

stone's throw of the border between San Diego and Tijuana. There is a small picture in the Los Angeles Times, which shows the border fence and then this drug lord's home right across the border fence. I want to describe it to you for a moment. I am quoting from the Los Angeles Times.

To their profound annoyance, Justice Department officials say, Reynoso, 53, is putting the finishing touches on an ostentatious walled residence that backs right up to the U.S. border. If he wanted to, he could hit a tennis ball into San Diego County.

The article goes on to describe the mansion:

Encircled by a forbidding wall that ascends 35 feet, chateau Reynoso rises like a ship over San Diego County, not far from a binational gulch called "Smuggler's Canyon." [Where I have been.] With its turret, a glass pool atrium and a dazzling green roof worthy of Oz, it is so conspicuous that Border Patrol agents sometimes point it out to visitors.

U.S. law enforcement officers note its fortress architecture and its protected position at the end of a narrow cul-de-sac. So close to the United States, they complain, yet so far from a San Diego courtroom.

"I wish we could just tunnel back and grab him," a Justice Department attorney said.

Then it goes on to say:

... Reynoso's name has appeared on lists of traffickers given to Mexican authorities by United States Attorney General Janet Reno. But no discernible action has been taken. U.S. officials have no indications that Reynoso is even a wanted man in Mexico.

This same family was the mastermind behind a huge tunnel, 60 feet below the ground, between Otay Mesa and San Diego. This tunnel had electricity, it had air conditioning, and it was used by this family to smuggle drugs under the border into the United States. It was one of the most sophisticated tunnels, really, ever known. This family spent \$1.1 million buying the lot in Otay Mesa where the passage's exit was to be located.

This is a clear indication, I believe, of what Senator COVERDELL and I will be looking for in terms of actions taken by the Mexican Government. We will have another round on certification. It is important to both of us, as well as, I believe, to a majority of this body, that there be actions taken in this equal partnership between the United States and Mexico. Let me just summarize.

The response from a good friend, a neighbor, and an ally that drugs are exclusively a U.S. problem is simply not adequate. We admit that we have a demand problem. We have taken steps to strengthen our laws, to allocate funds for prevention programs. Still, we know we must do more and we are willing to say we will and do it.

But when Mexican nationals run meth labs throughout California—and over 700 meth labs have been seized by the State Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement in California alone in the last year, 700 of them—and Mexico refuses to enforce its border, the drug problem is not our problem alone.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair advises the Senator her 10 minutes have expired.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. May I ask for 1 minute to wrap up, please?

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. When drug cartels are brazen enough to kill Government officials and church leaders in cold blood, the drug problem is not our problem alone. When the cartels are operating with such impunity that they do not hesitate to bribe officials on both sides of the border and, as "Nightline" has just pointed out, to buy up businesses along the border, the drug problem is not our problem alone. So the drug problem is a problem for both sides. What we need is a cooperative effort of both nations acting as full partners. Neither the United States nor Mexico can win this battle alone.

The report that the President has now committed to provide to the Congress on September 1 will be an important indicator of whether or not Mexico has taken the decision to approach this terrible problem in a cooperative partnership and in a fully committed way. Unless the report can cite significant and demonstrable progress in cooperation, the answer, very sadly, will be that Mexico has not yet taken such a decision. I hope that is not the case on September 1.

To me, this report is very meaningful. The point I want to make is that I believe the expectation of a majority of this body is that there be tangible and substantial steps taken that are visible, discernible, and real to combat the cartels and to stop the corruption, the bribing, and the sort of total disregard for law which is now characteristic of the situation.

I, for one, will watch the extradition picture especially carefully.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the May 14 letter from the President be printed in the RECORD, I thank the Presiding Officer for his forbearance, and I yield the floor.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, DC, May 14, 1997.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR DIANNE: Thank you for your letter regarding counterdrug cooperation between the United States and Mexico. I want to take this opportunity to tell you about my visit to Mexico and the efforts my Administration is making to advance our counternarcotics strategy in a bipartisan spirit.

President Zedillo and I had a full and frank discussion on ways we can achieve greater progress toward attacking the abuse and trafficking of illegal drugs. The Binational Drug Threat Assessment Report that General McCaffrey and Attorney General Madrazo presented to us sets forth in plain terms a common view of all aspects of the drug phenomena striking at our societies. On that basis, President Zedillo and I agreed to form an Alliance Against Drugs, which commits our two governments to prepare a common counterdrug strategy this year to achieve 16 specific objectives.

These objectives, which reflect your own thoughtful contributions, include reducing demand through anti-drug information campaigns directed at our youth, bringing the

leaders of criminal organizations to justice through strengthened law enforcement cooperation, attacking corruption, fully implementing laws to combat money laundering and increasing interdiction and eradication. Achieving all these objectives in the short term is unrealistic, but I believe we can make progress and that President Zedillo's effort to restructure Mexico's anti-drug forces is an essential starting point.

I want to keep the Congress informed of the progress we are making toward achieving the objectives set forth in my 1997 National Drug Control Strategy and the U.S.-Mexico Alliance Against Drugs. ONDCP Director McCaffrey will provide further details on these issues to Members of both Houses in the near future. My Administration will also provide the Congress by September 1, 1997, a report covering each of the issues contained in the Senate resolution passed in March as elaborated in your recent letter and discussions with my Administration. In addition, we will provide reports, as you have requested, commenting on prospects for multilateral hemispheric cooperation and on the feasibility of enhancing truck inspections at the border.

I appreciate your continued efforts to work with my Administration to ensure that our children face a future free of drugs and the crime they breed.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator suggest the absence of a quorum?

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). Is there objection to the order for the quorum call being rescinded? Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT BY THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the majority leader, pursuant to section 711(b)(2) of Public Law 104-293, appoints the Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. SPECTER] as a member of the Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of Kansas, suggests the absence of a quorum. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACT

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I was working in my office on some other matters, and it came to my attention that several of my colleagues, I

think Senator ASHCROFT and perhaps Senator MCCONNELL of Kentucky, came down to speak about the comptime-flexitime bill that Senator ASHCROFT introduced, S. 4. I want to respond to some of what they had to say because I think it is important that people in the country understand this debate and how it affects their lives.

Mr. President, one of the arguments that was made was that Democrats—it was a curious argument—by coming out on the floor, and I was one that did so, and Senator KENNEDY was out here and there were others, that by speaking in opposition to S. 4, we did not want to debate. The legislation was stopped. There were not enough votes to proceed. So somehow we did not want to debate the bill.

Mr. President, we should be clear about the difference between trying to get some legislation passed that will lead to an improvement in the quality of lives of people, as opposed to bringing out legislation which you know will never become law.

At the top of the issues I care most about is campaign finance reform. I keep being told we do not have time to do it on the floor of the Senate. We have core issues to debate. Mr. President, I disagree sharply with my colleagues. I make the point that when you bring a bill to the floor of the Senate which the President has already said he would veto, when you bring a bill to the floor of the Senate, S. 4 in the form it was brought to the floor, knowing full well that you will have a significant number of Senators, certainly well over 40, in opposition, this is hardly the way to pass legislation. You can score political points. You can come to the floor today and try and score political points, but that is not a substitute for a substantive argument and debate.

Now, Mr. President, we should be clear about what we oppose because I do not think it is a question of what I oppose, as the Senator from Minnesota. I think it is a question of how people in the country may view this.

S. 4 is an overreach. It did not go anywhere on the floor of the Senate. It was to be vetoed by the President. It will never become the law of the land because it is an overreach. It takes the Fair Labor Standards Act—we are talking about 50 years of people's history, if you will, with the idea being that when you work overtime you get compensated at time and a half—and it turns it on its head. It goes to an 80-hour work period so that an employee could end up working 60 hours one week, 20 hours the next week with no overtime pay.

Now, if you think in theory all employees will have the power to say to employers, "No, we do not want to work under these conditions," if you are naive enough to believe that, believe it. If you do not know much about the world of the workplace, believe it. But that is why we have some protections for working people. We are not

about to stand and watch the 40-hour workweek overturned. We are not about to see fair labor standards that have been so important to working families, so important to their wage levels, so important to people being treated with dignity and respect, overturned.

It is, as they say, a nonstarter. That is why that legislation, when it came to the floor was a nonstarter. We had debate. I heard colleagues say we did not want to debate. We had debate.

The second point, both the 80-hour 2-week framework and flexitime at hour for hour, where you get an hour off for an hour of overtime, but no time and a half, these are, essentially, cuts in pay. So, get real.

We should talk about the purported goal of the bill that was introduced and what should be our goal, which is to give employees more flexibility. If, in fact, a woman or a man wants to bank time—now I am talking about comptime—by working overtime 1 week and then saying, "Look, I would like to take that as time off rather than getting paid cash time and a half. Rather than getting an hour and a half in pay for the hour I worked overtime, I would like to have an hour and a half in paid time off. I could do some things with my family that would be important to my family." Great. But make sure that is what the legislation is. That is not the legislation that was on the floor of the Senate. Two out of the three options, the flexitime proposal and the 80-hour 2-week proposal, represent cuts in pay for people.

It represented an all-out assault on the Fair Labor Standards Act, an all-out assault on the idea of decent jobs, overtime pay for overtime work. So, now let's talk about where there could be common ground.

Before I do that, Mr. President, let me deal with a couple of other arguments that were made that I think are really quite important. Mr. President, one of the arguments that was made was that people do not have, and I cannot believe my colleagues made this argument, that, right now, because of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the laws we live under, there is no way to have flexibility.

I am the ranking minority member of the subcommittee which has considered this topic, with Senator DEWINE, who has been an excellent chair, by the way. We had people come in and testify about the existing flexibility. There are people in the country who work four 10-hour days and then they do not work on a Friday. There are people who work four 9-hour days and then they work half a day on Friday or Monday. There are people that come in at 7 o'clock and work to until 3 o'clock or come in and 10 o'clock and work until 6 o'clock, whatever the case might be. There are all sorts of ways in which there can be flexibility right now. The sad thing is a lot of companies do not provide that to their employees, but we should not confuse the issue. That has

nothing to do with the Fair Labor Standards Act. That cannot be used as a pretext for overturning the Fair Labor Standards Act. We are not going to let that happen. To argue there is no flexibility or no way that current law allows it is just simply not the case.

Now, Mr. President, the Senator from Missouri also claims that his bill simply makes available to private-sector workers the same benefits that Federal employees have. He is wrong. The Federal employee program gives employees the right to choose whether to have flexible schedules. S. 4 does not do that. The Senator also overlooks the many and substantial job protections that Federal employees enjoy that do not apply to the private sector workers.

By the way, when it comes to health care benefits and pension benefits and much larger percentage of Federal employees being unionized and having bargaining powers, I would be pleased to join with my colleagues to achieve parity for people in the private sector. Mr. President, first and foremost, Federal workers are covered by civil service rules requiring good cause for discharge or discipline. That is, Federal employees cannot be suspended, discharged, or disciplined without notice of the charges and an opportunity to respond in a hearing. Private employees, by contrast, are typically "at will" employees. An employer can discharge or discipline those employees for any reason. It is completely different. People in the private sector do not have the protection Federal employees have. Private employees can be fired because the employer does not like the color of their hair. They can be suspended because the employer does not like their political beliefs. These workers have no redress. They cannot complain to anyone. They have no right to a hearing, and they certainly do not have the right to get their jobs back. Only if private employees are covered by a collective bargaining agreement do they have the right to a hearing before they can be fired, and only about 15 percent of the private work force in this country is covered by such a contract.

Mr. President, these are critical differences between public and private employees. They underscore how careful we must be before we blindly apply Federal programs to the private sector. The possibility for exploitation of private-sector employees is far greater than in the public sector.

Let me give an example of something that happened in the Labor Committee. We will see what happens when the bill returns to the floor. I had an amendment that says we should give the employees real flexibility. Now, if Mary Jones has banked 20 hours that she earned by working overtime and she now wants to take that time off and she asks for the hour and a half paid time off for each of those overtime hours worked, if she wants to do it for reasons that are laid out in the Family and Medical Leave Act, because a family member is ill, or a new child has

been born, she should be able to do it. She should not have to have that approved. Those are her hours she banked, her earned compensation. Give her the flexibility. Do not just leave it in the hand of the employer to ultimately decide to sign off on everything. That amendment was defeated. Mr. President, if we want to make sure that private employees have flexibility, then we must have such a provision.

Mr. President, there are no sweatshops, my colleague mentioned, in the Federal sector. The Department of Labor found that 50 percent of garment shops failed to comply with minimum wage, overtime, or child labor laws—50 percent. Yet the Republican bill would give employers in the garment industry one more tool to abuse their employees. I had an amendment that said we should exclude people that work in some of these sectors of the work force that are already exploited because otherwise you are giving employers another way of not paying people overtime. That amendment was defeated. I repeat on the floor of the Senate, that amendment was defeated. Very revealing. We offered an amendment in the Labor Committee to exclude garment workers and other especially vulnerable employees of the bill. It was defeated on a party-line vote.

The Senator from Missouri quoted a song very familiar to me on the floor this week. I said, "I know that song, Florence Reese wrote that." I know that because my wife's family is from Appalachia and this was about the coal mining struggles. Florence Reese was from Harlan County, KY.

Mr. President, I think the vote to deny an exemption to garment workers and other vulnerable employees shows pretty clearly which side the Republicans are on in this debate. I think the vote not to provide an exemption for those employees, who we already know are exploited—the evidence is irrefutable and irreducible—shows clearly which side too many of my Republican colleagues are on. And by the way, not the side that Florence Reese was singing about, which is the side of working people.

Mr. President, another important difference between the public and private sector is that the Federal agencies do not go bankrupt. Contrast this with private businesses. In 1995, 52,000 American businesses filed for bankruptcy. The rate of business failures in the garment industry is twice the national average. In construction, the rate of bankruptcy is much higher than the national average. If an employer goes bankrupt when an employee has comptime banked, the worker loses all his or her time and money. Mr. President, under S. 4 comptime hours do not count as wages in a bankruptcy proceeding, so the worker who accepted comptime instead of paid overtime would be out of luck. We had an amendment ready in the Labor Committee markup to fix this problem but, it is not in the bill.

Mr. President, I see my colleague on the floor and I do not want to take up so much time that he does not have an opportunity to speak but let me make one of many other points I could make by way of correcting the RECORD.

Mr. President, my colleague from Missouri said Democrats have not read the bill. I read the bill. I can say, and I do no damage to the truth, that this bill violates the 40-hour week and sets up an 80-hour 2-week framework, and people can work 50 hours or 60 hours one week and they get no overtime pay if the employer decides the arrangement should be such that the employee can choose to get some time off the next week, but they do not get time and a half compensation as either cash or time. I can safely say that there is no effort here to really providing employees the flexibility to choose when to use comp time.

Mr. President, under the Ashcroft bill, flexible credit hours are defined as hours that the employer and the employee jointly designate for the employee to work so as to "reduce the hours worked" at a later time. This is on page 19, lines 14 through 18 of the bill.

My colleague from Missouri claimed that the opponents of S. 4 would support the legislation, if only we would read the bill. Mr. President, I respectfully suggest that my colleague needs to take another look at this legislation. It doesn't do what the proponents claim. The language shows that.

Federal law defines "credit hours" as hours which the employee elects to work. Let me repeat that. Federal law defines "credit hours" as hours which the employee elects to work so as to vary the length of the workweek or workday. Under the Ashcroft bill, you have to have the employer and the employee together designating this. If the employer doesn't want to go along with this—and the employers quite often have the power—the employee doesn't get to make that decision.

So let's not say that this bill is going to give employees in the private sector what employees in the Federal sector have. It is right there in the bill on page 19, lines 14 to 18.

Mr. President, I think I have made my case. We have had some time to debate this bill. The bill went nowhere because the bill, as opposed to providing employees flexibility, ends up being a way in which too many employers all across the country can basically cut the pay for workers. It amounts to a paycheck cut for workers.

We are not going to let that happen. The President wouldn't let that happen.

So I suggest that my colleagues, next time we have the debate, do not come out on the floor and say that we have not read the bill. We read the bill. That is why I oppose it. Don't come out on the floor and say that we are going to give the private-sector employees the same opportunities as the Federal-sector employees have. That is not the

case. Don't come out on the floor and say that this will provide flexibility for employees. It doesn't.

Don't come out on the floor and pretend that you have not done damage to the very cherished idea of a 40-hour workweek, and, that, by golly, people should get the functional equivalent of overtime pay, paid time off at time and a half, because this bill doesn't really provide real guarantees that it will happen.

And don't come out here on the floor of the Senate and say that all these great things are going to happen in the work force when we have clear examples of people who work, such as in the garment industry, who are already being exploited, and you don't want to provide them any kind of exemption or any kind of special protection. The arguments just simply don't carry the day.

Mr. President, I would suggest to my colleagues that I came out on the floor to correct the Record, that there is a good reason why the bill went nowhere, there is a good reason why the President is going to veto it. I hope we will see some serious work that we will do together to make some major corrections and have a really strong piece of legislation that will provide working women and men with the flexibility they need, and which will be family friendly.

And, by the way, I think Senator MURRAY has an excellent idea to expand the Family Medical Leave Act for some additional hours off for a family. There are a lot of things that we can do to really make this a piece of legislation that is family friendly, that is worker friendly. And that is what I think we will do.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the Senator from Minnesota yield for a question?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I actually have to leave the floor in a moment. I would be pleased to yield.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have listened with interest to the description of the bill by my colleague from Minnesota. I think it is safe to say there is no one in the Chamber who really doesn't subscribe to the notion that there ought to be greater flexibility in the workplace, and that there is merit to giving an employee the opportunity to decide whether they want comptime as opposed to overtime. I don't think there is much disagreement about that issue.

But I ask the Senator from Minnesota, is it the case that, when we talk about overtime pay for American workers, 80 percent of the workers in this country that are getting overtime pay are workers earning less than \$28,000 a year? Then therefore, by definition, these are workers somewhere toward the lower end of the economic scale who get less than \$28,000 a year, and many of them rely on overtime pay. They need it. It is very important to them.

To the extent that anybody opposes a bill that says let's provide flexibility in

the workplace in a manner that might threaten the opportunity for those who want and need the overtime pay, especially those at the bottom of the pay scale, boy, that is not moving in the right direction in terms of providing flexibility.

Is it the case that the preponderance of people getting overtime in the workplace are people below \$28,000 a year?

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, my colleague from North Dakota is absolutely correct. That is why I said earlier that I would want to point to the critical distinction between coming out here on the floor with a piece of legislation that you know threatens the labor standards of working people, that you know doesn't provide the flexibility, that you know is not going to get the votes to pass, that you know the President is going to veto, and doing what should be done, if, in fact, we care about working people and children, which is to come out with a piece of legislation that really does provide the comptime, the flexibility, without threatening people who really rely on that overtime pay.

Mr. DORGAN. Isn't it the case that the bill that was brought to the floor says to you, if you are an employer and you have somebody working for you making \$14,000 a year, working hard, working two 40-hour weeks, "By the way, we will give you some flexibility; you can tell that worker next week that they are going to work 60 hours, and that you can let them work fewer hours the week after, so as long as it adds up to 80 hours, whatever the requirement of work for the first time?"

Mr. WELLSTONE. Absolutely. It takes the Fair Labor Standards Act, which, as I said the other day, is based on a lot of sweat and tears of a lot of working families, and turns the whole idea of fairness on its head. That is absolutely right.

That is why that piece of legislation went nowhere on the floor of the Senate, nor should it.

That is absolutely correct.

Mr. DORGAN. One additional question: There is a way to do what people have said needs doing, and what, I think, needs doing; that is, honestly provide greater flexibility. If people want to take comptime instead of overtime, there certainly is a way to do that without potentially hurting people at the lower end of the economic ladder. Isn't that the case?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I would say to my colleague that he is correct. I think the key issues are, when you have proposals in here, first, what you do, if you are serious about passing a piece of legislation that is going to help working families, is you take the extreme and harsh parts out, like overturning the 40-hour week.

Second of all, you make sure you don't have a lot of coercion at the workplace, and that employees really do have a choice, whether it be a woman or a man. And, if so, they get either that at time-and-a-half pay or

they get that time-and-a-half off when they want and need to take it.

If you can make sure that happens, if you make sure that you have the important provisions to make sure that happens, and if you make sure there isn't exploitation, then it is absolutely the right direction to go.

That would be, I hope, the common ground.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask to be recognized to use the time reserved for the leader.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I came to the floor, and was interested in the comments offered by my colleague from Minnesota. I agree with his comments. That has been the issue on the floor of the Senate for the last couple of weeks. I expect we will have more debate on it. But I came to talk about several other issues, and I would like to take the time to make some points to my colleagues that are important to me, to my home State of North Dakota, and to others.

So let me begin talking about the first of the three issues.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RESCISSIONS ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, first is the disaster appropriations bill.

Last week the Senate passed an appropriations bill to provide supplemental appropriations for the disasters that have occurred in our country, and it is especially important to me and to our region.

This bill would provide substantial amounts of resources and money for people who have been victims of the disaster in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota.

I am enormously impressed that the House of Representatives last evening passed a disaster bill that contains almost identical amounts of money for the disaster relief that we put in here in the Senate. We added \$500 million to the bill—\$100 million that the President requested be added, and \$400 million above that for what is called community development block grants. That represents the most flexible of Federal spending that goes to State and local governments. It provides great flexibility for them. It is packaged in a way that helps them resolve their problems and help their people who are victims of the disaster.

While I am very pleased of the actions of the House last evening, we now go to conference. I will be a conferee because I am on the Senate Appropriations Committee. But we go to conference with a bill that has awfully good news in it for victims of the disaster in our region of the country. But the bill also contains a very controversial amendment that has nothing to do

with this bill. This is an amendment that has to do with ending Government shutdowns at the end of the fiscal year if the appropriations bills are not passed on time. They are called continuing resolutions. CR's, they are called.

This disaster appropriations bill contains an amendment, dealing with the continuing resolution which is very controversial. The President said long ago would this amendment require him to veto the bill, if it is in the bill. And, nonetheless, the Senate has passed the bill and the House has passed a bill that constrains this very controversial amendment.

I hope very much that this weekend, and in the early days of next week, as we work through this conference, that we can convince all of the people who are interested in this bill that the best interest of the people of the region who are victims of the disaster will be served by removing from this bill these amendments that have nothing to do with the disaster appropriations bill.

We should not in any way attempt to delay or derail a disaster bill with extraneous amendments. It just shouldn't be done. I have not done it in the past. I have voted for disaster funds to help people who have been victims of floods, fires, tornadoes, blizzards, earthquakes, and I have been pleased to vote for those because I think it is important for people all over this country to extend a helping hand to those who are victims of a disaster. But I don't think it is appropriate for Members of Congress to decide this is a bill which is critical and important, that provides needed help to victims, and, therefore, because it is a bill that the President somehow must sign, they should put a controversial amendment on it that has nothing to do with the bill. That is exactly what has happened.

I ask, with great respect to all of those involved in that effort to decide to do something different, to withdraw that amendment from this bill. Let's pass this bill out of conference, send it back to the House and to the Senate, and then to the President in a manner so that he can sign it.

Why on Earth would the Congress include something in a bill that they know the President is going to veto, and thereby just create a delay in the aid to victims?

There are thousands of North Dakotans and Minnesotans who woke up this morning not in their own beds and not in their own homes. They are homeless. It has been weeks since this flood of a 500-year level hit the Red River and evacuated 95 percent of the people in the city of 50,000, Grand Forks, ND. On the other side of the river, 100 percent of the city of East Grand Forks, MN, some 9,000 people were evacuated from their homes.

In Grand Forks, ND, alone, somewhere between 600 and 800 homes are destroyed. No one will move back into those homes. They are destroyed. Another perhaps 1,000 homes are severely