

We should increase the minimum wage that is at a 40-year low, if we want to do something to help working people stop falling behind. And people who think it is just teenagers who hold those jobs, I want to correct the record. People support their families on the minimum wage. That is the fact. And they cannot live at this minimum wage.

Yesterday, it may have been the day before, in California, construction workers rallied in the streets of Los Angeles by the thousands. Our Governor in California has decided to refigure the way construction workers are paid. They are supposed to be paid prevailing wages on State contracts. That means the average of the wages in the area. He wishes to mess with that formula, if you will. He has directed a committee to change that formula so that construction workers get 20 percent less pay.

Is that what we ought to be doing at a time when we are all growing to the realization that workers are stagnating? We should be supporting prevailing wage laws. One of the reasons many of us voted against this D.C. bill is not only because it attacks a woman's right to choose, but it would in fact walk away from prevailing wages, and it would say to the city of the District of Columbia forget it; just pay whatever the going will bear. And that will thrust people into poverty.

Let us reach across party lines and work for the American people. They deserve it, and they expect it from us. So I think instead of us coming together on the next thing on our agenda, fighting over Whitewater, we should be sitting here debating how we can make sure that as we go into the next century we have the most educated kids, the strongest families, the lowest amount of crime that we can bring to our communities, the best environmental protection, and cleaning up Superfund sites.

I visited a site, Mr. President, San Bernardino, CA, that got caught in this continuing resolution because the funds were frozen. If we do not move soon on that Superfund site, the drinking water of 600,000 San Bernardino residents is going to be poisoned. It is called the Newmark Superfund site.

We should stop playing games here. Now, I heard that there is some progress, that in fact the appropriations committee leaders on both sides of the aisle got together and they are working to resolve these matters. But my message today is let us reach across those party lines and get our work done. The people who drink out of the water in San Bernardino, they are of every political party. This is not about politics. This is about doing our job.

So we need to pass a balanced budget, to meet each other halfway and get it done. Put off the tax cut to the wealthiest, and we can get it done.

We need a clean debt ceiling so we make sure that the greatest country in the world does not default on its debt.

We need a trade strategy, an economic strategy to lift our people up. We are hearing now across party lines that this is something we should be doing. Let us not let this moment pass. We can do it. You and I have worked on some things in the farm bill where we crossed over our divisions on a number of issues, joining together. What we did is going to make life better for family farmers. I think we can do that.

Transportation and infrastructure is required to move goods through our Nation. I went down to the San Diego border. There is tremendous trade as a result of NAFTA. Now, I was not a NAFTA fan, and I have a lot of problems with NAFTA. But I vowed, even though I did not support it because of the wage disparity and environmental problems and labor standards I did not like, that I was going to make it work. We know there are ways to make it work. We need an infrastructure bill so that we can stand behind trade and make it work, because to get the goods into our country or shipping them out, they have to be able to move.

A lot of our local governments want loan guarantees from us. They will raise the money. Loan guarantees can make it work without putting taxpayers unduly at risk.

So, in any event, Mr. President, I wanted to use this opportunity to kind of give to the Senate and for the RECORD my state of mind at this point as I come back from a very in-depth visit to my home State, to give a reality check for all of us.

To sum it up very succinctly, the people want us to meet each other halfway on our differences and move forward, because a lot of people in today's economy are not moving forward. They are standing still.

If we have the will, we can turn it around. I think there is enough sentiment in this body across party lines that I have heard from the majority leader, the Democratic leader, and others in this body, from Senator KENNEDY to Senator JEFFORDS to others, that we can reach out to make life better for our people. Instead of taking up these issues that divide us, that are political, that everyone knows have political motivation, let us start working for the people we represent.

I thank the Chair very much. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The gallery will refrain from making comment on Members' speeches.

Mr. FRIST addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent to speak for what time is necessary as if in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. FRIST and Mr. HARKIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1578 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMPSON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— WHITEWATER EXTENSION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to a resolution extending the Special Committee To Investigate Whitewater Development Corporation, which I now send to the desk, and it be considered under the following time agreement: One amendment in order to be offered by Senator D'AMATO, limited to 2 hours, to be equally divided in the usual form, and that no amendment be in order to the D'Amato amendment; further, I ask that following debate on the D'Amato amendment, the amendment be laid aside and the Democratic leader or his designee be recognized to offer an amendment, under the same restraints as the D'Amato amendment, and following the debate the Senate proceed to vote first on the D'Amato amendment, to be followed immediately by a vote on the Daschle or his designee amendment, and that following those votes, the resolution be advanced to third reading and passage occur immediately without further action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I shall object in just a moment, I just want to point out that the Democratic leader has made a proposal with respect to continuing the Whitewater inquiry for a limited period of time. We think at a minimum, as a courtesy, that proposal needs to be responded to and addressed.

Second, we have no idea what the D'Amato amendment is that is contained in this proposal.

Third, this provides for moving to immediate passage without an opportunity for sufficient debate, in our view, to explore all of the implications.

Therefore, for all of these reasons, but particularly because of the proposal put forward by the Democratic leader earlier this afternoon, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I note that under the consent that was sought, the distinguished Democratic leader or his designee would be recognized to offer an amendment, and I am sure under this arrangement he would have done so and we would have had a way to have both points of view considered.

However, I understand the objection, and I know there will continue to be discussion between the leaders on how this matter can be addressed. That would be considered further.

In light of that objection just heard, I make the same request for the legislation to be the pending business on Wednesday, February 29, at 10:30 a.m. under the same restraints as the previous concept agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, for the same reasons already advanced to the previous request, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996—CONFERENCE REPORT

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2546, the D.C. appropriations bill.

Bob Dole, Jim Jeffords, Trent Lott, Rick Santorum, Alfonse D'Amato, Dan Coats, Mark Hatfield, Bill Frist, John McCain, Larry Pressler, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Olympia Snowe, Alan Simpson, Conrad Burns, Spencer Abraham, Orrin G. Hatch.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this cloture vote will occur on Thursday, February 29, at a time to be determined by the two leaders. This is obviously very important legislation. It is important that we come to an agreement on the District of Columbia appropriations conference report. I do not understand why it is being held up at this point because I felt like the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, the Senator from Vermont, Senator Jeffords, had worked out a very reasonable compromise of how to deal with the vouchers and scholarships, using a lot of latitude with the District of Columbia, the school board, and I think he came up with a very logical solution. I know the city is anxious to get its appropriations completed.

We will have this vote on Thursday, February 29, at a time we will announce later.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill, previously received from the House of Representatives for the concurrence of the Senate, was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1787. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to repeal the saccharin notice requirement; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

The following concurrent resolution, previously received from the House of

Representatives for the concurrence of the Senate, was read and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 141. Concurrent resolution providing for the adjournment of the two Houses; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-1875. A communication from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the OMB Sequestration Update Report for fiscal 1996; referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975, as modified by the order of April 11, 1986, to the Committee on Appropriations, Committee on the Budget, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Committee on Armed Services, Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Committee on Environment and Public Works, Committee on Finance, Committee on Foreign Relations, Committee on Governmental Affairs, Committee on the Judiciary, Committee on Labor and Human Resources, Committee on Rules and Administration, Committee on Small Business, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Committee on Indian Affairs, and the Committee on Intelligence.

EC-1876. A communication from the General Sales Manager of the Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the availability of agricultural commodities and quantities for fiscal year 1996; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.

EC-1877. A communication from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on appropriations legislation within five days of enactment; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC-1878. A communication from the Director of Defense Research and Engineering, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on the Office of Technology Transition for fiscal year 1996; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1879. A communication from the President and Chairman of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report for fiscal year 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1880. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report entitled, "A Community of Common Interests: Public Broadcasting and the Needs of Minority and Diverse Audiences and Public Broadcasting's Service to Minorities and Other Groups"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1881. A communication from the Deputy Associate Director for Compliance, Royalty Management Program, Minerals Management Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, notice of the intention to make refunds of offshore lease revenues where a refund or recoupment is appropriate; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1882. A communication from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on the nondisclosure safeguards information for the quarter beginning October 1 through December 31, 1995; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1883. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, the report of the texts of international agreements, other than treaties, and background statements; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1884. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, a draft of proposed legislation to amend the Federal Debt Collection Procedures Act of 1990; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1885. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, a draft of proposed legislation entitled, "Enhanced Prosecution of Dangerous Juvenile Offenders Act of 1995"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1886. A communication from the Attorney General of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report entitled, "National Strategy to Coordinate Gang Investigations"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1887. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report under the Freedom of Information Act for calendar year 1995; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1888. A communication from the Chief Administrative Officer of the Postal Rate Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report under the Freedom of Information Act for calendar year 1995; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1889. A communication from the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development's Designee to the Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report under the Freedom of Information Act for calendar year 1995; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1890. A communication from the Executive Director of the Non Commissioned Officers Association, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on internal controls and financial management systems in effect during fiscal years 1994 and 1993; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1891. A communication from the Executive Director of the Retired Enlisted Association, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on internal controls and financial management systems in effect during fiscal year 1994; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1892. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the preliminary report entitled, "Medicare Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Evaluation"; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1893. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report relative to runaway and homeless youth; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1894. A communication from the Chairman of the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report for fiscal year 1995; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1895. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the National Skills Standards Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report for fiscal year 1994; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1896. A communication from the Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 1995 annual report of the Board; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.