

Instead, they have announced that intention to rewrite the bill in conference. Apparently the Senate process has little meaning in this regard. It was just a ticket to a conference committee and a free hand in drafting a partisan bill.

The Nation needs a progressive, forward-looking energy policy that strengthens our national energy security, safeguards consumers and taxpayers, and protects the environment. Unfortunately, I believe passage of this legislation has put us on a fast track towards creation of an extreme Energy bill in conference that abandons each and every one of those core principles.●

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

OUR DEMOCRACY, OUR AIRWAVES
ACT

● Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues, Senators JOHN MCCAIN and RUSS FEINGOLD, in introducing S. 1497, the Our Democracy, Our Airwaves Act of 2003. This legislation complements the reforms accomplished through the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 by addressing an essential element omitted from the law: the demand side of fundraising.

As I emphasized during the Senate debate two years ago, simply dealing with the supply side of political campaigns—the sources of campaign contributions—misses the point. If we truly want to reform political campaigns in America, we must address the role of television. Television was once a tiny part of political campaigns, but it has grown exponentially.

Spending on television in political campaigns has skyrocketed. The \$1 billion spent in 2002 by candidates, parties, and issue groups for political spots set a record for any campaign year and doubled the amount spent in the 1998 midterm election. It represented a four-fold increase in what was spent in 1982, even adjusting for inflation. What we are witnessing is ever more intensive efforts by candidates of both political parties to raise money for television and radio stations to deliver their messages to the American people.

What is often overlooked in this discussion is that the airwaves belong to the American people. Broadcasting stations are trustees of the lucrative electromagnetic spectrum. Broadcasters pay nothing for their exclusive licenses and are allowed to use the publicly-owned airwaves on one condition: that they serve the public interest.

Since 1971, Federal law has required that in the 45 days preceding a primary election and the 60 days prior to a general election, candidates are entitled to the lowest unit charge for broadcast media rates for the same class and amount of time for the same period. But for all practical purposes, this mandate has been meaningless. In order to secure their preferred time slots and guarantee that their ads are

not bumped to a less desirable time, many candidates in competitive races end up paying premium prices instead of the lowest unit charge.

Television stations have taken this law, intended to benefit public discourse and to ensure that candidates are not penalized prior to an election, and have turned it upside down. Candidates end up paying dramatically more than the lowest unit rate. And as the costs to campaigns balloon, candidates, incumbents and challengers alike, must scramble for funds so they can give them right back to the television stations.

A \$200,000 media program buys a few 30-second slivers of time to deliver ideas and views on the public airwaves. It takes just a moment to broadcast it, and if a viewer-voter gets up to get a sandwich in the kitchen when it airs, they miss it. But raising the funds to pay for the ill-fated spot still requires asking 4,000 people to make a \$50 campaign contribution. As former Senator Bill Bradley observed several years ago: Today's political campaigns are collection agencies for broadcasters. You simply transfer money from contributors to television stations.

And as time ticks down to election day and the demand for television ads goes up, the stations raise their rates dramatically. Not only are rate costs for political ads inflated, stations are not covering the campaigns in their news segments in any significant way. Last week, findings from two instructive studies were published, which amplify these problems and underscore why enacting the Our Democracy, Our Airwaves Act is so important.

A study published by the Alliance for Better Campaigns based on a survey of more than 37,000 political ads on 39 local television stations in 19 states found that the average price of a candidate ad rose by 53 percent from the end of August through the end of October of last year. According to findings in another nationwide survey released last week by the Lear Center Local News Archive, a collaboration between the University of Southern California Annenberg School's Norman Lear Center and the Wisconsin NewsLab at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, viewers looking for campaign news during the height of the election season last year were four times more likely, while watching their top rated local newscast, to see a political ad rather than a political story. At the same time, those stations took in record-breaking amounts of political advertising revenue.

The Our Democracy, Our Airwaves Act addresses these concerns in three ways. First, it requires that television and radio stations, as part of the public interest obligation they incur when they receive a free broadcast license, air at least two hours a week of candidate-centered or issue-centered programming during the period before elections. Second, it enables qualifying federal candidates and national parties to earn limited ad time by raising funds in small donations. Up to \$750

million worth of broadcast vouchers would be made available to be used to place political advertisements on television and radio stations in each two-year election cycle. As conceived in our bill, this system will be financed by a spectrum use fee of not more than one percent of the gross annual revenues of broadcast license holders. And third, it closes loopholes in the "lowest unit rate" statute in order to ensure that candidates receive non-preemptible time at the same advertising rates that stations give to their high-volume, year-round advertisers.

Until we get to the heart of what is driving up the cost of political campaigns, we cannot achieve real campaign finance reform. And at the heart of skyrocketing campaign costs is the cost of television. Our legislation will help reduce the amount of money in politics by making the public airwaves more accessible for political speech. The airwaves belong to America and to the taxpayers, and the network stations simply must give time back to challengers and incumbents across the United States if we're going to succeed in putting a stop to the money chase and the millions of dollars being spent on campaigns.

Only by providing candidates an opportunity to purchase time at affordable rates and imposing a modest and reasonable obligation on broadcasters to air at least two hours per week of candidate or issue-centered programming in the weeks before election day can we hope to return Our Democracy, Our Airwaves to the American people.●

NOMINATION OF DANIEL BRYANT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to state before this body that I object to proceeding to the consideration of Daniel Bryant, executive nominee to the Department of Justice. Mr. Bryant is nominated to be Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Policy at DOJ. I have placed a hold on this individual because I have numerous outstanding issues that have yet to be resolved by the Department of Justice. More specifically, I have several outstanding written requests before the Department of Justice. Some of these requests are more than 6 months overdue. In addition, I am presently working with the Department of Justice to overcome a number of procedural issues directly affecting my ability, as a member of the Judiciary Committee to, among other things, conduct oversight of the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

J. MARC WHEAT

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Marc Wheat, who is leaving the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs after 2

years of outstanding service. As a Senior Advisor for Senate Affairs, Marc Wheat worked closely with my staff on the Foreign Operation Subcommittee on a range of important and controversial issues—from Plan Colombia to reconstruction in Afghanistan to Iraq.

To be sure, my staff tells me that Marc was a tireless and forceful advocate for the State Department's position on these, as well as other issues. But, they also emphasize that he was always honest and forthright, responding promptly and fully to the committee's requests for information. Perhaps what comes through the most is what a decent and genuine person Marc is. That was obvious to me when I met him after a committee hearing with Secretary Powell.

The State Department's loss is a gain for the House of Representatives. Marc is leaving his job at the State Department to be the Staff Director of the Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources. I know Marc will be a great asset to Chairman SOUDER in his new position. This is the latest move in a distinguished career for Marc, which includes service as a Counsel on the House Commerce Committee and Legislative Assistant to Congressman HASTERT.

I know my staff will miss working with Marc, and I wish him the best of luck in his new job.●

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

● Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, today I recognize the centennial of Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, KS. The institution that is today Pittsburg State University opened its doors on September 8, 1903, in a borrowed building in downtown Pittsburg with 54 students and five faculty. From these humble beginnings, Pittsburg State University has grown into a comprehensive state university of regional, national and international stature.

In 1903, the fledgling school offered only elementary courses in manual training, domestic science, domestic art, and a few basic academic subjects. Yet by 1912 the school's enrollment had increased to 1,183 students and it was described as a "College for Teachers." In the coming years, dedicated administrators and faculty worked to raise the standards of the institution to the point that it merited and received recognition as a liberal arts college.

Following World War II, the campus grew rapidly. Soldiers returning from the war came in droves, thanks to the G.I. Bill, and new buildings emerged all over campus. The college's mission and enrollment continued to expand as well. In 1977, the college achieved university status and assumed its current name, Pittsburg State University.

The decade of the 1990s was a time of unprecedented growth of PSU. Enrollment passed the 6,000 mark for the first time in 1991. Major additions ranged

from a renovation and expansion of the football stadium to the addition of a 100,000-watt public radio station and the installation of a world-class mechanical organ in McCray Hall. In 1997, the university completed its largest single capital project with the construction of the Kansas Technology Center, a \$28-million facility to house the university's nationally recognized technology programs. The Kansas Technology Center continues to play a vital role in the university's growth and development and is a significant economic development tool for the four-state region.

As it celebrates its centennial, Pittsburg State University now has an enrollment of more than 6,700 students. The university offers a wide variety of highly regarded programs in its Colleges of Business, Arts and Sciences, Education and Technology. Known as a comprehensive regional university serving Kansas and the four-state region that includes Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas, Pittsburg State attracts students from more than 25 states and 40 countries. Among its 55,000 alumni, PSU counts Pulitzer Prize winners, scientists, CEOs of some of the world's largest corporations, and even a former Miss America. Moreover, PSU is also to be admired for the model relationship of kindness and mutual assistance it has maintained with the Kansans in its local community.

I welcome this opportunity to commemorate all that Pittsburg State University has done to enrich the lives of its students and its surrounding community. I sincerely commend and thank PSU for its 100 years of faithful service.●

CONFIRMATION OF H. BRENT MCKNIGHT TO THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

● Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I am very pleased that last night the Senate voted to confirm Brent McKnight, an outstanding North Carolina lawyer and jurist, to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of North Carolina.

Judge McKnight, currently serving as U.S. Magistrate, has a stellar record of achievement and excellence. A native of Mooresville, North Carolina, he received his BA from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and his law degree at the University of North Carolina School of Law. He was a Rhodes Scholar, earning an MA and Diploma in Theology at Oxford University.

Judge McKnight served as Assistant District Attorney for the State of North Carolina from 1982 through 1988, when he was elected District Court Judge for the 26th North Carolina Judicial District. During this time, we in North Carolina first saw the superior qualities that Judge McKnight brought to the bench—temperance, fairness, attention to detail and an abiding commitment to and concern for equal justice under the law. In fact, after just

four years on the bench, Judge McKnight received a 97% approval rating from attorneys polled by Court Watch of North Carolina.

After four years of exemplary service on the North Carolina state court, Judge McKnight was appointed a United States Magistrate in May 1993. Judge McKnight has continued to build his reputation as an outstanding judge, earning the respect of lawyers and litigants throughout the state.

I can't tell you how many calls and letters I have received from people from across North Carolina telling me what an exceptional jurist and person Brent McKnight is. These folks attest to Judge McKnight's impeccable legal professionalism, both as a prosecutor and a Judge. I have no doubt that Judge McKnight will continue this record of excellence as a United States District Judge.

I was delighted to wholeheartedly support the nomination of Brent McKnight and am pleased that the full Senate has confirmed him to the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina. I wish him and his family—his wife Beth and their three boys, Brent, Matthew and Steven—well as he embarks on this next phase of his admirable career. I am confident that Judge McKnight, a consensus nominee who represents the mainstream of our state, will continue to serve the people of North Carolina and the United States with distinction.●

MYRA HYDE

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, as Co-Chairman of the Senate Beef Caucus, I recognize and commend Ms. Myra Hyde for a decade of service on behalf of America's cattlemen. Mr. President, for 10 years, Ms. Myra Hyde has served as the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's director of environmental issues where she diligently worked on land use, conservation policy, and property rights issues. This month, she leaves the cowboys for the administrative pastures at the Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service.

Ms. Hyde's contribution to progressive and responsible conservation policies and practices are known by those who work with her as well as those who have had the unenviable task of locking horns against her in the notoriously rough and tumble debate on resource management. She is a proud Texan, which is a compliment even outside of Texas.

Let me conclude by saying that those she leaves behind will sorely miss her expertise, honesty and sense of humor. Ms. Hyde has been a true friend of America's cattlemen as well as many of us serving here in Congress. She will be of great value as a servant of the public at Interior. On behalf of the caucus, we wish Myra good luck and ask her keep in mind the challenges faced by the hard working people who endeavor to feed the people of our nation and much of the world.●