

How many women are going to have to put up with their obstetricians leaving halfway through the pregnancy, either moving or dropping obstetrics, and having to find another obstetrician, or in rural areas not being able to find an obstetrician at all?

So I do call on my colleagues to stand with America's patients, the American people, and resist the powerful special interests—we know they are out there today—that want no change whatsoever.

I am determined to press forward. We will try once again at some point in the future to address this on the floor of the Senate. This is not a partisan issue. It goes way beyond that. People say we have these partisan votes, but it is not a partisan issue. This should not be and cannot be a partisan issue. So let's make Massachusetts the last State added to this list. Let's reduce that list. The only way we can do that is by acting on the floor of the Senate. Let's act now to stop the crisis from spreading and let's work together to put America's patients first.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2400, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2400) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2005 for military activities for the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Services, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reed amendment No. 3352, to increase the end strength for Active-Duty personnel of the Army for fiscal year 2005 by 20,000 to 502,400.

Warner amendment No. 3450 (to amendment No. 3352), to provide for funding the increased number of Army Active-Duty personnel out of fiscal year 2005 supplemental funding.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senator from Missouri, Mr. BOND, will be recognized to call up the Bond-Harkin amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 3384

Mr. WARNER. I wonder if the Senator will yield for a minute? The Senator from Missouri, perhaps the Senator from Iowa, could they advise the Senate with regard to your desire to make a change to the amendment? Has that been completed yet?

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I would advise the distinguished chairman of the committee that we have made a modification on this to change the offset to

an across-the-board reduction in the DOE appropriations. Discussions are continuing with you. We would like to have the same treatment for these workers as the other workers who were described in the Bunning amendment.

This is a work in progress. We do have an across-the-board offset in authorization for all DOE programs in this bill, but, obviously, we are going to have to continue to work with you and work in conference to make sure this is an effective, agreeable offset.

Mr. WARNER. Fine. I would say we will continue to work. At the moment, from the managers' perspective, at least this manager would have to take a close look at this.

I hope in a short time we could establish a time agreement so we could move on with other matters.

Mr. HARKIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I yield to the distinguished Senator from Iowa.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri is recognized to offer his amendment under the previous order.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator from Missouri yield for a question?

Mr. BOND. I am happy to yield to the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. REID. I am wondering if the two proponents of this legislation, the Senator from Iowa and the Senator from Missouri, would give us a general idea of how long they will speak on this?

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I believe we can have the discussions on the substance of amendment No. 3384 as we work with the managers on both sides and perhaps the Finance Committee to make sure we have the appropriate offset.

The amendment I wish to address, and I know Senator HARKIN and Senator TALENT will address it, is the Energy Workers Special Exposure Cohort Designation Act of 2004, which I will be offering on behalf of myself, Senator HARKIN, and Senator TALENT.

It will designate former nuclear production facilities in Missouri and Iowa as special exposure cohorts under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000. This was a very compassionate act designed to provide lump sum payments of \$150,000 to people who had worked in the nuclear weapons production program from 1942 to 1967—way before we understood the dangers of radiation—and who suffered very high levels of radiation and have now been diagnosed, suffered, and many have died from multiple cases of cancer.

This problem was brought to my attention by Denise Brock, whose father had died while waiting for the bureaucracy to work through the steps set up under the program to qualify for that particular \$150,000 compensation.

There are a very convoluted set of steps that have to be followed unless you are in a special cohort. There were four States that were designated as having needs that automatically qualified these workers.

We have found upon research that the exposure to the workers in Missouri was in many instances the highest exposure in any place. My colleague and I have met with those workers. Eight workers came into my office with Ms. Brock last spring, in May. Since then, three of them have died. They had multiple cancers. A brave fellow that I met when I met with the group in St. Charles County several months ago, Jim Mitalski, wheelchair-bound because cancer was in his right foot, had at least three other cancers. I am sad to say he slipped into a coma yesterday. His doctors suggest this may be his final coma. He has not been compensated.

The Mallinkrodt workers, who worked at the St. Louis downtown site from 1942 to 1958 and moved out to the Weldon Springs facility in St. Charles County, which operated until 1967, were exposed to levels of radionuclides and radioactive materials that were much greater than the current maximum allowable Federal standards. Many workers were exposed to 200 times the recommended levels of maximum exposure.

The chief safety officer for the Atomic Energy Commission during the Mallinkrodt St. Louis operations described that as one of the two worst plants with respect to worker exposures. Workers were excreting in excess of a milligram of uranium per day, which caused kidney damage.

A recent epidemiological survey found excess levels of nephritis kidney cancer from inhalation of uranium dust.

The Department of Energy has admitted that those Mallinkrodt workers were subjected to risks and had their health endangered as a result of working with these highly radioactive materials.

The Department of Energy reported that workers at the Weldon Springs feed materials plant handled plutonium and recycled uranium which were highly radioactive. NIOSH admits that the operation at the St. Louis downtown site consisted of intense periods of processing extremely high levels of radionuclides. The institute has virtually no personnel monitoring data for Mallinkrodt workers which would be necessary for them to reconstruct the dosages to make them qualify under the act. Under these circumstances, I believe simple justice and equity demands that we provide assistance for these severely ill workers and for their surviving families.