

these bills to become law because they will have a positive, real impact on American lives.

We define the child tax credit as children up to age 18. President Clinton's proposal limited it to kids under 12. We think it should include at least kids up to 18. I told some people that my kids range up to age 26. We might have an amendment to make it age 26. The bill we introduced takes it to age 18.

We provide estate tax relief. There is a small business advisory council that advises the President and those of us in Congress and they always have an estate tax relief on their list. Why? Because if you have a taxable estate right now above \$600,000, Uncle Sam starts taking big bites. If your estate goes up to a million above that, Uncle Sam wants 35 percent of it. If you have an estate of 3 million, say your business is as a farmer or a rancher or a businessman, if it is 3 million above the \$600,000 deduction, Uncle Sam says, "We want 55 percent of anything above that amount." Instead of protecting property, it is confiscating property. We want to reduce that, especially for small business and especially for family-owned operations. That is in our package, as well.

We have capital gains relief because we think we tax transactions too much. We actually tax transactions more than almost any of our other industrial competitors. We need to reduce the taxes on transactions. If we do so, we will have more transactions and the Government will make more money, not less money. That is in our package. We can do better with the economy.

I think we put together a good package, one that is family friendly. We have a provision that Senator LOTT alluded to called the Family Friendly Workplace Act—Senator ASHCROFT has worked hard on it—giving families the option that if they work a few extra hours one week, we think they can take off for their kids the next week. Why have good Government come in saying, "We mandate you have time off for PTA." Why not let the families and employees make that decision? So we do that. We provide much greater flexibility for families, employers and employees in this bill. It is all on a voluntary basis, where they can work a few more hours one week and take time off for whatever they desire the following week. You do not need Government's blessing to do it. They allow for compensatory time. Instead of taking time-and-a-half if they have to work an hour or two above 40 hours, if they want they can bank some time and take time-and-a-half off. If they worked 44 hours, under present law they would be entitled to 6 hours of overtime pay. If they want to keep it that way, they have the right to do so. If they would like to have 6 hours off and maybe have a day off or maybe work some other kind of combination or schedule that meets their family's needs and desires, maybe for a vacation

day, maybe for more time off, maybe for time to visit their kids' athletic events, they have the right to do so without having the Federal Government enumerate that this is what you have to offer by law, and not be paid for that time. We give them, through flextime and through the comp time, the ability to have the flexibility in their schedules to meet their family's needs, all of which are different. All of our families are different. All of our families have more time demands that are at variance. This gives them that flexibility, and probably would be the most family friendly thing we can do.

We provide for a balanced budget package which will say the Government will live within its means. We are not going to spend more than we take in. Interest rates will come down. Homes will be more affordable. When we talk of family tax credits, if you have three kids under the age of 18, that is \$1,500 more you get to spend as you desire. Maybe it is for education, maybe it is for food on the table, maybe it is for a home. You make that decision, because we decided it is your money, not Government's money.

Then the flextime proposal, where we are basically saying that families can make the decisions. You have the flexibility in your schedules to work out what is mutually beneficial with you and your employer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. NICKLES. I see the minority leader is not here, and I ask unanimous consent for an additional 2 minutes.

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

Mr. NICKLES. We also have an additional provision called the Paycheck Protection Act. It is fundamentally prodemocracy. It says no person should be compelled to contribute to a political organization without their consent. That person may be a stockholder. No one should be compelled, as a condition of employment, to contribute to a political group or organization, whether that be a PAC, whether it be a union organization or what. No one should be compelled. That is what this bill says. No one will be compelled to contribute to a political organization or entity or candidate against their will. They would have to sign a written authorization form before they would have contributions taken out.

Mr. President, I compliment Senator LOTT and all my colleagues for their work in putting this list together. I look forward to working with the minority leader and others on the other side of the aisle. I know they have their agenda list. I look forward to hearing what that is, and I look forward to working with them to see if we can have several items beneficial not for Congress but for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time is reserved for the minority leader for up to 30 minutes.

Mr. DASCHLE. Let me begin by thanking the Senator from Oklahoma for the tone of his comments. I did not have the opportunity to hear them all, but in keeping with the expressions of the majority leader and others who have indicated a desire to find ways with which to create greater harmony and greater opportunity for the country through increased bipartisanship, I appreciate very much his comments today.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S INAUGURATION

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, before I begin talking about the bills, let me make an initial comment about yesterday. We all witnessed a stirring ceremony as President Clinton and Vice President GORE were sworn in to a second term in office. President Clinton is the first Democratic President to earn a second term since Franklin Roosevelt. This is truly a historic event.

Anyone who witnessed the inaugural ceremony knows that, despite the cold weather, this quadrennial rite of American democracy was warmed by great pageantry, bipartisan good will, and a strong sense of national purpose and unity.

Yesterday's inaugural ceremony lasted a few minutes, but many weeks of hard work preceded the event. Everything from construction of the inaugural platform to ticket dispersal, security, and the traditional lunch in Statuary Hall, plus thousands of other tasks, required a great deal of preparation and attention to detail.

On behalf of Senate Democrats, I join with Senator LOTT and express my gratitude to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies; in particular, the distinguished Senator from Virginia, Mr. WARNER, and the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, Mr. FORD, for all of their efforts toward making this such a successful inaugural event. Senators FORD and WARNER and the other members of the committee put in long hours under very tight deadlines. Time that they might have preferred to spend with family or in their home States attending to constituent matters was sacrificed for the benefit of all Americans who enjoyed this inauguration.

Senator WARNER was chairman of the Joint Inaugural Committee this year. He brought to this duty the same diligence, resolve, and reverence for the congressional rules and traditions that he brings to his job as chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. This was his first inaugural ceremony as chairman, and he should be commended for a job well done.

This is the fifth time Senator FORD has served as chairman or vice chairman of the Inaugural Committee. Like everything he does as Senate Democratic whip, ranking member of the Rules Committee, and senior Senator from Kentucky, Senator FORD once again approached the responsibility

with great humor and tenacity and a deep respect for our best American tradition. Senator FORD is as dependable and dedicated a public servant as anyone who has ever served in this great institution, and all Americans owe a debt of gratitude to the citizens of Kentucky, who have asked him to serve in the U.S. Senate.

I also express my thanks to the other members of the committee for their hard work. A special thanks goes to the leader, as well as to others in the House who made this whole event the success that it was yesterday. Many officers and employees of the House and Senate, along with representatives from the executive branch, assisted these congressional leaders in this enormous but ultimately successful task.

All who contributed to this historic event should be proud of their efforts and know that their country on this day after the inaugural is very grateful.

SENATE DEMOCRATS' AGENDA

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, as we begin the first session of the 105th Congress, American families are asking some difficult questions, most of which seek answers affecting their lives directly. How am I going to put my kids through college? How do we pay the doctor bills if the kids get sick? Will I have enough money when I choose to retire?

Our challenges this year ought to be to provide the answers to those questions. As we do, we all recognize the limits of Government, and we should all recognize the unlimited potential of achievement through bipartisanship. Everything important which we accomplished in the last Congress—health care reform, the minimum wage increase, mental health equity—was accomplished only when we realized that only by reaching across the aisle in an effective way, passing legislation with overwhelming bipartisan support, could we ultimately send the right message to the American people—that we hear them and we want to respond to the problems affecting their daily lives. If we remember that lesson and pick up in this Congress where we left off in the last one, then we can make this not only a productive Congress, but a historic one.

We can, in this Congress, pass a budget for the remainder of this century, a plan that eliminates the deficit and invests in our people and their potential, so that the 21st century will be another American century. If we work together, we can answer those questions that worry Americans most, but we must find a way to do what the President said yesterday and what I heard the leader talk about just now—work together.

Cooperation is in the best interest of the American people, and, frankly, it is in our own self-interest. Good Government is still good politics. Since the

election, there has been a good deal of rhetoric from both sides of the aisle, from both Houses of Congress, from the White House, expressing an interest in dealing with the 105th Congress in ways that are dissimilar to those dealt with in the 104th. We have heard the rhetoric. Now we have to demonstrate with our deeds whether or not that rhetoric will be true, whether or not the sincerity of our rhetoric will actually match the sincerity of our work.

We can use the issues that we will lay out and describe today as wedge issues, issues that divide us; or we can use those same issues as issues that unite us. That will be our choice. Again, today, there will be rhetoric. Again, today, we will hear from both sides about the importance of trying to find common ground. The question is, will we find it? And if we do, how will we?

Today, I offer the Senate Democrats' priority legislation for the 105th Congress. This is our agenda. The Families First agenda is neither radical nor revolutionary. Instead, it is moderate. In our view, it is achievable. Our agenda starts with the fundamental premise that our political system can't work if people believe the system is rigged against them. Yet, more and more Americans believe that. More and more Americans have chosen not to go to the polls. At the very time we need more involvement, their response to what they see is to stay away—and not without reason. So we are proposing as our first bill comprehensive campaign finance reform.

The problem with the current system isn't limited to soft money or hard money, corporate money or PAC money, your money or my money; the problem is that there is too much money, period. And it is getting worse with every election. The truth is, there are no limits anymore, given the Supreme Court decisions.

I have enormous respect for Senators FEINGOLD and MCCAIN. There is much in their proposal that I admire and I think we should adopt. In my opinion, their bill should provide a way with which we come together to find common ground. But it does not go as far as I would like it to. We need to limit spending, special interest influence, and level the playing field for all candidates.

S. 11 establishes voluntary spending limits, and it gives candidates incentives to live within those limits. It reduces television and postal rates. It also restrains soft money and PAC contributions. It toughens restrictions on foreign contributions and extends election laws to cover so-called independent expenditures.

I know that any talk of spending limits raises constitutional questions. So, in addition, Senator HOLLINGS and I will offer a constitutional amendment that will allow Congress to set reasonable limits on how much people can give and spend in Federal elections. I hope, Mr. President, that we will even

consider proposing the issue to the Supreme Court again.

There was an article recently in the op-ed pages of the Washington Post, stating that a case could be made that what we need to do is revisit this in this Supreme Court, to test the constitutional limits they have proposed in *Buckley versus Valeo*. Whether we accept the decisions made in *Buckley versus Valeo*, and other subsequent decisions, however we decide to do this, the question is this: Can we get campaign spending under control? I believe the answer is yes. I believe we must do that in this, the 105th Congress.

In the last 10 years of debate on campaign finance reform, Congress has produced 6,742 pages of hearings; 3,361 floor speeches, not including this one; 2,748 pages of CRS reports; 1,063 pages of committee reports; 113 Senate votes dealing with campaign finance reform, and 1 bipartisan Federal commission. We have had 522 witnesses; 49 days of testimony; 29 sets of hearings by 8 different congressional committees; 17 filibusters; 8 cloture votes on 1 bill; 1 Senator carried to the floor by the Sergeant at Arms and forced to vote on campaign finance reform, and 15 reports by 6 different congressional committees. That is just in the last decade.

There is only one thing left to do: Enact campaign finance reform now. Now. We should do it in the first 100 days of this Congress so that the new rules are in place by the next election.

Mr. President, that is S. 11, our very first bill, and it is first because I speak with virtual unanimity within our caucus about the need to address this issue. I know there are concerns expressed and felt deeply by Members of the other side. This ought not be the wedge issue I described a moment ago. This ought to be a bridge issue.

Let us build that bridge to allow us success in dealing with it soon.

Our second bill is aimed at increasing the income of American families and the competitiveness of American business by investing in education. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 60 percent of all jobs created between now and the year 2005 will require education beyond high school. Yet, every year fewer families can afford the tuition. In the last 10 years, the cost of public college education has increased 23 percent. It is even worse in private colleges: 36 percent.

For the average family, the cost of sending one child to college is now 14 percent of total family income. The average debt load for a South Dakota college student is up by one-third just since 1991. Eighty-five percent of South Dakota's college students today are on financial aid. That is right; 85 percent rely on college aid in order to go to school in my home State of South Dakota.

Our bill, the Education for the 21st Century Act, includes the President's proposal to create a \$1,500 Hope scholarship for the first 2 years of college. The Hope scholarship is a refundable