

not necessarily reflect upon their respective merits. I would hope that the Senator's colleagues would heed his call for support for the underlying legislation, not only, as he indicated, because if a law is right for others it should be right for us. We should also recognize that the motivation for this legislation was not only to impose a sense of equity but also a sense of reality.

Someone once described Washington as being a city of marble surrounded on four sides by reality. That is what has been missing for the most part in terms of the reality of the consequences of what we do. We pass legislation from the very highest of motivations. We are trying to help people who are in need of help. We are trying to improve workplace safety; we are trying to improve the health and well-being of our constituents; we are trying to do many things on behalf of other people. Yet we do not necessarily do so in a way that is reflective enough of the consequences that must be borne by others that we do not have to bear ourselves.

So this is not only an issue of equity. I think it really is motivated principally from an issue of reality—that we will be more aware of the consequences of what we are about to do if we are forced to live under the same rules. So I would urge my colleagues to support the recommendation of the Senator from Ohio that, notwithstanding the rejection of the amendments which were offered, they lend their support to this measure.

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, I appreciate very much the comments of my distinguished colleague from Maine.

Mr. President, I understand that the Senator from Nevada is ready and I think he was awaiting the arrival of the distinguished majority leader, who was to have a colleague with him, on the subject that he will present.

Until the majority leader arrives, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed as in morning business.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Thank you very much.

CALIFORNIA FLOODS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thought it might be in order to give a very brief status report on the condition of the flooding in the State of California. It is a strange and altogether tragic irony that just about 1 year ago southern California was hit by

wildfire and then the shattering Northridge earthquake. The 1-year anniversary of the Northridge earthquake will be this coming Tuesday, January 17.

As we evaluate the recovery and expenditure of nearly \$11 billion of Federal funding that has been committed to disaster relief in that earthquake, record levels of rain are falling in California and have been since late last week, flooding rivers, washing out roads, causing mud slides, knocking out electricity and water supplies, and affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people throughout the State.

So I rise today, Mr. President, to give a brief status report on that record rainfall and flooding.

To begin with, I have been in contact with FEMA Director James Lee Witt, who is currently in California, and my State staff is on alert to provide whatever assistance they can. In addition, Transportation Secretary Peña, Housing Secretary Cisneros, and Federal Highway Administrator Slater are on a 1 o'clock flight today to California to assess what additional Federal assistance will be necessary in the days and weeks ahead.

Although the spirit in my State may be temporarily dampened, I am really confident that Californians will once again show the resilience and the determination that we have shown in the past and that we will overcome this disaster as we have the others. Californians have come together in times of disaster, and we will do so once again.

Last night, at about 11:30 p.m. eastern time, less than an hour after a request from Gov. Pete Wilson, President Clinton declared a Federal disaster for 24 of California's 58 counties. I thank the President on behalf of California for quickly declaring this emergency so individual disaster assistance funds could begin flowing.

FEMA started taking calls for disaster assistance as early as this morning. For those that might be watching C-SPAN, FEMA encourages all disaster victims to call this number, 1-800-462-9029, for information and to register for Federal assistance.

Preliminary estimates of the damage are as follows: At least six people are dead; over 1 million have been affected by power outages up and down the State. Very preliminary damage estimates exceed \$50 million as of now. This will undoubtedly rise as the waters recede and a full assessment of damages is made. Thousands of people have been evacuated from their homes.

According to news reports, California has been hit with 6 months' worth of rain in 10 days. Last night I talked with Dr. Joe Friday, the Director of the National Weather Service, and he stated to me that although there is a brief respite today, heavy rains are apt to continue through the weekend. More than 50 major highways and freeways and hundreds of roads are closed due to flooding. In one 7-hour period yesterday, the California highway patrol

logged 530 accident calls. That is more than five times the normal level, and by early afternoon had dealt with almost 500 disabled vehicles just in southern California alone.

What is clear is that in many areas of the State near-record levels of rain have fallen with devastating consequences. Let me describe some examples of just what the State is facing. In the Russian River area of northern California, the entire business district and hundreds of homes in the community of Guerneville in Sonoma County have been underwater for the last few days. The Russian River has swelled to record flood levels. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Monday's water flow in the Russian River was the highest ever recorded. The word from California this morning is that the river has begun to recede back to normal levels. However, Sonoma County has been without water, and the State is bringing water in. Everybody is being urged to boil their water.

All 2,800 residents of Hamilton City in Glenn County were evacuated as the Sacramento River rose 3 feet above flood stage. People literally are kayaking down the main business street, State Street, in downtown Santa Barbara.

Many of the communities still recovering from last year's earthquake and severe wildfires have been particularly hard hit, such as Malibu and many of the canyons in southern California. Everything that was a river or a creek yesterday is a flood basin today. The Pacific Coast Highway from Malibu to Santa Barbara has been closed due to mud slides.

Pepperdine University and local businesses in the Malibu canyon are closed due to flooding. The Pepperdine campus was used for helicopter evacuations of residents in the surrounding canyon.

Fortunately, but not for lack of practice, the local, State, and Federal responses are timely and effective. The State Office of Emergency Services under the direction of Richard Andrews quickly established a state operations center to coordinate State assistance. The California National Guard has activated 75 trucks, helicopters, boats, and 300 personnel, conducting rescue and evacuation operations in seven counties.

FEMA Director James Lee Witt, already in California, is remaining in the State to coordinate the Federal disaster response. FEMA damage assessment teams have been on the ground since the weekend, though much of this work is impossible until the water finally recedes after the final rainfall. We do not know when that will be. FEMA has been requested by the State not to establish disaster assistance centers. All financial assistance to people will be done by teleregistration, through the number that I gave earlier. I would like to repeat it once again. Anyone who is a victim of the flood and wishes either information or assistance should call 1-800-462-9029. The

system is in place right now and will be taking calls for as long as necessary. Personnel have been deployed from FEMA's Infrastructure, Individual Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Programs to California to begin work with State and local officials.

As I mentioned, Secretaries Cisneros and Peña are on their way now to California to decide what additional assistance might be warranted. I will work closely with my colleague, Senator BOXER; my colleagues in the House; and you, Mr. President, and others in the Senate. Over 30 congressional districts in California have been affected by this disaster, and we, together, will make sure that Federal response is swift, effective, and complete.

My heart goes out to the families that have members who have perished in this, our latest disaster, and to the many thousands of people that have been affected by the rising waters. My message to them is that FEMA will be there until we can get people back in their homes, businesses back on their feet, and lives back in order.

I thank you very much, Mr. President, and I yield the floor.

CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

Mr. GLENN. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President. Are we back in legislative session now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, we are.

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WELLSTONE. 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. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I will take just a few moments because I understand from the Senator from Ohio that we will for a short period go into recess following my statement, is that correct?

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, that is correct. The majority leader said when we were finished now, we will go into recess until 4:30 when he will come to the floor and have a colloquy with Senator BRYAN.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thought that while I was here I would summarize this past week for other Senators, and just as important, for people in the country, action of the Senate on some key political reform agenda items that were again blocked here in the Senate.

The piece of legislation that has been before this body is called the Congressional Accountability Act. There were a number of amendments introduced on

the floor this week that I think spoke to the heart of accountability. Many, many Senators have been talking about reform. I just want to summarize for a moment the record.

There was the Wellstone-Levin-Feingold-Lautenberg lobbyist gift ban. One of the central political reform item agendas, Mr. President—along with lobby registration and real campaign finance reform—and this was tabled on virtually a party-line vote. This was, once again, an amendment that was connected to what all of us have said we are about, which is to end this taking of gifts, expensive meals, and vacation travel from lobbyists and other special interests. I believe the Senator from Michigan, the occupant of the chair, was actually one of the few from his side who voted for this. But with the exception of the Senator from Michigan and a couple of other Senators from the majority, it was almost a straight party-line vote.

There was another amendment, the Wellstone amendment, to restrict political contributions from lobbyists who have lobbied a Member within a year. I think that goes to the heart of this sort of nexus between money and lobbying, and the extent to which people in the country feel left out of the loop of governing. This, I am sad to say, was not just a party vote. There was an overwhelming vote against this, and I really believe we are making a big mistake by not, in a very significant way, reforming this political process and doing something about the mix of money and its influence in politics.

There was an amendment by Senator FORD, from Kentucky, to prohibit the personal use of frequent flier miles by Members of Congress and staffers. While Senate rules already prohibit this, this amendment would have codified the rule for us and extended the rule to House Members.

Senator MCCONNELL's amendment struck language from the Ford amendment that would have applied the prohibition consistently to the House and Senate, allowing House Members to continue the practice of using frequent flier miles for family vacations, expensive meals, and other means of having their lifestyles subsidized indirectly by their official travel, paid for by the taxpayer. So Senator FORD's reform amendment was unsuccessful, voted down in what was largely a party vote.

There was the Exon amendment to require specificity in how we propose to get to a balanced budget and to prohibit outlays in excess of revenues in the year 2002.

Mr. President, what Senator EXON was trying to do was say, let us have some truth in budgeting, let us be accountable, let us be honest and direct with people about the cuts we are going to be making if we pass the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. That amendment was defeated by almost a party-line vote. Now, I opposed that amendment for other reasons, but I do believe that, at

a minimum, Members of Congress ought to make clear the huge cuts that would be required by the balanced budget amendment before we vote on it. By and large, that vote on the Ford amendment was also a party-line vote.

Again, what Senator EXON was trying to say for those who were for the constitutional amendment to balance the budget—I am not—is please be direct and honest with people and let us be clear about how we propose to get there. It was voted down on what was, by and large, a party-line vote.

There was the Kerry amendment to prohibit the personal use of campaign funds. It would have imposed tough new rules to prevent abuses by some Members of Congress in this area, including the leasing of cars for essentially personal use in the Washington area, paying for recreational travel, meals, and the like. Again, this amendment was tabled.

There was another attempt to address the problem of personal use of frequent flier miles by my colleague, the Senator from Ohio, Senator GLENN. The Glenn amendment was to extend to the legislative branch the same frequent flier rules that apply to the executive branch. That was tabled on essentially a party-line vote.

And finally, Mr. President, and I summarize, there was the Wellstone amendment on children. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been saying over and over again, "We are not going to impose cuts that are going to hurt children, that would create more hunger or homelessness among children." This amendment asked Senators to go on record voting for what they have been saying. Believe it or not, that amendment was tabled on virtually a party-line vote.

Mr. President, I just present this summary because somewhere, someplace in the United States of America, people should know that the so-called reformers did not follow through on a great deal of the reform agenda; in fact, they are blocking it. Americans should know that there is much that we can and should and must do to make this process more open, more accountable, more honest. And over and over and over again, on many important amendments, we had virtually straight party-line votes defeating these reform efforts by people who ran for office on a reform agenda.

Mr. President, I know that the majority leader on "Face the Nation" a couple of weeks ago, in talking about the gift ban said something to the effect that: "We're in control of the Congress now, and we're going to set the agenda."

Party control has shifted, and the majority leader is a skillful legislator and a skillful leader. But my question, Mr. President, looking at the past week is: When are we going to get beyond party-line votes? When are we going to get to the merits of amendments if, every time a Senator brings