

unanimous consent, without anybody on the floor, that I be allowed an additional 10 minutes to speak.

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

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, this is a real pleasure, because one of the problems we have had out here on the floor of the Senate is not enough time to be able to focus on issues that are terribly important, that we really believe ought to be part of this debate and part of the discussion.

As long as I see the Chair, the Senator from Ohio, presiding, I would like to thank him for what I think is really his focus, or at least part of his work, which is the importance of what we do in making sure that, even before kindergarten, we do well by our children.

I would really like to say before the Senate that I hope we will get back soon to a focus on the family issue. I don't think it is all, I say to the Presiding Officer, Government policy. But I do think it is a combination of public sector and private sector and community volunteer work. It should be a marriage made in Heaven, where we really bring people together and we as a nation achieve the following goal. To me, this is the most important goal. I think this should be the central goal of the public policy of the Senate and the House of Representatives. I think this is where the Federal Government can matter, where we can be a real player: It is pre-K.

We ought to make it our goal that every child prekindergarten—she knows the alphabet, he knows colors and shapes and sizes; she knows how to spell her name; he knows his telephone number; and each and every one of them has been read to live; and each and every one of the children in our country comes to kindergarten and has that readiness to learn—they have, I say to the Presiding Officer, that spark of learning that he saw as Governor when he visited elementary school; they have that.

There are just too many children who, by kindergarten, are way behind, and they fall further behind, and then they run into difficulty.

I just want to say I really am disappointed that, in spite of all the studies, in spite of all the reports, in spite of a White House conference, in spite of all of the media coverage—and to a certain extent there is a part of me with some anger that says maybe in spite of the hype—that we have not centered our attention on what it is we could do here in the Senate and in the House of Representatives to enrich the lives of children in our country, to make sure that somehow we can renew our national vow of equal opportunity for every child. From my point of view, I think there is probably no more important focus.

If I were to think about the kind of issues we talk about all the time—solvency for Social Security; where are we going to be as a nation in 1050? Are we

going to have a productive, high-moral, skilled workforce? What about Medicare expenses? How do we reduce violence in our communities, violence in homes, violence in schools, violence out in the neighborhood?—each and every time, I make the argument, the most important thing we could do would be to make an investment in the health and skills and intellect and character of our children. To me, that would start with pre-K.

The tragedy of it all—it is a tragedy because we are talking about people's lives—is we have not focused on that agenda at all. We don't even have but about 50 percent of the kids who qualify for Head Start receiving assistance; and, if it is early Head Start, pre-3-year-olds. I think it is naive. It is just a couple of percentage points. I don't think it is even 10 percent. If you move beyond low-income and you look at working families, we are lucky if 20 percent of the families that could use some assistance, some investment that would help them find good child care for their children, get any assistance at all. And then, if you move beyond that and you talk about the wages of child care workers, who do the most important work, it is deplorable the kind of wages we pay.

On the floor of the Senate, I argue that this ought to be our priority. I argue that it doesn't—it cannot make us comfortable that at the same time the economy is humming along, we have about one out of every four children under the age of three growing up poor, and about one out of every two children of color under the age of three growing up poor in our country. We ought to make that a big part of our agenda—children's education, health care coverage, patient protection rights, universal health care coverage. Finally, I will finish by going back to what Senator FEINGOLD said.

I will make sure he is not lonely and out here alone. I will help him call that bankroll, because we ought to put reform right at the top of our agenda.

We ought to talk about the mix of money and politics. We ought to talk about the ways in which big money dominates politics. We ought to understand the fact that the reason people have become disillusioned with politics is not because they don't care about the issues that are important to their lives. People care deeply and desperately about being able to earn a decent living, giving their children the care they deserve and need, about livable communities, and about being able to do well by their kids. People care about all those issues and more. They care deeply and desperately.

However, they also believe that their concerns are of little concern in the Nation's Capitol, where politics is so dominated by the big money, by the investors, by the givers, by the heavy hitters. They believe if you pay, you play; and if you don't pay, you don't play.

We ought to make reform and the way money has turned elections into

auctions and severely undercutting representative democracy, where each and every man and woman should count as one and no more than one—that is not the case—we ought to make that the central issue.

I heard Senators FEINGOLD, DURBIN, BOXER, KENNEDY and Senator DASCHLE speaking. We intend to bring these issues to the floor, along with one other issue that is near and dear to my heart: That is what has now become an economic tragedy—family farmers are being driven off the land. When will they get a fair price? When will they have a fair and open market? When do we take action against the conglomerates that basically dominate the market? When do we take antitrust action?

I heard my colleague talking about Senator LaFollette. When do we take on the economic interests? When will we be there on the side of children, on the side of education, on the side of decent health care, on the side of reform, on the side of working people, on the side of producers?

We ought to be there. All these issues are interrelated. These are the issues that we will insist be part of the agenda of this Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The Senator from Missouri.

SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE'S E-COMMERCE FORUM

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, over the past several weeks, much of the discussion and debate in the Senate has focused on high technology and its impact on our everyday lives, particularly with regard to its pivotal role in our economy. We heard about the potential problems related to Y2K computer failures and the need to guard against unreasonable liability in the event that Main Street small businesses, through no fault of their own, become the targets of frivolous lawsuits. In short, we have been preoccupied with the dawn of the 21st century and what we can do to help sustain the robust economic growth that has been fueled by as many remarkable breakthroughs in computer technologies and computer-related services as we could possibly imagine.

Last Thursday, a new reality dawned when I saw a copy of a study on electronic commerce, or e-commerce as business conducted over the Internet is known. Many Members got a jolt from the story entitled "Net's Economic Impact Zooms." A study shows \$301 billion was generated in revenue in 1998, and it produced 1.2 million jobs. The findings were reported in the USA Today and were drawn from a study conducted by the Center for Research and Electronic Commerce at the University of Texas and Cisco Systems.

Frankly, I, too, was shocked but in good company because the figures exceeded the wildest expectations of the experts. To add a little more perspective from that study, consider that

from 1995 to 1998 the new Internet economy grew 174 percent, compared to the 3.8 percent growth in the world economy as a whole. The Internet economy alone ranked among the top 20 economies worldwide. More importantly, this awe-inspiring growth, packed into just a few short years, stands almost toe to toe with the economic horsepower generated by the Industrial Revolution.

The onslaught of e-commerce and the Internet puts us in the same position as the snail who was run over by a turtle. When interviewed about it, he said: It all happened so fast I never saw it coming.

We are working hard to see if we can work with small businesses to help them see it coming. E-commerce is leading a new business revolution, from Wall Street to Main Street. In my view, there simply is no more potent force at work in the economy with the equal potential to propel nearly every business into the 21st century.

As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business, it is my pleasure to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take care of and to be concerned about whether small, independent, family-owned, and home-based businesses are adequately prepared to be full partners in the remarkable growth potential that the Internet economy holds.

Some folks may assume that the rapid development of new technologies has given Main Street America the tools to compete more effectively, but the unanswered question is whether the technologies readily available to small businesses are truly up to the challenge.

Yesterday, in the Senate Committee on Small Business, we held a forum entitled "e-commerce: Barriers and Opportunities for Small Business." We had a blue-chip panel of experts in high-tech computer and software companies and business leaders representing over 20 trade groups to identify and target barriers keeping Main Street businesses from expanding into e-commerce.

We were joined by several of the companies that are leading the charge in pushing back the rise of the Internet economy, including an Internet service provider from my home State of Missouri, Primary Network of St. Louis.

It was an exciting and informative session considering the potential growth e-commerce will undoubtedly spark for many years to come. One of the participating companies, CyberCash, unveiled new research specifically for yesterday's forum projecting e-commerce business will generate another million jobs over the next 2 years. Those are conservative estimates.

Another study from the firm, Cyber Dialogue, shows that many small businesses are already taking advantage of e-commerce-based markets. That study says over 427,000 small businesses added web sites and sold \$19 billion worth of

products and services over the Internet in the last 12 months, a 67-percent increase since early 1998.

Unfortunately, not all the news was good. According to the American City Business Journals and the Network of City Business Journals, only 10 percent of small businesses have a web site today and only 32 percent have access to the Internet. That suggests both a disconnect and, at the same time, an incredible opportunity for Main Street America and for the suppliers of the equipment and services.

What is more, we were reminded that for many small businesses you have to be prepared to deal with a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week business. Some small businesses have difficulty raising the capital and acquiring the knowledge to survive in such a dynamic business area. Research has shown that even major companies have been slow to realize the potential, and many are now working hard to regain market shares they lost.

Today, thanks to the cutting-edge expertise and the information provided at yesterday's forum, we are a little wiser about the Internet economy. We know that e-commerce can be economic TNT. I think Congress has a duty to make sure that as many independent, family-owned and home-based businesses as possible are not at risk of being left behind in this worldwide business revolution.

I am deeply grateful to the occupant of the Chair. His subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations has approved a \$1 million earmark we asked for to allow the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy to begin a study of the potential of e-commerce for small business. We are going to ask the Office of Advocacy to develop a web site to help small businesses who want to do business with the Federal Government.

Make no mistake, the Internet economy is a train that has already left the station and it is picking up speed by the minute. I look forward to working with my colleagues, both in the committee and in this broader body, to help Main Street America climb on board.

I look forward to pursuing this effort. We are outlining just a few steps we will take on the Senate Committee on Small Business. We welcome ideas, participation and suggestions from other colleagues. We invite all Members of the Senate to join in making sure that the smallest businesses in the United States have access to this tremendous engine of economic growth.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

MR. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I compliment the Senator from Missouri for his excellent work on the Small Business Committee in a very important area—the dramatic growth in

electronic commerce and the ability of small businesses to participate in that. We hear so much about the family farm and the small business community being in jeopardy. As we transition in this economy, to have a chairman of the Small Business Committee who is on top of that and working to integrate the advances in electronic commerce with our small business community, and to make those advances available to them is very important. I congratulate him on that, and Senator MACK and Senator BENNETT of the Joint Economic Committee for a series of hearings this week in the area of technology and its impact and continued potential impact on our country and on our economy and the world economy.

These are the things, frankly, we do not do enough of around here, looking at the future to see how we can adjust our public policy to alleviate not just what the problems are or what the problems were that have been with us but how, through innovation, we can form the future to alleviate those problems.

So I am very pleased we are focusing in on the future as opposed to just dealing with the current important problems; not looking through the rear-view mirror instead of looking in front at the opportunities ahead us.

THE ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS BILL

MR. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise to thank the chairman of the Energy and Water Subcommittee on Appropriations, Senator DOMENICI, for agreeing to an amendment I offered to restore \$25 million of money for the Lackawanna River levee raising project in Lackawanna County, near Scranton, PA. That is a critical project to the people in Greenridge and the Albright Avenue sections of Scranton, who have suffered immeasurable loss in prior floods, which is a chronic problem in the Lackawanna River area. All of Lackawanna and the counties in northeastern Pennsylvania have had terrible problems with flooding. This is a critical project and one I have to commend Congressman Joseph McDade for his work, before he left here, in getting that money.

I just cannot tell you how much I appreciate Senator DOMENICI's willingness to restore that money into this bill so we can tell the people up in Scranton that money will be there, that money is there to raise the levee, to prevent the damage that could be caused by future high waters on the Lackawanna River.

I know it was a very difficult thing for Senator DOMENICI to do. I again want to tell him how much I appreciate his willingness to do that. I know Senator SPECTER was on the floor here a couple of days ago expressing a similar concern, so I think I can speak for Senator SPECTER. We are both very grateful the Senator has agreed to restore that money so we can tell the people