

State, file for bankruptcy, and basically protect all of their assets which they own because of a provision in Florida and Texas law. Homestead exemptions exist in other States as well. People can put money in trusts today and tomorrow file for bankruptcy and know that all the millions of dollars they put in those trusts can be protected from bankruptcy. That is wrong.

With the legislation we have before us, someone has to figure out that 2½ years ahead of time people are going to want to file for bankruptcy and be smart enough to put the money into a home, or an estate, or into a trust—not something you can do today—and file for bankruptcy tomorrow; or this year and file for bankruptcy next year or the next 2 or 3 years, or 3½ years. It is a much better approach. I, frankly, would like to see a cap on the homestead exemption. I voted for one yesterday. It didn't prevail. It should have.

What is in this current bill is a heck of a lot better than it is in the law that exists today. Here is how this bill would work. For people whose median family income is under 100 percent of median family income, those families for the most part will be able to file for bankruptcy and go into chapter 7 bankruptcy without a whole lot of fuss.

What is median family income? In my State, it is about \$72,000. Nationally, median family income is about \$65,000 for a family of four. It varies from there. It can be as low as \$48,000 or \$49,000 for a family of four in Mississippi, up to \$80,000 in States such as Connecticut and others. But it is a range from the high forties to the low eighties for median family income.

For folks whose income is below 100 percent of median family income, they go into chapter 7 pretty much without a lot of dispute. However, for those families whose income is above median income, above \$72,000, they would have to go through a means test. That is not a bad thing to do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 26, which the clerk will report.

The legislation clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 26) to amend title II of the United States Code, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Kennedy (for Leahy/Sarbanes) amendment No. 83, to modify the definition of disinterested person in the Bankruptcy Code.

Dodd (for Kennedy) amendment No. 69, to amend the definition of current monthly income.

Dodd (for Kennedy) amendment No. 70, to exempt debtors whose financial problems were caused by failure to receive alimony or child support, or both, from means testing.

Akaka amendment No. 105, to limit claims in bankruptcy by certain unsecured creditors.

Feingold amendment No. 90, to amend the provision relating to fair notice given to creditors.

Feingold amendment No. 92, to amend the credit counseling provision.

Feingold amendment No. 93, to modify the disclosure requirements for debt relief agencies providing bankruptcy assistance.

Feingold amendment No. 95, to amend the provisions relating to the discharge of taxes under chapter 13.

Feingold amendment No. 96, to amend the provisions relating to chapter 13 plans to have a 5-year duration in certain cases and to amend the definition of disposable income for purposes of chapter 13.

Talent amendment No. 121, to deter corporate fraud and prevent the abuse of State self-settled trust law.

Schumer amendment No. 129 (to Amendment No. 121), to limit the exemption for asset protection trusts.

Durbin amendment No. 112, to protect disabled veterans from means testing in bankruptcy under certain circumstances.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided on amendment No. 70.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to ask for the yeas and nays at this time.

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

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to talk about the most vulnerable people who go into bankruptcy; they are single women with children. There is \$95 million a year in unpaid alimony and child support. When these women marry—or divorced women end up in bankruptcy, they end up in the harsh provisions of this legislation. That is wrong. These are people who are trying. They are working hard. They are playing by the rules, and they wouldn't be in bankruptcy if their husbands had paid. Why we ought to treat them harshly as this bill does is wrong.

This amendment which I have introduced with the Senator from Connecticut, Senator DODD, makes sure that we are going to treat them fairly under this provision.

I hope the Senate will accept it.

I yield 30 seconds to the Senator.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Massachusetts. He makes a point. Next year, more than 1 million single women will file for bankruptcy in the United States. Most of them are women with children, significant numbers of children. This is far too harsh for this constituency.

We urge adoption of the Kennedy amendment. It is only right and only fair and ought to be done to provide re-

lief to these people under the bankruptcy system.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I understand the vote is about to start. I yield back all of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The question is on agreeing to Kennedy amendment No. 70.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced — yeas 41, nays 58, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 36 Leg.]

YEAS—41

Akaka	Feingold	Mikulski
Baucus	Feinstein	Murray
Bayh	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Jeffords	Pryor
Byrd	Kennedy	Reed
Cantwell	Kerry	Reid
Chafee	Kohl	Rockefeller
Conrad	Landrieu	Salazar
Corzine	Lautenberg	Sarbanes
Dayton	Leahy	Schumer
Dodd	Levin	Stabenow
Dorgan	Lieberman	Wyden
Durbin	Lincoln	

NAYS—58

Alexander	DeWine	McConnell
Allard	Dole	Murkowski
Allen	Domenici	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Biden	Enzi	Santorum
Bond	Frist	Sessions
Brownback	Graham	Shelby
Bunning	Grassley	Smith
Burns	Gregg	Snowe
Burr	Hagel	Specter
Carper	Hatch	Stevens
Chambliss	Hutchison	Sununu
Coburn	Inhofe	Talent
Cochran	Isakson	Thomas
Coleman	Johnson	Thune
Collins	Kyl	Vitter
Cornyn	Lott	Voinovich
Craig	Lugar	Warner
Crapo	Martinez	
DeMint	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Clinton

The amendment (No. 70) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 69

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate on Kennedy amendment No. 69.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next 2 votes be 10 minutes each.

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

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, workers in this country have hit a perfect storm with the decline in manufacturing, the outsourcing of jobs, and the increasing of part-time work. This has fallen disproportionately on African Americans and Latinos. The unemployment rate for Latinos has increased by 40 percent in recent years. It has increased by 31 percent with African Americans. If you are a Latino homeowner, you are 250 percent more likely

than White homeowners to go into bankruptcy. African-American homeowners are 690 percent more likely to go into bankruptcy.

All this amendment says is that those individuals can still go into bankruptcy, but they will not be caught up in the harsher provisions of this bankruptcy act. It would be enormously unfair, unjust, and discriminatory. That is what this amendment does.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield back the time on this side.

Mr. KENNEDY. 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 on agreeing to Kennedy amendment No. 69.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 41, nays 58, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 37 Leg.]

YEAS—41

Akaka	Feingold	Mikulski
Baucus	Feinstein	Murray
Bayh	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Jeffords	Pryor
Byrd	Kennedy	Reed
Cantwell	Kerry	Reid
Carper	Kohl	Rockefeller
Conrad	Landrieu	Salazar
Corzine	Lautenberg	Sarbanes
Dayton	Leahy	Schumer
Dodd	Levin	Stabenow
Dorgan	Lieberman	Wyden
Durbin	Lincoln	

NAYS—58

Alexander	DeWine	McConnell
Allard	Dole	Murkowski
Allen	Domenici	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Bingaman	Enzi	Santorum
Bond	Frist	Sessions
Brownback	Graham	Shelby
Bunning	Grassley	Smith
Burns	Gregg	Snowe
Burr	Hagel	Specter
Chafee	Hatch	Stevens
Chambliss	Hutchison	Sununu
Coburn	Inhofe	Talent
Cochran	Isakson	Thomas
Coleman	Johnson	Thune
Collins	Kyl	Vitter
Cornyn	Lott	Voinovich
Craig	Lugar	Warner
Crapo	Martinez	
DeMint	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Clinton

The amendment (No. 69) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 105

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAHAM). There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided on the Akaka amendment No. 105.

The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, the bankruptcy bill does not allow consumers to declare personal bankruptcy,

in either chapter 7 or chapter 13, unless they receive a briefing from an approved nonprofit credit counseling agency within 6 months of filing for bankruptcy.

About one-third of all credit counseling consumers enter into a debt management plan. In exchange, creditors can agree to offer concessions to consumers to pay off as many of their debts as possible. However, most credit card companies have become increasingly unwilling to significantly reduce interest rates for consumers in credit counseling.

My amendment would prevent unsecured creditors, primarily credit card issuers, from attempting to collect accruing interest and additional fees from consumers in credit counseling.

As a show of support for the effectiveness of sound consumer credit counseling, especially as an alternative to bankruptcy, credit card issuers should waive the amount owned in interest and fees for consumers who enter a consolidated payment plan. Successful completion of a debt management plan benefits both creditors and consumers. For many consumers, paying off debt is not easy, and my amendment seeks to help these struggling individuals.

I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment to help consumers enrolled in debt management plans to successfully repay their creditors, free themselves from debt, and avoid bankruptcy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, the amendment of the Senator from Hawaii is dressed up as a credit counseling amendment, but it would cause havoc in our modern consumer credit system. It requires that a lender stop charging interest on the outstanding debt of any bankrupt debtor who participates in a debt management program. The practical result is that lenders are forced to either waive further payments on an extension of credit or have the debt discharged in bankruptcy. This will not be good for the consumer, the borrower.

This is a sweeping change in modern banking practices. We have had no hearings in the Senate Banking Committee. I ask my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to Akaka amendment No. 105.

Mr. AKAKA. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 38, nays 61, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 38 Leg.]

YEAS—38

Akaka	Harkin	Murray
Bayh	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Jeffords	Obama
Byrd	Kennedy	Pryor
Cantwell	Kerry	Reed
Conrad	Kohl	Reid
Corzine	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Dayton	Lautenberg	Salazar
Dodd	Leahy	Sarbanes
Dorgan	Levin	Schumer
Durbin	Lieberman	Stabenow
Feingold	Lincoln	Wyden
Feinstein	Mikulski	

NAYS—61

Alexander	Crapo	McCain
Allard	DeMint	McConnell
Allen	DeWine	Murkowski
Baucus	Dole	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Domenici	Roberts
Biden	Ensign	Santorum
Bingaman	Enzi	Sessions
Bond	Frist	Shelby
Brownback	Graham	Smith
Bunning	Grassley	Snowe
Burns	Gregg	Specter
Burr	Hagel	Stevens
Carper	Hatch	Sununu
Chafee	Hutchison	Talent
Chambliss	Inhofe	Thomas
Coburn	Isakson	Thune
Cochran	Johnson	Vitter
Coleman	Kyl	Voinovich
Collins	Lott	Warner
Cornyn	Lugar	
Craig	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—1

Clinton

The amendment (No. 105) was rejected.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. TALENT. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now stand in a period for morning business until 2 p.m., with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be permitted to speak in morning business up to 25 minutes.

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

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, in past weeks I have come to the floor to report on the tremendous job that America and other allies did in assisting relief from the devastating tsunami that struck in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand last December. Later I spoke about the very promising development of broad-based support for moderate Islam among leaders in Southeast Asia. The constructive work being done there is an extremely important counter to the Wahabism strain of Islam teaching which subverts the teaching of a peaceful religion to promote terrorist attacks on any and all