

morning business today. I would not worry about that at all.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Senator.

ELECTION REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I see here one of the persons responsible for the amendment that has brought the Senate to a standstill—Senator WYDEN. I think it is really too bad that the amendment has brought the Senate to a standstill.

The opponents of the Schumer-Wyden amendment claim they are seeking to eliminate fraud and that is why they oppose the amendment. Well, of course, everybody in the Senate is against fraud. However, we over here believe that also we must do anything we can to stop disenfranchisement of voters.

I think it is so important to recognize that we need to encourage people to vote, and vote honestly. Nobody is encouraging people to vote by fraud. But by holding up this legislation—and that is what is happening—the opponents are preventing, among other things, \$3 billion going to the States for election reform efforts.

My State, Nevada, needs this money very badly. We have the most modern machines you can buy in southern Nevada, in Las Vegas. They are electronic, beautiful, and they are without fail. But in the other 16 counties, we have a mishmash of other types of machines. In the 1998 election Senator ENSIGN had with me, we had a registrar of voters in Washoe County, Reno, NV, who wanted to save the county money, so she had printed the ballots herself. They were approximately a 16th or a 32nd of an inch off. A lot of them didn't count. They didn't match the machines. It created all kinds of problems. In addition to that, there were—because of the inappropriateness of the machines—a number of ballots that were not counted because they were not put into the machines correctly.

In other counties, we have old-fashioned, very old punchcard machines. This legislation would allow the State of Nevada to have all good machines. That is one of the things being held up here—\$3 billion in funding going to the States for election reform efforts.

The secretary of state of Nevada, one of the most progressive secretaries of state, has been in conference with Senator DODD on this legislation. He is a Republican, by the way. He loves our legislation and thinks it should pass. He likes the amendment of the Senator from Oregon. We have letters from secretaries of state of Arkansas, Kentucky, and North Carolina, to name a few, who have strong reservations with the bill's original language dealing with identification.

Currently, there are 19 States and the District of Columbia that have signature verification. An additional 22 States use a signature system in conjunction with something else.

No eligible voter should be prevented from casting their vote. Remember, this bill still has to go to conference, and one of the things that so troubles me with the minority is the President of the United States is a member of their party. The leadership in the House is all Republican. So when we go to conference with this bill, we are in the minority because we are dealing with the President and the Republican leadership in the House. So I cannot understand why they will not let this legislation move on and go to conference. It is as if they are changing the rules in the middle of the game.

Legislation has come before the Senate, an amendment was offered and was adopted. Does that mean anytime legislation comes before this body and an amendment is offered to it we just close up and go on to something else? If that is the case, then we should do everything in committee and forget about action by the full Senate.

By holding up this important legislation, we are wasting valuable time that could be spent on, for example, the energy bill or campaign finance reform. I am terribly disappointed we are not moving forward. I hope cloture will be invoked tomorrow.

I say to my friend from Oregon, I have been tremendously impressed with the State of Oregon and their method of election. The two Senators from Oregon who voted in favor, of course, of the amendment that Senator WYDEN offered were elected by virtue of ballots cast by mail.

I followed very closely what went on in Oregon. I have not heard an iota from newspapers or any other commentary that there was anything wrong with the election. I have never known anyone to say there was any fraud in electing Senator WYDEN or Senator SMITH. They were elected by mail.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. REID. I will be happy to yield for a question.

Mr. WYDEN. Not only is the Senator right, but Senator SMITH, in particular, deserves great credit because in a very close election, he made no assertions that there was any fraud in the election.

My question is, Is the Senator from Nevada aware of any evidence of any studies or analyses indicating that these vote-by-mail elections are tainted by fraud? I am not aware of any. Senator SMITH deserves a lot of credit because he could have raised that issue in our election, and he declined to do it.

Is the Senator aware of any evidence of fraud in these races?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend, the evidence speaks for itself. The Senator from Oregon courageously stepped forward yesterday and was the only Republican to vote in favor of Senator WYDEN's amendment. Why did he do that? Because he knows the process in Oregon is good.

I think we, as Senators, have to do everything we can to stimulate voter turnout, to make it easier. I am in favor of voting 2 days. In Nevada, I am in favor of—we are a 24-hour town—voting all night long. We have to do everything we can to allow more participation.

I am so impressed with what North Dakota does. In North Dakota, if you want to vote, come on in, we will let you vote. They have same-day registration. Imagine that. I have talked to my friend from North Dakota, and I have never heard—and I do not think he has either—of any fraud.

We live in a world of computers. People are going to cheat. It is easy to find out if they cheat.

We should do everything we can to move forward with allowing people to vote. We should not make it harder for them to vote. We should make it easier for them to vote.

I applaud my friend from Oregon for working on this legislation so hard and, I think, making the legislation so much better. Recognizing there is a problem with it, let us work it out in conference and not say we are going to close up shop and not allow us to move forward on this legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I, too, compliment the distinguished Senator from Oregon for his outstanding work and leadership on this issue. He has gone the extra mile to find a way to resolve this matter. I know he has worked diligently over the last several weeks. He and I have talked about this matter on a number of occasions.

I think Oregon has been the leader in this country in innovative ways to encourage broader voter participation. He so ably represents his State. On this particular issue, no one has provided greater leadership and more insight on what we can do to improve participation than he has.

I join with my colleague from Nevada in thanking him and commending him for his efforts.

AMERICA'S STEEL INDUSTRY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask the indulgence of my colleagues. I have a short statement that I will use my leader time to make. It involves a matter I know is of great concern to a number of our colleagues. I wish to make a couple of remarks with regard to the so-called 201 decision to be made by the administration relating to steel.

The last few years have been among the worst in history for the American steel industry. In just the last 2 years, 31 steel companies have filed for bankruptcy. Since January of 2000, more than 50 steel-making or related plants have shut down or been idle. Steel prices are now at their lowest level in 20 years.

This crisis has been devastating for steelworkers, their families, and communities. Over 43,000 steelworkers have