You cannot take a 2 o'clock in the morning television show that sells at a discount rate and compare it with prime time. It simply is not true.

Fourth, the broadcasters say lowering the costs of candidate advertising will result in candidates running more ads. As my friend MITCH MCCONNELL commented on occasion, the Nation does not suffer from too much political discussion. It would not be a bad thing if there were more advertising, discussing more issues. But that is probably not the result of this amendment. It simply means candidates will raise less money because of campaign finance reform and hopefully be able to have the same amount of advertising because rates are lower.

This is all part and parcel of eliminating a major source of revenue for the broadcasters, and that is the problem. Political advertising is a paid form, in my judgment, of community service. This is not running a public service ad for the Boy Scouts, but it should not be akin to charging General Motors to advertise a new car either. And that is exactly what has happened.

Here, political ads have now become the third highest source of revenue for the broadcasters. In 1998, the automobile industry was the source of 25 percent of advertising dollars in America. Political candidates, using the public airwaves to discuss public policy issues under campaign finance law restrictions, are 10 percent of advertising dollars in America. This is growing faster than any other component of advertising in the Nation. Political advertising is not an industry; it is how we conduct public policy in a democracy. That is why we have offered this amendment as well.

This legislation will be voted upon in the House of Representatives in only another day. The House of Representatives has a choice that was before this Senate. The national broadcasters have spent $19 million since 1996 to lobby this Congress. They have spent $11 million to defeat no fewer than 12 campaign finance bills that would have reduced the cost of candidate advertising. It is unconscionable and it is wrong. It is also hypocrisy. The very news departments and executives that come to this Congress and complain about the state of politics in America, the lack of public confidence, the declining levels of integrity in the public discourse because of campaign fundraisers, are now a principal obstacle to reform.

I want to vote for McCain-Feingold when that legislation returns to this Senate after a conference, but I will make it very clear: Restricting campaign fundraising with no restriction on the cost of campaign advertising, in the region of the country in which I live, and Los Angeles and Chicago and Miami and Boston and other large cities in America, means that candidates will not be able to communicate with the public. There will be no independent means of the political parties actually getting their message to American voters.

I am prepared to vote to limit campaign spending, to eliminate soft money, but the test, in my judgment, at least for the region of the country in which I live, is whether we can overcome this hurdle of the broadcasters as well.

Mr. President, I hope the House of Representatives meets its responsibility. I hope we can get a bill that in good conscience many of us in the Senate can vote to support.

I yield the floor.

H–2A REFORM

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support of the Agriculture Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act of 2001. I am proud to join my colleague Senator CRAIG as a cosponsor of this important legislation.

I am a strong believer that American workers should have the first chance to have American farm and ranch jobs. However, when there are not enough American workers, our agricultural producers should be able to find farmworkers elsewhere. Under the current H–2A agricultural guest worker program, producers are required to go through a lengthy, uncertain, and undoubtedly costly process to demonstrate to the Federal Government that American workers are not available in order to gain authorization for guest workers. During this long process, Montana crops are not being harvested and cattle and sheep herds are not being tended to the degree they require. A General Accounting Office study recently found that the Government's inefficiency in processing such claims discourages use of the program. As a result, the Federal Government estimates that only half of this country's 1.6 million agricultural workers are authorized to work in the U.S., and the figure may be higher since the estimate is based on self-disclosure by illegal workers.

Let me give you an example of how H–2A reform will benefit real producers. We have a number of large sheep operations in Montana. All of these sheep need to be sheared in the spring of the year, and as any sheep rancher will tell you, this is a job that needs to be done quickly, safely, and accurately. Shearers need to pay close attention to detail, lest sheep could be severely injured. With the number of sheep ranches in this country dwindling, there are few Americans who shear professionally, so guest workers from countries such as Argentina must be brought in to do the job. Reform of the H–2A program would make this process easier for our sheep producers.

It is high time we reformed the H–2A program. This legislation will replace the current system with a more efficient process for certification of H–2A employers looking to hire agricultural guest workers. It will also replace the current, unrealistic premium wage mandated for H–2A employers with the standard, minimum wage. Employers will continue to furnish housing and transportation to H–2A workers.

This bill makes sense for producers in Montana, Senator CRAIG's home State of Idaho, and other agricultural States across the country. It also provides a better environment for our guest workers. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important legislation.

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 Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred January 14, 1999 in El Dorado, AR. Thomas Gary, 38, was run over by a truck he owned after he suffered a blow to the head and shotgun injuries that killed him. Chuck Bennett, 17, who has been charged with the crime, claimed that Gray made a sexual advance toward him.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, July 10, 2001, the Federal debt stood at $5,710,436,329,428.99, five trillion, seven hundred ten billion, four hundred thirty-six million, three hundred twenty-nine thousand, four hundred twenty-eight dollars and ninety-nine cents.

One year ago, July 10, 2000, the Federal debt stood at $5,662,950,000,000, five trillion, six hundred sixty-two billion, nine hundred fifty million.

Five years ago, July 10, 1996, the Federal debt stood at $5,148,771,000,000, five trillion, one hundred forty-eight billion, seven hundred seventy-one million.

Ten years ago, July 10, 1991, the Federal debt stood at $3,533,712,000,000, three trillion, five hundred thirty-three billion, seven hundred twelve million.

Fifteen years ago, July 10, 1986, the Federal debt stood at $2,071,214,000,000, two trillion, seven-one billion, two hundred fourteen million, which reflects a debt increase of more than $3.5 trillion, $3,639,222,329,428.99, three trillion, six hundred thirty-nine billion, two hundred twenty-two million, three hundred twenty-nine thousand, four hundred twenty-eight dollars and ninety-nine cents during the past 15 years.