

important bill. That is exactly what they did. At times when negotiations got heated, both sides hung in there, and in the end we came up with a compromise. Neither side liked everything that was in it, but it was a true compromise.

Less than 12 hours after we reached agreement, the faction within the House leadership led by Congressman DELAY and Congressman ARMEY decided to renege on our bipartisan conference. We were baffled by this sudden decision. We spent many late hours giving and taking, compromising, and negotiating. We came to an honorable, mutually satisfactory agreement.

As I said, no one was 100-percent happy with it. For example, I was extremely displeased that, at the insistence of Republicans, an important regulation protecting workers from workplace injuries—such as carpal-tunnel syndrome—was delayed yet again; despite the fact that last year's conference report contained explicit language, it would be delayed further.

Each year, over 600,000 American workers suffer disabling, work-related, musculoskeletal disorders that cost employers \$15 billion to \$20 billion a year in compensation. It may cost our economy as much as \$60 billion total a year.

I was especially disappointed in the delay because this ergonomic provision, as a nonpartisan proposal, initiated under Labor Secretary Elizabeth Dole in the Bush administration 9 years ago.

While I was displeased with certain aspects of the bill, I was satisfied that the bill contained important provisions to improve the education of our kids, provide health care for working women, and safeguards for Social Security and Medicare. Those provisions are far too important to be destroyed by last-minute partisan politics.

There is a 21-percent overall increase in education funding in this bill and 35-percent more funding for class size reduction. This means 12,000 new teachers across America will be making a difference for 648,000 children.

There is school modernization funding that will generate approximately \$9 billion for school repairs; \$250 million to increase accountability to turn around failing schools; a 40-percent increase in IDEA grants, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act grants, to States; the largest increase ever in Pell grants, so that college is affordable to working families and their kids; 70,000 more kids will get Head Start under this bill; an additional \$817 million for child care to serve 220,000 more children; another almost \$.5 billion for afterschool care for 850,000 kids.

In the health care area, there will be 1.4 million more patient visits to community health centers under this bill with an additional \$150 million; an additional \$18 million for breast and cervical cancer screening; an additional \$1.7 billion for NIH funding, the largest ever; home heating, an additional \$300

million for the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program.

In the end, each side won some battles and each side lost, but we ended up with a fair and honorable agreement that was in the best interests of our Nation. That is what bipartisan compromise is all about.

Some are suggesting we just adopt a full year's continuing resolution. Not only would that be an abdication of our responsibility, but it would be exactly the wrong start to the next 2 years of a possibly evenly divided Senate and closely divided House. It would toss out one of the best examples of bipartisan cooperation that we have had this year, the bipartisan cooperation to enact the Labor-Health-Education appropriations bill.

Even worse, Mr. President, a full year's continuing resolution would be a step backwards for the education of our kids and making health care available to all Americans. It would wipe out all the gains I have just mentioned that are included in the bill. We would be kissing goodbye all these important advances in class size reduction, Head Start, breast and cervical cancer treatment, and many others.

Among other things, a full year's continuing resolution would cut NIH research by 47 percent, denying funding to 4,500 new research project grants this year. This chart indicates that.

If we pass a 1-year continuing resolution, here is what will happen: Under the current bill on which we had bipartisan agreement, we will be able to fund 9,500 new research projects at NIH. If we have a 1-year continuing resolution at last year's level, we will have only 5,000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The hour has arrived for the party conferences to meet. The discussion on this issue will continue.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent to be recognized at 2:15 for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The unanimous consent divides time at that time, so I object.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent to be recognized at 2:15 to finish my statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I have to object. We have divided the time at 2:15 on this issue.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:17 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. INHOFE].

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 2415

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the

vote regarding the continuing resolution, the majority leader be recognized to offer a motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider the cloture vote relative to the bankruptcy bill. I further ask that the motion to proceed on the motion to reconsider be agreed to and the Senate then proceed to 10 minutes equally divided between the majority leader and Senator WELLSTONE, and following that time the Senate proceed immediately to the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2415, the bankruptcy bill.

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

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the joint resolution.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 126) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2001 and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will be 15 minutes equally divided.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, this is a continuing resolution to give us until the close of business Thursday to complete the activities of this Congress. That is a large order, but I think it can be done if all Members of the House and Senate will cooperate.

We have in conference the major bill, the Health and Human Services bill, which we were prepared to act upon, but there were four basic differences in the conference that we could not resolve with the White House before the election. We are working on that. I can report to the Senate that our majority leader has just given us information about the meeting that he and other leaders had with the President last evening. I can tell you from my perspective, based on the report of the majority leader, I believe it is possible to finish by Thursday night if there is a will in both the House and Senate to do so.

It is my judgment—I am sure we are going to hear from the distinguished Senator from West Virginia that he shares this opinion—that the work of this Congress should be finished by this Congress. We put a lot of time and effort into these bills that are still pending in conference. I do believe it is possible for us to finish if all Members will cooperate with us.

The President has consented to making some reductions in the amounts proposed in these bills before the election. We are working on that with the staff of the House now in the appropriations process. I believe we will be able to report back sometime before the close of business today if the progress has led us to the point where we could file, or ask the House to file, a conference report tonight so it could be taken up by the House tomorrow.

Again, I will be pleased to report later. For now, it is my urging that Members of the Senate work with us to try to finish the business of this Congress, including the passage of all of the remaining appropriations bills, by the time given in this continuing resolution, which is the close of business Thursday.

I reserve the remainder of my time and suggest the absence of a quorum, the time not to be charged until the Senator from West Virginia claims his time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Currently, there are 5 minutes 14 seconds remaining on this side and 7½ minutes remaining on your side.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, the Senate has now before it the latest in a series of continuing resolutions in order to keep the operations of the Federal Government going for another 48 hours. This will be the 17th continuing resolution for the fiscal year which began on October 1 of this year—the 17th continuing resolution for the fiscal year. This is the largest number of continuing resolutions that has ever been required in order to enable Congress to complete its work on the 13 annual appropriations bills.

As Senators are aware, we have yet to complete action on 4 of the 13 fiscal year 2001 appropriations bills; namely, the Commerce-Justice-State-Judiciary, Labor-HHS, legislative branch, and Treasury-General Government appropriations bills. We are now into the third month of fiscal year 2001, and we have yet to get our work done on these very critical appropriations bills.

It seems to me that the best way to set the tone for the 107th Congress, which will begin on January 3, 2001, would be to finish the work of the 106th Congress immediately. The time has long since passed for us to end partisan bickering over issues in these various appropriations bills. Why should it take so long to reach a compromise on the remaining issues? What in the world is keeping us from completing action on these appropriations bills 2 months after the new fiscal year has begun?

We have been aware of those issues for months. Most of these issues do not involve appropriations at all. Rather, they involve legislative riders which have nothing to do with the operation of the Federal Government as far as funding levels are concerned. Of course, legislative riders are not new. The Wilmot Proviso was such a rider back in the days when slavery was being discussed.

These issues involve ergonomics, immigration, tobacco lawsuits, et cetera,

matters that properly belong in the jurisdiction of other committees. We should not continue to tie up appropriations bills for a fiscal year that began more than 2 months ago—haggling over issues such as these.

The partisanship should end right now, right here this week, on these remaining appropriations bills. We should not permit ourselves to delay action on these matters until the next Congress or the next administration. The time has come for this 106th Congress to complete its work now; clean the slate so that the 107th Congress and the new administration can begin with a fresh start.

We have a tremendous opportunity here. We can demonstrate to the American people and to the world that even though the Presidential election is still in the courts, the people's branch—the people's branch—is here, the people's branch is functioning, and the people's branch intends to get our work done. We can demonstrate to the Nation and we can demonstrate to the world that there is stability in this Government even though the next President's name and the next President's party are yet not known.

The way we wind up this year's business can be a constructive harbinger for the way we approach next year's business with a new President and a closely divided Senate and House. We can start now to reassure the American people that we can stop the bickering, stop the wrangling, and begin to behave as adults instead of as 4-year-olds.

We can show the new Senators of both parties how to reach across the aisle for the good of the Nation. Comity and compromise will have to be the watchwords in the new year, and we can begin practicing that new tone right now.

I hope we can pass these four remaining appropriations bills over which the distinguished chairman, over which the staffs, over which the Members of both parties, both sides of the aisle, have spent hours and hours and days in efforts to complete the work, and I hope we can go home to ponder our new responsibilities. Repeatedly passing 48-hour continuing resolutions, or 24-hour continuing resolutions, and continuing to try to play for some partisan advantage sets exactly the wrong tone for next year's changed circumstances.

Senators, let us employ our intellects and our considerable talents for the good of the Nation. Let us do our duty and fund the Government, as we were expected to be doing. There is no advantage to putting off this work, no advantage whatsoever to putting it off any longer. There is only the very possible danger of poisoning the well from which we all must drink in a new and very different reality setting next year.

So I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work together with Chairman STEVENS and myself and with the leadership in seeing to it that we work together in a spirit of honest compromise to wrap up the remaining

matters on the last four appropriations bills and get them to the President's desk for his signature this week.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I join with Senator BYRD on most of the comments he made. I am constrained to point out that I did argue with the White House at length not to put us through the process of having 1-day CRs. It is true this is the 17th one, but the bulk of them were for 1 or 2 days. And it takes us 2 days to pass one resolution, 1 day in the House and 1 day over here. As a consequence, we haven't been able to get anything done because we have been busy passing continuing resolutions, so we work the next day on another continuing resolution.

I share the frustration of the Senator from West Virginia with this process. The Senator is absolutely right; we are going into another year in just a matter of days, a time when this body will be split, 50 votes on each side of the aisle. In our Appropriations Committee, we work basically on a bipartisan basis. What we are asking is for the Senate and the House to work together now in these next 2 days and let us wind up this business. The State-Justice-Commerce bill is finished, for all intents and purposes. The Treasury-Postal and legislative bill, that was ready to be signed—and it wasn't signed because of a disagreement over the Health and Human Services bill—we were told would have been signed. So as a practical matter, we have one bill that is really in controversy, and that is the Health and Human Services bill.

As I reported to the Senate before the Senator returned, I tell my good friend, Senator BYRD, our leaders reported that the President has indicated a willingness to agree to some changes in that bill to meet the objections that were raised to the version of the bill prior to the election. I think we can do that today.

Unfortunately, once again we are in a situation where both Houses are involved in elections for the coming Congress. We will be involved tomorrow in indoctrination of new Senators for the next Congress. I am told that if we don't finish by Thursday, we will have to finish by Saturday, which means we will have to spend all day Thursday working on another continuing resolution to be able to stay until Saturday. This foolishness has to stop, if we are going to wind down this Congress and finish the business of this Congress in this calendar year. I think we can.

We are waiting now, Senator BYRD and I, to get together with Members of the House. Both Houses are involved in meetings for organization of the next Congress. I plead with Members to help us wind this down. We are within literally just two or three issues to be resolved on the Health and Human Services bill, and I think we can put them

all together. I hope we will bring one resolution before the House and the Senate to approve all three bills. That can be done by Thursday night if there is goodwill here and the comity Senator BYRD has asked the Senate to show at this time.

For myself, I look forward to the challenge of working with a 50-50 balance in the Senate. It is going to be a great challenge for all of us, and it is going to be an opportunity for us to demonstrate to the American public that the Senate is still the basic portion of our Government that deals with resolution of conflicts. This is supposed to be a debating society, a debating body. I think it will be for 2 years to come. We are going to be doing our business right here on the floor, to a great extent. With the help of the Senate, we will finish this bill.

Does the Senator wish any more time?

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield.

Mr. STEVENS. Yes.

Mr. BYRD. I think we are all aware of the monstrous hoax that has been pulled upon the American people, the hoax that this year was the opening year of the 21st century. This year is the closing year of the 20th century. That is according to the old math as well as the new math. I hope it won't be said that the Senate dabbled and dabbled and waited until the 21st century, which begins on January 1, to complete the appropriations bills of the 20th century. Let's be about our work.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, the Senator makes a good point. I will not argue with the Senator about which century it is. I do believe that next year is the first year of the next century. I join him in that.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of any time I may have.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The question is on the third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Shall the joint resolution pass? The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 295 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Abraham	Allard	Baucus
Akaka	Ashcroft	Bayh

Bennett	Gorton	McConnell
Biden	Graham	Mikulski
Bingaman	Gramm	Miller
Bond	Grams	Moynihan
Boxer	Grassley	Murkowski
Breaux	Gregg	Murray
Brownback	Hagel	Nickles
Bryan	Harkin	Reed
Bunning	Hatch	Reid
Burns	Helms	Robb
Byrd	Hollings	Roberts
Campbell	Hutchinson	Rockefeller
Chafee L.	Hutchison	Roth
Cleland	Inhofe	Santorum
Cochran	Inouye	Sarbanes
Collins	Jeffords	Schumer
Conrad	Johnson	Sessions
Craig	Kennedy	Shelby
Crapo	Kerrey	Smith (NH)
Daschle	Kerry	Smith (OR)
DeWine	Kohl	Snowe
Dodd	Kyl	Specter
Domenici	Landrieu	Stevens
Dorgan	Lautenberg	Thomas
Durbin	Levin	Thompson
Edwards	Lieberman	Thurmond
Enzi	Lincoln	Torricelli
Feingold	Lott	Voinovich
Feinstein	Lugar	Warner
Fitzgerald	Mack	Wellstone
Frist	McCain	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Leahy

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 126) was passed.

BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 2000—CONFERENCE REPORT—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now 7 minutes equally divided before the next vote.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes of the 5 minutes on our side to Senator BIDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I will be reading from these charts some of the provisions of current law for women and children. We developed these child support provisions with Senators TORRICELLI, DURBIN, and DODD on the Democrat side. We have worked very hard to accommodate both sides.

For women and children, we give child support first priority status—up from seventh in line—meaning they will be paid ahead of the lawyers.

We make staying current on child support a condition of discharge.

We make debt discharge in bankruptcy conditional upon full payment of past due child support and alimony.

We make domestic support obligations automatically nondischargeable, without the costs of litigation.

We prevent bankruptcy from holding up child custody, visitation, and domestic violence cases.

We help avoid administrative roadblocks to get kids the support they need.

Those are some of the things we are doing for women and children in this bankruptcy bill.

There are more improvements over current law for women and children.

We make payment of child support arrears a condition of plan confirmation.

We provide better notice and more information for easier child support collection.

We provide help in tracking down deadbeats.

We allow for claims against deadbeat parents' property.

We allow for payment of child support with interest by those with means.

We facilitate wage withholding to collect child support from deadbeat parents.

We make great strides against deadbeats.

Pro-consumer provisions:

New disclosures by creditors and more judicial oversight of reaffirmation agreements, to protect them from being pressured into onerous agreements;

A debtor's bill of rights, to prevent bankruptcy mills from preying upon those who are uninformed of their rights;

New consumer protections under the Truth in Lending Act, such as required disclosures regarding minimum monthly payments and introductory rates for credit cards.

We provide penalties on creditors who refuse to renegotiate reasonable payment schedules outside of bankruptcy.

We have penalties on creditors who fail to properly credit plan payments in bankruptcy.

We have credit counseling programs, to help avoid the cycle of indebtedness.

We provide protection for educational savings accounts.

We give equal protection for retirement savings in bankruptcy.

This is a very good bankruptcy bill. We have worked hard to bring both sides together. It is something that is absolutely needed in this country.

I hope our colleagues will support us today in this motion to reconsider.

I reserve the remainder of the time in favor of Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I understand that I have possibly up to 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 2 minutes.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I will not use all of the time.

We will hear from our friend from Massachusetts and others on this floor about how this has harmed women and children in support payments. That is simply, flat out not true. We have improved the position of women. We have improved the position of children. We have improved the position of people who do not have much money.

We have included a safe harbor provision, saying that unless you meet a certain minimum income level, you don't even get considered in this process.

This is a good bill subject to a lot of exaggeration.

My good friend from New York had a very good provision which I supported relating to abortion clinics and bombs.