

an important piece of legislation. But also, as we have learned here in the Senate, people keeping their word is also important. I am confident it was some kind of a misunderstanding. I am hopeful that is the case. But until Senator KENNEDY and others and Senator SPECTER work this out, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, just a moment of explanation because I think this bill is, in substance, broadly supported. I am disappointed to hear the objections tonight.

Let me comment very briefly on the bill because it is an issue that I think this body does feel strongly about and that we need to move forward on because it can make a difference. This particular bill is child predator legislation, and we all need to be working together to keep our children safe from child predators. American families, as we all know, should not have to live in fear of sexual predators lurking in neighborhoods and enticing our children.

In the last 24 hours, we have all seen—actually here in the Senate and in this town—we have learned some shocking and tragic news about the growing problem of online child pornography. The abuse of the Internet has really, unfortunately, become the gateway to more serious violent sex offenses against both children and adults.

On Tuesday night, we learned of the arrest of another online child predator and the tragic plight of a child predator victim. The predator was an official from the Department of Homeland Security who was arrested for seducing a child over the Internet. Allegedly, this individual initiated a sexually explicit online chat with a detective posing as a 14-year-old girl. He allegedly described in graphic detail the sexual acts he wanted to perform with her and offered to exchange sexually explicit photos. Fortunately, law enforcement intercepted this individual before he could victimize an innocent child.

But for too many innocent children, the child predators are not caught until it is too late. Yesterday we also heard from one of the victims: 19-year-old Justin Berry from California who courageously testified before a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing on sexual exploitation of children over the internet. For 5 five years, Justin was the victim of an online child pornography ring. At 13, this lonely teenager innocently hooked up a web camera to his computer, hoping to meet other teenagers online. Instead, he heard only from adult child predators who struck up friendly chats and offered him compliments and gifts. One day, one predator offered to pay him \$50 to take off his shirt in front of the webcam. Eventually, these predators lured him into performing pornographic acts in front of the webcam for an audience that grew to more than 1,500 people who paid him hundreds of thousands of dollars.

These shocking stories are not isolated incidents. They are symptomatic of a larger problem.

I believe we should seize this opportunity to transform these tragedies into positive action.

The bill I called up tonight—S. 1086, the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act—would help protect our kids against child predators. It was introduced by Senator HATCH. It has 33 bipartisan cosponsors. It was reported unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Boys and Girls Club of America, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the National District Attorneys Association. And it is supported by the families of child predator victims.

Among its many provisions, the bill will create a national sex offender registry accessible on the Internet and searchable by zip code;

Require convicted sex offenders to register, including child predators who use the Internet to commit a crime against a minor;

Make failure to register a felony; Encourage information sharing among local, State and Federal law enforcement; and

Toughen criminal penalties for violent crimes against children under 12.

Here in the Senate, we need to act to address this issue. In light of the events this week, we should not delay. We should act now before another innocent child becomes a victim of a child predator.

It is an issue we do need to address, and I believe it will pass in an overwhelmingly bipartisan way. In light of the events of this week, we should not be delaying it any longer. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the other side in getting this bill passed as soon as possible.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, very briefly, if the distinguished majority leader will yield, Democrats support the concept of a national registry. It is important. But we also support the concept that people who are injured, maimed, or murdered as a result of hate crimes also deserve protection. We hope we can do all this at one time. I am hopeful and confident that can happen.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF BENJAMIN A. POWELL TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed en bloc to the following nominations on the calendar: No. 239, Benjamin Powell; No. 310, Gordon England; No. 485, Dorrance Smith; No. 252, Peter Flory. I further ask unanimous consent that the clerk report them individually at this time in order to file cloture motions.

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

The clerk will report the first nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Benjamin A. Powell, of Florida, to be General Counsel of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Benjamin Powell to be General Counsel of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Bill Frist, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Jim Bunning, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, Craig Thomas, Ted Stevens, David Vitter, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, Norm Coleman, Mike DeWine, R.F. Bennett, John Thune.

NOMINATION OF GORDON ENGLAND TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Gordon England, of Texas, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gordon England to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Bill Frist, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Jim Bunning, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, Larry E. Craig, Ted Stevens, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, Norm Coleman, Mike DeWine, R.F. Bennett, John Thune, Craig Thomas.

NOMINATION OF DORRANCE SMITH TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Dorrance Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Dorrance Smith to be Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Bill Frist, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Jim Bunning, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, Craig Thomas, Ted Stevens, David Vitter, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, Norm Coleman, Mike DeWine, R.F. Bennett, John Thune.

NOMINATION OF PETER CYRIL WYCHE FLORY, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Peter Cyril Wyche Flory, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Peter Cyril Wyche Flory to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Bill Frist, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Jim Bunning, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, Craig Thomas, Ted Stevens, David Vitter, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, Norm Coleman, Mike DeWine, Robert F. Bennett, John Thune.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for clarification, I just filed cloture on four defense nominations that have been pending since last year.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now return to legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

REMEMBERING MARGO CARLISLE

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, yesterday was a sad day for me because it

was the day when friends and family of Margo Carlisle, my former chief of staff, gathered to bid her farewell.

Margo worked faithfully in a number of positions of responsibility here in the Senate. She was the first female staff director of the Senate Republican Conference, under the chairmanship of former Senator Jim McClure of Idaho. She was my chief of staff from 1991 to 1997. All who worked with her here know of her respect and appreciation for the Senate, and her conscientious devotion to our great country.

She served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs from 1986 to 1989, and at that time, she was one of the highest ranking women in the Department of Defense. She received the Distinguished Public Service Medal in recognition of her outstanding performance of duty in this important office.

She also served as vice president of the Heritage Foundation, president of the Philadelphia Society, and was a member of the board of the Marine Corps University in Quantico and the Washington Home Hospice.

She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Miles; and two children, Mary "Nisi" Hamilton of Bethesda and Tristram Coffin Carlisle of Alexandria. We extend to them our sincerest condolences.

THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY ANTITRUST ACT OF 2006

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to join with Senators SPECTER, KOHL, DEWINE and others on a new bill, the Oil and Gas Industry Antitrust Act of 2006, which includes, as its centerpiece, our NOPEC legislation, which many of us have worked together on for years.

This measure—The No Oil Producing And Exporting Cartels Act, NOPEC—would make OPEC accountable for its anticompetitive behavior and allow the Justice Department to crack down on illegal price manipulation by oil cartels. It will allow the Federal Government to take legal action against any foreign state, including members of OPEC, for price fixing and other anticompetitive activities. The tools this bill would provide to law enforcement agencies are necessary to immediately counter OPEC's anticompetitive practices, and these tools would help reduce gasoline prices now.

The Congress should pass this measure immediately instead of waiting until the price of gasoline at the pump is \$4 a gallon. OPEC has America over a barrel, and we should fight back. If OPEC were simply a foreign business engaged in this type of behavior, it would already be subject to American antitrust law. It is wrong to let OPEC producers off the hook just because their anticompetitive practices come with the seal of approval of this cartel's member nations.

It is time for the President to join the bipartisan majority in the Senate

which already said "NO" to OPEC by passing NOPEC and by sending it to the other body, where it was killed.

The Senate has already passed this bill, which would make OPEC subject to our antitrust laws. In fact, the Judiciary Committee has approved the NOPEC bill three times. Regrettably, even though President Bush promised in 2000 that he would "jawbone OPEC," the Bush administration and its friends in the House have scuttled the NOPEC bill and the direct and daily relief it would bring to millions of Americans.

In addition, this bill makes it unlawful to divert petroleum or natural gas products from their local market to a distant market with the primary intention of increasing prices or creating a shortage in a market. This solves a real problem where products are being shipped for sale in that market but are later diverted and sold for less in another market.

We have an obligation to address these and other issues caused by oil cartels and by greedy companies who have money—that they have extracted from the American people—to burn. That is why I am also pleased that the bill includes provisions to conduct several studies that address serious competition, information sharing, and other antitrust problem areas related to the oil and natural gas industries. The American people deserve answers, and this bill also provides a path to getting those answers.

Authorizing tough legal action against illegal oil price fixing, and taking that action without delay, is one thing we can do without additional obstruction or delay.

The artificial pricing scheme enforced by OPEC affects all of us, not the least of whom are hardworking Vermont farmers. The overall increase in fuel costs for an average Vermont farmer last year was 43 percent, meaning that each farmer is estimated to pay an additional \$700 in fuel surcharges in 2006 alone. Vermonters know what the terrible consequences of these high prices can be: forcing many farmers to make unfair choices between running their farms or heating their homes. No one should be forced to make these choices, certainly not our hard-working farmers.

In summary, this bill will provide law enforcement with the tools necessary to fight OPEC's anticompetitive practices immediately, and help reduce gasoline prices now. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and to say "NO" to OPEC as we have done in the past.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL A. CHAGARES

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the nomination of Michael A. Chagares to be a Circuit Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

It is an honor that another person from my home State of New Jersey has