was registered to lobby for that company and was advising it on how to save the deal from the political firestorm.

At least half a dozen congressional spouses have jobs as registered lobbyists and several more are connected with lobbying firms, but reining in the practice to prevent potential conflicts or the appearance of them has not been a priority among congressional leaders. Even modest proposals such as banning wives and husbands from lobbying their spouses or using their spouses' floor privileges for lobbying have gone nowhere.

Democrats made ethics reform a major issue in last fall's congressional elections, but the ethics package the House approved earlier this month didn't address the issue and neither did the one proposed by Senate Democrats. Last week, however, Sen. David Vitter (R–La.) proposed banning spouses of senators from lobbying any part of the chamber. The lone exception is for spouses who were lobbying at least one year before their husband or wife was elected.

The Senate is scheduled to vote on the legislation as soon as today. Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D–Nev.) called Vitter and said he would support the proposal with one caveat: It should exempt spouses who are already lobbyists.

''As long as it is not retroactive, Senator Reid supports efforts to ban spouses of sitting members from lobbying in the future,'' spokesman Jim Manley said. Vitter said he will not support Reid's proposal. ''I think this goes to one of the fundamental issues in this whole debate and that is officeholders using their office to increase their personal and family income. It doesn't get any more basic than that,'' Vitter said.

Massie Ritsch of the Center for Responsive Politics, a nonpartisan group that studies political donations and ethics in Washington, said that if senators decide that a lobbying ban is necessary, it makes no sense to exempt current spouses.

''If there is a problem here, it is that family members can get access to lawmakers that other people don't. And if they exempt the current spouses, then they are making it all the more exclusive. Those family members will seem all the more special.''

Vitter's legislation does not apply to the House. It also does not address lawmakers' siblings and children, another growth area in lobbying. Vitter said he wanted to make the plan broader but was not assured of a vote, so he scaled it back to Senate spouses.

Elected to the Senate in 2004, Vitter took an initial foray into ethics reform more than a year ago, proposing the spousal lobbying ban as well as the end of large tribal donations like those seen in the Jack Abramoff lobbying scandal. But his plans went nowhere when his own party was in charge.

Vitter had garnered scrutiny during the scandal when it was learned that, as a House member in 2002, he had written a letter opposing a casino for an Indian tribe that rivaled Abramoff's clients. Vitter had taken donations from Abramoff's tribal clients but had refunded the money. He said he always has opposed gambling.

With Democrats in control of Congress and promising broad ethics reform, Vitter tried again. Last week the Senate rejected another of his proposals—one to end the practice of lawmakers hiring relatives and paying them with Senate office, campaign or political action committee money.

Typically, according to their offices, those senators with lobbyist-spouses do not let their spouses lobby them or their staff personally. The rest of the Senate and Congress, however, is usually fair game.

Robert Dole's office said that while he registered to lobby for DP World, he never contacted the Senate and instead focused on giving advice. Nonetheless, his work during the political firestorm over port security helped earn his firm $320,000 in the first half of 2006, records show.

Kimberly Olson Dorgan is registered as a lobbyist for the American Council of Life Insurers and worked on several issues, including the estate tax. She now has moved into an executive job. Barry Piatt, a spokesman for Byron Dorgan, said that the senator long opposed repealing the estate tax, that his position was consistent with that of most Democrats and that his wife's job had no bearing.

Piatt noted that Dorgan once was at odds with his wife's lobby when he supported exempting income under $10 million from the estate tax.

Though the Dorgans built a voluntary wall between them, it doesn't extend to the senator's reelection campaign. His wife's lobbying group gave the senator's campaign $2,000 from its political action committee in 2004. And other life insurers have donated tens of thousands of dollars to Dorgan's campaign, Federal Election Commission records show.

Among the other senators with lobbyist wives are Ted Stevens (R–Alaska) and Kent Conrad (D–N.D.).

Catherine A. Stevens has been a registered lobbyist for the Washington firm of Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw, whose past clients include media giant Bertelsmann AG and the famed King Ranch in Texas, lobbying records show. She did not return calls to her office seeking comment.

Lucy Calautti, Conrad's wife and a former chief of staff to Dorgan, is registered to lobby for Major League Baseball's commissioner's office, which paid her firm at least $360,000 in the first half of 2006, according to the most recent lobbying reports on record with the Senate. She did not return calls to her office seeking comment. Conrad spokesman Chris Thorne said that the senator and his wife have a firm rule prohibiting her from lobbying his Senate office and staff.

On the House side, Abigail Blunt, the wife of House Minority Whip Roy Blunt (R–Mo.), has lobbied for years for Altria Group, the parent company for Kraft Foods and tobacco firm Philip Morris. The couple were married in 2003 and decided about a year ago that Abigail would no longer lobby any part of the House, Blunt's office said yesterday. And Jennifer LaTourette, the wife of Rep. Steven C. LaTourette (R–Ohio), has been registered in recent years to lobby for several interests, including health-care companies and Cleveland's port authority.

Other congressional spouses have ties to lobbying even though they aren't formally registered in Washington. Ray Hutchison, the husband of Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R–Tex.), works at the Vinson & Elkins firm, whose lobbying clients have included corporate giants such as 7-Eleven, Goldman Sachs and Halliburton.

Senate Democratic Whip Richard J. Durbin's wife, Loretta Durbin, runs a lobbying firm called Government Affairs Specialists. But Durbin's office said she limits her lobbying to their home state of Illinois and recuses herself from any federal matters that could affect her husband's work in the Senate.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. VITTER. Certainly.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. It is my understanding, initially, the Senator's amendment had a grandfather clause. Does it now contain that grandfather clause?

Mr. VITTER. No, it does not. I appreciate the question. In developing this amendment, we dealt with a lot of different ideas and a lot of different versions. I mistakenly filed a version with the grandfather clause in it. That was never my intent, in terms of filing an amendment in this Congress and in this debate. As soon as I learned that from my staff, I amended the amendment, and so it does not contain that grandfather clause.

My thinking is very simple. If it is wrong, it is wrong. If it is a conflict, it is a conflict. If it is a problem, it is a problem. And because somebody has been doing it for a few years doesn't right the wrong.

I do have an exception, which is different from a grandfather clause. I bent over backward to try to meet every reasonable argument. The exception says: If the spouse lobbyist was a lobbyist a year or more before the marriage or a year or more before the Member's first election to Congress, that is a bit of a different situation that is allowed.

I can make an argument for even doing away with that exception, but I tried to bend over backward for what I considered any legitimate argument.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, may I ask a second question?

Mr. VITTER. Certainly.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. So anyone who doesn't meet the specific confines of the Senator's bill would be forced to lose their job; is that correct?

Mr. VITTER. No, it is not correct, for the following reason: My amendment, first of all, applies only to Senate spouses lobbying the Senate. It doesn't apply to the House, it doesn't apply to Federal agencies, it doesn't apply to State legislatures. It doesn't apply to all sorts of other things. To be quite honest and direct, I would like to have it apply more broadly to all of Congress, but to make my amendment germane, I have to forgo that.

I think that is a direct answer to the Senator's question.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator.

Mr. SALAZAR addressed the Chair.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I believe I have the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I wish to emphasize what I stated to the distinguished Senator from California. I tried to meet every legitimate argument. I bent over backward with regard to that issue. Specifically, I point out that the exception in my amendment that says, quite simply, if the spouse lobbyist was a lobbyist a year or more prior to the marriage or a year or more prior to the Member's first election to the House or Senate, then that is an exception, and they can continue lobbying.

Every other case is a real problem, a real conflict, and specifically I don't think a grandfather clause that protects folks who are doing it now is appropriate. If it is wrong, it is wrong. If it is a conflict, it is a conflict. If it poses real ethical questions—that is true whether one has been doing it for 10 years or whether one starts tomorrow—I urge all the Senate to reject that grandfather clause.

The message of a grandfather clause is simple: Yes, we are going to get serious about ethics, as long as it doesn't do anything in practice, as long as it doesn't affect our friends.

I don't think that is the right policy. I don't think that is the right message.

I urge all my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to support this amendment. The American people are watching this debate. They have seen the leadup to this debate. They have seen the scandals. They have seen the rhetoric in the campaigns, and they are wondering: Is this going to be real or is this going to be a farce?

We have had some votes, quite frankly, that are leading folks to believe this is a lot of show, a lot of sound and fury with nothing behind it. I hope we can prove those cynics wrong, but I have to admit, I am quickly becoming one of those cynics.

I believe this vote is going to say a lot about how serious we are. If there is a vote on the grandfather clause issue, that is going to say a lot about whether we are going to act when it has a consequence in this body or just act when it doesn't affect anybody in this body as it stands now.

Madam President, I urge all my colleagues to look at the amendment, support the amendment, certainly resist any grandfather clause which would be horrible policy, and send a very simple message to the American people. I look forward to a fuller debate on the issue and a vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

AMENDMENT NO. 71

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam President, I rise today to speak in support of amendment No. 71, which was offered and cosponsored by myself and Senator BEN NELSON from Nebraska. The essence of the amendment we offered last night is to try to make sure that as we move forward with ethics reform in Washington, DC, a spotlight not just be on the Senate or the House of Representatives but that the ethics standards we are moving forward with in this legislation, which will be a hallmark piece of legislation for Washington and for our Nation's Government, that those same kinds of high ethical standards should also apply to the senior executive officials of the executive branch of Government, as well as to the judicial branch of Government.

The essence of our amendment is to say, as we clean up Washington, DC, that we ought not to stop simply by cleaning up the affairs of the Congress; that what we ought to do is adopt a set of ethical standards that will also apply to the executive branch and to the judicial branch of Government.

As we move forward with that principle, what we have tried to do in this amendment is very simple. Let me discuss three important aspects of this legislation.

First, our amendment would apply to the gift and travel ban—which will become the rules of this Senate on passage of this bill—to senior and very senior executive and judicial branch personnel. After passage of this bill, we in the legislative branch will operate under a stringent set of rules which will ban gifts and travel from lobbyists, among other things. Currently, executive branch personnel can, with few exceptions, accept gifts, except from a few so-called prohibited sources. Simply put, there is no reason why lobbyists should be able to give gifts—no matter how small—to senior employees of the executive and judicial branches.

Second, the amendment would ban all executive branch personnel from lobbying their former agency for 1 year after leaving Government service. Currently, the revolving door rules in the executive branch apply only to senior and very senior personnel. That means junior employees of any executive branch agency are permitted to go directly from a Government job to a position of lobbying their former office. That, in my view, is an unethical thing to do. Meanwhile, here in the Senate, all Members and staff are subject to at least some form of a revolving-door rule, and the bill we are debating would strengthen those rules for the Senators as well as for staff. Simply put, there is no reason the executive branch personnel, no matter how junior, should be permitted to lobby their former office immediately upon leaving Government service.

Third, the amendment would require senior and very senior executive branch personnel to disclose to the Office of Government Ethics any negotiation for private employment within 3 business days. The bill we are now debating would require Senators and senior Senate staff to disclose to the Ethics Committee that they are negotiating for private employment within 3 business days. There is no principled reason this rule should not apply equally to senior executive branch employees as well.

This is a narrowly drafted attempt to apply some of the key provisions of this bill to other branches of Government. It is based on both principle and practical concerns. The principle is that ethics rules should apply uniformly across the Government of the United States. The practical concern is that key Government personnel should not accept any gifts from parties seeking action by the Government, that all legislative and executive employees should adhere to minimum revolving-door standards, that senior officials should not negotiate for future employment in secret, and that negotiations should be fully disclosed.

I support Senator NELSON's amendment, and I urge my colleagues in the Senate to accept this amendment as we move forward in an effort to try to clean up Washington, DC. At the end of the day, this is much more than just about dealing with the ethics issues of the Senate and the House of Representatives; this should be an effort from all of us to send a loud and clear signal to the people of America that we are taking ethics seriously and that we are going to bring a new standard of conduct, a new standard of ethics across all the branches of our Nation's Government.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I would like to ask a couple of questions about the Vitter-Inhofe amendment, amendment No. 3. I think it is one thing if the amendment is prospective and doesn't affect people. I think it is another thing when it is retroactive. I believe our side would accept

the amendment if it were, in fact, prospective.

The amendment has a complicating factor in addition to that; that is, there is a prohibition against any official contact with any spouse of a Member who is a registered lobbyist under the Lobbying Disclosure Act. That is not any lobbying contact, it is official contact. Now, what is official contact? Does this mean the spouse, if he or she happens to have been a lobbyist for a substantial period of time, cannot attend the Supreme Court dinner which just took place? That could be interpreted as an official contact. Is it an official contact if the individual calls the scheduler of her husband's or his wife's office and asks for some information on the schedule? I am surprised—and I didn't know this—that this amendment has the words ''official contact.'' You can be sure that even if it said: Well, it is not an official contact, that someone will make the argument: Oh yes, it is an official contact if you attend the Supreme Court dinner with your spouse.

Again, I would repeat, this is retroactive legislation. We know it affects people in this body who have worked, helped support their families. I don't recall another time when we have enacted this kind of legislation.

So it concerns me, and it concerns me if it is overly repressive, such as using the words ''official contact.'' I am puzzled as to why, when the majority leader offered that if it had a grandfather clause, we would accept it, it wasn't taken, unless the intent is essentially to sever people from their ability to have anything to do with this body, whether it is simply as a spouse or as a professional.

So I have some concerns about this amendment, and I wanted to take this opportunity to express them, and hopefully the author will respond.

Mr. VITTER. Will the Senator yield?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I certainly will.

Mr. VITTER. I thank the distinguished Senator from California for those points and questions. Let me respond to each one.

First, I think what you said, literally at the very beginning of your comments, says it all. You said this would be fine if it didn't affect anyone, but it does. This would be window dressing if it didn't affect anyone, if it did not do anything. But, yes, it does. And it should.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Will the Senator yield, please?

Mr. VITTER. I will be happy to, after I finish my comment.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Because I said ''presently employed,'' if I may, through the Chair. To clarify that, I said anybody ''presently employed.'' We know it affects people. We know it would affect people in the future. We also know it affects people presently employed.

Mr. VITTER. Reclaiming my time, the point is, yes, it is a great vote as long as it doesn't affect anyone here, as long as it doesn't affect anyone in the body now, as long as it doesn't affect any spouse.

I disagree. If it is a conflict, it is a conflict. If it is a problem, it is a problem. Having done it in the past doesn't cure the conflict, doesn't cure the problem. I think demanding that a grandfather clause be attached to this is the height of cynicism. We are going to reform things as long as it doesn't affect us. I think that is bad policy and I certainly think it is a very negative message to send to the American people—although it may be a rather clear message about what this debate and exercise is all about.

In terms of the question about official contact, I think that is very clear because it is in the context of the lobbyist disclosure law. It is in the context of lobbyist contact. However, if the Senator continues to believe it is not clear and wants to offer any clarifying language, I would look at that and work with the Senator. I will be happy to work on clarifying language. Obviously, no one wants to prohibit spouses from going to the Supreme Court dinner or anything else. I think that is a relatively—I don't think it is a problem. But even if you think it is one, I believe it is an easy problem to solve.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. If the Senator will yield for a moment.

Mr. VITTER. Certainly.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Through the Chair, on line 5, if you substituted ''lobbying'' for ''official,'' I think that would do it.

Mr. VITTER. I will be happy to look at that and respond to that suggestion. Certainly, if there is any ambiguity there, and I don't think there is, I will be eager to clarify it and work on it.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Senator.

Mr. VITTER. Again, I think this goes to the heart of the matter. I think this grandfather clause issue goes to the heart of the matter. Are we going to do something that ''doesn't affect anybody,'' that doesn't matter in terms of people here and now and make a big show of it or are we going to make a difference and stop practices that the huge majority of the American people think are a real problem?

I hope we are going to do the latter. I hope we are going to be real and substantive and not go through a PR exercise, and I think the American people are watching to find out. I think this, among other votes, will be a clarifying moment.

I thank the Senator for her questions and I look forward to continuing the discussion.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, if I may, I thank the Senator. Perhaps our staffs can get together directly and take a look at this. I appreciate it.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 12:30 p.m. having arrived, the Senate will stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:34 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CLINTON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to proceed as in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO NANCY STETSON

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, one of the best things about the Senate and the character of this place and the opportunity it provides all of us is we are privileged to work with people as our experts on our committees and our aides who, even more than many of us, dedicate decades to this institution and to the causes that bring them to public service.

They do it selflessly, never seeking the headlines but always trying to shape those headlines, making contributions that are most often left in the unwritten history of this institution and of the country.

The fact is, though, as my colleagues know, it is these individuals and their commitment that really writes that history and makes an unbelievable contribution to the country as a whole.

One such person I have had the privilege of working with for the entire time I have been here, for 22-plus years. No one is a more dedicated, harder working, more idealistic, passionate, and effective example of that special kind of public service than Dr. Nancy Stetson of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who is retiring this year after over 25 years of remarkable service—groundbreaking service, really—to the Senate.

As a young and idealistic doctoral student, Nancy first came to Washington to work on her thesis and to ask the question whether a single legislator could make a difference in the shaping of American foreign policy. Her subject was Senator ''Scoop'' Jackson and the long record that he amassed in the Cold War through the legislation that to this day bears his name, the Jackson-Vanik waiver.

Nancy found that on Capitol Hill, despite the Historians' fixation on the rise and fall of the imperial Presidency, one Senator can make a lasting impact on America's role in the world. But it has really been for her role to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and to me personally that I want to pay her tribute today.

She began working for Senator Pell from her beloved home State of Rhode Island and, then, of course, for Chairman BIDEN. I really inherited her in a sense from Senator Pell because when we came into the majority in 1986, Senator Pell was a chairman who believed in delegating responsibility. I was then the chairman of one of the subcommittees that had jurisdiction over the