

So the Finance Committee needs a lot of work. But Democrats are ready to do the work, and the Finance Committee bill does provide us with a mechanism for bringing welfare to the floor of the Senate for debate.

If Republicans have problems with their own bill, they should offer amendments to improve it. That is what Democrats intend to do.

In fact, we will offer an alternative plan that is truly about work.

And so today I urge the majority leader to bring the welfare bill to the floor.

It is time the Senate fulfills its obligation to give the American people what they want and deserve: True welfare reform that will move people off welfare and into work, not by punishing children, but by providing people access to the real means to become self-sufficient.

WAS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, as of the close of business yesterday, Thursday, June 29, the Federal debt stood at \$4,898,835,701,662.79. On a per capita basis, every man, woman, and child in America owes \$18,596.06 as his or her share of that debt.

REGULATORY REFORM ACT

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, during consideration of S. 343, the Regulatory Reform Act, I intended to offer an amendment to waive administrative and civil penalties for local governments when Federal water pollution control compliance plans are in effect.

I believe this amendment is a simple issue of fairness to local governments and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment. I ask unanimous consent that the text of my amendment and the text of my "Dear Colleague" letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AMENDMENT No. —

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . WAIVER OF PENALTIES WHEN FEDERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT COMPLIANCE PLANS ARE IN EFFECT.

Section 309 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1319) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(h) WAIVER OF PENALTIES WHEN COMPLIANCE PLANS ARE IN EFFECT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, no civil or administrative penalty may be imposed under this Act against a unit of local government for a violation of a provision of this Act (including a violation of a condition of a permit issued under this Act)—

"(A) if the unit of local government has entered into an agreement with the Administrator (or the Secretary of the Army, in the case of a violation of section 404) to carry out a compliance plan with respect to a prior

violation of the provision by the unit of local government; and

"(B) during the period—

"(i) beginning on the date on which the unit of local government and the Administrator (or the Secretary of the Army, in the case of a violation of section 404) enter into the agreement; and

"(ii) ending on the date on which the unit of local government is required to be in compliance with the provision under the plan.

"(2) REQUIREMENT OF GOOD FAITH.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply during any period in which the Administrator (or the Secretary of the Army, in the case of a violation of section 404) determines that the unit of local government is not carrying out the compliance plan in good faith.

"(3) OTHER ENFORCEMENT.—A waiver of penalties provided under paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to a violation of any provision of this Act other than the provision that is the subject of the agreement described in paragraph (1)(A)."

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, June 27, 1995.

DEAR COLLEAGUE: When the Senate begins consideration of S. 343, the Regulatory Reform Bill, I intend to offer an amendment to lift the unfair burden of excessive civil penalties from the backs of local governments that are working in good faith with the Clean Water Act.

Under current law, civil penalties begin to accumulate the moment a local government violates the Clean Water Act. Once this happens, the law requires that the local government present a Municipal Compliance plan for approval by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), or the Secretary of the Army in cases of Section 404 violations. However, even after a compliance plan has been approved, penalties continue to accumulate. In effect, existing law actually punishes local governments while they are trying to comply with the law.

Under my amendment, local governments would stop accumulating civil and administrative penalties once a Municipal Compliance Plan has been negotiated and the locality is acting in good faith to carry out the plan. Further, my amendment would act as an incentive to encourage governments to move quickly to achieve compliance with the Clean Water Act.

This amendment is a simple issue of fairness. Local governments must operate with a limited pool of resources. Localities should not have to devote their tax revenue to penalties, while having to comply with the law. Rather, by discontinuing burdensome penalties, local governments can better concentrate their resources to meet the intent of the law in protecting our water resources from pollution.

I hope you will join me in supporting this commonsense amendment for our towns and cities. If you have any questions or wish to cosponsor this amendment, please feel free to have a member of your staff contact Quinn Mast of my staff at 4-5842.

Sincerely,

LARRY PRESSLER,

U.S. Senator.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I see no other Senator seeking recognition. I yield the floor, and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE RESCISSIONS BILL

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I understand we have morning business until 10:30, at which time I will ask consent that we turn to H.R. 1944, the rescissions bill, and that no amendments be in order; there be 10 minutes for debate to be equally divided in the usual form; and that following the conclusion or yielding back of time, the bill be advanced to third reading and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

I will make that request at 10:30. I hope we can have the cooperation of our colleagues. This is something the White House wants. We have a statement from the administration. This contains the money for the Oklahoma City disaster. It contains money for the earthquakes in California. And if my colleagues on the other side do not want to pass it, that is up to them.

We have had a lot of negotiation on the rescissions package. The President vetoed it, and we went back and tried to accommodate some of the President's concerns. Now I am advised at this last moment there may be some other political efforts made to delay the bill or frustrate the will of the majority.

I hope that at 10:30 sharp we can take up the bill under the previous considerations.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I know we are waiting until the hour of 10:30, but just for the public record, I now have a copy of this bill. This is the first time I have seen this bill.

I voted for the \$16 billion in cuts when it was on the Senate side, but I want to make it crystal clear that there have now been additional cuts, for example, in low-income energy assistance. I am from a cold weather State. I want to talk about that program. I represent people in my State. Just because people are low income does not mean they do not have representation.

Just now I received a copy of this bill. There was a program that we had that was an important program—the majority leader actually helped me on this before—which provided counseling to elderly people so they do not get ripped off on some of the supplemental health care coverage to Medicare. That came out in the conference committee.

So, Mr. President, there is also a range of important programs here for dislocated people, workers with summer youth employment. I just received this bill—just received it. I have not even had a chance to look at it. I certainly would oppose any kind of a unanimous-consent agreement that said we would have a vote at a time certain.