



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 104th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 141

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, JULY 28, 1995

No. 124

Senate

(Legislative day of Monday, July 10, 1995)

The Senate met at 9 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Sovereign God, our help in all the ups and downs of life, all the triumphs and defeats of political life, and all the changes and challenges of leadership, You are our Lord in all seasons and for all reasons. We can come to You when life makes us glad or when it makes us sad. There is no place or circumstance beyond Your control. Wherever we go You are there waiting for us. You already are at work with people before we encounter them, You prepare solutions for our complexities, and You are ready to help us to resolve conflicts even before we ask You. And so, we claim Your promise given through Jeremiah, "Call on Me, and I will answer you, and show great and mighty things you do not know."—Jeremiah 33:3.

Lord, we want our work this day and the end of this workweek to be done in such a way that You will be able to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Our only goal is to please You in what we say and accomplish. Bless the Senators in the decisions they must make and the votes they will cast. Give them, and all of us who work with them, Your strength to endure and Your courage to triumph in things great and small that we attempt for the good of all. In Your holy name. Amen.

CONGRESSIONAL GIFT REFORM ACT OF 1995

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1061, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1061) to provide for congressional gift reform.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:
McCain modified amendment No. 1872, in the nature of a substitute.

Murkowski amendment No. 1874 (to amendment No. 1872), to permit reimbursement for travel and lodging at charitable political events.

Lott amendment No. 1875 (to amendment No. 1872), to change the maximum total value of gifts that can be accepted from a single source in 1 year from \$50 to \$100.

AMENDMENT NO. 1874

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be 10 minutes of debate on the Murkowski amendment No. 1874.

Mr. LEVIN addressed the Chair.
The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the two amendments that we are going to be voting on early this morning really go to the heart of the efforts that we are making to reform gifts. And those issues are the recreational trips and the meals and the tickets which are given to Members of this body.

So while we have narrowed the differences significantly—and we have—we still are confronted with the really principal issues which have brought us to this point; and that is the recreational travel, the golf outings, the ski trips, and the tennis trips that are provided as so-called charitable travel but which is a significant recreational benefit to us. As a matter of fact, this travel is defined as substantially recreation. That is the first amendment that we will be voting on. It is the Murkowski amendment, which will be to allow that kind of recreational travel to Members of this body to be reimbursed by private interests for that travel.

What the public has seen and read and heard about are these trips that we are offered also benefit a charity. There are two beneficiaries of these trips. A charity benefits when we show up, and we benefit by being given a couple of days and nights and fancy lodging, and being given fancy meals and being paid the transportation to get there. That is a substantial gift to Members. Yes, a charity also benefits. But the price that we pay to benefit the charity is the diminution, the reduction of the public confidence in this institution by the benefit that is received by Members from this recreational travel, which is significant. It is like a paid vacation that we are given at the same time there is a charitable contribution that is also made by the corporate sponsors. And we should give it up. We simply should give it up. It has reduced public confidence in this institution.

We have transcripts of television shows that are available to Members to read if they want to see what this looks like to the general public.

So I hope we will defeat the Murkowski amendment, which is the first amendment that we will be voting on this morning.

I reserve the remainder of my time.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MCCAIN). The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, good morning. My colleagues, good morning.

Mr. President, the amendment that we are going to be voting on very shortly provides the same rules for transportation and lodging in connection with charitable events as the bill provides for political events. That is all it does. It just conforms the two—political vis-a-vis charitable events.

Mr. President, much of this debate has been about public perception, that somehow we in Washington are being bought and sold by lobbyists, PAC's, and so forth; if we spend a weekend at

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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