

mittee staff, were very cooperative and provided many helpful suggestions.

The Department of Interior Solicitor's office provided good counsel and worked with us through the process. And the people out in the field, the coal companies, who have valid concerns about their existing and future leases to main federal coal, were great to work with. Nothing in this bill should be construed to limit their ability to mine federal coal under valid leases, nor should anything be construed to expand their liabilities to coalbed methane owners covered by the bill. The gas producers and land owners really came together and proposed reasonable solutions to solve the problems. Without their cooperative effort, this bill would not have happened.

So again, my appreciation goes out to all the people who helped us remove the possibility of devastating situation—extensive private property takings, retroactive liabilities, and mountains of combative litigation. On behalf of thousands of Wyomingites, thank you.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ROLE OF THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I want to take this time to recognize the important role and work of the Senate's Subcommittee on Communications this Congress and emphasize the challenges that lie ahead.

The communications world encompasses so many areas that personally touch the lives of practically every person in America—from the telephone to the television to the computer. The ways we interact is a fitting reflection of the fast times in which we live and the constant evolution of technologies. Traditional systems are changing. Options are expanding. Companies continue to shift gears and take the necessary risks to bring fruition of the landmark 1996 Telecommunications Act to the marketplace and to consumers.

Enacting policies to encourage, and not hinder, such activity is Congress' challenge. Mr. President, I believe the members of this subcommittee are ready and willing to embrace that challenge.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to my colleague and friend, Senator CONRAD BURNS of Montana, for his yeoman's work as chairman of the subcommittee during the course of this Congress. His guidance has been instrumental in bringing focus to the many issues that merit attention. His inclusive and enthusiastic approach has engaged all who work with him, and I appreciate that.

Mr. President, many contentious policy areas were considered by the subcommittee during the 105th, and consensus proved elusive. I am confident, though, that the stage has been set for several productive debates in the first

session of the 106th—from Federal Communications Commission reauthorization, to international satellite privatization, to transition to digital, to competition issues, to Internet privacy and content.

Speaking of the Internet, let me take this opportunity to mention my deep admiration for the contributions made by retiring Senator DAN COATS in this area. Although not a member of the Commerce Committee, he has tirelessly advocated against the Internet becoming a dirty book for our children, while responsibly taking into account first amendment concerns. I have the utmost respect for his efforts, and will truly miss his wisdom and his counsel.

Mr. President, I appreciate the contributions of each of my subcommittee colleagues this Congress, and look forward to working with them next year in tackling some tough issues and ushering in a truly new era of communications.

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, one of our country's most important observances is National Bible Week sponsored by the National Bible Association. This year, as in the past, it will be observed by houses of worship and individuals of all faiths during the week in which Thanksgiving Day falls. That will be from Sunday, November 22 through Sunday, November 29.

It is my great and underserved honor to be this year's congressional co-chair of that observance. In that capacity, I would like to recommend to all my colleagues, and to the American people, that, in this season of strife and division we look to National Bible Week as an opportunity to join together in prayerful reflection.

The German poet Heinrich Heine called the Bible "that great medicine chest of humanity," the greatest cure for the worst ills of mankind. And he observed how—during the great fire that destroyed the Second Temple of ancient Israel—the Jewish people rushed to save, not the gold and silver vessels of sacrifice, not the bejeweled breastplate of the High Priest, but their Scriptures. For the Word of God was the greatest treasure they had.

It remains our greatest treasure today. The lessons it teaches, and the morality it commands, are the foundation on which a free people build self-government. In that sense, the Bible is the charter of our liberties. Daniel Webster put it this way: "If we abide by the principles taught by the Bible, our country will go on prospering."

That has never been a partisan sentiment, and neither should it be so today. Two great political rivals of the early twentieth century, both of whom achieved the Presidency and attained world leadership, agreed on this one point.

Teddy Roosevelt said, "A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education." And Wood-

row Wilson, a university president at Princeton before reaching the White House, counseled, "When you have read the Bible, you will know it is the word of God, because you will have found in it the key to your own heart, your own happiness and your own duty."

Here in the Senate, as in the House of Representatives, there are several small Bible study groups. Members of all faiths regularly come together, away from the public spotlight, to learn from one another and seek inspiration from sacred Scripture.

For my part, I find in those sessions both enlightenment and challenge. For any time we read the Bible with an open heart, we may find ourselves falling short, in some way, of the standard it sets for us and the promise it offers us.

In that way, reading the Bible can be like a spiritual work-out. And if, in the process, we feel the spiritual equivalent of a few sore muscles, we can remember the saying, "No pain, no gain." And the gain that Scripture offers lasts a lifetime—and even longer.

For that reason, it is especially appropriate that Thanksgiving Day comes during National Bible Week, for the Bible itself is something for which we should give thanks, on that day and every day.

TITLE BRANDING LEGISLATION

Mr. CAMPBELL. Today I express my appreciation to the majority leader, Senator FORD, Senator GORTON, and Senator MCCAIN for their hard work and efforts on S. 852, the National Salvage Motor Vehicle Consumer Protection Act. I believe S. 852 will deter automobile theft and protect consumers by providing them with notice of severely damaged vehicles. I would like to emphasize one provision contained in the bill. It is my understanding that the process of reducing salvage and nonrepairable vehicles to parts cannot begin before receipt of a salvage title, nonrepairable vehicle certificate, or other appropriate ownership documentation under state law. If a vehicle could be dismantled prior to the receipt of the appropriate ownership documents, then the parts from a severely damaged vehicle could skirt the titling system which this bill has put in place to deter automobile theft. Is my understanding correct?

Mr. LOTT. Yes, that is correct. A vehicle that would qualify as a nonrepairable or as salvage vehicle cannot be taken apart for its parts before appropriate ownership documentation has been received for that vehicle.

Mr. President, I appreciate that the Senator from Colorado has taken the time to address this important issue.

MEDICARE HOME HEALTH FAIR PAYMENT ACT OF 1998

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as we begin to wrap-up the 105th Congress,