

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question now occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 4025.

Mr. ROTH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The question occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 4025. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 154 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Akaka	Exon	Mikulski
Baucus	Feingold	Moseley-Braun
Bennett	Feinstein	Moynihan
Biden	Ford	Murkowski
Bingaman	Harkin	Murray
Boxer	Hatch	Nickles
Bradley	Hollings	Pell
Breaux	Inouye	Pressler
Bryan	Jeffords	Pryor
Bumpers	Johnston	Reid
Burns	Kennedy	Robb
Byrd	Kerrey	Rockefeller
Chafee	Kerry	Roth
Cohen	Kohl	Sarbanes
D'Amato	Lautenberg	Simon
Daschle	Leahy	Snowe
DeWine	Levin	Specter
Dodd	Lieberman	Wellstone
Dorgan	Lott	Wyden

NAYS—43

Abraham	Gorton	Mack
Ashcroft	Graham	McCain
Bond	Gramm	McConnell
Brown	Grams	Nunn
Campbell	Grassley	Santorum
Coats	Gregg	Shelby
Cochran	Hatfield	Simpson
Conrad	Heflin	Smith
Coverdell	Helms	Stevens
Craig	Hutchison	Thomas
Dole	Inhofe	Thompson
Domenici	Kassebaum	Thurmond
Faircloth	Kempthorne	Warner
Frist	Kyl	
Glenn	Lugar	

The amendment (No. 4025) was agreed to.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMS. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 12 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. GRAMS. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. Grams pertaining to the introduction of S. 1805 are

located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. GRAMS. Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KENNEDY. 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. KENNEDY. I would like to be able to proceed for 4 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). Without objection, it is so ordered.

INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today's action by the House of Representatives removes one of the Republican's obstacles to successful action on the minimum wage. An overwhelming majority of House Republicans, 81 percent, tried to kill the increase by attaching a "poison pill" to exempt all workers of small business, but 43 courageous Republicans stood up to the extremists in their party and spit out the poison pill.

As the price for accepting an increase, House Republicans tried to deny any minimum wage at all for millions of men and women who work for small business. It was a Republican sneak attack on the minimum wage, and it did not deserve to pass. The minimum wage is supposed to be a floor. It is wrong for Republicans to try to turn that floor into a trap door.

The Republican philosophy seems to be the only good minimum wage is no minimum wage. It is bad enough that in today's economy, America has to compete with sweatshop labor overseas. If the Republicans have their way, American workers and American employers will have to compete with sweatshop labor right here in our own backyard. How very Republican. Every previous Congress that dealt with the minimum wage voted to expand coverage and give the benefits of the law's protection to more and more Americans. Now is no time to roll back that progress. It is time to end the Republican war on hard-working American families, and I am confident the Senate will also reject any Republican scheme to roll back the minimum wage. No one who works for a living should have to live in poverty.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAIG. 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. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak in morning business for no more than 5 minutes.

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

FOREST HEALTH

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, within an hour or so, we will be adjourning and out for the Memorial Day recess. But when we return, it is my plan to mark up legislation in the Public Lands and Forestry Subcommittee that I chair, dealing with forest health, the health of the forests of our country.

For well over a decade now, we have studied the issue of how to manage our forests in light of the recurrence of wild storm style forest fires that continue to devastate our forests across the Pacific Northwest and across the Southwest every time we get into a dry period, especially the kind the Southwest, New Mexico and Arizona and Colorado, are experiencing at this moment.

What we have found, Mr. President, is that in our great ability to put out fires, we have allowed to build up on our forest floors, massive amounts of fuel in the form of dead and dying trees as a result of bug kill, as a result of fungus, or simply as a result of the overpopulation of our trees and therefore their death because of lack of moisture. In my State of Idaho and across the inland West, where before man came to that region we had tremendously healthy forests and populations of trees of 40 or 50 or 60 trees per acre, now, because of our ability to put out fires, we are finding that we have 300 and 400 trees per acre. Of course, there is only so much moisture. When we get into a drought cycle, there is not enough moisture to keep all of those trees alive.

What we are finding is that before we had this tremendous ability to put out fires, fires would come along on a relatively regular basis, caused by lightning strikes or actually caused by native Americans who saw the useful tool of fire. It would burn at a low rate, at a low pace, burn off the shrubbery and the brush, allow the mature trees to stand and allow young trees that had reached a certain age to survive. That kept the forests, primarily of the West, in a very productive and rather pastoral form.

But that changed and it has changed dramatically over the last 50 years, as we learned to put out fires. But we did not go in and do what Mother Nature was doing, and that was to thin trees or to take down the underbrush. As a result of that, we have had a massive fuel loading in many of the forests of the West and Southwest.

Mr. President, you and I have witnessed, in the last several months, fires in New Mexico and Arizona and now in Colorado that, by our forest scientists'