

of income taxes, a whole host of questions.

I happen to agree with a number of our colleagues on the other side who want to make it tough, for example, to raise taxes. I am one of the Democrats who voted to do that. But this is not the proper bill on which to have a debate about tax policy. This is not the proper vehicle to have a comprehensive discussion about tax reform. This is about tobacco.

I see our friend and colleague, Senator FORD. He and I serve on the Commerce Committee. We produced a bill that came out of committee by 19 to 1 because we stayed focused on the relevant issues. We didn't always agree.

I have enormous respect for Senator FORD. He has done yeoman's work on the question of making sure our farmers get a fair shake. He knows I feel strongly on key issues: for example, making sure that these tobacco companies don't pay for a settlement in this country by targeting youngsters around the globe. But together, and with our colleague, Senator HOLLINGS of South Carolina, we produced what we think is a fair package. There can be further discussion of those issues. But we stayed focused on the question of tobacco. We didn't raise a whole host of other issues that are important to both of us. We stayed focused on the cause of trying to protect children, recognizing that we would have further discussion of that subject here on the floor. But we stayed focused on the topic at hand.

The fight to stop the cigarette industry from marketing to children did not begin this year. But this is the year we have an opportunity to make real progress. I was a Member of the other body and participated in the hearings held by then-Chairman HENRY WAXMAN. The tobacco executives told me under oath that nicotine isn't addictive. The American people didn't believe them. The Surgeon General of the last 20 years didn't believe them. As a result of that hearing, and the documents that have come out over these many years, we have been in a position to make great progress—progress, for example, that lead to that 19-to-1 vote in the Senate Commerce Committee.

So this debate is the culmination of years of work by those who have been trying to promote the cause of better health for the children in our Nation. We are trying to do it in a way that is going to help kids around the world be healthier. For the first time, we are going to say that you have to protect kids in Oregon and in Texas, and across this country. But we are going to get the Government out of the business of trying to help these tobacco companies sell cigarettes overseas to hook kids in Bangkok and Bangladesh.

That is important. But we are up against tremendous lobbying. The tobacco companies have spent millions. Maybe what we need is a "Million Child March" on Washington, DC, with families, with health professionals, to

show that we are not going to be derailed by these lobbyists. These lobbyists are not going to be allowed to derail the cause of public health in this body. We are going to come back again and again and again in the days ahead.

So this issue is focused on what really counts; that is, protecting children. There is not going to be a death by distraction. There is not going to be a precipitous and unfortunate demise for this bill by virtue of so many other issues coming up and being debated on this floor. We are going to stay focused.

Mr. President, I know of the good work that you have done on this issue. We have fought together on a bipartisan basis to try to protect children in our State. I am looking forward to seeing the kind of spirit that you and I have brought to this issue come to this body as a whole to make sure that we stay focused on the issue of protecting children.

I yield my time, Mr. President.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess, subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:39 a.m., recessed, subject to the call of the Chair;

Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BURNS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

NATIONAL TOBACCO POLICY AND YOUTH SMOKING REDUCTION ACT

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now resume consideration of the tobacco legislation, S. 1415, for debate only until the hour of 2 p.m. today.

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

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1415) to reform and restructure the processes by which tobacco products are manufactured, marketed, and distributed, to prevent the use of tobacco products by minors, to redress the adverse health effects of tobacco use, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Gregg/Leahy amendment No. 2433 (to amendment No. 2420), to modify the provisions relating to civil liability for tobacco manufacturers.

Gregg/Leahy amendment No. 2434 (to amendment No. 2433), in the nature of a substitute.

Gramm motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Finance with instructions to report back forthwith, with amendment No. 2436, to modify the provisions relating to civil liability for tobacco manufacturers, and to eliminate the marriage penalty reflected in the standard deduction and to ensure the earned income credit takes into account the elimination of such penalty.

Daschle (for Durbin) amendment No. 2437 (to amendment No. 2436), relating to reductions in underage tobacco usage.

Ford amendment No. 2707 (to amendment No. 2437), to provide assistance for eligible producers experiencing losses of farm income during the 1997 through 2004 crop years.

Mr. GREGG. I make a point of order that a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KERRY. 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. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707, AS MODIFIED

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I send a modification of my amendment that is pending at the desk. The only thing I am doing is changing a section of reference.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The amendment (No. 2707), as modified, is as follows:

At the end of the amendment, insert the following:

SEC. . INAPPLICABILITY OF TITLE XV.

The provisions of title XV shall have no force and effect.

SEC. . ASSISTANCE FOR PRODUCERS EXPERIENCING LOSSES OF FARM INCOME.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, from amounts made available under section 1012(3)(A), the Secretary shall use up to \$250,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2004 to establish a program to indemnify eligible producers that have experienced, or are experiencing, catastrophic losses in farm income during any of the 1997 through 2004 crop years, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) GROSS INCOME AND PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, use gross income and payment limitations established for the Disaster Reserve Assistance Program under section 813 of the Agricultural Act of 1970 (7 U.S.C. 1427a).

(c) EFFECT ON OTHER PAYMENTS.—The amount available in section 1012(3)(A) for tobacco community economic development grants under section 1023 shall be reduced by any amount appropriated under this section. None of the payments made under this section shall limit or alter in any manner the payments authorized under section 1021 of this Act.

Mr. FORD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. KERRY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, let me speak for a moment to the question of where we appear to be, although no final decision I know has been made by leaders.

But it is clear that at some point today, if events flow the way they have been discussed, the majority of the members of the Republican Party are going to try to kill this bill. And they are going to try to kill this bill either through a cloture motion—depending on what decision is made as to when that vote might be able to take place—