

When the relationship soured, the case ended up in small claims court. Nick had retired on disability and wanted his money back. The judge became alarmed that Nick testified proudly he had used his government-issued credit card to pay the doctor. Nick whipped out the card in the courtroom and showed it to the judge. The judge examined the card and read the inscription that says, "for official government travel only."

The judge stated in total disbelief, "You paid for this breast enlargement with a government credit card?"

After the revelation, the judge simply said, "Let's not go there."

That case is unique. It is unique because the cardholder paid his bill, though not always on time. So I have two problems with all of that.

The point is, we have to get this stopped. We have to make sure all of the resources of the Defense Department are not used for playing games with government credit cards but are used to make sure we win the war on terrorism.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JEFFORDS). The Senator from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 25 minutes.

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

The Senator from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. LUGAR. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. LUGAR pertaining to the introduction of S. 2026 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if morning business is closed, what would be the order before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate would proceed to H.R. 2356.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Is there any more time for morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is not.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the regular order.

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN REFORM ACT OF 2002

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2356) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide bipartisan campaign reform.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today with the opening of this debate, we take the first step toward passing the McCain-Feingold/Shays-Meehan bill in the Senate and take one of the final steps toward banning soft money.

I am grateful for all the hard work that has brought us to this moment—of course, the work done by the reform community, the work done by the outstanding leaders in the other body to pass this bill last month, and, most of all, the work done by my colleagues here in the Senate, under the leadership of Senator MCCAIN of Arizona.

A year ago, we had an excellent debate about campaign finance reform here on this floor. In fact, it began almost exactly a year ago, on March 19. We had an outstanding exchange of ideas, we held numerous votes, and we worked hard on both sides of the issue. I believe that that debate enriched this body, and that it enriched the McCain-Feingold bill.

In the end, the will of the Senate was done, and we passed the bill in a strong bipartisan vote of 59–41. A year later, we are here again on the floor working to pass reform. But this time it is different. This time, we already know where the Senate stands. And we know that all that stands between this bill and the President's desk is the Senate's final consideration of the bill this week.

With the strong vote for McCain-Feingold last year, the Senate recognized the importance of our responsibility as representatives of the people and as stewards of democracy. As long as we allow soft money to exist, we risk damaging our credibility when we make the decisions about the issues that the people elected us to make.

The people sent us here to wrestle with some very tough issues. They have vested us with the power to make decisions that have a profound impact on their lives. That is a responsibility that we take very seriously. But today, when we weigh the pros and cons of legislation, many people think we also weigh the size of the contributions we got from interests on both sides of the issue. And when those contributions can be a million dollars, or even more, it seems obvious to most people that we would reward, or at least listen especially carefully to, our biggest donors.

So a year ago we voted to change the system. And now, both bodies have fully and fairly debated the issues and discussed the merits of this bill. We have given this important issue the time and consideration it deserves. Now, very simply, it is time to get the job done. It is time to get this bill to the President.

I believe the Senate is ready to repair a broken system. And make no mistake

about it, the way the soft money and issue ad loopholes are being abused today has devastated the campaign finance system. More than that, these loopholes have weakened the effectiveness of this body and cast doubt on the work we do. They have weakened the public's trust in government; in a very real sense, they have weakened our democracy.

I know many of us here are tired of seeing headlines that imply that legislative outcomes here are not a result of our own will or good judgment, but a result of our desire to please wealthy donors. We are tired of those headlines, and so are the American people. The people know that the system can function better when soft money doesn't render our hard money limits meaningless, and when phony issue ads don't make a joke of our election laws. And they also know that this is our best chance in years to do something to effect real change.

This week we can show them, just as we did a year ago in this Senate, that we are ready for change, and that we are going to make that change happen.

As we embark on this discussion about campaign finance reform on the floor today, it is remarkable how much has changed since the Senator from Arizona and I introduced this bill in September of 1995, and even since we stood here a year ago. Both sides of Capitol Hill have finally acknowledged the demand of the American people that we ban soft money contributions, after years of soft money scandals and embarrassments that have chipped away at the integrity of this body.

As many commentators have noted, the collapse of Enron gave the campaign finance reform issue momentum prior to the House vote in February. But I would note that our effort has been given momentum by many other campaign finance scandals that have occurred just in the last few years. I think they are actually more than we care to remember.

Soft money has had an increasingly prominent role in party fundraising over the last 12 years. In 1988 the parties began raising \$100,000 contributions for the Bush and Dukakis campaigns—an amount unheard of before the 1988 race. By the 1992 election, the year I was elected to this body, soft money fundraising by the major parties had doubled, rising to \$86 million. In successive election cycles the amount of soft money raised by the parties has simply skyrocketed. In 2000 soft money totals were more than five times what they were in 1992. It was already a lot in 1992. In 2000, it was five times already what it had been 8 years earlier.

And along with the money, came the scandals—soft money and scandals have gone hand in hand for more than a decade now. First, the mere fact that soft money was being raised in such enormous amounts was a scandal in the early 1990s. But then we had the Lincoln Bedroom, and the White House