

Mr. REID. Will the Senator from West Virginia yield for a comment?

Mr. BYRD. Absolutely; gladly.

Mr. REID. As directed by the two managers of this bill, we have asked both Cloakrooms to clear their request: that there be a filing of amendments by 4 o'clock today, which gives people ample time, many hours. It was announced even prior to the break that the Interior bill would be the first bill brought up, and we even indicated when it would be brought up. So I hope we can get this cleared right away.

I say to my friend, the junior Senator from Montana, who has done such a good job in getting this bill to this point, the holdup now is on that side. Maybe if we go into a quorum call Senator BURNS will be gracious enough to see if he can move this along. Until that happens, my experience is this bill is in a flounder.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the distinguished whip.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, it is my hope that we can do this by 4 o'clock this afternoon. There is no need for us to dillydally around here when we have other things to do. I only have one thing I have to do at 2 o'clock this afternoon. I have to introduce a couple of judges who have been nominated to the Montana district court system. By the time I get that done, 4 o'clock should be our cutoff.

We should be talking about amendments right now. There is no reason why we cannot move this bill to final conclusion tomorrow.

Mr. REID. I believe the Senator from West Virginia still has the floor, if I can make another comment.

Mr. BYRD. Surely.

Mr. REID. It is my thought, if the two managers agree, that at 12:30 p.m., if there is still a problem with hotlining, a unanimous consent request be made and if anybody objects to it, they are going to have to come here in person to object to it. That is my suggestion. On a bill as important as this, we need to have the Senators, not the staff lurking in some of these rooms around the Capitol complex making objections for their Senators.

After we go into a quorum call, upon consulting with the two managers, I make the suggestion that perhaps that is what we should do.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Nevada, the majority whip, for his suggestion. I like it. We have just heard Senator BURNS voice his opinion.

Mr. BURNS. We will do everything we can to get that taken care of. We do not want to close anybody out either, understanding the sensitivity of that. I believe we have made a reasonable request. I thank the chairman.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. 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

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, there being no Senators seeking recognition and having discussed the following request with the distinguished majority whip and the distinguished manager on the other side of the aisle, it appears it might be best if the Senate stood in recess until 12:15 p.m., during which time some work may be done hopefully that will speed up the entire process to some extent.

I, therefore, ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until the hour of 12:15 p.m. today.

There being no objection, at 11:39 a.m., the Senate recessed until 12:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. STABENOW).

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. With the consent of Senator BYRD, I ask unanimous consent all first-degree amendments to H.R. 2217, the Interior appropriations bill, be filed at the desk by 4 p.m. today, Wednesday, July 11.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 880

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I send to the desk an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from West Virginia [Mr. BYRD] proposes an amendment numbered 880.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 157, line 7, insert "Protection" after the word "Park".

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be temporarily laid aside.

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

The Senator from Illinois.

AMENDMENT NO. 879

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN], for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. DAYTON, proposes an amendment numbered 879.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds for the conduct of preleasing, leasing, and related activities within national monuments established under the Act of June 8, 1906)

On page 194, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

SEC. 1 . PRELEASING, LEASING, AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.

None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to conduct any preleasing, leasing, or other related activity under the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) or the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) within the boundary (in effect as of January 20, 2001) of a national monument established under the Act of June 8, 1906 (16 U.S.C. 431 et seq.), except to the extent that such a preleasing, leasing, or other related activity is allowed under the Presidential proclamation establishing the monument.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I note that the Republican ranking member is not on the floor at this time. I will proceed and, of course, afford all opportunity for him for comment or rebuttal or perhaps a speech in support of my amendment. I want to make sure I extend that courtesy to him since he is not currently in the Chamber.

The amendment I bring before us today is one that is very straightforward. I suppose I could have had it read, and it would have made it very clear what I am setting out to do. It basically will prohibit any preleasing or other related activity within the boundaries of a national monument.

What it boils down to is, there are certain lands in the United States which have been designated as important national treasures. We call them national monuments. Virtually every President in the last century, save three, decided to designate certain areas of land in America that were so important they wanted to preserve them so that future generations could enjoy the bounty which God has left us.

There are those, of course, who see that land not as a great treasure to be valued but as a resource to be used. The purpose of my amendment is to stop oil and gas drilling on national monuments across the United States.

We owe the existence of many of America's natural treasures to pioneers of yesterday. Their appreciation of our rugged, untamed new country gave them the foresight to preserve many of our natural resources and public lands for future generations to enjoy.

Theodore Roosevelt was one such pioneer. In 1906, he established Devils Tower in Wyoming, the first national monument.