

Last July, Deputy Assistant Secretary Sylvia Baca testified before the Senate regarding the numerous problems with this legislation. She testified that the Bush proposal of 1.9 million acres is "inadequate to protect Utah's great wilderness resources." In fact, S. 884 would remove protections for some 300,000 acres recommended for wilderness by President Bush.

Nevertheless, some supporters of the legislation have repeatedly sought to portray the position of the previous Administration as that held by the Bureau of Land Management, or to claim that "field professionals" independently and objectively formulated the previous Administration's position. This is not the case. I am told by professional career staff at all levels of the organization that the Utah wilderness process was the most controversial, and perhaps the most political, in the entire BLM wilderness process.

It is the position of the Bureau of Land Management that far too little land is protected under this bill and too much land is released for development. In short, no one should be claiming the support of the Bureau and its professional staff for S. 884.

We have reviewed the most recent changes proposed by the bill sponsors and find that the same basic problems exist: too little designated, too much opened to development, unprecedented "hard release" language, reduced protections inside wilderness, and unprecedented land exchange language. The Secretary has indicated—most recently in a March 15, 1996, letter to Senator Murkowski—that he would recommend the President veto legislation carrying the text of S. 884. It continues to be my hope that the core problems of this bill can be fixed so the President receives legislation he can sign.

Sincerely,

BOB ARMSTRONG,
Assistant Secretary,
Land and Minerals Management.

Mr. BRADLEY. I remind my colleagues that there are 33 titles to this bill. I personally would have no objection to moving almost all 33, and we already have a veto threat in the form of a letter from the Secretary, and yesterday also we have a statement of administration policy from the Executive Office of the President also being very clear on that issue.

I hope we will be able to recognize that this Utah wilderness bill is far from complete and that there are many things that need to be done before it could be thought to be a true wilderness bill.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

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

PRESIDIO PROPERTIES ADMINISTRATION ACT OF 1995—UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute be agreed to and considered original text for the purpose of further amendment. I further ask unanimous consent Senators have until the hour of 5 p.m. today in order to file first-degree amendments, in accordance with rule XXII.

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

Mr. LOTT. For the information of my colleagues, this now allows the pending

substitute amendment offered by Senator MURKOWSKI to be amendable in two degrees. Also, as a reminder, a cloture vote will occur on that substitute tomorrow morning under the provisions of rule XXII.

Senators have until the hour of 5 today in order to file first-degree amendments to the substitute. I thank my colleagues. We have worked with the Democratic leadership in getting this agreement.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. I now ask there be a period for morning business until the hour of 12:30, with the time between now and 12:30 equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. BRADLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BRADLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LOTT. I renew my unanimous consent request.

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

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Massachusetts.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, just as a matter of a point of information, on yesterday when there was the announcement of the Republican leader, which is on page S. 2839, in the Program, Mr. LOTT said, "For the information of all Senators, the Senate will resume the Presidio legislation tomorrow morning with the understanding that Senator DASCHLE or his designee will be prepared to offer an amendment at 10:30."

I am his designee, and I was prepared to offer the amendment at 10:30. The amendment I was going to offer was the increase in the minimum wage. I was offering it for myself, my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. KERRY, Senator WELLSTONE, and others.

This was not in order, I want to make it very clear. So it was not consent, but it was an understanding about the way we were going to proceed. Now, as a result of our indication to try to get a debate on the increase on the minimum wage, and hopefully some action on the minimum wage, we have been put into this holding pattern to effectively deny us that opportunity for debate and discussion about increasing the wages for working families, some 13 million working families in this country.

What we are being faced with is another procedural effort by our Republican friends to deny the Senate taking action on this issue. This is a similar kind of avoidance by the Senate that we saw on July 31, when we voted 48 to 49 on a sense-of-the-Senate resolution; again on October 27, 1995, 51-48 to override a budget point of order on the issue on the minimum wage, raised by my colleague, Senator KERRY.

We had a hearing on this issue on December 14, 1995. We have not had the markup. We have not reported anything out. We were prepared to debate this issue, which is of such fundamental importance and fairness to working families in this country. Now we are caught up in a procedural situation where we are, at least at this time, foreclosed from being able to offer it.

I can even foresee the possibilities where that will continue in the afternoon, as we are coming down to the line for a cloture motion to be voted on tomorrow, where those, under the current situation, under the right of recognition, will be able to offer an amendment and then offer another amendment right on top of that and virtually foreclose our opportunity to speak for working families, the 13 million working families who have not experienced any increase since 1991 and have seen the real value of that minimum wage deteriorate by some 40 percent.

So we are seeing the commitment of our Republican friends, and Republican leadership, which cannot be separated from the Republican who is on the ballot out in the State of California, Senator DOLE, as well as the Republican leadership, saying on the issue of worker fairness, we are not even going to permit you to vote on that or address that on the floor of the U.S. Senate. We are going to use all the parliamentary means of denying working families the chance to get any kind of increase in that minimum wage.

At a time when CEO salaries have gone up 23 percent and we are having record profits in 1995; again, 1991, of 23 percent—we are refusing to permit the Senate of the United States to even address this issue, to vote on this issue—an issue which will mean some \$1,800 for working families. This is an issue which will affect 13 million working families. It will be the equivalent of a year's tuition in a 2-year college; 9 months of groceries, 8 months of utilities for working families. We are seeing, at a time when the disparity between the wealthiest workers and families and poorest families has been growing and growing and growing, the small, modest step to try to do something for working families, families that work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, trying to make it—we are seeing we are effectively being closed out. You cannot interpret the kinds of actions we have heard here this morning to be anything else.

Mr. President, I want to point out, because I am on limited time on this