

Mr. President, I rise today in support of the conference report for the fiscal year 1997 District of Columbia appropriations bill.

Mr. President, the conference report for the fiscal year 1997 District of Columbia appropriations bill includes \$718 million in Federal funds and \$5.02 billion in District of Columbia funds. This figure is \$1 million more in Federal funds and \$29 million less in District of Columbia funds than in the original Senate version of this bill.

This conference report has my signature and my vote for final passage. The District's financial situation demands as much. But I do have reservations: in particular, the inclusion of the Hose of Representatives' position on abortions and domestic partners. As you may know the Senate version of the District of Columbia Appropriations bill, which passed unanimously, contained language allowing the city to use non-Federal dollars to fund certain abortion services and domestic partner benefits. Use of Federal moneys to provide these services was prohibited, but the District could use its own money. For its part, the House of Representatives; version of the bill prohibited the use of all funds, including District Funds, in support of these services.

We have been here before. This is not a new debate. In fact, the House position represents current law. But as a proponent of a woman's right to choose, I oppose that position both on substantive grounds and because it is too broad an incursion into home rule. On the issue of domestic partners, again we should show some measure of restraint when it comes to an issue on which the local electorate—through its duly elected officials—has spoken.

Mr. President, I compliment the chairman of the subcommittee, Senator JEFFORDS, and thank him for his hard work in representing the views of the Senate in conference. The House conferees were tough, but fair, negotiators. They, too, deserve thanks for their cooperation.

I urge my Senate colleagues to adopt the conference report on behalf of all those who visit, live, and work in the Nation's Capital.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997—CONFERENCE REPORT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the first vote will be on the conference report accompanying H.R. 3517. The question is on agreeing to the conference report. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] and the Senator from Alaska [Mr. MURKOWSKI] are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 269 Leg.]

YEAS—92

Abraham	Feinstein	Mack
Akaka	Ford	McConnell
Ashcroft	Frahm	Mikulski
Baucus	Frist	Moseley-Braun
Bennett	Gorton	Moynihan
Biden	Graham	Murray
Bingaman	Gramm	Nickles
Bond	Grams	Nunn
Boxer	Grassley	Pell
Breaux	Gregg	Pressler
Bryan	Hatch	Pryor
Bumpers	Heflin	Reid
Burns	Helms	Robb
Byrd	Hollings	Rockefeller
Campbell	Hutchison	Roth
Chafee	Inhofe	Santorum
Coats	Inouye	Sarbanes
Cochran	Jeffords	Shelby
Cohen	Johnston	Simon
Conrad	Kassebaum	Simpson
Coverdell	Kempthorne	Smith
Craig	Kennedy	Snowe
D'Amato	Kerry	Specter
Daschle	Kohl	Stevens
DeWine	Kyl	Thomas
Dodd	Lautenberg	Thompson
Domenici	Leahy	Thurmond
Dorgan	Levin	Warner
Exon	Lieberman	Wellstone
Faircloth	Lott	Wyden
Feingold	Lugar	

NAYS—6

Bradley	Glenn	Kerrey
Brown	Harkin	McCain

NOT VOTING—2

Hatfield	Murkowski
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The conference report was agreed to.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997—CONFERENCE REPORT

The Senate resumed consideration of the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on the conference report to accompany H.R. 3845, the appropriations for the District of Columbia. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] and the Senator from Alaska [Mr. MURKOWSKI] are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 83, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 270 Leg.]

YEAS—83

Abraham	Ashcroft	Biden
Akaka	Bennett	Bingaman

Bond	Glenn	McCain
Boxer	Graham	McConnell
Bradley	Grams	Mikulski
Breaux	Grassley	Moseley-Braun
Bryan	Gregg	Moynihan
Bumpers	Harkin	Murray
Byrd	Heflin	Nickles
Campbell	Hollings	Nunn
Chafee	Hutchison	Pell
Coats	Inhofe	Pressler
Cochran	Inouye	Pryor
Cohen	Jeffords	Reid
Conrad	Johnston	Robb
Coverdell	Kassebaum	Rockefeller
Craig	Kempthorne	Roth
D'Amato	Kennedy	Santorum
Daschle	Kerrey	Sarbanes
DeWine	Kerry	Simon
Dodd	Kohl	Simpson
Domenici	Kyl	Specter
Dorgan	Leahy	Stevens
Exon	Levin	Thompson
Feinstein	Lieberman	Thurmond
Ford	Lott	Thomson
Frahm	Lugar	Warner
Frist	Mack	Wyden

NAYS—15

Baucus	Gorton	Shelby
Brown	Gramm	Smith
Burns	Hatch	Snowe
Faircloth	Helms	Thomas
Feingold	Lautenberg	Wellstone

NOT VOTING—2

Hatfield	Murkowski
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So the conference report was agreed to.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the conference report was agreed to, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we are not in a quorum call, are we?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No, we are not in a quorum call.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I am glad that we have adopted those two important appropriations conference reports.

I would like for us to continue to move forward and try to make progress now on a series of amendments with regard to the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3230

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, with regard to the conference report to accompany the Department of Defense authorization bill, I ask unanimous consent that at 10:30 on Monday, September 9, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany the Defense authorization bill, that the conference report be considered as having been read; further, that there be 4 hours for debate to be equally divided between the chairman and the ranking minority member on the Armed Services Committee with an additional 1 hour under the control of Senator JOHNSTON, with the vote to occur on the conference report at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, September 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FORD. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. Start at 10:30 for 4 hours on Monday?

Mr. LOTT. Yes. Actually, it is 4 hours to be equally divided with 1 hour under the control of Senator JOHNSTON, so there is a total of 5 hours. I really wonder about the need for that length of time, and I had hoped to start earlier—9 o'clock or 9:30 or 10. But at the request of the distinguished Senator from Georgia, we are going to begin at 10:30. So, first of all, we are agreeing to more time, and I wonder about that need.

Mr. FORD. I am not worried about how the watch is made here. I am just worried about the time. So we start at 10:30. There will be 4 hours equally divided, and then an additional hour. That will be all done on Monday?

Mr. LOTT. That would all be done on Monday. That is correct.

Mr. FORD. Then we vote on Tuesday.

Mr. LOTT. That is correct.

Mr. FORD. I thank the majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to say that we expect to get other work done on Monday. Hopefully, we will be able to spend some time on the Interior appropriations bill, and there is still a strong likelihood or even a probability that we will have a recorded vote or votes on Monday night after 5 o'clock. I advised our conference at our policy luncheon on Wednesday that that would be my intent.

I just do not see how we can get our work done in the next 30 days if we do not have any votes late on Wednesday night, if we do not have any votes all day on Monday, if we do not have any votes on Tuesday morning. I am perfectly willing to do most of this without votes, but I have to do what is necessary to try to keep our attention and get focused on the work and try to produce results. But this is a fair agreement, and I appreciate that. That is the way we need to continue to try to work. As the Democratic leader and I have talked, we will just take it one step at a time. This is one more positive step. As to what we have to do on Monday night, that will be determined by what happens today, tonight, and in the morning. If we make progress, we have good cooperation, it may be that we will not need recorded votes on Monday night. But we will continue to work, and as soon as we make a final determination with regard to Monday night, we will notify all Senators so they can plan what time to come back in here. I have urged our colleagues to be back in here by sundown on Monday so that we can get work done. I hope that we will do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the unanimous-consent request of the majority leader? Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 2053

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is correct.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2053) to strengthen narcotics control reporting requirements and to require the imposition of certain sanctions on countries that fail to take effective action against the production of and trafficking in illicit narcotics and psychotropic drugs and other controlled substances.

Mr. LOTT. I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill is being placed on the calendar under rule XIV. Objection is heard.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report H.R. 3666.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3666) making appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, one final question in that I see the leader is still here. He has an amendment at the desk, and it is obviously one that there is a great deal of interest in on all sides. I wonder if he is ready to lay down his amendment. If we could do that here in the next few minutes and get a time agreement, that would help us get moving on what obviously is an amendment with a lot of interest.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would not be able to lay it down until 11 o'clock, but I think I could lay it down within the next 15 minutes. I have a couple of conflicts that I need to address, but I will be ready to do that in the not too distant future.

Mr. LOTT. I believe that will be fine. I appreciate it.

Mr. President, I believe we have amendments the managers can act on in the meantime, and we will be ready to go around 11 o'clock.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, we have made good progress on the bill so far. As the majority and minority leader discussed, we do have one major amendment, the veterans health care amendment, the veterans entitlement amendment, to be proposed by the minority leader. We were hoping to get a time agreement on that.

As I look down the list, there are a number of amendments relevant to the

VA-HUD bill, and I ask Senators to come to the floor. Some of these I still hope can be worked out by agreement and taken without a vote. A couple people on our side of the aisle have suggested that they want votes but would be willing to take very short time agreements on them. For the most part, we hope to be able to finish those.

There are quite a few amendments that are not relevant to the VA-HUD bill. I hope they can be held for bills which are related to the subject matter. There are some on both sides. Nobody has a monopoly on those. But if we are to continue the very important work of the many agencies that are included in this bill, we really do need to get this measure passed, sent to conference, worked out, and sent to the President. As I have stated on previous occasions, lifting the ceiling on the Ginny Mae loans will permit the sale of mortgages from the Veterans' Administration and FHA which otherwise would come to a halt.

There is a matter, a very important matter, with continuing the availability of flood insurance that is dealt with in this measure. I urge my colleagues on both sides not to put in amendments which more appropriately belong on other measures or which are likely to lead to extensive discussions. We are open, ready for business, and we would like to get this resolved in the daylight. It would be a real pleasure to pass one in the light of day, and if we work cooperatively, we have a chance of doing that today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I share the goal of the Senator from Missouri to move in a well-paced way on this bill. I wonder, while we are waiting for the Democratic leader to come to offer his veterans medical care amendment, if we could have a quorum call and let us look at some of the amendments that maybe we could zip trip through once there is concurrence. Maybe while we are waiting for the Democratic leader to come we could actually dispose of some of those amendments.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, we have three amendments, I think, that have been cleared on both sides.

AMENDMENT NO. 5187

(Purpose: To amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and for other purposes)

Mr. BOND. First, I send an amendment on behalf of Senator HOLLINGS to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.