

back to the Senate and to the Congress in a relatively brief period of time, as soon as possible, what is happening with the Food Stamp Program in this country. We need to know.

There was a dramatic piece in the Washington Post about 2 weeks ago. I could hardly bear to read it. It was the front page of the B section. It was a picture of an 8-year-old child, a little boy. The whole piece was devoted to hungry children in the District of Columbia.

The gist of the article was that in August—now—the summer schools are going to shut down and the breakfasts will not be there, the School Lunch Program will not be there, and there is no food at home.

In this particular family, this grandmother with four children does not have enough money to feed her children. What I want to know is, whatever happened to the Food Stamp Program? That has been our safety net program. What is going on when we have a dramatic rise in the use of food shelves and food pantries in this country? The Catholic Church network study pointed this out just last month.

What is going on when 675,000 low-income people are removed from medical assistance as a result of the welfare bill? What is going on when the vast majority of these women are working at jobs that still do not get them and their families out of poverty? What is going on when we are unwilling to do an honest policy evaluation of this legislation, because very soon in many States there will be a drop-dead date certain, and all families, all women, and all children will be cut off from any welfare assistance at all. Before that happens, we need to know what is happening with this legislation.

I have come to the floor of the Senate today to basically challenge my colleagues to make sure this stays in the conference committee and to announce I will be out here on the floor with an amendment if it gets eliminated from the conference committee, and to announce we ought to also have a study of the Food Stamp Program to find out why it is not reaching children and families who need the help, and also to directly challenge the White House and the President. It is not enough to say we have cut the rolls by 40 percent. The question is, Have we reduced the poverty by 40 percent? We have not.

It is not enough to say these mothers are now working. The question is, Are they working jobs that will enable them and their children to no longer be poor in our country? That is the goal which I do not believe has been met.

We are talking about the lives of poor women and poor children. They deserve to be on our radar screen. They deserve an honest, rigorous policy evaluation so that we, as decisionmakers, know whether or not, by our actions, we are helping these women and children or whether or not we are hurting these women and children. We ought to

have the courage to step up to the plate.

I think we are about ready to start on the Ag appropriations bill. I will yield the floor. I look forward to this debate. I came down here on the floor to debate this bill. This is the crisis that is staring my State of Minnesota in the face. I am going to leave it up to Senator HARKIN or Senator DASCHLE to start out debate on our side, but I am very anxious to be in this debate and very anxious to speak for farmers and for agriculture.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

**AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000—Resumed**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1233, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1233) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I believe we have a unanimous consent request now and some motions that we will need to make. It might take a few minutes to get through this.

First, I ask unanimous consent that Senator DASCHLE be recognized to offer his amendment relative to disaster assistance and, following the reporting by the clerk, the amendment be laid aside and Senator COCHRAN be recognized to offer his disaster assistance amendment. I further ask unanimous consent that debate run concurrently on both amendments, with the votes occurring in a stacked sequence at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, the first in relation to the COCHRAN amendment to be followed by a vote in relation to the DASCHLE amendment, as amended, if amended, with 2 minutes of debate prior to each vote. I further ask unanimous consent that no amendments be in order to either amendment prior to the votes.

I ask unanimous consent that following those votes, Senator JEFFORDS be recognized to offer his amendment relative to dairy and immediately following the reporting by the clerk, Senator LOTT be recognized to send a closure motion to the desk and that closure vote occur at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, with the mandatory quorum being waived notwithstanding rule XXII.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. KOHL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. Since objection has been heard, I have no alternative other than to offer a series of amendments. This is important because we do need to move forward with the Agriculture appropriations bill. We brought it up earlier, this past month. It became embroiled in an unrelated issue, and we had to set it aside.

The farmers in America and the consumers of America and the children of America are depending on this very important legislation going through the process. We are talking about \$60.7 billion, probably more than that by the time it is completed, for agriculture in America. We need to get it completed.

I know there are some issues that cause a lot of concern: How do you deal with a disaster in America, when do you deal with it, and how would any assistance be apportioned among the farmers that have been impacted by disasters in a number of ways. And also, of course, we have this very important dairy issue. I have advised Senator COCHRAN, Senator JEFFORDS, Senator KOHL, and Senator DASCHLE to make sure everybody understands what I am doing here. I am doing it because I do think it is so important that we move forward on this bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 1499

(Purpose: To provide emergency and income loss assistance to agricultural producers)

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I send an amendment to the desk on behalf of Senator DASCHLE and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT], for Mr. HARKIN, for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. KERREY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mrs. LINCOLN, and Mr. SAR-BANES, proposes an amendment numbered 1499.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Amendments Submitted.")

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1500 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1499

(Purpose: To make a perfecting amendment)

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, on behalf of Senator COCHRAN and others, I send a second-degree amendment to the desk and ask for its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT], for Mr. COCHRAN, proposes an amendment numbered 1500 to amendment No. 1499.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Amendments Submitted.")

MOTION TO RECOMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 1501 (Purpose: To restrict the use of certain funds appropriated to the Agricultural Marketing Service)

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I now move to recommit the bill with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment, and I send the motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion and the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT] moves to recommit the pending bill to the Appropriations Committee with instructions to report back forthwith with the following amendment.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 21, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel of the Department of Agriculture to implement—

(1) sections 143 or 147(3) of the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7253, 7256(3));

(2) the final decision for the consolidation and reform of Federal milk marketing orders, as published in the Federal Register on April 2, 1999 (64 Fed. Reg. 16025); or

(3) section 738 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277; 112 Stat. 2681-30).

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the cloture motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the pending motion regarding the dairy compact amendment:

Trent Lott, Jim Jeffords, Susan M. Collins, John H. Chafee, Fred Thompson, Richard Shelby, Olympia J. Snowe, Christopher Bond, Jesse Helms, Paul Coverdell, John Ashcroft, Strom Thurmond, John Breaux, Jay Rockefeller, Arlen Specter, and Patrick Leahy.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I now withdraw the motion to recommit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

Pending is the second-degree amendment offered by the majority leader on behalf of Senator COCHRAN.

Mr. LOTT. For the information of all Senators who may have missed a step or two there, a cloture motion was just filed on the dairy amendment. The vote on the cloture motion will occur Wednesday under Rule XXII, unless agreement can be reached to set a time certain for that vote.

I encourage Senators on all sides of this issue to communicate with each other and see if there is some accommodation that could be worked out so that both sides can find it acceptable. In the meantime, it is my hope that we can continue to debate the important disaster relief amendments.

I thank my colleagues. I am delighted to yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from Mississippi, or to Senator DASCHLE if he has any comment at this time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I will be very brief. I thank the majority leader for moving this process along to accommodate a procedure that takes into account a number of very important matters that we hope to resolve this week. I think this procedure will do it. I also note for my colleagues that I designate the Senator from Iowa, the ranking member of the committee, to be my designee in offering the amendment.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COCHRAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, as I understand the parliamentary situation at this time, pending before the Senate is a second-degree amendment to an amendment offered on behalf of the Democratic leader to provide disaster assistance and economic assistance to our Nation's farmers.

The amendment, which is the amendment in the second degree offered by the majority leader on my behalf, provides a wide range of benefits to individual farmers and ranchers who, under the terms of this legislation, are eligible for disaster assistance because of economic losses and disasters that have occurred by reason of vagaries in the weather and other conditions that will cause these farmers to undergo unusual hardship.

We think this amendment is better and a more sensitive approach to the real needs of those involved in production agriculture than the proposal coming from the Democratic leader. Here is why. Most of the funds that are appropriated in this amendment for economic and disaster assistance go directly to the agriculture producer who has been victimized by floods or drought or economic catastrophes affecting his ability to earn a profit this year.

On the other hand, much of the assistance that is appropriated or funded

in the Democrats' package goes to continue or expand Federal programs, to enlarge programs. In other words, the money is going to the Government to expand and administer programs that either have to work, in some cases, or really do nothing to improve the farmer's ability to derive income from his labor. So that is a major distinction that I hope Senators will consider as they try to decide which of these proposals to support.

As Senators know, most of the funds that go to protect income, or support the production of agriculture commodities in our country, are in the form of assistance called AMTA payments. These payments are transition payments that were begun under the last farm bill to prepare farmers for the time when predictable subsidies under the old farm bill program are reduced and then finally eliminated. Over this 5-year period under this new farm law, the transition payments are made to help support farmers as they become accustomed to agriculture without the benefit of the old subsidy payments. Farmers are now free to make planting decisions, for example, for themselves, as indicated by the condition of the market and the likelihood of crops being productive and efficiently produced, rather than what the Government tells them they should produce under the restraints of Federal law.

Many farmers are beginning to make these decisions and shift from one program crop to another, without running the risk of losing Federal Government support. In order to show that the economic conditions and the market conditions have been so severe as to cause farmers not to be able to operate profitably under the new transition payment system, that payment is doubled under the Cochran amendment. And so instead of receiving \$5,000 as a transition payment, a person who is entitled to that benefit under existing law this year will get twice that amount as an economic assistance payment from the Federal Government. A total of \$5.54 billion will be paid to agriculture producers for market transition payments under the Cochran amendment. This is a 100 percent increase in a producer's 1999 payment under the existing farm bill.

Other benefits that are available to agriculture producers under this amendment would include \$500 million in direct payments to soybean and oil-seed producers; \$350 million in assistance to livestock and dairy producers, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture. The amendment would also suspend the budget deficit reduction assessment on sugar producers for the remainder of the farm bill, as long as no Federal budget deficit exists.

There will be a direct payment provided in this amendment to producers of quota and non-quota peanuts, equal to 5 percent of the current loan rate. The Cotton Step Two Export Program is reinstated in this amendment. There is an increase in the current loan deficiency payment limit from \$75,000 to

\$150,000. There is, additionally, a provision in this bill that expresses the sense of the Congress, encouraging the President to be more aggressive in strengthening trade negotiating authority for American agriculture and expressing the Congress' objectives for future agriculture trade negotiations. The amendment also requests that the President evaluate and make recommendations on the effectiveness of our existing export and food aid programs.

If you add up all of the direct benefits that are payable, they have been scored by the Congressional Budget Office as amounting to a total of \$6.67 billion for fiscal year 2000. The added cost over the next 3 years, from 2000 to 2004, would add another \$309 million to the cost of the bill, for a total of \$6.979 billion in total cost from fiscal year 2000 to 2004, as scored by the Congressional Budget Office.

Madam President, Senators will remember that when we first brought this bill from the committee to the floor of the Senate, there was a great deal of concern about whether or not there should be a disaster program included in a title of the bill. We had asked the administration to submit a budget request for any funds that were expected to be needed. We have had no response whatsoever from the administration to that request. We attached that as an amendment in the Committee on Appropriations. We discussed it on the floor of the Senate when this bill was before the Senate earlier, and I am very distressed that we have yet to hear any request made by the administration for this assistance. So in spite of the absence of cooperation in trying to identify and work together on a program that would be sensitive to the problems in production agriculture, we are moving to suggest to the Senate that this is a program that ought to be adopted.

I have additional comments to make. I will be glad to respond to questions that may arise from Senators on the content of this legislation to try to answer any questions that others may have. But I know we will soon have a vote that is scheduled to occur on another bill that was debated in the Senate earlier today. In an effort to accommodate friends who have asked for time to talk on their amendment, I will yield the floor at this time so other Senators may speak.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I wonder if the Senator will yield. I would like to ask the Senator a question.

Mr. COCHRAN. I would be happy to respond to the Senator.

Mr. HARKIN. I didn't get a copy of the amendment. What is the bottom line? What is the total package?

Mr. COCHRAN. The Congressional Budget Office has scored the items I discussed at \$6.67 billion for fiscal year 2000, and the total cost during fiscal years 2000 to 2004 is scored at \$6.979 billion.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, today all across America most people are doing pretty well. Unemployment is at its lowest rate in years. The stock market keeps going up. Our gross national product is going up at a great rate. As we now know, we have a surplus for the first time in almost 30 years in the Federal budget. We just had a lengthy debate last week on what we are going to do with that surplus. Our friends on the other side want to take most of it and give it, through a tax break, to people mostly in the upper-income brackets.

If you just looked at that, you would think we shouldn't be worried too much about what is happening in America; things look pretty good.

Out of the glare of Wall Street, far from the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, sort of silently and quietly, American farmers and ranchers are losing their businesses. They are at the end of their rope. Our small towns and communities that dot our countryside are facing a bleak winter, with the prospect that things will get even worse after the harvest is in and the snow falls.

The situation facing American agriculture today—according to bankers, farm economists, and agricultural economists from many of our universities—is the worst it has been since the Great Depression. We have to respond to that. We have to respond in a way that is meaningful. That is what our first-degree amendment does.

I listened to my friend from Mississippi describe this amendment. I guess my response basically would be, "Nice try." Would it help farmers? Would the Republican amendment help farmers? Why, sure. Any little bit would help. Does it get to the underlying problem? Does it really help get our farmers through this winter and into next year? The answer is no. It is hopelessly too short.

While I appreciate the effort by my friends on the Republican side to come up with a last-minute amendment to perhaps put out a smokescreen on what is really happening in agriculture and what we need to do to respond to the crisis, it is a nice effort, but it really doesn't do it. Our hard-working, dedicated, progressive farmers and ranchers across this country don't just need a little bit of a handout that the Republican amendment will give them. What they need is a package of help that will not only get them through this summer and this fall but through next winter so they can get back on their feet again next year.

You will hear a lot of talk about how one of the problems is our lack of exports. I just want to point out that even though the United States has a trade deficit, one sector that earns us money and that has a positive trade balance is agriculture. But there are those who would have you believe it is

because of the lack of exports that our farmers are in such bad shape. Here is the chart that puts the lie to that.

For wheat, rice, corn, and soybeans—the major commodities we export—the exports are fully up this year over what they were in the previous couple of years. We are exporting more. If we are exporting more, what is the problem? The problem is, there is no price and farmers aren't getting anything for their commodities.

Here is what has happened to soybeans just in my State of Iowa since the fall of 1997: Basically about a 45-percent decrease in the value of that crop. The same is true with corn. There have been precipitous drops just in the last year and a half. It is not a lack of total exports. It is a lack of the money and the price that farmers are getting.

While we need to get an emergency package of money out to farmers, we need to do it now. We also have to be about changing the farm policy. We cannot go on another year under the Freedom to Farm bill and be back here again next year looking at another package of several billion dollars. The Freedom to Farm bill has failed miserably. It has failed our Nation. It has failed our farmers. It has failed our rural communities.

I have an article that was in the Kansas paper back in 1995 when we passed the Freedom to Farm bill by my friend from Kansas, Senator ROBERTS. He said:

Finally, Freedom to Farm enhances the farmer's total economic situation. In fact, the bill results in the highest net farm income over the next seven years of any proposal before Congress.

I hate to say it to my friend from Kansas, but net farm income in key farming areas is down dramatically. For the principal field crops, net farm income is going to be down about 29 percent this year from the average of the last 5 years. That is why we are facing one of the greatest depressions in agriculture since the 1930s. That is why halfhearted measures are not going to work. That is why the bill we have come up with really does address the magnitude of the problem. It is deep, and it is a very large problem and one that has to be addressed efficiently.

The amendment that Senator DASCHLE and I, along with Senator DORGAN, Senator KERREY, Senator JOHNSON, Senator CONRAD, Senator BAUCUS, Senator DURBIN, Senator WELLSTONE, Senator LINCOLN, and Senator SARBANES have just sent to the desk provides for a total of \$10.79 billion to farmers and ranchers for this next year.

There is a great gulf of difference between what the Republicans have set up and what we are proposing. First, the Republicans are proposing that we send all of this money out in a direct payment to farmers; an AMTA payment, it is called, a market transition payment. Our payments go out in supplemental loan deficiency payments,

which means they are based upon a farmer's production—what that farmer actually produced this year, not what they did 10 or 20 years ago. In that way, it is more fair and it is more direct to the actual farmers this year. We include \$2.6 billion for disaster assistance.

We include a number of other measures such as \$212 million for emergency conservation. We have had a lot of floods and a lot of damages in a lot of States. We need to repair the damage to farm and ranch land and enhance our conservation. For emergency trade provision, we have \$978 million for purchases of commodities for humanitarian assistance. We have people starving all over the world. We have a Public Law 480 food assistance program and related programs. Our bill provides about \$1 billion to take the surplus food we have and send it around the world to starving people. The Republican proposal does not include that.

We include money for emergency economic development for our rural towns, small towns, and communities that are hit hard. Our total package of \$10.79 billion addresses the magnitude of the problem. It is that big.

I say to the people who think \$10.79 billion is a lot of money, we passed a tax break bill last week for \$792 billion, most of which goes to upper-income people in this country. Very little will ever go to our farmers and our ranchers around America.

This point in time is going to decide what happens to rural America this winter. That is why it is so important to act now. That is why it is so important that we get the money out that is needed—not some halfhearted measure in a way that doesn't address the real and devastating economic problems that farmers have all over America.

I will have more to say about my amendment later.

Mr. COCHRAN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. HARKIN. I yield to the Senator.

Mr. COCHRAN. My colleague asked me whether the Congressional Budget Office had scored the amendment that I offered. I ask my colleague the same question: What does the Congressional Budget Office say the amendment that the Democratic leader has offered will cost the American taxpayer over the next few years?

Mr. HARKIN. I answer to my friend from Mississippi that all of the items in our amendment are direct appropriations for next year. The only items that are not are the Cotton Step Two Export Program, and that is scored by CBO at \$439 million for 3 years, and the adjustment to the payment limitations.

Mr. COCHRAN. Does that mean that the exact dollar amount set aside for each of the programs such as the Wetlands Restoration Program, the EQIP program—which is an emergency conservation program—emergency watershed program, all total \$212 million in the bill?

Mr. HARKIN. That is the amount of money provided for those items.

Mr. COCHRAN. Emergency trade provisions, humanitarian assistance, cooperative program, for a total of \$988 million; is that what the Senator is saying the CBO has verified the cost to be?

Mr. HARKIN. That is the amount of money we specifically provide in the amendment.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. HARKIN. I am delighted to yield, and I want to thank the Senator from North Dakota with whom I serve on the agriculture appropriations subcommittee.

I appreciate the very strong help in putting this package together. It has been a very difficult year for farmers in North Dakota as well as Iowa and I can say without fear of contradiction the Senator from North Dakota has been one of the instrumental people in actually putting this package together.

I appreciate the support.

Mr. DORGAN. I want to address the question to the Senator from Iowa. The discussion we had about income support for family farmers in the nature of a disaster program being income support in the form of a transition payment or AMTA, the whole notion of a transition payment is to transition farmers out of a farm program into the free market.

This chart shows what has happened to the price of wheat since 1996. This chart is similar to the corn chart and the price of corn which the Senator from Iowa shared. This is what has happened to the so-called "free market" for wheat. The price of wheat has collapsed. The notion of a transition was philosophically by those in this Chamber who said let's transition people out of a farm program.

Isn't that the base of an AMTA payment?

Mr. HARKIN. As I read the debate and all the talk on the Freedom to Farm bill when it passed, the idea was that we would transition out of farm programs with AMTA payments.

Mr. DORGAN. This is the right subject and the right time; we are debating the right issues. The Senator said it well. We have an economy that is growing and prospering, more people are working, fewer people are unemployed, fewer people on welfare, inflation is down. So many good things are going on in this country, but in rural America family farmers are in desperate trouble through no fault of their own.

If any group of Americans found their income had collapsed, or if the salary for Members of Congress had fallen where income for family farmers had fallen, we would have dealt with this immediately and a long time ago. The same is true with corporate earnings.

However, we are here through no fault of the family farmers but because they are trying to do business in a marketplace where prices have just

collapsed. If we don't take action soon, we won't have many family farmers left across the bread basket of the country.

Mr. HARKIN. The Senator is absolutely correct. The Freedom to Farm bill was premised that we would put farmers on the free market. As the Senator from Kansas said, they would have high net income for the next several years. However, Freedom to Farm ripped the safety net out from agriculture.

As I pointed out, our exports are up. We are exporting more of our key commodities, but there is no price. The safety net has been taken out from underneath agriculture. Farmers all across America recognize that Freedom to Farm has been a total and absolute disaster when it comes to protecting farm income, and it has to be changed. That is why the first thing we need to do is get the emergency package, but then we have to address the end-of-the-line problem of Freedom to Farm.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I have a question.

Mr. HARKIN. I yield for a question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I actually have three quick questions. First of all, dealing with the urgency of now, is it not true that the Senator from Iowa and other Democrat Senators have tried to pass an emergency assistance package and we have been working on this for some time? Would the Senator from Iowa give a little bit of a historical background? I think farmers are wondering how much more has to happen to them before there is some assistance.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank my friend from Minnesota. I also thank him for his help in putting this package together.

The Senator is right. We started this spring, in the emergency supplemental appropriations bill, trying to add some money. We got beat on a nearly straight party-line vote. All but one Republican voted no; Democrats voted yes.

We then came back, as the Senator from Minnesota knows, and tried it again in the subcommittee on this bill. We again lost on a straight party-line vote.

Now we are on the floor. I will say we are making some progress. At least now our friends on the other side recognize there is a problem. At least they are willing to address it somewhat. The amendment that the Senator from Mississippi sent to the desk is better than nothing, but it is not going to do enough to help get our farmers through this winter. It is only a little more than half of what is needed.

Mr. WELLSTONE. If I might ask my colleague from Iowa a second question to be clear about what is at stake—we will all have a chance to speak later. My colleague from Iowa says that what the Senator from Mississippi introduces is an emergency assistance package for farmers to try to get some income out there to families, and my colleague says it does about half the job.

Mr. HARKIN. A little bit over half. Give them the benefit of the doubt—about half, though.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Where are the gaps? In other words, I think people assume, if we pass something that we say is going to enable them to continue to stay on the farm until we deal with the structural problems, it is going to help them. Again, could the Senator emphasize the difference?

Mr. HARKIN. I will be delighted to respond to the Senator, but I understand our time is up.

Madam President, if I might inquire what the parliamentary situation is right now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate resumes consideration of S. 335 in 15 seconds.

Mr. HARKIN. I understand there is a vote at 5:30.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. HARKIN. Further parliamentary inquiry. After that vote is over, will we return then to the Agriculture appropriations bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at the end of that vote, when we return to this bill, the Senator from Iowa be recognized to complete his statement. It will not take very long to complete my statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Chair hears none. It is so ordered.

---

DECEPTIVE MAIL PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to vote on S. 335, after recognizing Senator EDWARDS for 10 minutes, Senator LEVIN for 5 minutes, and Senator COLLINS for 5 minutes.

The Senator from Maine is recognized.

Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, I rise today in support of S. 335, the Deceptive Mail Prevention and Enforcement Act, legislation authored by my colleague from Maine, Senator SUSAN COLLINS. I applaud her leadership on this issue as chair of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. I believe that this legislation strikes an important balance between consumer protection and over-regulation of the sweepstakes industry.

This issue has long been a priority for me. In the late 1980s, while in the House of Representatives, I began working on initiatives to curb deceptive mailings, and during the 101st Congress, I co-authored H.R. 2331, the Deceptive Mailings Prevention Act of 1989, which was signed into law by President Bush on November 6, 1990. H.R. 2331 prohibited solicitations by private entities for the purchase of products or services or the contribu-

tion of funds or membership fees, which imply false federal government connection or endorsement.

At the time, our main focus was on mailings that led one to believe that they were endorsed by the government—for example, offers that promise consumers information on federal benefits for which they may be eligible for a fee, when in fact such information is available at no cost directly from federal agencies.

The legislation barred the use of any seal, insignia, trade or brand name, or other symbol designed to construe government connection or endorsement. Today, I am pleased to support S. 335, which builds on the foundation laid by the 1990 law, in recognition of the problems that have emerged as sweepstakes offers have proliferated, with all of the accompanying abuses we have witnessed.

How many times have each of us received an offer in the mail promising enormous sweepstakes payoffs or other prizes? These promises are a clever way to market magazine subscriptions and other products. The old adage—"if it's too good to be true, it probably is"—comes to mind. Regrettably, for many, such offers seem too good to pass up particularly when they are accompanied by dire warnings such as "urgent advisory," "don't risk losing your multi-million dollar prize," or "don't risk forfeiture now!" Many consumers are misled by this type of advertising, which is deliberately designed to mislead.

Many offers are designed to entice the consumer into believing that he or she has already won a valuable prize, for example, or is on the verge of winning, when in fact, the odds against winning may be astronomical.

The sad truth is that companies use deceptive advertising because it works—it sells more product. And the tragic problem facing us today is this: all too often, the consumer who is being victimized is a senior on a fixed income or is disabled.

We have all heard the horror stories about unwitting victims on fixed incomes who have purchased hundreds or thousands of dollars worth of magazine subscriptions—sometimes multiple subscriptions to the same magazine, thinking they would improve their chances of winning a prize. We have heard the tragic accounts of individuals flying to another city or state to claim a prize, genuinely believing that they had been selected as the winner, only to find that they have become a victim. Some have squandered life savings on misleading offers. When these types of incidents become commonplace, I think, we have a good indication that there is a problem. And we have a responsibility to correct the problem.

What I find most troubling about this issue is that many unscrupulous companies intentionally target the most vulnerable consumers, knowing full well how devastating the results can

be. S. 335 is designed to target these companies that have demonstrated that they will not police themselves.

Among other things, S. 335 requires sweepstakes mailings to display rules clearly and state explicitly that no purchase is necessary to increase one's chance of winning. It requires the sponsor of an offer to clearly state the odds of winning and the value of the prize, and prohibits companies from making false statements, such as an individual is a winner, unless they have actually won a prize. It also strengthens safeguards to protect those who have requested not to receive sweepstakes mailings and other such offers, and enhances the Postal Service's authority to investigate, penalize, and stop deceptive mailings.

S. 335 does not prohibit legitimate offers. Rather, it puts fair, common sense restrictions in place in order to protect consumers, particularly those most at risk, such as seniors, or the disabled.

This week, the Senate Commerce Committee, of which I am a member, is scheduled to hold a hearing on fraud against seniors. It is a serious problem, and one that is not going to go away on its own. We must address the problem, and the deceptive mailings which S. 335 seeks to curb are certainly a component of this problem.

I am pleased that S. 335 has generated so much debate on this issue, because I believe that in addition to government action, the key to this challenge is increased awareness and personal responsibility—on the part of companies and individual consumers and families.

Companies should police themselves. Likewise, there are steps that consumers can take to protect themselves. For example, always read the rules for any offer very carefully, especially if it sounds too good to be true. And if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If you receive a letter in the mail informing you that you have won a prize, and it solicits a shipping or handling fee, be wary. This type of offer should raise a red flag, and could be a fraud. Finally, make sure you know the company is a reputable one, and don't give out your bank account or credit card number.

I hope this legislation will be a constructive step forward in this important effort, and I hope that it sends a strong message that government takes its responsibility as a watchdog and regulator of anti-consumer practices very seriously.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam President, today the Senate is taking another important step toward enacting sweepstakes reform legislation.

Today we continue the good fight that was launched nearly fourteen months ago when the Senate first began consideration of sweepstakes reform legislation. I was pleased to lead the fight for sweepstakes reform on June 5th, 1998, in the 105th Congress, when I introduced S. 2414, the Honesty