

are needed to protect the rights of millions of Americans while fighting terrorism.

That is why I will be offering an amendment on the spending bill to limit the scope of the office. That amendment will not prevent those in the administration who support the program to come back at a later date and show why additional threats warrant additional action.

It will ensure that as this program is developed in its early days it is done in a fashion that is sensitive, with constitutional protections and safeguards, while still ensuring that our Nation can fight terrorism.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BURNS. I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until 1:30 p.m., with the time equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

UPCOMING AGENDA

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, this morning we are continuing to negotiate the reorganization of the responsibilities in this Senate. Those folks who observe the Senate and the goings on on the floor probably think there is not a whole lot going on, but it is kind of like a duck. He looks pretty calm and serene on top of the water, but under the water there is a lot of paddling going on.

As we work our way through this, it is hopeful we will come up with some kind of an agreement in the near future.

That being said, this morning we announced our agenda for the upcoming session as far as the Subcommittee on Telecommunications. I will share with my colleagues how these issues will rank and their importance. Last year, we passed a "can spam" bill out of committee. The bill came to the floor at the tail end of the session and was up for consideration in a package with a lot of other legislation, but it did not make it. It is broadly supported by this body. There is a similar bill in the House of Representatives which has to do with spam.

Spam is the unwanted mail that one gets in e-mail. Whenever one clicks on their e-mail, they see a lot of unwanted messages that are selling everything from shoelaces to whatever. This unwanted mail continues not only to plague our system and clog it, but in rural areas, especially like my State of Montana where some Internet users actually have to pay long distance fees to their server, it becomes quite expensive. In fact, American business is reporting that the cost of spam right now is going out of sight.

Before Christmas of last year, it was thought that around 8 percent of the mail a person received in their Internet was unwanted mail or spam. By December of 2002, just before Christmas, that figure grew to 40 percent of the mail a person found in their mailbox was unwanted. Another figure that sort of astounds all of us, it was estimated the average user of the Internet receives 2,300 pieces of unwanted mail in their mailbox.

Spam messages sent increased nearly 300 percent between the years of 2001 and 2002. This tells me it is time we pass this legislation and get it to the desk of the President. Junk mail sent will outpace other e-mail by at least the middle of this year, and 80 percent of the people online now say they find spamming very annoying.

That being said, we must pass this legislation. It is the first agenda item on my priority list, and we can do it.

I also remind Members, there are a couple of important meetings coming up this month and next that have to do with the Internet. February 12 is the Internet caucus. It is probably the most active caucus we have in the Senate. I am being told now some folks want to set up demonstrating units and vendors have to be turned away. That will be held in 902 of the Hart Building on February 12, starting at 5 p.m. It will be highly attended. I think we had a larger number of people at the planning meeting the other day than was anticipated, so there is quite a lot of interest in that.

The U.S. Asian Network kickoff will be January 27. Of course, that is just prior to the President's State of the Union Message that will be on January 28.

The head of the ruling party, Mr. Hyun of South Korea, will be there. He is part of that network. This was founded about a year ago to bring together the countries in the Pacific Rim and the Far East, because we feel the free flow of communications and technologies is a key to stability in the Far East. We are in this situation now with North Korea, and we feel the free flow of information and those technologies will somewhat diffuse that if people are informed. It will also address key areas such as privacy and copyright. All of those issues are very important to the communications industry.

A new caucus that was formed last year was the E-911 caucus. E-911 is enhanced 911, which is legislation that passed 2 or 3 years ago and was signed by President Clinton. I sponsored that bill, which was probably one of the better public safety bills we passed in Congress.

When a person has an emergency and dials 911 from their home, from a wired line, the one who fields that call has an immediate trace on that call and they know exactly where the person is when they report an emergency.

In the early days—and when I say early days, let's say around 1996 or so—if someone was a cellular phone user,

using wireless communications, they could dial 911 and the person at 911 who received the call really did not know where to go. A person was liable to get the 600 Cafe in Miles City, MT, and they might be in southern California. It just did not know where to take someone who called 911.

We have dealt with that issue, making 911 the national emergency number, No. 1. No. 2, we want to put in place those technologies that when a person dials 911 from their cellular phone, they have the ability to be located.

In my State of Montana, under certain emergency conditions, we lose lives because we have to deal with distances, and also we do not know where a person is located. To give an example of that, there was a man involved in an automobile accident. He was south of Missoula, MT, which is over in the western part of the State, in the Bitterroot Valley. When he dialed 911, his call came into a communications center. When they asked him where he was, he said he was south of town. The operator, we are happy to say, said: What town? He says, Missoula.

Well, he had the operator in Miles City, and those two cities are 400 miles apart.

So working with Senator CLINTON of New York, the cochair of the E-911 caucus, we will have our first meeting on February 24. Any Member wanting to join that caucus because of their interest in 911, please join us to get this technology in place because it is superb legislation that helps us in our public safety.

This year, Members can also look for the debate to start on spectrum reform: How we handle our spectrum, how we allocate it, how we regulate it. It has been a long time since we have looked at spectrum allocation and management. There has been an agreement now between the Consumer Electronics Association and the television people that will advance or accelerate the deployment of high-definition television, or digital television, in the home. It was an industry problem they had to face. They faced it. The standards are now set in the private sector. The "plug in and play," as they call it, of buying a digital television, plugging into the cable, and it works, and the customer will have digital television or high-definition television immediately should bring down the cost to the consumers as more and more digital televisions are offered.

We will have spectrum returned to the Government for reallocation. How we handle that spectrum, how we manage it, will be very important. There are a couple of studies completed and one more to complete. Mark my word, this will be an issue of high debate, although it will not be a front-page issue.

Yesterday, Senator BAUCUS, my colleague from Montana, and I introduced a new broadband bill. Last year, I was privileged to work with Senator ROCKEFELLER on the Commerce Committee as he had written a bill giving