

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this has been an unusual day. Earlier today, the majority wanted to vote on the Thompson amendment. We were led to believe, not wrongly, that the minority did not want a vote on that today. So we decided we would not vote on that today. We learned, later in the day, that Senator THOMPSON wanted a vote on his amendment today. By then, people had gone home for September 11 occurrences.

So now we are in a position where Senator THOMPSON thought there would be nothing happening on his bill today, and he left to do other things.

We have learned that the distinguished Senator from South Carolina, Mr. HOLLINGS, now wishes to offer a second-degree amendment to the Thompson amendment. I have not been able to speak to Senator THOMPSON. I have spoken, on a couple of occasions, to the Senator from South Carolina.

It would be my suggestion, therefore, that the Senator from South Carolina speak on his amendment, and that on Thursday, when we come back on this homeland security bill again, the Senator from South Carolina be recognized to offer his amendment.

We would be taking no advantage of the minority because, as everyone knows, the majority leader has the right of first recognition. And we have indicated to the Senator from South Carolina that he would be in order to offer that amendment, unless we can work something out with Senator THOMPSON that it need not be offered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. So I ask unanimous consent, Mr. President, that we go to a period of morning business, now, until 6 o'clock today, with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period of up to 10 minutes each. I hope that we would have consent that Senator HOLLINGS could offer the amendment; otherwise, we would, of course, have Senator DASCHLE come and offer that on Thursday.

Is the Senator from South Carolina satisfied with that?

Mr. HOLLINGS. That I be allowed to offer it at what time on Thursday?

Mr. REID. We have not decided what time Thursday, but we do not go to the bill until Thursday afternoon because—

Mr. HOLLINGS. If I could at least get an hour of debate, or whatever it is, on my amendment before we vote on the Thompson amendment.

Mr. REID. Yes. On the Thompson amendment itself, we were planning to do an hour and a half to 2 hours of debate prior to voting on it. That was the plan. Now, with you offering this second-degree amendment, I don't know what the pleasure of Senator THOMPSON would be. But we will work on that today, and tomorrow if necessary, with your staff and his.

Mr. HOLLINGS. I thank the distinguished leader. I think he has certainly accommodated the Senator from South Carolina. I definitely understand Senator THOMPSON is not here. I wanted to offer it while he is here so we can talk about it. But we will offer it at that particular time on Thursday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request of the Senator from Nevada?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001,
ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to share a few thoughts on the eve of tomorrow's anniversary of the terrorist attack, September 11, 2001. Tomorrow, a lot of our colleagues, both in this Chamber and the other body, will be expressing themselves, with many Members attending memorial services at the Pentagon. The Senate, as a body, plans to come together late tomorrow morning to meet as a body and to share our thoughts with the country about the events of a year ago. I take this opportunity to remember and to honor the nearly 3,000 of our fellow citizens and others who had come to this country to work—not all were Americans; the majority were—but lost their lives 1 year ago tomorrow in one of America's darkest of days.

I also join all of America in paying tribute once again to the countless men and women whose acts of bravery and heroism so inspired us on that day and the days that followed the tragedy of September 11, and continue to serve as a solemn reminder that the American spirit shines as bright as ever despite the events of that day, that horrible day a year ago.

Thousands of families across this great country of ours, including families in my home State of Connecticut—families in my State lost some 149 people, most of whom lost their lives in the World Trade Center—these families and their loved ones have endured a year of unimaginable grief and unimaginable bravery. Every American grieves with them as many of our fellow citizens the world over from around the globe have shared with us the sense of grief and horror of a year ago and have continued to relate to us and to share their thoughts and prayers with all Americans as a result of our commemoration of the events of 12 months ago.

Over the past 12 months, I have heard countless stories, tragedies that were once unthinkable. In Connecticut, I know of a man who lost both his wife and his only child on that day a year ago; of parents who lost their young children in their twenties, just beginning their lives as young adults, with professional careers; of wives who had received the last phone calls from their husbands before the Twin Towers fell.

Every American will always remember where they were when the Twin

Towers were attacked and collapsed. Every American will always remember where they were when they heard a hijacked plane had crashed into the Pentagon, only a few blocks from where I am sharing these thoughts this afternoon. Every American will always remember how they felt upon learning that a group of passengers fought back against the terrorists who hijacked their plane before it crashed in the field of Pennsylvania. September 11, 2001, is a day that will be etched in all of our memories for the rest of our lives and etched in history forever.

Although all Americans went through that day together, we will always share its memory. Last September 11 was also a deeply personal day for each and every one of us. We each had our own highly personal experiences during those horrid hours that began in the early morning—that wonderful clear, bright, cloudless sky over the eastern part of our country.

For me, the hours and days and weeks following the terrorist attacks were filled with immensely mixed emotions, as most of my colleagues know. I see my friend and colleague from Texas on the floor. We shared the great joy last year of having children come into our lives. My first child, my daughter Grace, was born just 48 hours after the attacks, born on September 13, at a hospital right across the river in Virginia. From the window of the maternity ward, my wife Jackie and I watched the smoke rising from the still-burning Pentagon as we held our newborn child in our hands.

I can still vividly recall trying to balance my feelings of incredible, intense joy with this new beautiful life, mixed with the powerful feelings of horror and trepidation over what kind of a world my daughter Grace would grow up in, in the 21st century.

Something heartened me that day. I have told this story on numerous occasions. In the hospital as my wife held our newborn daughter, many of the doctors and nurses, several of them who held her shortly after she was born, came from places outside of America to become citizens. Three of them came from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Lebanon. Here we are, 48 hours after the events, those countries had been the places of refuge for those engaged in the attacks on our country, and here were people from that very part of the world, United States citizens today, nurturing and caring for my newborn daughter.

That was all the evidence I needed at that particular moment that America was attacked not for who we are, but for what we stand for: Freedom, liberty, and community. And we shared something very powerful in common: We were devastated over the attacks, and we were never prouder to be Americans, almost simultaneously.

Word was already out that the terrorist attacks were the work of al-Qaeda, a fanatical group which hijacked planes, but also an otherwise

peaceful religion, Islam, to perform their evil deeds.

Word was out that Osama bin Laden and his minions of hate thought that by attacking us, our buildings, our Pentagon, and our planes, they could somehow divide our great Nation and somehow weaken our resolve to be a global power, to be a force for freedom and democracy around the globe.

Word was out that those who hate the United States simply for who we are, for our freedoms, our prosperity, and our diversity, thought that by murdering thousands of innocent Americans and shattering the lives of thousands of families, our Nation would somehow lose its ability to function as a great democracy.

They were wrong. We are today stronger, I argue, than ever.

September 11 changed America forever. At one level, the attacks made us aware of our vulnerabilities and forced us to realize there is no such thing as the unthinkable. Yet at another level, the way in which the entire Nation came together, in the days and weeks and months after the attacks, has served as a profound and inspirational reminder to strengthen the American people and the breadth and depth of the American spirit.

So as we mark this historic day, a day of sadness, we look back and remember September 11, not just for the tragedy it evokes but also in renewing our faith in the greatness of the wonderfulness of our Nation, in which we are charged temporarily to be custodians, as Members of this body, to see that that daughter of mine and the children of our colleague from Texas grow up in a world far safer than what we witnessed a year ago. That becomes our collective responsibility as public officials: To put aside differences and, wherever we can, to work together as one people to make our country stronger and better, to achieve that sense of perfection that the Founders of our Nation envisioned more than 200 years ago.

With those thoughts in mind, I extend my deepest sympathies, my thoughts, and prayers to the families in my State and across our Nation who still grieve terribly for the loss they suffered a year ago.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Before Senator DODD leaves the floor, I appreciate so much his beautiful remarks. We do share something very special, and that is that each of us had a new baby—mine through adoption, yours with your wife. It was right during that very sad time. I think it was so helpful to have this new life I knew then we were fighting for, to make sure that my young son and my young daughter would have the same kind of life as I did.

I know you feel that way about Grace, and to look out from her birth to see the Pentagon smoldering must

have been an emotional experience beyond any ability to describe.

So I am so proud that I have two babies born in 2001, and I have the firmest commitment to make sure we do everything in our power to assure that they have the freedom and the love of this country and the diversity we champion and the tolerance we have shown to the world. That is the way people should live. I thank the Senator for his remarks. I just wanted to say how their lives will be intertwined forever.

Mr. DODD. I thank the Senator.

NATIONAL AMBER ALERT NETWORK ACT OF 2002

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MILLER). The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate immediately proceed to Calendar No. 566, S. 2896.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2896) to enhance the operation of the AMBER Alert communications network in order to facilitate the recovery of abducted children, to provide for enhanced notification on highways of alerts and information on such children, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

[Strike the part printed in black brackets and insert the part printed in italic.]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

[This Act may be cited as the “National AMBER Alert Network Act of 2002”.]

SEC. 2. NATIONAL COORDINATION OF AMBER ALERT COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.

[(a) COORDINATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Attorney General shall assign an officer of the Department of Justice to act as the national coordinator of the AMBER Alert communications network regarding abducted children. The officer so designated shall be known as the AMBER Alert Coordinator of the Department of Justice.

[(b) DUTIES.—In acting as the national coordinator of the AMBER Alert communications network, the Coordinator shall—

[(1) seek to eliminate gaps in the network, including gaps in areas of interstate travel;

[(2) work with States to encourage the development of additional elements (known as local AMBER plans) in the network;

[(3) work with States to ensure appropriate regional coordination of various elements of the network; and

[(4) act as the nationwide point of contact for—

[(A) the development of the network; and

[(B) regional coordination of alerts on abducted children through the network.

[(c) CONSULTATION WITH FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.—In carrying out duties under subsection (b), the Coordinator shall

notify and consult with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation concerning each child abduction for which an alert is issued through the AMBER Alert communications network.

[(d) COOPERATION.—The Coordinator shall cooperate with the Secretary of Transportation and the Federal Communications Commission in carrying out activities under this section.

SEC. 3. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ISSUANCE AND DISSEMINATION OF ALERTS THROUGH AMBER ALERT COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.

[(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF MINIMUM STANDARDS.—Subject to subsection (b), the AMBER Alert Coordinator of the Department of Justice shall establish minimum standards for—

[(1) the issuance of alerts through the AMBER Alert communications network; and

[(2) the extent of the dissemination of alerts issued through the network.

[(b) LIMITATIONS.—(1) The minimum standards established under subsection (a) shall be adoptable on a voluntary basis only.

[(2) The minimum standards shall, to the maximum extent practicable (as determined by the Coordinator in consultation with State and local law enforcement agencies), provide that the dissemination of an alert through the AMBER Alert communications network be limited to the geographic areas most likely to facilitate the recovery of the abducted child concerned.

[(3) In carrying out activities under subsection (a), the Coordinator may not interfere with the current system of voluntary coordination between local broadcasters and State and local law enforcement agencies for purposes of the AMBER Alert communications network.

[(c) COOPERATION.—(1) The Coordinator shall cooperate with the Secretary of Transportation and the Federal Communications Commission in carrying out activities under this section.

[(2) The Coordinator shall also cooperate with local broadcasters and State and local law enforcement agencies in establishing minimum standards under this section.

SEC. 4. GRANT PROGRAM FOR NOTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS ALONG HIGHWAYS FOR RECOVERY OF ABDUCTED CHILDREN.

[(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Transportation shall carry out a program to provide grants to States for the development or enhancement of notification or communications systems along highways for alerts and other information for the recovery of abducted children.

[(b) ACTIVITIES.—Activities funded by grants under the program under subsection (a) may include—

[(1) the development or enhancement of electronic message boards along highways and the placement of additional signage along highways; and

[(2) the development or enhancement of other means of disseminating along highways alerts and other information for the recovery of abducted children.

[(c) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any activities funded by a grant under the program under subsection (a) may not exceed 50 percent.

[(d) DISTRIBUTION OF GRANT AMOUNTS ON GEOGRAPHIC BASIS.—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure the distribution of grants under the program under subsection (a) on an equitable basis throughout the various regions of the United States.

[(e) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall prescribe requirements, including application requirements, for grants under the program under subsection (a).

[(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—(1) There is authorized to be appropriated for