The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Majority Leader DASCHLE was asked earlier today, on several occasions by Senator BYRD and Senator STEVENS, if he would bring to the floor a unanimous consent request that there be a time set on the supplemental appropriations bill that is now with the Appropriations Committee that would set a time certain for filing of amendments on this most important legislation.

Such a request has been cleared by Senator DASCHLE and the majority, but objection has been raised by the minority. So the request by Senators BYRD and STEVENS cannot be met tonight. Hopefully, this request will be cleared by the minority tomorrow so that there can be a time certain set for the amendments on this, as I said, most important piece of legislation, the supplemental appropriations bill.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

OFFSHORE OIL

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to take a moment while the leadership of the Senate is, at this very moment, deciding which course the rest of the day will take with regard to this important legislation, the Patients' Bill of Rights. While we have a moment in which we might reflect on other items, I want to draw to the attention of the Senate the considerable concern of 16 million Floridians that the Bush administration is trying to drill for oil and gas off the shores of the State of Florida.

It is most instructive, if one looks at a map of the Gulf of Mexico, where colored in on the gulf waters are the active drilling leases. One will see clearly that, from the central Gulf of Mexico all the way to the western Gulf of Mexico, almost all of the waters of the gulf are shaded in, indicating active oil and gas drilling leases. Indeed, there is a reason for that. It is because the reserves were there, the oil and gas deposits are there, the future reserves are expected to be there. As a matter of fact, I believe it is 80 percent of all economically recoverable, undiscovered gas reserves on the Outer Continental Shelf—which not only includes the gulf but also the Atlantic and Pacitic—80 percent of the Nation's known, recoverable gas reserves in the central and western gulf and 60 percent of the future recoverable oil reserves are in that area too. They are no in the area off the State of Florida.

The State of Florida has consistently taken the position that we should not have oil and gas drilling because of the high cost and potential damage to our environment and to our economy. One of our primary industries is the tourism industry, which so often is dependent upon those pure, sugary white beaches being unspoiled so millions of visitors who come to Florida to enjoy the sunshine and the waters and the beaches can do so without having to worry about having oil spread across the beach.

I can tell you that 16 million Floridians, in unison, do not want oil lapping up on our beaches. The cost to our environment and the cost to our economy would be simply too high.

Why, you would ask, other than that the oil and gas reserves are in the central and western gulf, is there not any drilling off the coast of Florida? It goes back to the early 1980s, under the Reagan administration and a Secretary of the Interior, James Watt. He offered tracts for lease from as far north as Cape Hatteras, NC, in the Atlantic, south all the way as far as Fort Pierce, FL.

I had the privilege of being a Member of the House of Representatives at the time. So I went to work, knowing the people of my congressional district, in the early 1980s, didn't want oil lapping up onto their beaches. We were able to persuade the appropriations subcommittee on the Department of the Interior appropriations bill to insert language that said no money appropriated under this act shall be used for offering for lease tracts such and such, and then listed the tracts all the way from North Carolina south to Fort Pierce, FL. And we prevailed in the appropriations.

The administration left Floridians alone on offshore oil drilling for a couple of years but came back under a new Secretary of the Interior and tried again. This time it was harder to stop. This time it escalated all the way to the full House Appropriations Committee. But we finally prevailed, interestingly, not on the threat to the economy or to the environment of Florida, and indeed the United States eastern coastline, but prevailed by getting NASA and the Defense Department to own up to the fact that you cannot have oil rigs down there in the footprint of where you are dropping solid rocket boosters off the space shuttle and where you are dropping first stages off the expendable booster rockets that are being launched out of the Cape Canaveral Air Force station. And we have not been bothered since the early 1980s, in Florida, about offshore oil drilling—until now.

The bush administration is pressing a 6-million-acre lease off the northwest coast of Florida in a strange configuration called lease-sale 181, of which the bulk of the 6 million acres is 100 miles offshore but a stovepipe runs northward to within about 20 miles of the Alabama coastline, which is about 20 miles, then, from the white sands of Perdido Key, State of Florida.

In a meeting of the Vice President with a Florida congressional members delegation, the Vice President suggested a compromise, which was to knock off that stovepipe coming off the bulk of the 6 million acres. That is no compromise. That is unacceptable because that is still oil drilling off the State of Florida where the future reserves are shown to be not as abundant. The tradeoff to 16 million Floridians is simply not worth what potentially could be discovered in oil and gas—the despoiling of our environment and the killing of our economy.

Thus, it was such welcome news when we learned last week that the other side of the Capitol, the House of Representatives, added to the Interior appropriations bill an amendment that would prohibit such drilling. The vehicle was the Interior appropriations bill. It prohibits it for only 6 months. It will be my intention, and certainly the intention of my wonderful colleague, the distinguished senior Senator from the State of Florida, Mr. GRAHAM, that we in the future will offer amendments either to the Interior appropriations bill, to bring it in conformity with the House-passed bill, or more likely amendments that would cause a prohibition of lease-sale 181 as well as offering similar amendments to the authorizing bill that will come out of Chairman BINGAMAN's committee.

I want our colleagues to be clear. This is an issue of enormous magnitude to 16 million Floridians. It happens to be of enormous magnitude to New Jersey, the State of the Senator who sits as Presiding Officer, as well as all the States in New England which value so much the pristine waters and the waters particularly as you get on north of New Hampshire and Maine—those waters that produce such delicacies as the Maine lobsters. This is a matter of grave concern to many of us.

It is time to draw the line in the sand—hopefully, not a line that will be washed over by oil on our beaches' sands but, rather, a line that will indicate the unanimity of 16 million Floridians, joined by their sister States along the eastern seaboard, of opposition to offshore oil drilling.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The