

hours ago to make sure this is passed so rural viewers of America have the opportunity to have local satellite service.

I compliment my friend from Montana for working so hard on this. He has worked very hard, as well as others. I am not going to hold up the continuing resolution to shut down the Government. In the whole scheme of things, we have our own priorities and know what the priorities should be. But it is important to get this provision in here because it does make it even more certain we are going to get this loan guarantee provision passed in the next year.

I thank the majority leader. He has been very gracious in working this out, as well as the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, who I know wants to work this out as well, and my good friend from Montana. I also thank the Banking Committee chairman. He has been very helpful.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is a unanimous consent request before the Senate. Is there objection?

Mr. BURNS. Reserving the right to object, and I will not object, this is a compromise to facilitate the passage of this omnibus bill. We have worked a long time on this. We are working up to a deadline where we could see some blue screens after December 31. But one cannot ignore the fact that even our satellite viewers should be able to receive local broadcasts or network stations in their local areas. The only way we will ever provide any competition for the cables under the rules they live by, under must carry, and still have a viable satellite service that will compete with cables is through this method.

I appreciate the commitment of the Senator from Texas, the chairman of the Banking Committee. I thank my friend from Montana. He has worked hard on this. I thank the majority leader. Without their commitments, we would be talking a different tune now. I also commend the leadership in the House of Representatives for making the same commitment that this legislation be passed early next year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A unanimous consent request is before the Senate. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator from Texas yield to the Senator from West Virginia?

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I was going to speak on this subject of the satellite bill, but I yield to the Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized as one of the managers of the continuing resolution. I am entitled to that recognition. I ask I be recognized immediately after the distinguished Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia has pro-

pounded a unanimous consent request. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues. This has obviously been a very difficult issue. We passed the satellite bill in the Senate unanimously. I think every Member of the Senate realizes the ability to receive television signals in America is critically important. On Saturday, you want to watch Texas A&M. On Sunday, you want to watch the Dallas Cowboys. And one's life is diminished if you cannot do either one of those things.

The problem we had was we passed a bill in the Senate to set up the legal structure to get that job done. They passed a bill in the House to do the same. Neither bill had any loan guarantee language in it. The conferees realized there was a problem, but in their haste to get it done, it is my opinion that we ended up with language that was as good as anybody could have written during that short period of time.

Under the agreement we have reached, we have an opportunity to have representatives of the television stations, the satellite companies, and potential Internet suppliers come in. We have the ability to look at the technology.

We have the ability to look at loan guarantees we have given in the past. We have the ability to get the input of the Treasury. Hopefully, we will have the ability to put together a bill that will maximize the chances that every American will have access to their local television station.

I want my colleagues to know, as I have said many times as this debate has evolved, I intend, by the 30th of March, to report a bill from the Banking Committee. It is my goal not only to write a bill that will deal with this problem, but I hope we can develop a prototype for the future, where we recognize that there are some social goals that are not necessarily met by market forces, and that the market by itself might not provide this service which we have deemed to be important.

The question then is: What can you do to provide this service at the lowest possible cost and in the most efficient manner? It is my goal to put together a bill that will achieve that goal and perhaps be a prototype for similar problems in the future.

So I thank my colleagues. Probably as much effort has gone into this one little issue as anything throughout this whole process. It is an important issue. It involved an important principle. I think we have reached a good conclusion. I am happy about it. I believe, when we complete it, that every Member of the Senate and every Member of Congress and, hopefully, everybody who has a satellite dish or wants one will be happy about it as well.

I thank my colleagues.

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I send to the desk an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. I yield to the majority leader first.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is yielding to the majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, would the majority leader yield?

Mr. COVERDELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. 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.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). Objection is heard.

The clerk will continue to call the roll.

The bill clerk continued with the call of the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FEINGOLD. I object.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded so that the Senator from Minnesota can—

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I object until I can read this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The clerk will continue the call of the roll.

The bill clerk continued with the call of the roll.

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

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill clerk continued with the call of the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.J. RES. 82, H.J. RES. 83, AND H.R. 3194

Mr. LOTT. I thank my colleagues for not objecting.

Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request that has been very

carefully worked out, and after it is agreed to, we have three colloquies that Senator DASCHLE, Senator STEVENS, Senator BYRD, and I would like to enter into.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to H.J. Res. 82, the continuing resolution, and following the reporting by the clerk, there be two first-degree amendments in order, and no second-degree amendments or motions to commit or recommit be in order. Those amendments are the following:

The Byrd-McConnell amendment regarding mining;

The Helms-Edwards amendment regarding disaster funds.

I further ask consent that following the disposition of the amendments, the joint resolution be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

I further ask consent that when the Senate receives H.J. Res. 83, the joint resolution be deemed agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, all without any intervening action or debate.

Finally, I ask consent that when the Senate receives the conference report to accompany H.R. 3194, the reading of the conference report commence immediately following the motion to proceed made by the majority leader, to be followed by a vote on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object, could I ask the majority leader, following the motion to proceed by the majority leader, it says "to be followed by a vote on a motion to proceed." Is this going to be read?

Mr. LOTT. This is after the reading has been completed.

Mr. WELLSTONE. That is our understanding.

Mr. LOTT. That is correct.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Reserving the right to object, I ask the majority leader a question, if I could. We had an understanding prior to removing the quorum call that there is no time limitation.

Mr. LOTT. Correct, there is no time limitation in this agreement.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I thank the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we do have a colloquy we will enter into. I don't know how much debate time will be required since there was no time limitation. It is safe to say there will be a period of time for debate, so if Members want to take this time to get something to eat they will probably have the time to do so. However, I do expect after some reasonable period of time there will be a vote or votes, and, of course, we will proceed to the conference report that has been delivered to the Senate at an appropriate time so it can be read, and for a motion or votes on that.

One important thing I want to emphasize, the Senate can only do what

the Senate can do, and then our action has to go to the House. The House must act. With regard to these continuing resolutions, they have a number of options. I personally am going to vote for the Byrd amendment. I think the Senator is entitled to make his case. I hope the House will accept that. If they don't, it will be back in another venue in another way.

The same thing with regard to the Helms-Edwards disaster funds. An oversight occurred, as I understand it, in the final hours last night with regard to disaster funds for North Carolina. There were about three tranches of money that had been requested for disaster assistance. Two of those were included, which come to a total of around \$800 million. However, \$81 million, an important tranche, was not included. Hopefully, the House will accept this and hopefully the House will see fit to accept them both. I will talk to the Speaker and encourage him to do that.

I want to also emphasize, as has been the case in the past when my State has been involved, when South Dakota or North Dakota has been involved, when any place is involved in a disaster, they should get the assistance they need from a caring American people. That is the way we have been doing it for all the years I have been in the Congress. That is the way it is now and the way it should be.

If for whatever reason in this waning hour of the session this money is not made available, I am committed publicly, along with Senator DASCHLE and the chairman of the committee, that this money will be provided. It will be provided in the first available vehicle after the first of the year, and I presume that will be in a supplemental because there will be a supplemental available, and with the commitment of the chairman and the commitment of the leaders and also the commitment of the American people, those funds will be available. I want to make that part of the RECORD at this point.

I yield the floor for others to respond.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, let me say I agree wholeheartedly with the comments made by the majority leader. I don't know if there is a State right now that is hurting as badly as North Carolina. Senator EDWARDS has made that point over and over and over again to me, and I know that Senator HELMS has worked with Senator EDWARDS to try to provide the most comprehensive response to the situation as we can.

We have come a long way and made a great deal of progress in the legislation pending, the omnibus bill. As things happen when we work late into the night with a lot of different people working, there is always the possibility something will fall through the cracks. I truly believe that is what happened. I believe it was an honest mistake.

As the majority leader has indicated, whether it is fixed tonight, whether it

is fixed before the end of the session, or whether it is fixed immediately when we come back, I don't know how one can get a stronger commitment than the one given by the majority leader or the one I am prepared to give and the one I know the chairman will be prepared to give to accommodate North Carolina.

I appreciate their willingness to work to do this. This should resolve this matter successfully once and for all, either tonight or at some point in the not too distant future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, as chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I regret this error. It was an error. We have put together several bills in one bill and it has been a rather difficult week in many ways. This error occurred because some of the Members of the House who are involved and should have been involved were not notified of the final decision that was made with regard to a request that came from the Senators of North Carolina.

Senator HELMS called me several times on the matter. I talked on the floor and on the phone with Senator EDWARDS before the final arrangement was reached. Frankly, they sought more money than is even in the amendment that was left out of the bill. However, we said we would have to take up the further money in the supplemental that comes before the Congress in the early part of the next year.

Last evening when this bill was being read out, I did receive a call concerning the fact that some of the Members of the House were disturbed by the changes that were proposed. It was determined then that had not been properly conveyed to the Members, although some of the staff, I believe, were notified and were part of it. It is just one of those things that a staff member's interaction did not take place, and I personally did not go over and tell the House Members—I probably should have—but it was one of the final items on the discussions we had, including those that involved the White House representatives who were before our committee yesterday.

As a consequence, I want to assure the Senators from North Carolina, I do believe that once we have reached a decision such as that, and we felt it had been cleared out, it is our responsibility now to make certain this commitment is made good, and we will do that. This bill will do it if the House will accept it and send it to the President. If that does not happen, we will, without any question, take the matter up in the first supplemental that comes before the Congress next year. We will have the supplemental bill for Kosovo coming. That was another request we received which was not fulfilled in this series of bills that are before the Senate now.

I want to assure Senator EDWARDS and Senator HELMS on this side—and

both have been very diligent in seeking these moneys—that we will put this money in the next bill if this is not accepted by the House. I have every reason to believe it will be accepted by the House. I intend to get on the phone and talk to my friends and make sure they understand. If there was an error, it was one that was caused by the intensity of the work that was going on by the staffs of five different subcommittees trying to put a bill together, along with all the other bills that were being considered, many of which were rejected and are not in this bill that we all considered over this last week.

I do hope the Senators from North Carolina will accept that assurance. I can assure them this is an \$81 million item and it is, in my judgment, small compared to the amount of money that will be in the next supplemental for the people who were affected by Hurricane Floyd anyway, so we will make up for this problem. We will make up the money, and we certainly will see to it that it is there.

I plead with the Members of the House to pass the bill tonight. In any event, we will take care of that error as quickly as we can.

Second, with regard to my good friend from West Virginia and his amendment and that of Senator McCONNELL and the Western Senators, I think there is a clear, growing understanding of the provisions of this amendment. I have been saying, as Senator BYRD has been saying for some time, this does not change existing law. It is an amendment to try to preserve the status quo until Congress has a chance to review the changes that would take place if decisions of the Solicitor's Office and decisions of one Federal judge were followed, which would affect the mining industry of the whole Nation. I hope the House will certainly see fit to send that measure to the President, so we can see what the White House is going to do with that.

But for now, I hope the Senators involved will let us get on with the major bill, which is going to take some time. I again express my regret to the Senators involved that this incident has taken place, and we will do our best to see it does not happen. But the distinguished minority leader reminded me, on an amendment that we had on a bill earlier this year, a similar thing happened when there were just too many things going into one bill. Our provision was left out, but it got back in the next bill, I assure you.

Mr. President, I do hope the Senators involved will give us the courtesy now of permitting the Appropriations Committee to present, at last, the omnibus appropriations bill that will fulfill our commitment to pass 13 appropriations bills this year.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I know the Senator from North Carolina might want to make a comment or ask a question at this point. I will be glad to yield the floor to him, or yield for him to do that while retaining the floor.

Mr. EDWARDS. I thank the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, the human suffering and devastation we incurred in North Carolina is absolutely unparalleled. Our people have never suffered and struggled the way they are suffering right now. This storm has completely devastated us. Our farmers are in the worst shape they have ever been in.

I appreciate very much the majority leader's commitment, Senator STEVENS' commitment, and the minority leader's commitment. We have talked throughout this process on a daily basis. We had an agreement, a commitment to two things, basically. One was a loan forgiveness program, which has been talked about, and, second, some language that would help the payment for structural damage on farms in North Carolina.

I appreciate very much the commitment we have received today. I do have to say I am counting on my colleagues' commitments—the majority leader's commitment, Senator STEVENS' commitment, Senator DASCHLE's commitment—to do everything in their power to get this thing passed in this Congress; that it will be included in the CR we are discussing right now and that, when it goes to the House side, the majority leader will speak to the Speaker. We will do everything in our power, Senator HELMS and myself, to make sure that happens. But it is critical to Senator HELMS and me that we not need to rely on the commitment to do something after the first of the year, that we get this done tonight or tomorrow.

With that, I thank the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. I will say on behalf of Senator HELMS, he has been following this very closely. I have spoken to him, and Senator EDWARDS has been in constant conversation with him, as has Senator STEVENS. He understands what we are doing here, and we have made a commitment to him, which we certainly are going to honor, and to Senator EDWARDS, that we will pursue this aggressively with the other Chamber. This money is going to be available, hopefully in this CR; if not, the first available vehicle next year.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000—CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the conference report to accompany the DC appropriations bill, H.R. 3194, and the conference report be considered as having been read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FEINGOLD. I ask for the reading.

Mr. LOTT. Is there objection?

Mr. FEINGOLD. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. I ask that the Senate now proceed to the conference report, and before the clerk begins reading, I announce to my colleagues, Senator KOHL has indicated to me, following the conclusion of the reading, he will insist on the conduct of a rollcall vote on the motion to proceed to the conference report.

Therefore, a procedural rollcall vote will occur at approximately 9:30 this evening.

Mr. FEINGOLD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the conference report.

The legislative clerk read the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of November 17, 1999.)

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. MACK. 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.

Mr. LOTT. 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. LOTT. Mr. President, I believe the regular order is for the vote to begin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed. 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 Missouri (Mr. ASHCROFT), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST), the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) are necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 80, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 369 Leg.]

YEAS—80

Abraham	Biden	Campbell
Akaka	Bingaman	Chafee, L.
Allard	Breaux	Cleland
Baucus	Brownback	Cochran
Bayh	Bryan	Collins
Bennett	Burns	Coverdell