

What this bill is about is expanding the support network available to our teachers; support for people in other professions seeking a second career as a teacher; support for teachers seeking to improve subject knowledge or classroom skills; support for teachers seeking new ways to teach math or science or history; and finally, support for new teachers from experienced teachers.

In short, with this bill, we provide the kinds of resources that enable the teaching profession to build upon its commitment to teaching excellence. Mr. President, as we debate the merits of the Educational Opportunities Act, the bottom line, I believe, is that we need to get back to basics: good teachers, safe schools. That is what this bill is about—good teachers, safe schools. Parents will not have peace of mind unless they know their children's teachers are qualified to teach, that they are good teachers, and that their children's schools provide safe learning environments. It is that simple. That is what parents expect.

Today, I have talked about teaching and what this bill does to assist the teaching profession. Tomorrow, I hope to have the opportunity to talk about the second component of this bill which is safe schools. Good teachers, safe schools. We need to get back to the basics, and that is what this bill does.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. GORTON pertaining to the introduction of S. 2464 and S. 2466 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the unfinished business.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 3 proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to protect the rights of crime victims.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I remind my colleagues of the status now of business on the Senate floor. It has been a little confusing, I know, particularly for those who might be watching who aren't familiar with Senate procedures. But sometimes we take something up and then lay it aside, take something else up, and then go back to the original matter, and so on. That is what we have been doing.

Yesterday, you will recall that we began the debate on S.J. Res. 3, which is an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would provide rights to victims of violent crime. Senator FEINSTEIN of California and I are the primary sponsors of that resolution.

At the end of yesterday, we went to other matters. We are now going to resume debate on the motion to proceed to this resolution.

The Senate procedure is that we first have to decide to proceed, and then we can proceed. So later on this afternoon, hopefully, the Senate will vote to proceed to formal consideration of this constitutional amendment. Technically, for a while this afternoon we are going to be debating on whether or not we should proceed.

I am hopeful our colleagues will agree, whether they support the amendment or not, that they should permit us to proceed to make our case so they can evaluate it and decide at the end of that period whether or not they want to support a constitutional amendment.

I think it is a little difficult, given the fact that there hasn't been a great deal of information, for people who are not on the Judiciary Committee to decide what their position is on this until they have heard arguments.

Yesterday afternoon, Senator LEAHY primarily, but several other members of the Democratic side and one Republican, came to the floor and discussed at length, I think for at least 3, maybe 4 hours, reasons why they thought that constitutional amendment should not be adopted. Certainly there are legitimate arguments that can be adduced on both sides of this proposition.

But I would like to begin today by explaining a little bit why we believe that it is important, first, to take the amendment up, and, second, why we believe, if we do take it up, it should be supported by our colleagues.

Senator FEINSTEIN will be here shortly, and she will begin her presentation by discussing a case, the Oklahoma City bombing case, that in some sense is a metaphor for this issue generally, because in the Oklahoma City bombing case victims were denied their rights. Families of people who were killed were not permitted to sit through the trial. They were given a choice over a lunch break during the trial either to remain in the courtroom or to leave if they wanted to be present at the time of the sentencing and to say something to the judge at that time. There was enough confusion about the matter that many of them gave up their right

to sit in the courtroom in order to be able to exercise their right to speak to the judge at the time of the sentencing.

Congress was so exercised about that it actually passed a law—it was specifically directed to the Oklahoma City bombing case but it pertained to other similar cases—so that victims have the right to be in courtroom, and they shouldn't have to make a choice between the trial and sentencing. They should be able to appear at both.

Senator FEINSTEIN will discuss in a moment the details of how that case proceeded and why it stands for the proposition that we need a Federal constitutional amendment.

The bottom line is that even the Federal Government passed a statute designed to pertain to this exact case which was insufficient to assure that those people could exercise what we believe is a fundamental right to sit through that trial. They were denied that right.

What is worse, because the case was taken up on appeal, and because the U.S. Constitution clearly trumps any Federal statute, or any State statute, or State constitutional provision, it wasn't possible to argue that this Federal statute trumped the defendants' rights if those were bases for the rights asserted.

So you have at least seven States, or thereabouts, in the Tenth Circuit that are now bound by a precedent that says this Federal statute doesn't work, to let you sit in the courtroom during the trial. That has to be changed. There is only one way to change it. That is with a Federal constitutional amendment that says to the courts, from now on, these are fundamental rights and courts must consider these rights.

As Senator FEINSTEIN will point out, supporters of this amendment include a wide variety of people who had family and friends involved in the Oklahoma City bombing case. One is Marsha Kight, whose daughter was killed. Marsha has been a strong supporter of the victims' rights amendment because she had to sit through all that. That is what Senator FEINSTEIN will be talking about.

We listened to arguments yesterday from Senator LEAHY and others about the amendment. I understand they wish to talk this afternoon. I will be paying attention to what they have to say and try to respond as best I can. The arguments fall into two or three general categories. One notion they presented is that this is a complicated amendment, it is too long—even longer than the Bill of Rights. It is not longer than the Bill of Rights. We have counted the words. I will have my staff tell Members exactly how many words are in the Bill of Rights and how many words are in this amendment.

The point is, to find defendants' rights, one has to look all over the Constitution. We have amended the Constitution several times to give people who are accused of crime different rights. If you added up all rights of the