

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Leigh Ann Simmons-Wescott, a legislative fellow in Senator KENNEDY's office, be granted floor privileges during the remainder of the day and cloture vote on the TANF reauthorization.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privilege of the floor be granted to Sharon Segner of my staff for the next hour during consideration of the Get Outdoors Act.

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

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALLIED LANDING AT NORMANDY

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 28 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the joint resolution be read a third time and passed, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) was read the third time and passed.

The preamble was agreed to.

The joint resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S.J. RES. 28

Whereas June 6, 2004, marks the 60th anniversary of D-Day, the first day of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II by American, British, and Canadian troops;

Whereas the D-Day landing, known as Operation Overlord, was the most extensive amphibious operation ever to occur, involving on the first day of the operation 5,000 naval vessels, more than 11,000 sorties by Allied aircraft, and 153,000 members of the Allied Expeditionary Force;

Whereas the bravery and sacrifices of the Allied troops at 5 separate Normandy beaches and numerous paratrooper and glider landing zones began what Allied Supreme Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower called a "Crusade in Europe" to end Nazi tyranny and restore freedom and human dignity to millions of people;

Whereas that great assault by sea and air marked the beginning of the end of Hitler's ambition for world domination;

Whereas American troops suffered over 6,500 casualties on D-Day; and

Whereas the people of the United States should honor the valor and sacrifices of their fellow countrymen, both living and dead,

who fought that day for liberty and the cause of freedom in Europe: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress—

(1) recognizes the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II; and

(2) requests the President to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and programs to honor the sacrifices of their fellow countrymen to liberate Europe.

TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS UNDER SMALL BUSINESS ACT AND SMALL BUSINESS EXTENSION ACT OF 1958

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4062, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

A bill (H.R. 4062) to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through June 4, 2004, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to support passage of H.R. 4062, a bill that provides needed improvements to the Small Business Administration's largest business loan program, the "Section 7(a)" program, at no additional cost to the Government.

The SBA's 7(a) loan program has proven that a small amount of government backing can greatly enhance private-sector financing for small businesses, and that the economic benefits reverberate throughout the economy at large. Small businesses create almost 75 percent of the net new jobs in the economy. The 7(a) program harnesses this power and has helped small businesses to create or retain nearly 2 million more jobs in the last five years.

The program is so popular among small businesses that demand for program funds in the first few months of fiscal year 2004 suggests that requests for the entire year would far out-pace its available budget. As a result, in January 2004, the SBA shut the program down, and then re-opened it with a loan cap of \$750,000—only 37.5 percent of the \$2 million maximum previously available. Faced with these restrictions, small businesses have urged Congress and the administration to improve funding opportunities for the rest of 2004.

Together with my fellow Senators, colleagues in the House, and a large coalition of small businesses and lenders, we have worked for several months to construct a way to improve the program by allowing lenders to help alleviate the funding shortfall. This plan would benefit small businesses and lenders by allowing loans larger than \$750,000, and by allowing "piggyback" loans, or by allowing financing pack-

ages with several portions. And again, we could do this without increasing Government expenditures.

The bill would achieve these goals in three ways. First, lenders would return to the SBA a 0.25 percent, or one-quarter of one percent, fee on new loans under \$150,000. Lenders are currently permitted to retain this amount from a borrower fee, of 1 percent, that lenders already collect and pass on to the SBA. For loans larger than \$150,000, lenders already must pass the entire borrower fee on to the SBA; this change would make the treatment the same for all loan sizes. This proposal was first made by the SBA, as part of a larger plan the SBA submitted to Congress this year.

Second, a lender fee on new loans would be increased from 0.25 percent, one-quarter of one percent, to 0.36 percent. This fee cannot be passed on to small businesses.

Third, lenders would be permitted to provide small businesses with "piggyback" financing packages that include a 7(a) loan portion and a non-7(a), strictly commercial portion, if the lenders paid the normal fees on the 7(a) loan portion and a 0.70 percent fee on the non-7(a) portion. Prior to January 2004, the SBA permitted this type of financing, but without receiving any fee income for the non-7(a) portion, and without an upper limit on the total financing. H.R. 4062 prohibits the non-7(a) portion of the financing from being larger than the 7(a) loan.

The bill also extends to June 4, 2004, the authorization for several SBA programs that would otherwise expire on April 2, 2004, including the Preferred Surety Bond Program, the Small Disadvantaged Business Program, and the SBA's co-sponsorship authority. Finally, the bill extends to September 30, 2004, the authorization for the SBA's Certified Development Company program, also known as the 504 Loan Program.

H.R. 4062 is very similar to legislation which I introduced in the Senate on March 10, S. 2193, the "Small Business Loan Revitalization Act of 2004," which I was joined in sponsoring by 18 fellow Senators. That legislation was the result of months of hard work and negotiations with fellow Senators, colleagues in the House, small businesses, lenders, and the administration. I regret that S. 2193's provisions, such as its lower fees for lenders, and the increased debenture sizes for the 504 Loan Program which I recently added by amendment, are not being enacted today, but I am pleased that, according to the Small Business Administration's projections, H.R. 4062 at least achieves the goal of allowing the 7(a) program to operate without restriction through the remainder of this fiscal year.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2004

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent when the Senate completes its business

today, it adjourn until 9 a.m. on Friday, April 2nd. I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then begin a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. FRIST. Tomorrow the Senate will be in session for the transaction of routine morning business. There will be no rollcall votes during Friday's session. The next rollcall vote will occur on Wednesday of next week. I will have more to say on that in the morning.

Next week, there are a number of issues that may be addressed. There is an important medical liability bill being introduced by Senator GREGG and others, Pregnancy and Trauma Care Access Protection Act of 2004. That bill deserves to be debated and voted on. We will try to schedule that bill for next week. I will continue to hold out hope that we will be able to finish the JOBS bill, which is the FSC/ETI bill.

Senators have come to the floor over the course of the last several weeks discussing the importance of this bill. Yet we have been unable to vote on the legislation as the WTO sanctions continue each day. In fact, today, since this is 1 month after the sanctions began, the sanctions were increased by \$40 million. We must move expeditiously on that bill. It is a priority for the Senate. We will have an opportunity next week to speak on this bill.

The pension reform conference report is another piece of legislation that should be moved expeditiously. The House may act on that conference report later this evening or on Friday. I will be talking to my colleagues about scheduling that conference report for Senate action.

Finally, the conferees on the budget resolution continue to meet and it is important to address the budget conference report as soon as that does become available. Having said that, we have a lot of work to do and not a lot of time to do it. We will be working each day next week with an effort to schedule the above-mentioned items throughout.

In addition, next week we have accommodated Members' schedules for the observance of Passover. I will have more to say on the specific schedule for rollcall votes on Wednesday, April 7. However, we will have no vote prior to 2:15 on that day on Wednesday.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

MR. FRIST. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate

stand in adjournment under the previous order, following the completion of the remarks of Senator DAYTON and following the remarks of Senator SARBANES, each for up to 10 minutes.

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

VOTING TO HELP THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I am troubled by some of the comments made earlier as we debated whether to continue with this bill before us. In particular, one of the leaders on the other side of the aisle is quoted in today's paper as saying—this a direct quote—“Why put our Members through the whole litany of Democratic political votes for no discernible gain?”

I am amazed at the implication these amendments we in the Democratic caucus are trying in vain to have voted upon by the Senate are political votes. I am even more astonished it could be said they are for no discernible gain.

For whose gain are we talking? Not, perhaps, for Republican Members of the Senate. But that is not the purpose of our amendments. These are amendments to benefit the American people.

We are talking about extending unemployment benefits for the over 1.1 million Americans who have exhausted those benefits since December of last year. The Children's Defense Fund, originators of the No Child Left Behind concept, are committed to seeing it carried out and have estimated 622,000 American children live in families whose parents have exhausted their unemployment benefits. They estimate each of those families loses an average of \$1,100 a month in income when their unemployment benefits run out. It drives over a third of them below the poverty level. Over two-thirds of those families lose their health care coverage.

No discernible gain from a vote on extending unemployment benefits? Perhaps not to the Republican caucus. But it would surely make a huge difference to 1.1 million American adults and their 622,000 children.

No discernible gain to a vote on protecting overtime pay for some 8 million Americans who stand to lose those benefits through the unilateral action of the Secretary of Labor? These are not idle political gestures. These are real decisions affecting the lives of millions of Americans.

It may be inconvenient for some Members to vote on them, but that is our responsibility in this body.

EDUCATION FUNDING

As another illustration of how these votes and these decisions really do affect people's lives, about a month ago we were holding rollcall votes regarding the budget resolution for the next fiscal year, and just about that same time the Secretary of Education was in my State of Minnesota, where he met with educators and with State officials, and with, evidently, some of the Mem-

bers of the Minnesota congressional delegation on the other side of the aisle—I was not invited to either of those meetings, which seemed a shame since they were being billed as non-political meetings, but, nevertheless, they did occur—and at that meeting—again, I was not invited, so I was not there—according to the reports of those who attended, the Secretary assured these Minnesota educators that No Child Left Behind is adequately funded.

Well, there had been rumors that there were going to be cutbacks affecting Minnesota in the title I program, which is the major source of funds under the so-called No Child Left Behind. So the Minnesota educators were temporarily relieved by that, until just a few weeks later—scarcely a month later, in fact—when the actual title I allocations for the next fiscal year, 2005, became known.

Lo and behold, Minnesota will experience a reduction of over \$2.5 million. Only two States in the Nation are going to experience cuts in title I funding from the year 2004 to the next year, 2005: Massachusetts and Minnesota.

Now, I am not running for President or anything else, for that matter, this year, so I am shocked that Minnesota would be paired with Massachusetts as being the only two States to be cut back in title I dollars at the same time we are experiencing an increase in the children who are eligible for title I funding. As that reduction gets spread across our school districts, some of the consequences are very severe. Quite a number of districts will be taken off of title I funding whatsoever. They will not be able to serve any of the children in those school districts who are eligible, individually, for title I.

One of the school districts, Anoka-Hennepin, is going to experience a 40-percent reduction in funding for title I programs at the same time the number of children eligible for title I is going up.

Now, how can we say that there is no child going to be left behind under this program, and that it is adequately funded, when a school district such as that is going to experience a 40-percent reduction in funding? How is it that two States in the Nation—Massachusetts and Minnesota—are going to see a reduction in funding while the overall program nationwide is going to receive a \$1 billion increase?

Why are we being punished? Why are we being penalized? Why are we being singled out for those reductions? Why does the Secretary of Education come to our State one month earlier and assure our educators that there is plenty of money, that these reductions are not going to take place, when either he did not know—in which case he was unbelievably ill-informed—or he knew and did not speak honestly to our educators? And either one of those I find enormously reprehensible.