

the only ophthalmology and neurology surgical teams in Iraq, so if a victim has damage to the head, the medevac sets out for the facility here, located in the heavily fortified coalition headquarters known as the Green Zone.

Once there, doctors scramble. A patient might remain in the combat hospital for only six hours. The goal is lightning-swift, expert treatment, followed as quickly as possible by transfer to the military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany.

While waiting for what one senior officer wearily calls "the flippin' helicopters," the Baghdad medical staff studies photos of wounds they used to see once or twice in a military campaign but now treat every day. And they struggle with the implications of a system that can move a wounded soldier from a booby-trapped roadside to an operating room in less than an hour.

"We're saving more people than should be saved, probably," Lt. Col. Robert Carroll said. "We're saving severely injured people. Legs. Eyes. Part of the brain."

Carroll, an eye surgeon from Waynesville, Mo., sat at his desk during a rare slow night last Wednesday and called up a digital photo on his laptop computer. The image was of a brain opened for surgery earlier that day, the skull neatly lifted away, most of the organ healthy and pink. But a thumb-sized section behind the ear was gray.

"See all that dark stuff? That's dead brain," he said. "That ain't gonna regenerate. And that's not uncommon. That's really not uncommon. We do craniotomies on average, lately, of one a day."

"We can save you," the surgeon said. "You might not be what you were."

Accurate statistics are not yet available on recovery from this new round of battlefield brain injuries, an obstacle that frustrates combat surgeons. But judging by medical literature and surgeons' experience with their own patients, "three of four months from now 50 to 60 percent will be functional and doing things," said Maj. Richard Gullick.

"Functional," he said, means "up and around, but with pretty significant disabilities," including paralysis.

The remaining 40 percent to 50 percent of patients include those whom the surgeons send to Europe, and on to the United States, with no prospect of regaining consciousness. The practice, subject to review after gathering feedback from families, assumes that loves ones will find value in holding the soldier's hand before confronting the decision to remove life support.

"I'm actually glad I'm here and not at home, tending to all the social issues with all these broken soldiers," Carroll said.

But the toll on the combat medical staff is itself acute, and unrelenting.

In a comprehensive Army survey of troop morale across Iraq, taken in September, the unit with the lowest spirits was the one that ran the combat hospitals until the 31st arrived in late January. The 3 months since then have been substantially more intense.

"We've all reached our saturation for drama trauma," said Maj. Greg Kidwell, head nurse in the emergency room.

On April 4, the hospital received 36 wounded in 4 hours. A U.S. patrol in Baghdad's Sadr City slum was ambushed at dusk, and the battle for the Shiite Muslim neighborhood lasted most of the night. The event qualified as a "mass casualty," defined as more casualties than can be accommodated by the 10 trauma beds in the emergency room.

"I'd never really seen a 'mass cal' before April 4," said Lt. Col. John Xenos, an orthopedic surgeon from Fairfax. "And it just kept coming and coming. I think that week we had three or four mass cal's."

The ambush heralded a wave of attacks by a Shiite militia across southern Iraq. The next morning, another front erupted when Marines cordoned off Fallujah, a restive, largely Sunni city west of Baghdad. The engagements there led to record casualties.

"Intellectually, you tell yourself you're prepared," said Gullick, from San Antonio. "You do the reading. You study the slides. But being here. . . ." His voice trailed off.

"It's just the sheer volume."

In part, the surge in casualties reflects more frequent firefights after a year in which roadside bombings made up the bulk of attacks on U.S. forces. At the same time, insurgents began planting improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in what one officer called "ridiculous numbers."

The improvised bombs are extraordinarily destructive. Typically fashioned from artillery shells they may be packed with such debris as broken glass, nails, sometimes even gravel. They're detonated by remote control as a Humvee or truck passes by, and they explode upward.

To protect against the blasts, the U.S. military has wrapped many of its vehicles in armor. When Xenos, the orthopedist, treats limbs shredded by an IED blast, it is usually "an elbow stuck out of a window, or an arm."

Troops wear armor as well, providing protection that Gullick called "orders of magnitude from what we've had before. But it just shifts the injury pattern from a lot of abdominal injuries to extremity and head and face wounds."

The Army gunner whom Poffenbarger was preparing for the flight to Germany had his skull pierced by four 155mm shells, rigged to detonate one after another in what soldiers call a "daisy chain." The shrapnel took a fortunate route through his brain, however, and "when all is said and done, he should be independent. . . . He'll have speech, cognition, vision."

On a nearby stretcher, Staff Sgt. Rene Fernandez struggled to see from eyes bruised nearly shut.

"We were clearing the area and an IED went off," he said, describing an incident outside the western city of Ramadi where his unit was patrolling on foot.

The Houston native counted himself lucky, escaping with a concussion and the temporary damage to his open, friendly face. Waiting for his own hop to the hospital plane headed north, he said what most soldiers tell surgeons: What he most wanted was to return to his unit.

Mr. STEVENS. I thank the Senator from Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for as much time as I may require.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

INTERNET TAXATION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I was just at a luncheon with the distinguished chairman of the Commerce Committee, and he wondered where I had been in terms of the debate on the Internet tax question. So here I am. I am glad to have this opportunity. I know we have been diverted to discuss the Energy bill. But I appreciate the leadership creating an opportunity to debate these issues.

As the Senator from New Hampshire knows, who is a member of the Commerce Committee, and has a large interest in the fastest-growing technology in America, the growth of high-speed Internet access—the question of how we approach, in a comprehensive way, the regulation and taxation of this new technology—is very important. It is important for our economic growth. It is important because, as we do this, we will be making, inevitably, major adjustments in terms of the responsibilities of State and local governments, and we need to do it right.

That is why I am encouraged by the fact Senator MCCAIN; Senator STEVENS; the Commerce Committee; Michael Powell, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, all have announced that we need to take a new look at the Telecommunications Act of 1996 in light of the recent growth of high-speed Internet access.

I am not happy about the fact we are trying to solve problems that ought to be solved comprehensively, for the long term, on a piecemeal basis, which is exactly what some are trying to do, by turning a fairly innocuous idea—a temporary timeout on State and local taxation of Internet access; we are just talking about the connection between my computer and AOL or whoever is providing my Internet access; that is just a little bitty thing—they have turned that into a debate about whether we should give a broad exemption to the entire high-speed Internet access industry, and make decisions now about whether State and local governments will be able to continue to collect taxes on telephone services.

One of the problems with this debate is that everyone who stands up on opposite sides offers different facts and figures and interpretations, so a Member of the Senate who is not really studying or following this issue closely is easily misled.

Let me deal with four or five of the misconceptions. First, let me talk about what we are talking about. We are talking about high-speed Internet access, which was barely known to most Members of Congress when the 1996 Telecommunications Act was enacted, not very well known in 1998, when we all said—almost all of us said; I said this—let's take a temporary timeout. Let's not allow even State and local taxation of Internet access until we figure out what it is.

So we did that for 2 years. We did it then for 3 more years. Now the effort is to not just do that permanently but to just say: OK, this is a great new invention. Let's just exempt the whole industry from taxation.

High-speed Internet access is now offered in lots of different ways. The reason it is so important is because it means that lots of different services may come to my home. If I am watching television through direct satellite in my home here in the District of Columbia, there is a nice young woman who comes on and she advertises that

the same DirecTV satellite television I have can also supply me with high-speed Internet access.

Anywhere I am that I can get DIRECTV, which is most places in the world, I can get high-speed Internet access. It seems I get something in the mail every day from my telephone company saying they can deliver it over the telephone line. That is DSL. I would get something from the cable TV, when I had that, that said: We can deliver high-speed Internet access to you as well. There are Internet service providers, companies who deliver it, such as America Online. Now we are finding that high-speed Internet access can be delivered by power companies.

In other words, there is no problem with making high-speed Internet access available to anybody in America who has a telephone wire running to their house or business, has an electric wire running to their house or business, who can put up a satellite dish or hook into a cable television. That covers about everybody. But not everybody has it. More Americans have it than in any other country, which I will get to in a minute. But this is a new technology. A lot of people have it. In Manassas, VA, you can buy it from your electric power company. The same people who provide electricity will sell it to you for \$25 a month. Most cable systems or telephone companies will sell it to you for \$30 or \$40 a month. I get things in the mail that offer it on an introductory basis for \$10 or \$15 a month.

What we are debating is whether State and local governments can apply the sales taxes they usually apply to such transactions and whether they can apply the business taxes they usually apply to such business activities. The tax we are talking about that Tennessee, New Hampshire, or Texas might charge might be \$1 a month or \$2 a month. That is what all the fuss is about. If that were all we were talking about, it really would not be worth very much of the Senate's time except the legislation that we are being offered would do much more than is advertised.

Let me begin by suggesting what it will do or what it could do. I don't know why every Governor in America and every mayor in America is not sitting in the lobby right now saying to Members of the Senate: Be careful about what you are doing because the way we read the latest proposal by the distinguished chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator MCCAIN, and certainly the way we read the legislation that came over from the House that is expected to be put into conference with whatever we produce, you put at risk the money State and local governments collect today from taxing telephone services.

If you are sitting at home listening, you might say: Hooray, I don't want to pay those taxes. Well, fine. So we take those taxes off. In Texas, if we take off the taxes Texas collects on telephone

services, it is \$1.7 billion a year. So if the bill passes in the form it passed the House or in the form it is now written in the Senate, we might as well call this the Texas new income tax law of 2004 or the Nashville higher local property tax law of 2004. Because you cannot put at risk billions of dollars of State and local revenues and expect those governments to continue to fully fund universities, schools, parks, roads, and the other things they are expected to do.

One might say, well, let them just cut the size of government. I could be facetious about this, although I don't want to be because it is so serious. Here is a serious analogy. I just had lunch with the president of one of the largest car companies in the world. We were talking about hybrid cars, the cars that have an electric engine in them and an internal combustion engine in them. They are reported, according to Toyota Corporation, to get 50 miles a gallon. That is pretty good. Gasoline is at record prices. The Middle East is in turmoil. We are getting 65 percent of our oil from around the world, and our air is dirty. So as a Senator, I think it would be a great idea to encourage people to use hybrid cars.

Why don't I propose a Federal law that stops Tennessee, New Hampshire, Texas, and California from charging a State tax on the sale of hybrid cars? That would clean the air. That is a good thing. Let's do it. You might say: That sounds good, but it sounds odd, too, because you are a Federal legislator. Why would you pass a hybrid car act about State laws? If you have an expensive idea, why don't you do it yourself?

The Senator from Virginia and the Senator from Arizona have said it is not the intention of their legislation to keep States from continuing to tax telephone calls, telephone services, even if the calls are made over the Internet. That is what was said. But that is not what the language of the bill does. I don't think the Senate should take any chance that in the State of California we would pass a law on such a simple item as exempting Internet access from taxation and have the unintended effect of costing State and local governments up to \$10 billion a year in revenues they now collect on telephone calls—not all telephone services, just telephone calls.

In Florida, it is \$1 billion a year. So you might call this act, as it is now written, the Florida income tax act of 2004, the Tennessee income tax act of 2004, the Texas income tax act of 2004, because I don't know what other revenue base is left if that much of a sales tax is taken away.

You might ask: Why are you saying it would be taken away? Let's assume I am right about the way the law is written. Here is what happens. I will use the hybrid car analogy. We might set up a two-tier tax system for cars. Buy a hybrid car in Nashville and you will pay zero of the Tennessee sales

tax. Buy a regular car in Nashville and you will pay 6, 7 percent on the cost of the car, I believe up to a ceiling. So we will have two tiers. That is what is going to happen with telephone calls.

One of the exciting advantages of this new technology is we will soon be making regular telephone calls over the Internet, not over the telephone wires. They will be using telephone wires but not in the same way. It is a different technology. It is still a telephone call but a different way of doing it, just as with a hybrid car. Calls, as they move to the Internet, will be free of State and local taxation. That is what adds up to about \$10 billion a year in State and local revenues.

That won't happen overnight. The Congressional Budget Office has informed us that within the next 5 years, State and local governments will lose \$3 billion of revenue. I think it will come faster than that. Most people who look at VOIP, voice over Internet protocol, believe it will and hope it does. I hope it does. I think it is a great advance. But I disagree that on this bill, we should decide the question of whether State and local governments must stop taxing telephone services and start raising property taxes, or sales taxes on food, or institute a new income tax to make up for all or part of the revenue you lose.

I would much rather see the Senate Commerce Committee, over the next year or two, consider legislation such as that by the distinguished Presiding Officer, which straight out says—if I am stating it correctly—that with this new protocol, it should be free of taxation. We ought to talk about that. It ought not be snuck into a bill.

I urge the chairman of the committee and Senator ALLEN to accept plain English language—just take it and change their bill. They asked what suggestions we have. I have given this to them several times. Just say that nothing in this legislation precludes States from collecting taxes they are collecting on telephone services, including telephone calls made over the Internet. Save that question for another day. I have heard that is their intention. That is not what it says.

In Alabama, that is worth up to \$213 million a year; in Alaska, it is \$18 million a year; in Arizona, it is \$308 million a year; California collects \$1.5 billion a year. So that is a huge cost to State and local governments. It is 5 percent of the Tennessee State budget, to give you an example. Senator FEINSTEIN says there are more than 100 cities and counties in California that estimate they could lose from 5 to 15 percent of their revenue. So that is one of the four issues that could be easily corrected.

Another question that has come up quite a bit lately is the idea that suddenly we need more Government subsidy for high-speed Internet access because the United States is falling behind.

Well, my view on that is I don't think it is true that we do. But if it is

true, Congress ought to pay the bill and not send it to State and local governments. Just as we think hybrid cars are great and we want to give them a subsidy—that is called picking and choosing winners in the economic marketplace, which I thought conservatives were not supposed to do. If we want to do that for hybrid cars, we should take it out of our budget and not tell Governors and mayors to take it out of property taxes or take it out of the classrooms to do it. If we want to give an advantage to high-speed Internet access, we should pay for it. But we ought not to pass this bill because we think we are behind in high-speed Internet access. There is no real evidence of that.

For example, in 2002, the United States had the highest number of Internet subscribers in the world, nearly 20 million. Eighty-eight percent of all ZIP codes have at least one high-speed subscriber; 29 percent of all ZIP codes have access to five or more providers. The Pew analysis recently showed that a quarter of Americans have high-speed Internet access in their home and half have it at their workplace.

Consumers are adopting broadband, high-speed Internet access, at a record pace, not a slow pace. There is no emergency in terms of people not using this. They are adopting broadband technology at a faster pace than CD players. High-speed Internet access is coming in at a faster pace than cell phones, color TVs, and VCRs during their development. That is according to a report from the Department of Commerce in 2002. Cellular phones took 6 years from their introduction to reach 7½ million subscribers. High-speed Internet reached that in 3½ years.

High-speed Internet service providers are increasing their investment in broadband services. For example, between 1996 and 2001, the four largest phone companies increased their investment in broadband technologies by 64 percent and cable companies by 68 percent.

In short, the Congressional Budget Office told us, the Senate, in December 2003 that the broadband market is booming. In its report to us in December of 2003, "Does the Residential Broadband Market Need Fixing?" the CBO analysis also concluded that "Nothing in the performance of the residential broadband market suggests that Federal subsidies for it will produce large economic gains."

This is CBO. "Nothing in the performance of the residential broadband market suggests that Federal subsidies for it will produce large economic gains."

So, then, why are we coming with a bill that would give more big subsidies? I have reviewed the fact that, because of the language in the latest proposal by the chairman of the Commerce Committee, up to \$10 billion of State and local tax collections on telephone

companies are at risk. If you take that away, that is a subsidy to a company.

You can subsidize a company in one of two ways. You can give it some money or you can say you don't have to pay taxes like everybody else does. That is a flatout subsidy. That is not the only subsidy. I mentioned to the distinguished chairman, the Senator from Arizona, that it seems to me that insofar as my research indicates, high-speed Internet access is a lot like ethanol. It is hard to find anything that has more subsidy. According to the Congressional Research Service, the Congressional Budget Office identified three programs totaling \$4.8 billion in subsidy, a Federal subsidy for promoting the adoption of high-speed Internet access. They are already in place—\$4.8 billion of Federal subsidy for high-speed Internet access.

Established in 1996, the Telecommunications Act provided subsidies for schools and libraries, subsidies for rural health care providers. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 authorizes \$20 million per year for loans and grants.

Then I have the Alliance for Public Technologies' report on all of the State and local broadband policy experiments in the State. In virtually every State in America, there is a spending of taxpayer dollars to encourage the spread of high-speed Internet access.

Yesterday, I used the example of Texas. Texas set up a fund in 1995 to spend \$1.5 billion over 10 years to provide telecommunications access to public schools, hospitals, libraries, and institutions of higher education. Almost every State is doing it. So let's take how this works as an example.

If this bill passes—and if I am reading the McCain proposal right and it affects telephones the way I believe it does—this is what happens in Texas to broadband. They are spending \$1.5 billion already to encourage the spread of broadband in public institutions. Texas also has a law put in by President Bush when he was Governor in 1999; I think it is a good law. By the way, I think we ought to adopt that. I think it is exactly the way to encourage permanently the growth of high-speed Internet access, if that is what we want to do.

Texas, in 1999, said it is the law of Texas that the first \$25 is exempt of everything to pay for Internet access. So that would save you maybe \$1 or \$2 a month. That is what the tax would be in Texas on high-speed Internet access. You can get it anywhere from \$20, to \$40, or \$50, depending on who sells it to you. The prices are coming down because of the competition.

So you have \$1.5 billion in Texas at least to encourage it. You have an exemption for every single person in Texas who wants to sign up. The first \$25 is already exempt.

Now here we come with our bill. What does it do? It does a lot more than exempt Texans from tax on Internet access. First, I believe it puts at

risk up to \$1 billion of revenues in sales taxes the State collects today on telephone services. That is one.

Second, it stops Texas from collecting business taxes on telephone companies it normally would collect on any company that does business in the State. The definition of the latest proposal by the distinguished Senator from Arizona says we are not just talking about the hookup, Internet access between the end user and the provider, we are talking about the whole industry. We are talking about that, that, that, and that—in other words, all the way through.

Let's go back to the example of the hybrid cars. It would be like passing a Federal law saying you cannot collect the State tax in Arizona or Tennessee on the sale of a hybrid car because it is a great new invention. Not only that, you cannot collect a sales tax—if you are an auto parts supplier in Tennessee—you can't collect a tax there. And if they brought steel to the auto parts supplier, you cannot collect a tax there.

None of us like to pay taxes, but when we lower State and local taxes here, we are inevitably raising State and local taxes there. Lowering taxes in this amount of money by direction from Washington, DC, inevitably makes this the Higher Sales Tax Act of 2004, the Higher Local Property Tax Act of 2004 because every mayor and every Governor is going to be scrambling to figure out: We lost all this revenue because the Congress in its wisdom had the idea to give a big subsidy to the high-speed Internet access business, and we are going to have to find a way to pay for the schools, to keep from raising tuition so much, to pay for health care, and to open the parks. So we are going to have to close them, cut them back, or raise the sales tax on food and raise the property tax. That is why we usually leave those matters to mayors and Governors and do not do it from here.

We are all for home ownership, but we do not pass a Federal law to lower property taxes. We all want our corporations to stay in the United States, and we do not want them to have high local taxes any more than high Federal taxes, but we do not pass a Federal law lowering the local corporate income tax.

That is why I am perplexed by this bill. The idea that by adding a subsidy we would encourage the use of high-speed Internet access when it is already, according to the New York Times last week, the fastest growing technology in America, when already it is being accepted more rapidly than VCR and all these other innovations I do not agree with. The idea that it needs more taxpayer support I do not agree with.

Let's throw that item completely out the window and say if we do believe it needs a subsidy, then why do we send the bill to State and local governments? We promised not to do that.

Mr. President, 300 Republicans stood over on the steps of the Capitol in late September 1994 and said: No money, no mandates. If we break our promise, throw us out.

I thought we were the party on this side of the aisle of no Federal unfunded mandates. That was a big movement back then. Everybody got fired up about it. I heard it. I was running around the country trying to offer myself for higher office, which the people rejected. I know the great Contract with America was no more unfunded mandates. I remember Senator Dole saying when he was majority leader the first act on the part of the Senate was no more unfunded mandates. In fact, this unfunded mandate might be so large that according to CBO's letter to us, they cannot calculate how much it will be, although they know it is enough to make it an unfunded Federal mandate.

Why would we do that? Why don't we do what Texas did? Texas did a very direct thing. They said the first \$25 you pay every month is exempt from State and local taxes. It could be \$30, it could be \$35, it could be \$40. Then we won't have any argument about definition. We would not have to worry about whether we were subsidizing companies instead of consumers, and we would actually be giving a benefit to the individual American—maybe there will be 100 million of them 1 day—who subscribe to high-speed Internet access, and we say no State and local taxes at all, none on you.

The States have asked us to do that, and we have not done it. I don't know why. That also is an unfunded mandate, but it is not much money. The way we are doing it is a lot of money. It is at least hundreds of millions of State dollars a year, and the way this latest bill is written, it could be billions a year of State and local revenues.

I thought the National Governors Association letter was thoughtful and respectful and acknowledged the hard work all sides have done on this issue. That is why it is such a hard issue, maybe, because it ought to be easy. It ought to be a small amount of money and a fairly simple issue. But it has been written into a complex issue with the possibility that it might run a Mack truck through State and local budgets.

The National Governors Association yesterday suggested the proposal by the Senator from Arizona falls short of their hope of balancing the interests of State sovereignty and State responsibility with the desire for keeping high-speed Internet access free of excessive taxation. They talked about the specific issues I suggested in my letter to the chairman earlier this week and that formed the basis for amendments I have filed.

One, the definition. Instead of using the definition of the original moratorium in 1998, the one we all agreed to in 1998 and 2000, instead of saying let's do

that permanently or do that again, they have cooked up a new definition. This definition is the one that runs the risk of costing State and local governments so much. That is one.

Second, the language—and this may be inadvertent and if it is, maybe I can ask the Senator from Arizona if there is a way we can agree on how to fix it. If we agree we do not intend to keep States from continuing to collect State and local taxes on telephone services, even telephone calls made over the Internet, then we ought to get that issue off the table, and surely we can find somebody who can write that in a sentence to which we can all agree.

Then there is the term. I applaud the leadership of those Senators on the Commerce Committee who want to address this issue. I think if we go 4 years, which is better than permanent, but if we go 3 or 4 years, we run the risk of freezing into the law provisions that will be much harder for the Commerce Committee and the full Senate to change. Then there is the question of the so-called grandfather act which allows States already collecting taxes to keep doing that.

Those are all the issues we have here. One is the definition, one is telephone, one is term, and one is grandfather. That is tantalizingly close, it would seem to me, but the one that makes the most difference is the definition, which means for the first time, States will not be allowed to apply business taxes to the high-speed Internet industry in the same way they normally would other businesses for the first time. They are not collecting these taxes.

The other issue is the language, we believe, in the latest draft and certainly the language in the House bill runs the substantial risk of over time costing the States up to \$10 billion a year in sales taxes, and the House bill another \$7 billion in business taxes now collected on telephone services.

I do not want to overstate that point. That is not going to happen tomorrow. It is going to gradually happen as telephone calls are made over the Internet.

So that would be my hope since we have narrowed it down to that, and one of them may not be an issue at all, but that is pretty close. I do not know much more that I can say about it except—well, I can say a whole lot more about it. I have stacks of stuff and I will be glad to stick around and talk about it if anybody wants to. I do have the hearing I am expected to chair at 3, but I would say to the distinguished chairman from Arizona that I hope he understands I am not persisting in this just for the purpose of being obstinate. I feel very deeply, from my background as Governor, that it is important for us to respect the ability of State and local governments to fund their programs.

Since I left the Governor's office in Tennessee in 1987, Federal funding for education has gone from 50 cents out of every dollar to 40 cents. Most of that has gone to higher education. Our

chances for job growth and a high standard of living depend to a great extent on the ability of State and local governments to properly fund colleges and universities and create schools our children can attend.

Any time we take away resources from State and local governments, that does not sound like the Republican Party. President Reagan was giving resources to State and local governments. President Eisenhower was giving resources to State and local governments. Last year, we sent a welfare check to State and local governments of \$20 billion, and this year we are talking about taking back up to at least \$10 billion a year. That is my objection.

We could have a separate debate about whether the subsidy is warranted and, if it is, well, we could pay for it from here. But surely we would not send the bill to State and local governments.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I look forward to discussions with the Senator from Tennessee and the Senator from Delaware. As they know, we have a meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld in 407 in about 20 minutes, and we are going to go back on the bill at 4. I would be glad to have discussions. Meanwhile, I hope there would be some amendments proposed by the opponents of the legislation, and we could dispose of them as we did yesterday with the Senator from Texas, who came forward with an amendment and we debated it. Unfortunately, neither the Senator from Tennessee, nor the Senator from Delaware, nor the Senator from Ohio have chosen to do so.

Usually, I like to do business by amendments, debates, and votes. That is the way we usually like to move forward legislatively.

I look forward to that opportunity and also engaging in any discussions which the Senator would like. I want to assure him I am very confident in the sincerity of his views on this issue and his commitment to the issue. I understand his background as a very successful Governor of the great State of Tennessee which gives him a perspective for which I am greatly appreciative.

We are still in morning business?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to finish my statement, which I hope will be done by 2:55. If not, I ask unanimous consent to finish my complete statement.

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

THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION CHAIRMAN MUST GO

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I was in Arizona recently, and by chance I watched C-SPAN airing the Federal Election Commission hearing on the issue of 527s. Let me assure my colleagues, it was both eye opening and appalling.