Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, if that is where we are.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, could I have the attention of Members. I understand the good Senator from Kansas wanted to make a brief statement about the terrible tragedies that have affected his State, and I see my friend from Vermont is here, so if he were to take 10 minutes, we would still have 10 minutes.

Mr. SANDERS. Ten minutes would be fine.

Mr. KENNEDY. I am wondering if Senator SANDERS would be willing to take 6 minutes and let Senator ROBERTS have 4 to talk about the tragedies in his State. He mentioned this earlier to me, and I didn’t think we would have this time dilemma. Would that be acceptable?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes.

Mr. ROBERTS. I could not hear the amount of time I might be permitted.

Mr. KENNEDY. We have the whole 30 minutes, but the Senator from Vermont has said that, of his 10 minutes, he would be glad to yield to you 4 minutes, and then he will take 6 minutes. Would that be agreeable?

Mr. ROBERTS. I could plead with the Senator for 5 minutes?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes.

Mr. ROBERTS. I thank the Senator from Vermont.

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I will yield 1 minute of my time to Senator SANDERS.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank the Senator.

Mr. ROBERTS. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

DRUG SAFETY

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, hopefully the afternoon we will have a chance to move irrevocably toward bringing the FDA into the 21st century, in terms of safety and security for American families. We do that with our primary focus making sure that in this time of the life sciences, the extraordinary breakthroughs we are seeing every single day, that the Food and Drug Administration is going to bring those new opportunities to American families but do it safely and do it efficaciously and do it in a way which is going to ensure that every family in America is going to have safe prescription drugs and safe products over which the FDA has jurisdiction.

I thank my friend from Wyoming for all his good work. We are going to have a series of three votes, and then we may very well set a pathway, hopefully, toward a successful conclusion of this legislation. He and I are both eager to see this legislation in the conference to work out, with the House of Representatives, the points of differences. We are both eager to work out the extremely important area of the follow-on biologics. It is an enormously important area of public health, and it is going to demand a great deal of time and careful attention to make sure we get that issue correct.

It is important to not fail the American people but to see progress made in this area. The way we can do it is make sure we get legislation that is going to pass the Senate, pass the House of Representatives, and move into conference. We are strongly committed to doing that.

I commend Senator BROWNBACK and Senator BROWN to encourage the development of new therapies for neglected diseases. Under this innovative and thoughtful proposal, companies that have developed new treatments or vaccines for tropical diseases will receive a credit entitling them to a priority review at FDA for a product of their choosing.

The amendment strikes the right balance between innovation and access, and closes a loophole that eliminated the incentives to bring old but never approved antibiotics to market.

If there were more time, I would describe other amendments on the list, but I simply wish to thank all our colleagues. This issue is a matter of enormous importance and immediate consequence to the safety and security of the American consumer. This legislation brings the FDA into the 21st century. I commend my friend and colleague Senator ENZI for all his work.

Most of all, I want to thank our staffs. They have been tireless over this past week, on a variety of different amendments and prior to that time as we worked our way to the floor of the Senate.

This is a very comprehensive bill. It is enormously important. I believe it will help in providing greater safety for American families, greater innovative-ness in terms of breakthrough drugs and in terms of food safety, and greater opportunities for the FDA to have the best science there is.

Mr. President, whatever remaining time that I have, I yield it to the Senator from Vermont.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I will allow the Senator from Kansas, if he would prefer, to proceed for his 5 minutes, asking that I be recognized for 10 minutes following his presentation.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator. I thank the distinguished Senator from Vermont for allowing me to speak.

DISASTER IN GREENSBURG, KANSAS

Mr. ROBERTS. My colleagues, last Friday evening the town of Greensburg, KS, was literally wiped off the map by an enormous, mile-and-a-half, level 5 tornado. As a result of this and storms associated with the system, 12 Kansans are confirmed dead—and I fear that number may still rise—and all of the 1,500 residents of Greensburg have been displaced.