

high interest notes first, negotiate with creditors, set up a payment plan, get the whole family in—if there is a drug problem, gain treatment; if there is a mental health problem, get treatment. Gamblers Anonymous can be used for people who have these problems. A lot of these things are driving bankruptcy.

None of that is occurring in bankruptcy court. Lawyers come in, they claim a \$1,000 fee, or \$2,000, or whatever, and their secretaries fill out the forms. They don't even meet the client until they get to court. The judge declares all their debts wiped out, and they walk out of court. That is not helping treat the root cause. But credit counseling does. It says: We respect you, American men and women. We want to help you get your financial house in order, and if you can avoid bankruptcy, we will show you how and help you do that. That is a good step in the right direction.

There are a lot of other things in this bankruptcy bill that improve the law. It has not been changed in over 25 years. We have new experience with the law. We have seen a host of abuses of the law, loopholes through which people are driving trucks. We closed those loopholes.

For the most part, it has been overwhelmingly received by everybody in this body. Over 90 Senators in this Senate have voted for it, Democrats and Republicans. The White House has approved all of these.

We have a problem with bankruptcy. We can do better. This bill is fair. It raises protections for women and children far above anything before.

Before, lawyers and other debts were paid before child support. In this bill, alimony and child support are raised to the highest level. The first money paid goes to pay child support. That is a big, positive change. By killing this bill, that will not happen. The old rules will be in effect and children and women will not get that preferential treatment.

We can do better. This is a good bill. I think the President will reconsider. He has been involved in this process for well over 3 years, as we have been wrestling with it, having hearings and debates on this floor and in the House. To say this is sneaking the bill in is really unbelievable. It has been a source of regular debate and bipartisan agreement, and now we get to the very last of this session and see an effort to derail it over this odd idea that out of all the activities in America, if you get sued by an abortion clinic, you cannot file for bankruptcy.

One of the suggestions I made and others have made is, what about a union group that tears down a business? What about a group of environmental activists that tears up and protests and illegally does business? Do they get to claim bankruptcy against their debts, but not those who go to an abortion clinic because they are religious, I suppose?

Why should we have such a double standard, a political law in bankruptcy? That is a political act, not something that ought to be in the bankruptcy court of America.

I said if you either take it out or draw it broadly and it covers similar acts by other groups, then I will sup-

port it, but I am not going to vote for a law that simply targets one group that one Senator does not like. What is right about that? How is that good law? Some Senators and the President do not like abortion protesters. I guess he thinks they are too religious, so they do not get to claim bankruptcy, but everybody else does. People who put metal spikes in trees that injure people in the forest business, I guess they do not count.

That is where we are on this. That is such an infinitesimal problem which we can overcome, unless the real agenda is to see bankruptcy does not pass. I hope that is not so. We have gone too far. We have worked too hard. We have a bill that has bipartisan support. I am hopeful yet that the President will sign it, and it will be good for America.

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

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

RECESS UNTIL 2 P.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:04 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m., Tuesday, October 31, 2000, at 2 p.m.