

amendments to the Bankruptcy Reform Act and then proceed to a vote on final passage.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, enough is enough. Hard-working American people are being denied common-sense legislation that they overwhelmingly support, because some on the Democratic side are insisting on votes relating to the politically charged issues of abortions and guns. At some point, I would hope that this will stop, and we can move ahead with the people's agenda, instead of trying to win political points.

We have been on the bankruptcy bill for two weeks now. The Democrats demanded the ability to have votes on other politically motivated, non-relevant issues. We debated and had a vote on minimum wage. We have agreed to or voted on 31 Democrat amendments. These are amendments in addition to the Grassley-Torricelli package amendment which included numerous other provisions insisted upon by the Democrats.

This is a fair, bipartisan bill, drafted jointly by Senators GRASSLEY, TORRICELLI, BIDEN and SESSIONS. This legislation was developed in a fair and inclusive manner. With the more than 31 amendments, plus additional amendments jointly developed by Republicans and Democrats, such as the Grassley-Torricelli healthcare amendment, the Hatch-Torricelli domestic and child support amendment, the Hatch-Dodd amendment on protecting educational savings accounts, among many others, this is a much improved bill that provides unprecedented consumer protections, while preserving the bankruptcy system for those who truly need it. What also is included in this bill are unprecedented consumer disclosures that are not even bankruptcy related, but are banking law amendments which Senators TORRICELLI and GRASSLEY have taken the leadership to develop, and I commend them for that.

Mr. President, throughout the process of consideration of this bill, at both the drafting stage, at the Committee level, and here on the floor, we have worked hard to address any concerns any member has with the bill. Senators GRASSLEY, LOTT and I have been more than patient and cooperative. It is apparent, however, that efforts were underway to defeat this important legislation this year by insisting on extraneous political agenda items, regardless of all the progress we made.

We are open to further debate. But this bill, which the Minority had said would only take two days to complete, was on the floor for two weeks. They did not agree to a time limit for debate, but it is now clear why that was.

I hope we can get the cooperation of the Minority to drop their remaining politically-motivated items and pass legislation early next year that provides meaningful and much-needed reform to the bankruptcy system. Ramp-

ant bankruptcy filings are a big problem, and last year over 1.4 million Americans filed for bankruptcy. In the same year, about \$45 billion in consumer debt was erased in personal bankruptcies. Under current law, families who do not file for bankruptcy are unfairly having to subsidize those who do. This is our opportunity to do something about it. I would hope that my colleagues would take the time over these next few months and consider the desires of the American public. Let's do what is right and pass this important legislation early next year. Thank you.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, let me observe one of the problems we had in not being able to complete it even this week. While the sponsors of some of the amendments had indicated—or maybe all the amendments—indicated a willingness to have limited time agreements, we had, I know, at least a couple of Senators on this side who were not willing to agree to limit the time, therefore possibly tying up half a day or a day one a couple of these amendments.

We may still be able to work out something where we could have a short time agreed to on both sides and get a vote after the first of the year. But you reach a point, in the final days of a session, where motions are such that you just cannot get that kind of agreement.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the second session of the 106th Congress will convene, then, at 12 noon on Monday, January 24. We do not yet have absolute certainty that there will be a State of the Union Address the next night, although it is preliminary indicated. I believe that is the date we would expect to have a State of the Union Address; that is, Tuesday, the 25th. That could be postponed upon a request from the White House, but we will need to be back and in business in order to be here for that date.

So there will be a need for a live quorum to establish the beginning of the second session on Monday. A period of morning business will commence for the remainder of that day. And this 12 noon cloture vote on Tuesday, January 25, would be the first vote of the second session of the 106th Congress.

Again, I thank my colleagues for their continued cooperation and wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Let me say, too, we have a number of bills that are in conference now. I had an opportunity to discuss the schedule for next year, or some of the bills for next year, with the President. We have a number of bills that are in a position where we could get early agreement out of conference, including the trade bill on which we worked so hard. We spent 2 weeks getting that out for Africa and CBI. We could have maybe even done it this week but we had so many things we were working on we could not get that completed.

We have the FAA reauthorization bill that good work has been done on, and a series of bills, including the juvenile justice bill, which we hope we can get early in the session next year. So we will continue to work on that.

I understand we are about ready to do a series of energy bills.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we have cleared a number of nominations on the Executive Calendar. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on the Executive Calendar: Nos. 228, 273, 292, 326, 327, 329, 331, 332, 333, 366, 377, 394, 404, 405, 406, and all nominations in the Coast Guard on the Secretary's desk.

I further ask consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nominations, and the Senate proceed to their consideration, en bloc: Magdalena Jacobsen, Francis Duggan, Ernest DuBester, and John Truesdale.

I further ask consent that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session, and that the Senator from Vermont be notified that Judge Linn is in this list for confirmation.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Ivan Itkin, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, Department of Energy.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Neal S. Wolin, of Illinois, to be General Counsel for the Department of the Treasury.

THE JUDICIARY

Richard Linn, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit.

UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

Stephen Hadley, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2003.

Zalmay Khalilzad, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2001.