

especially we do this bankruptcy provision. This editorial says, among other things:

If the bankruptcy provision becomes law, as it should, lenders will have a powerful incentive, which they currently do not have, to modify troubled loans voluntarily. If they can't or won't come to new terms with borrowers, then they would run the risk that a bankruptcy court would do the modifying for them.

But most, or all, I repeat, independent experts agree that any increase in costs would be nonexistent. Meanwhile, this modified bankruptcy language would help more than 200,000 families avoid foreclosure. It would stabilize the housing market, prevent future, perhaps deeper losses to families, investors—and that is so important, we have to do that. That is why we have to act.

There may be no perfect solution to the growing housing crisis, but standing back and doing nothing would be a real mistake. The legislation that will shortly be before us will make a real difference to homeowners, neighborhoods, and our economy.

More than 700,000 families will benefit from the policies in this measure, 80,000 vacant foreclosed homes will be put back to productive use, 30,000 jobs, and \$10 billion in economic activity will be created.

I hope my colleagues will join us to support cloture on the motion to proceed to this matter so we can pass the legislation and bring the relief to hundreds of thousands of Americans.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday, at 3:16 in the afternoon, the Senate voted to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2633, which is a bill to provide for the safe redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq.

After the cloture vote, I made a proposal that we would have postcloture debate for a period of time, a significant period of time, agree to the motion, and then go to the bill. But once we completed action on this, S. 2633, we would have a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the next matter that I talked about earlier today. That consent was rejected.

I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time be yielded back, and the motion to proceed be agreed to; that upon disposition of S. 2633, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2634; further, that if cloture is invoked, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate then proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3221, the housing bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Reserving the right to object, the question of the Iraq debate, once again at this particular juncture, was not the decision of the minority. Nevertheless, having put the

Iraq issue back before the Senate, there are a number of members of my conference, many of whom have been to Iraq recently, who were anxious to discuss the undeniable progress that has occurred in Iraq over the last 6 months.

We had a good discussion yesterday. I have more members who would like to continue the discussion today. There is obviously an opportunity later in the morning or this afternoon to discuss further with the majority leader the possibility of shortening the time.

But for the moment, there are a number of Senators on my side of the aisle who are anxious to discuss the progress in Iraq, happy to have the debate time. Therefore, for the time being, I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me say briefly, the matter before us, the Feingold withdrawal amendment is in basically the form it has been before us, has been voted on four times before. Each of the times it was voted on in the past, one could argue that things were going less well in Iraq than they are today. The highest number of votes the Feingold withdrawal proposal has received at any point in these 4 votes is 29 votes.

It will be, should it be voted on, defeated once again. It certainly should be because now we have had 6 months or so of undeniable progress on all fronts. The security situation is dramatically improved. Even on the political side, where I think Members on both sides were frustrated with the new Iraqi democracy, they finally have begun to take the kind of steps that are needed—the deBaathification law was approved, local elections have been scheduled for later in the year.

They are finally making some progress on the Government side as well as the undeniable progress on the security side, at this point, not brought about strictly by American troops but also the sons of Iraq. These people who decided to defend their neighborhoods and defeat, help us defeat al-Qaida, have grown dramatically in terms of numbers and commitment.

So there is, as I indicated, a lot of interest on our side in continuing to at least point out the progress that has been made in Iraq, both in terms of security and on the political side. So we will have that discussion later into the morning, and the majority leader and I will have an opportunity later in the day to discuss where we go from here.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period of morning business for

60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

TENNESSEE TORNADOS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to speak for a few minutes this morning.

While I would like to speak about health care and on some of the comments made about the stimulus package that is going to be debated apparently in upcoming days, I would first like to make mention of the tornado damage that has occurred in our State.

We have officially 32 deaths. That number may rise. Certainly, we have had numbers of people in our State who have gone without housing. They have lost their worldly possessions. They have lost family members. In this time of grief for many people, I think we have also seen something that has been very uplifting.

Certainly, after other disasters that have taken place in this country in recent times, there, in some cases, has been a sense of concern about whether our Government is able to meet the needs of these disasters we have seen in various parts of the country and in some cases the world.

In the State of Tennessee FEMA, under the leadership of Director Paulison, and TEMA, under the leadership of General Bassham, and then the leadership of various local agencies that deal with disasters have responded in incredible ways.

In our State, I think what we have seen is an unprecedented cooperation that has taken place, one that I think is going a long ways toward causing people to see our Government responding in a way that is very responsible.

We have also seen numbers of people who have given of themselves to help their neighbors. We have had Red Cross personnel on site, we have had lots of volunteers from various organizations throughout our State helping those in need.

It has caused me to feel great about our leadership, Federal, State and local, as it relates to responding to these people in times of need. I know this will continue as 16 counties right now are under the Federal disaster designation; there may be more coming. But my hat is off to all those who have been involved in helping people in this time of need.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I do wish to refer briefly to the stimulus package that was discussed by our majority leader. I have a great deal of respect for him. I was 1 of 16 Senators who voted against the last stimulus