The amendments were ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read the third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill, as amended, pass?

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Did we just pass the bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair has not yet announced the final passage of the bill.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING), is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 79, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 225 Leg.]

YEAS—79

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Abraham | Durbin | McConnell |
| Akaka | Edwards | Mikulski |
| Ashcroft | Feinstein | Moynihan |
| Baucus | Fitzgerald | Murkowski |
| Bayh | Frist | Reed |
| Bennett | Gorton | Reid |
| Biden | Grams | Robb |
| Bingaman | Grassley | Roberts |
| Bond | Gregg | Rockefeller |
| Breaux | Hagel | Roth |
| Brownback | Harkin | Santorum |
| Bryan | Hatch | Sarbanes |
| Burns | Helms | Schumer |
| Byrd | Hollings | Sessions |
| Campbell | Hutchinson | Shelby |
| Chafee, L. | Hutchison | Smith (OR) |
| Cleland | Inhofe | Snowe |
| Cochran | Jeffords | Specter |
| Collins | Johnson | Stevens |
| Conrad | Kohl | Thomas |
| Craig | Landrieu | Thompson |
| Crapo | Lautenberg | Thurmond |
| Daschle | Leahy | Warner |
| DeWine | Levin | Wellstone |
| Dodd | Lincoln | Wyden |
| Domenici | Lott | |
| Dorgan | Lugar | |

NAYS—13

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Allard | Kyl | Smith (NH) |
| Enzi | Lieberman | Torricelli |
| Feingold | Mack | Voinovich |
| Graham | McCain | |
| Gramm | Nickles | |

NOT VOTING—7

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Boxer | Kennedy | Murray |
| Bunning | Kerrey | |
| Inouye | Kerry | |

The bill (H.R. 4461), as amended, was passed.

(The bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate insists on its amendments and requests a conference with the House, and the Chair appoints Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. BOND, Mr. GORTON, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. BURNS, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. KOHL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. BYRD conferees on the part of the Senate.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I want to express my deepest appreciation for the excellent cooperation of our professional staff members of the Appropriations Committee. Our subcommittee staff, in particular, led by our chief clerk, Rebecca Davies, and other staff members, including Martha Scott Poindexter; Hunt Shipman; Les Spivey; and Coy Neal; the minority professional staff, Galen Fountain and Carole Geagley; the full committee staff member, Jay Kimmitt; Senator KOHL's personal staff members, Ben Miller and Paul Bock. They were all enormously helpful in the handling of this legislation and the passage of this legislation tonight in the Senate. For all of their assistance, I am deeply grateful.

I also have to thank Senator HERB KOHL, the distinguished ranking member of the Democratic side of the aisle on this subcommittee.

I appreciate the able assistance we received during the final, crucial stages of the handling of this bill from Senator LOTT, the majority leader; Senator STEVENS, chairman of the full Committee on Appropriations; and Senator REID of Nevada, who provided assistance all during the handling of the bill on the floor of the Senate today. We appreciate all of the good work they did. We also thank all Senators for permitting us to pass this legislation tonight.

## UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank the manager of the Agriculture appropriations bill for allowing me to begin this unanimous consent request and for his patience in working through this long series of amendments. Again, I thank HARRY REID and Senator DASCHLE for their work with us. We have a unanimous consent request so Senators will know how to proceed tonight.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the reconciliation/marriage tax relief conference report to H.R. 4810, and there be up to 90 minutes for debate this evening, to be equally divided between the two managers.

I further ask unanimous consent that when the Senate reconvenes at 9 a.m. on Friday, there be 30 minutes of debate on the marriage tax penalty conference report, to be equally divided between the two managers, and following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to the vote on adoption of the reconciliation/marriage tax relief conference report, without any intervening action, motion, or debate.

I further ask consent that following the disposition of the marriage tax relief conference report on Friday, the Senate immediately proceed to executive session in order to consider the following nominations, that they be considered en bloc, confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be notified, and the Senate return to legislative session. Those nominations are:

Johnnie Rawlinson, to be a Ninth Circuit Judge; Dennis Cavanaugh, to be a district judge; John E. Steele, to be a district judge; Gregory Presnell, to be a district judge; and James Moody, to be a district judge.

If we can get an agreement, Senator DASCHLE and I are prepared to go forward with the Department of Defense appropriations bill. We don't have that yet, but we will try to clear that on both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I thank Senator DASCHLE, Senator REID, and Senator COCHRAN for their help in this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senator from New York, Mr. MOYNIHAN, the ranking member of the Finance Committee, has been here. He checked with the minority and there is nobody on the minority side who wishes to speak tonight. The Senator will be here in the morning to lead the debate for the minority on the marriage tax issue. I wanted the RECORD to be clear because my friend, Senator ROTH, indicated that the ranking member would be here. He was here and he checked to see if anybody on our side wished to speak and nobody did. So he has departed from the Chamber.

## MARRIAGE TAX RELIEF RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2000—CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I submit a report of the committee of conference on the bill (H.R. 4810) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 103(a)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2001, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The report will be stated.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee on conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill H.R. 4810 have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD, of July 19, 2000.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SNOWE). The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. ROTH. Madam President, tomorrow this Senate will approve the Marriage Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2000. This is a great victory for the American family—all of America's families. It is not one that has been won for America's families, as much as it has been earned by America's families.

This bill is the centerpiece of our efforts to reduce the tax overpayment by American taxpayers. It is fair, it is responsible, it is the right thing to do for American families. And it is long overdue that they receive it.

The provisions in this bill will help 45 million families. That is substantially every family in the U.S. Some of my colleagues have argued that almost half of those families—21 million families located in every state in this country—do not deserve any tax relief. I reject that. I reject it because in my home state of Delaware it would mean leaving over 30,000 families that contributed to our ever-growing budget surplus out of family tax relief.

Why should the family in which one spouse stays home to raise the children and keep the house not receive a tax break? Does that spouse not work? Do you imagine that spouse doesn't work just because she or he does not get paid? Does that family not count? They do in Delaware, they do in this country, and they do in this bill.

All of these American families have contributed to the record surplus that we have in Washington. They deserve to get some of it back. I believed that three months ago when I first unveiled this package. And I believe it even more so now in light of estimates recently released by the Congressional Budget Office.

Today's bill amounts to less than 5 percent of the total budget surplus over the next 5 years. That is less than a nickel on the dollar of our total budget surplus. It amounts to just 9 percent of the total non-Social Security surplus over the next five years. That is less than a dime on the dollar of the non-Social Security surplus. A nickel and a dime. By any comparison or estimation, this marriage tax relief is fiscally responsible. Those who dispute that are themselves seeking to ''nickel-and-dime'' America's families out of tax relief.

I would ask those who oppose this family tax relief: just how big will America's budget surplus have to get before America's families deserve to receive some of their tax dollars back? If not now, when? If just 5 percent of the budget surplus and just 9 percent of the tax overpayment is too big a refund, how little should it be? How long do they have to wait? How hard do they have to work? How large an overpayment do they have to make? How large a budget surplus do we need to have?

This bill is fair. We have addressed the three largest sources of marriage tax penalties in the tax code—the standard deduction, the rate brackets, and the earned income credit. And we have done so in a way that does not create any new penalties—any new disincentives in the tax code. We have ensured that a family with one stay-at-home parent is not treated worse for tax purposes than a family where both parents work outside the home. This is an important principle because these are important families.

Let's take a look at what all these families will receive under our bill—and just as importantly, let's look at when they will get it. First, our bill increases the standard deduction for married couples filing a joint return to twice the deduction for singles.

This benefit, which would reduce a couple's taxable income by $1,450, is effective for this taxable year. That's right—for the year 2000. That means when a couple files their tax returns this coming April, they will be able to see and feel the results of our work. This provision will benefit about 25 million taxpayers. As a result, I believe that we should call this bill the ASAP tax relief bill for America's taxpayers—tax relief for America's families now.

Now, I know that those who search for excuses to oppose tax relief will question the immediacy of this tax cut. Before they do, I would remind those people: it was not a problem for them to raise taxes retroactively seven years ago. And of course, when you are raising taxes retroactively, it is a big problem because people have already made their financial commitments. In contrast, giving people an immediate tax cut is only a problem if you object to letting people keep their money.

Second, our bill increases the 15 percent rate bracket for married couples so that it is twice the size of the corresponding rate bracket for singles. While we phase in this doubling, we begin the increase immediately. Taxpayers will receive a portion of the benefit as soon as possible—as soon as they file their year 2000 tax returns. And they will see the entire benefit—a total of over $1,100 per family—in the year 2004. This provision will help about 21 million taxpayers.

Third, our bill helps married couples who are receiving the earned income credit. We increase the beginning and ending points of the credit's income phase-out for these couples by $2,000. Just like the other provisions in the bill, we deliver this relief immediately—for the tax year 2000. The hard working families who receive the EIC will see the benefit as soon as they file their year 2000 tax returns. This provision helps almost four million families, including an expansion of the EIC to one million families who were previously ineligible for the credit because of their combined income.

Finally, our bill ensures that families will continue to receive their family tax credits. Congress has delivered a variety of tax credits to American families—credits like the child credit, the HOPE credit, the Lifetime Learning credit, the dependent care credit, and the adoption credit. This bill extends a temporary provision that carves out these credits from the ever-reaching grasp of the alternative minimum tax. Millions of families will also see this benefit. For them, this tax relief won't be an empty promise.

In any House-Senate conference, both sides are forced to make compromises. This one was no exception. I would like to have included the doubling of the 28 percent bracket as we did in the Senate and as 61 Senators supported. I think that these families deserve their full tax break as well. Even the Democratic alternative offered in the Senate accounted for these families by not completely phasing-out their relief until $150,000. I fought hard, but our colleagues in the House did not agree and they refused to budge. I also would have liked to keep our earned income credit provision at $2,500. Once again, the House disagreed. But this is still a good bill and it still delivers the tax relief families have earned and deserve.

Despite the red flags thrown up by those who want to stand in the way of marriage tax relief, this bill actually makes the tax code more progressive. Families with incomes under $100,000 receive a tax cut under our bill that is proportionally higher than the amount of taxes they currently pay. In other words, their tax burden will fall.

Let's look at a few examples prepared by the Joint Committee on Taxation. First, let's take a married couple with two children earning $30,000. When this bill is fully effective, that couple would see a reduction in its taxes of over 143 percent. On the other hand, a two-child couple earning $100,000 would see its taxes drop by 11 percent, and a couple earning $200,000 would see its taxes drop by less than 4 percent.

This same dynamic holds true for a couple with no children. Under our bill, a couple earning $20,000 would see its taxes reduced by 28 percent; a couple earning $75,000 would have its taxes reduced by 16 percent, and a couple earning $100,000 would have its taxes reduced by 9.5 percent.

There is no honest way people can claim that this bill is tilted towards the rich. I believe that the real complaint of those who oppose this bill is not that it is tilted towards the rich—because it is not—but because it is tilted away from Washington. As a result, some of America's tax overpayment will flow back to America's families.

And while I would rather have seen the 28 percent bracket doubling included in the bill, its absence does do one thing. Its absence removes any excuse for the President not to sign this bill. If President Clinton does not sign this bill, then there is only one explanation. No matter how much the amount of surplus, no matter how much the size of the tax overpayment,

no matter how high the overall tax burden, and no matter how much families deserve tax relief, it is all less important than the fact that Washington wants the money more. They are saying to America: those in the White House need your money more than the people in your house do.

With the passage of this bill, Congress has met every test that the President has set for tax relief. He wanted it to go to deserving people. Who could be more deserving than America's families? He wanted it to be fiscally responsible. What could be more fiscally responsible than using just a nickel on America's budget surplus dollar and a dime on its tax overpayment? He wanted it to be one provision and not part of a large package. How could it be smaller than the single proposal of family tax relief included here?

Every test, no matter how illusory, has been met. With this bill, President Clinton has run out of excuses for not giving American families tax relief. No more if's, and's, or buts. No more excuses. No more obstacles and no more conditions, this Senate will go on record tomorrow: Family tax relief now.

Madam President, the time for excuses has passed, the time for family tax relief has come. While President Clinton has been focused on international affairs, families across America have been waiting for us to make good on our promise. For President Clinton to make good on his promise. They have been patient. They are waiting for us to return some of this record surplus to them.

There is no reason, none whatsoever, that this bill, the ASAP tax relief bill for America's family taxpayers, should not be immediately signed. Let's approve the Marriage Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2000 and let's divorce the marriage tax penalty from the tax code once and for all.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back the time of the minority tonight, leaving the equally divided half hour in the morning.

Mr. ROTH. Madam President, I will yield back whatever time is not used by the distinguished Senator from Kansas, who wishes to speak.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I will need somewhere around 10 minutes to discuss the conference report. May I proceed at this time?

Mr. ROTH. I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Kansas, and I will yield back the remainder of our time tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I thank the chairman of the Finance Committee for putting forward this legislation. This is the marriage penalty tax. It has been before this body. We passed it with 61 votes in favor of it, and 9 Democrats voted in favor of this bill. Almost the entire Republican side voted for this bill. Now we have a conference report in front of us.

I hope people will look at this and look at what is in the conference report. That is why I wanted to take some time to go through it. It is a 5-year package, $89 billion. I don't want people saying it is $250 billion or anything; it is an $89 billion package. It only hits the 15-percent tax bracket. There has been concern about the 28-percent bracket being hit. It doesn't include the 28-percent bracket. The House side has a 15-percent bracket in dealing with the marriage penalty but not the 28-percent bracket. So we went with the House side and said: OK, we will pull out the 28-percent bracket. So it is just that 15-percent bracket. It is phased in faster than the Senate bill that passed. It does continue to contain the earned-income tax provisions within it so that married couples who are currently being hit by a marriage penalty associated with the earned-income tax credit are no longer impacted by that.

This is an overall excellent bill that meets virtually everybody's suggestions that they were making about this bill. I hope we can get 100 percent support within the Senate for this bill.

It eliminates the marriage penalty built into the standard deduction effective back to the beginning of this year. It backs it up to the beginning of the year 2000. It widens the 15-percent bracket gradually so that joint filing is two times that of singles. It starts at the beginning of this year, and is fully effective by the year 2004.

In other words, we are taking that 15-percent bracket for two-wage earners, or spouses with combined incomes, or even only one spouse, and we are doubling the standard deduction. We are doing it up until 2004.

It increases the top phaseout amount of the earned-income tax credit—the provision I was talking about earlier—for joint filers by $2,000 effective to the beginning of this year; again, the beginning of the year 2000. It sunsets the tax relief provisions in accordance with the Byrd rule at the end of 2004. I want to make sure to point out that provision to people as well. This is a 5-year marriage penalty elimination for the 15-percent tax bracket and earned-income tax credit.

That is basically what the package is. I think it should contain more. I think we ought to have the 28-percent bracket as well on combined incomes. We couldn't get agreement to that in the House. We did on the 15-percent bracket.

I direct most of my statement tonight to the administration. This is going to pass. It is going to pass strong. We have had a lot of calls and contacts in our office from people saying: Of course you shouldn't tax marriage. Let's do away with this penalty. That is what we are simply pleading to the President.

After tomorrow morning when this passes with at least 61 votes, this will be on the administration's desk. It is up to the President and Vice President to determine whether they are going to sign this tax cut. Are we going to sign this tax correction and send to the American people, or are we going to veto it?

The President has been saying: OK. Send me prescription drugs and I will sign the marriage penalty. In the State of the Union Message, he said: Let's deal with the marriage penalty tax, and let's eliminate it. He didn't say then that you have to send this to me at the same time. He asked for a hundred things in the State of the Union Message. He didn't say they have to be linked together. I think he is hiding behind that issue rather than saying whether he is for or against eliminating the marriage penalty within the Tax Code.

I call on the President to sign this for the American people. After tomorrow morning, the President and the Vice President and this administration are all that stands in the way of the American people being able to receive this correction within the Tax Code so people who are married don't pay more taxes than people who are single.

It simply makes equitable a situation for most people impacted by the marriage penalty; not all. It would be better if it dealt with everybody. It is a simple statement that we should not be taxing marriage. We have said that repeatedly. For most people impacted by the marriage penalty, this bill will deal with that situation. We will not be taxing people just for being married. Plus, I think it is just the right message to send across to the American public saying we think marriage is a valuable institution; it shouldn't be taxed. We think it is at the center of family values. Let's all say we are for it and that we shouldn't be taxing it.

Also, it gets around that iron rule in government that if you want less of something, tax it; if you want more of something, subsidize it. I don't think we want to tell the American public we want less marriage, and therefore we are taxing them.

This is the time for us to accomplish this.

I say in conclusion that this is going to pass, and it will pass large tomorrow morning. At least nine Democrats voted for it the last time. The only thing that stands in the way of this tax relief—this tax sanity, that we shouldn't be taxing marriage and the American public—is the President of the United States. Please, Mr. President, sign this bill.

This is good tax policy. This Congress is doing a number of things. We are getting them to the President. It is up to the President whether he will sign them into law.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, the Marriage Tax Relief Act that passed in the Senate previously and that has now come back to us from conference is a piece of legislation of historic importance. I would like to share a few thoughts with this body concerning why I think it is so important.

Not long ago a Harvard president wrote a book about the beginning of our Republic—the first 150 years. He said every piece of legislation that was considered and passed was debated on the principle of whether or not it would make the American people better as individual people, as human beings. It would encourage their self-reliance, their discipline, and their work ethic. It would encourage them to educate themselves and their families. It would make them more law abiding.

We know that public policy does, indeed, affect social policy and that actions have consequences. We know that a tax is a penalty. A tax is a detriment. When you tax something, you get less of it. In fact, that is why we tax cigarettes and beer more than we do food and medicine. We believe you can reduce certain activities to some degree by a tax. We now know if you subsidize an event, you get more of it.

Those are principles that I think are undisputed. How much I don't know. How much it affects any one single event in the life of a nation I don't know. But when you have over 200 million people making thousands and thousands and hundreds of thousands of decisions every day, every week, and every month of the year, penalties on one type of decisionmaking and a subsidy on another type of decisionmaking can affect what happens.

We are in the position that this great Nation through inadvertence, I suppose, has created a system that actually penalizes marriage. It, indeed, can be said to subsidize divorce.

I know a friend who got a divorce in January. I was told had they divorced in December it would have saved them $1,600 in tax dollars; the Federal Government would be prepared to subsidize that divorce. But had they married in December, it would have cost them on their tax return an additional $1,600; $1,600 is a lot of money.

The average family who pays this marriage tax penalty according to the best estimates pays around $1,400 more per year in taxes. That is $100 a month. That is real money for American families.

I want to say how excited I am that I believe we are on the verge of passing and sending to the President a bill that I trust he will feel quite comfortable signing—a bill to eliminate this bizarre penalty.

How much has it impacted marriage and families in America? I don't know. But we know this: Marriage and family is a good institution. It strengthens America through families. Traditions, stability, and education are ways of getting along in the world and transmitted partnerships occur. People live longer who are married, for the most part. It is a good institution. It is the institution that raises our next generation, trains them, and prepares them for the world.

It is such a delight and a thrill to know that we will, tomorrow, I am quite confident, vote to eliminate this penalty on one of America's most valuable institutions, the family. What a good day that is going to be. I look forward to it. I am going to celebrate it when it is signed, as I am confident the President will do. We will have made a major step in this body to strengthening one of America's greatest institutions, and that is the family.

## HONORABLE NANCY EKSTRUM, MAYOR OF PHILIP

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, on July 10, 2000, one of South Dakota's finest mayors stepped down after two decades of public service. Nancy Ekstrum, former city council member and mayor of the town of Philip for 12 years, provided thoughtful and decisive leadership for her community during a time of considerable change.

The first woman to lead Philip, Mayor Ekstrum began her service as mayor facing difficult issues that would be familiar to anyone who lives in a rural community. Poor quality water supplies made treatment expensive and difficult. An aging sewer system needed repair and road projects awaited completion. Meeting these challenges with a shrinking tax base and during a time of hardship for area ranchers required a sense of vision and tenacity. Most of all, it required a mayor who was willing to roll up her sleeves and put her heart and soul into finding creative solutions to difficult problems.

Nancy Ekstrum was just that kind of mayor. Under her leadership, the city built long-needed roads and made great strides toward providing its citizens with clean, healthy drinking water. When it became clear that the Mni Wiconi Rural Water System was still several years from reaching the community, Mayor Ekstrum rallied area residents to work with the congressional delegation to find an affordable interim solution to the city's water crisis. It is my hope that this project will be funded this year so that clean water will be Mayor Ekstrum's lasting legacy to the city.

On a more personal level, I will miss working with Mayor Ekstrum. Her advice on issues facing western South Dakota is always thoughtful and on target. I suspect that I will continue to turn to her long into the future for her thoughts and input as South Dakota faces the challenges of adapting a rural state to a global economy. I look forward to maintaining our strong friendship.

In conclusion, I simply would like to extend my congratulations to Mayor Ekstrum on her 23 years of service to her community. I am delighted that she plans to stay involved in education and will continue to make a difference for the youth of Philip. I wish her the best as she enters this new phase of her life.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator MURRAY be granted leave from the business of the Senate from on today, July 20, and Friday, July 21. She is attending a funeral in Washington.

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

## UNILATERAL ECONOMIC SANCTIONS: LESSONS LEARNED

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, the role of unilateral economic sanctions in the conduct of American foreign policy has been part of our debate in the Congress and in the executive branch for the past three years. Attempts to modify or reform the way the United States utilizes unilateral economic sanctions in the conduct of our foreign policy have consumed the attention of several committees, spawned numerous sanctions reform bills—including my own efforts—resolutions and amendments, generated a number of floor debates, stimulated countless discussions within this body and with the administration and prompted many press conferences and news releases. It even moved the distinguished Majority Leader to appoint an ad hoc bipartisan Senate task force to sort through the issue in the hopes of finding a policy path or sanctions that best promotes our national interest.

Outside the United States Government, virtually every think tank, university, trade association, and foreign policy association has invested time and resources to studying, analyzing and making recommendations on the subject of unilateral economic sanctions. This is as it should be. The subject is integral to our approach on foreign policy, national security and international trade.

I have been pleased that our debate and the large volume of literature have led to considerable re-thinking about the efficacy of unilateral economic sanctions. I have noted that the frequent resort to use of unilateral sanctions to achieve foreign policy goals has declined and that our sophistication about the inter-relationship between unilateral economic sanctions and policy has grown dramatically. One of the most important players in our debate over the past few years has been the unique coalition of some 675 export-oriented companies in the United States called USA*ENGAGE. They have been critical in helping to shape the debate on unilateral economic sanctions, a debate which continues virtually as I speak.