

Networks, describing how Microsoft's anticompetitive conduct crippled their technology and hurt the company, although I have to say Real Networks has been doing very well ever since because of their fascinating innovations and the tremendous abilities that they have in this field. However, if violations of the antitrust laws are not pursued against powerful companies like the Microsofts of the world, as the Senator from Washington suggests, many of the technology companies, not to mention the consumers, in the states of Washington, Utah and all across the nation, will suffer. Mr. President, the survival of these companies means jobs, it means innovation, it means competition in the digital market, and it means the availability of consumer choice.

I just hope that Microsoft can learn from its mistakes in court and its earlier mistakes here in Congress. Frankly, some of their efforts here have reminded me of those who would tie themselves to railroad tracks and wait for a train to come just to make a point. Microsoft's misguided legal and legislative advice has not helped its case to date, and I would hope, for Microsoft's case, that they would not initiate a foolish political protest which could leave them even more damaged than they are now. Frankly, I don't think this train is going to stop.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time and turn the floor over for my dear friend from South Carolina.

Mr. HOLLINGS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. HOLLINGS. I thank the distinguished Chair and my distinguished colleague for setting aside this particular time.

(The remarks of Mr. HOLLINGS pertaining to the introduction of S. 605 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). The distinguished Senator from Idaho is recognized.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Kristine Svinichi, a congressional fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of the discussion on the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1999.

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

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

(The remarks of Mr. CRAIG pertaining to the introduction of S. 607 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

(The remarks of Mr. CRAIG, Mr. MURKOWSKI and Mr. GRAMS pertaining to the introduction S. 608 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. MURKOWSKI pertaining to the introduction of S. 609 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SOCIAL SECURITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today to make my maiden speech on the floor of the Senate. It is about a subject near and dear to me, protecting and strengthening Social Security for this generation and the next.

In the other body, I served on the Social Security Subcommittee for 8 years. Over the last 4 years, I had the privilege of being the chairman. It was the most satisfying task I have had since coming to the Congress. In the subcommittee, we held numerous hearings over the past several years on Social Security reform and how to tackle the looming problem that will be facing us in the next century.

I have already introduced my own personal Social Security reform bill. It is called The Social Security for the 21st Century Act. Basically, Social Security reform is a two-sided coin. The first side of the coin is that we must guarantee the benefits that have been promised our older workers, workers who have paid into the program for years. We must assure them that their investment is safe and their benefits will always be there when they are needed.

The second side of the coin is that we have to find a way to give younger workers a reason to believe in the program, a reason to believe that they will get a reasonable rate of return on the money they invest in Social Security taxes throughout their working careers.

My bill focuses primarily on the second side of the coin. It gives taxpayers a one-time, voluntary option to set aside a small portion of their income that they have to pay into FICA taxes,

and to invest this money in their own retirement security account.

The Social Security for the 21st Century Act enables them to begin by investing just 2.5 percent of their FICA taxes each year, and slowly increasing this amount by 2.5 percent annually over 20 years until eventually taxpayers can invest one-half of all of their FICA taxes in their own personal retirement security account. In return for choosing to set up a retirement security account, a taxpayer would agree to a 50-percent reduction in Social Security benefits.

The most important point about my bill is that it is voluntary, not mandatory. It gives people a choice, and it does not force them to do anything they do not want to do. If they are satisfied with what they have now, they can keep their benefits simply by doing nothing. But, if taxpayer-investors elect to set up a retirement security account, they would be able to manage their investment just like the Government workers do today in the successful Federal employee Thrift Savings Plan. Investors would have the additional choice to stop investing, but they could not do it again later on. They couldn't choose to come back.

They would have at least five options for investing their money. They could elect to put their money into a number of investments: stocks, fixed income, Government securities—whatever best meets their needs. There would be an annual open season so they could adjust their portfolios. In short, this would give Americans more control over their futures, and enable them to harness the power of markets and the miracle of compound interest.

Now, I know that many Americans, especially older taxpayers, might not want to make any changes at all to Social Security. We should respect that. They have been promised their benefits for years and they have relied on that in good faith. That is the second side of the coin. To protect these folks, and our most vulnerable citizens, my legislation guarantees the Social Security safety net. It does not raise the retirement age, it does not cut benefits, and it does not cut COLAs.

But I think that many workers, if given a choice, would opt to set aside some of their money and invest it in a retirement security account. Based on our experience with the Thrift Savings Plan, I think it would be a significant step towards stronger financial security for all Americans.

The TSP has been a great success for Federal workers. Over the past 10 years, the three investment choices available to workers in the TSP have average annual rates of return of 17.5 percent, 8.5 percent, and 7.6 percent.

That means the worst performing of these three funds, the G fund, which invests strictly in Government securities, has returned over 7 percent annually to investors. That compares very, very well to the 2 to 3 percent annual return that most Americans get for

their money that they pay into Social Security. Compounded over decades, the differences in the rates of return are staggering.

Under my bill, taxpayers will own their own retirement secured accounts, and they, not the Federal Government, can control how their money is invested. My legislation follows the scrupulous conflict of interest rules that have worked well for the TSP to make sure that Government cannot vote shares of stock or manipulate markets. Best of all, withdrawals from this retirement secured account will be tax free, because we should not need to penalize Americans who successfully plan for their retirement.

Congress has wisely moved in recent years to help retirees keep more of their own money. Social Security reform must continue that trend. I believe Social Security reform must be voluntary. It should give taxpayers more, not fewer, investment choices, and it must protect the most vulnerable Americans who are counting on these benefits. It is important to bring as many ideas to the table as possible as part of a national dialogue about Social Security reform. These are the principles I have tried to follow in writing this bill, and I will work with anyone on my legislation and on any other proposals to improve the Social Security system.

Mr. President, we have a golden window of opportunity now to reform Social Security. Our economy is the strongest it has been in decades. We have a budget surplus to give us some flexibility in making difficult decisions. Now we have to find the political will. It is a challenge we must meet.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator DURBIN, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

DELAY IN CAPITOL VISITORS CENTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I didn't know Jacob Chestnut, but I did know Detective John Gibson, as a result of an unfortunate incident with a member of my family. Officer Gibson reacted in a very valiant way on something a couple months before he was murdered last July in this Capitol complex.

Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson, about 9 months ago, were murdered. They were murdered when an assailant went through a door, shot both of them, killed both of them, and was after other people as well. The Presiding Officer, being a physician/surgeon, was on the floor and rendered great aid and assistance to others who were injured, for which we are all grateful. After that tragedy, many of us stood on this floor and talked about the need to do something to stop these incidents in the future.

Mr. President, I look at this in a number of different ways. I look at it as someone who knows what a valiant man John Gibson was and, of course, I am sure Officer Chestnut also; I just did not know him on a personal basis. I approach this on the basis that I am a Senator and have some responsibility for this Capitol complex. I approach it as a person who is concerned about my staff and the visitors who come to this complex being safe and secure.

I approach it also as a former Capitol police officer. I have great empathy and great understanding, I believe, for what police officers go through in this facility. What we talked about last year, after this incident, is that finally, after more than a decade, we were going to do something to create a visitors center in the east plaza. In this beautiful Capitol complex, we have a big parking lot; we have asphalt. We have talked about having a nice grassy area, as well as an underground area where people can come and enter the Capitol.

Now, if people want to come and take a tour through the Capitol, they stand out on the east plaza, on that asphalt. No matter the temperature, it can be 5 degrees below zero, they still stand out there. There is no place else for them to go. If it is 100 degrees, like it gets here in August, they still stand out there. There is no place else for them to go. There is no place for them to get a drink of water. There is no place for them to go to the bathroom. They stand out on the asphalt waiting to come through the Capitol.

After the unfortunate murders of these two police officers, we talked about how we were going to do something. We immediately authorized a bill to allow construction of this facility. After that was done, we appropriated money to initiate the planning of this visitors center. In fact, we are no closer to completion of this facility today than when these two officers were gunned down by this man, this terrorist.

We need to move forward with this effort. However, we have created a bureaucratic nightmare. We have four or five committees and subcommittees which have jurisdiction over how it is going to be constructed, when it is going to be constructed, and who is going to be constructing it, in what manner it is going to be constructed. We have heard lately that other committees want to get involved. We do not have enough now. We want to add some more.

I say, as a member of two committees that are talking about this, out of the three or four that are involved, I think we should get on with the business at hand. I understand the need for oversight, I understand very much, but there comes a time when we have said enough and we must move forward to do what we have to do.

This is not a waste of taxpayers' money. If we have this beautiful facility, not only will it be a convenience

for the public but it will be a safety factor, because it will give a way to funnel people in this Capitol so that proper measures can be taken to find out if they are carrying weapons or bombs or anything else that could be of danger to the people inside this facility. In addition to that, it will be a place where people can go to the bathroom and escape from the elements. It will probably be set up so that there will be places for them to eat. In effect, it will be a place where there will be revenues gained from this facility. We owe this facility to the two officers who were gunned down 9 months ago, we owe it to our staffs, for we, as Members, are responsible for their safety and security. We owe it to the millions of people who come to this facility on a yearly basis. We are very proud of this U.S. Capitol; all Americans are. We should be able to come to this Capitol without fearing for our safety.

For more than 10 years, well before last year's tragedy, there had been a lot of talk about building a Capitol complex visitors center, but it has only been talk. It is about time we turn this talk into action, for the good of the country.

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.

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

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak for 10 minutes.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Thank you.

NEED FOR A VISITORS CENTER

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I came to the floor to speak for a moment of personal privilege, but I heard my colleague from Nevada speaking about the need for a visitors center. I would like to add my support for his calling for us to resolve whatever difficulties there may be and try to get this visitors center constructed for all the good reasons he outlined.

There are millions and millions of young people and adults who come to this beautiful building. This really is the people's house. There really is no place for them to rest and to have a refreshment and to get someplace away from the hot Sun. The lines are quite long.

For all the reasons he laid out in his few minutes, I add my voice to how important I think it is for us to get on with the business of a visitors center for this Capitol.