

of putting customers first, cutting red tape, empowering employees, and getting back to basics.

Mr. President, the Tampa Teleservice Center's commitment to serving clients in a timely, helpful, and courteous manner is exactly the kind of service that Reinventing Government intended.

In a cynical era where Government agencies are frequently accused of being unresponsive, the Tampa Teleservice Center is proof that services can be delivered quickly and skillfully. Over 90 percent of the calls it receives each year are handled to completion, with no need for further contact.

That's an incredible record. And perhaps the most impressive part is that the Social Security Administration has improved its performance so much that it is now rated as the best in telephone customer service from a list of nine service providers—including respected companies like Nordstrom L.L. Bean, Disney, and Federal Express. These companies are in a league of their own when it comes to customer service, and even they are not in the Social Security Administration's league.

This achievement is particularly impressive when one considers the difficult task assigned to Social Security telephone agents. The sheer volume of calls that these agents handle is daunting. So is the complex nature of many of the customers' questions.

The Tampa Teleservice Center is to be commended for its skill in handling this difficult task. Last year, its agents assisted over one million satisfied customers.

I join Vice President GORE in saluting this significant achievement. The workers of the Social Security Administration's Tampa Teleservice Center truly embody the best principles of public service. ●

CONVERSION OF POSITIONS IN THE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 432, which is S. 1488.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1488) to convert certain excepted service positions in the United States Fire Administration to competitive service positions, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be deemed read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD as if read.

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

The bill (S. 1488) was deemed read for a third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1488

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONVERSION OF CERTAIN EXCEPTED SERVICE POSITIONS IN THE UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION TO COMPETITIVE SERVICE POSITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No later than the date described under subsection (d)(1), the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall take such actions as necessary to convert each excepted service position established before the date of the enactment of this Act under section 7(c)(4) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(c)(4)) to a competitive service position.

(b) EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES.—Any employee employed on the date of the enactment of this Act in an excepted service position converted under subsection (a)—

(1) shall remain employed in the competitive service position so converted without a break in service;

(2) by reason of such conversion, shall have no—

(A) diminution of seniority;

(B) reduction of cumulative years of service; and

(C) requirement to serve an additional probationary period applied; and

(3) shall retain their standing and participation with respect to chapter 83 or 84 of title 5, United States Code, relating to Federal retirement.

(c) PROSPECTIVE COMPETITIVE SERVICE POSITIONS.—Section 7(c)(4) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(c)(4)) is amended to read as follows:

“(4) appoint faculty members to competitive service positions and with respect to temporary and intermittent services, to make appointments of consultants to the same extent as is authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code;”

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—(1) Except as provided under paragraph (2), this Act shall take effect on the first day of the first pay period, applicable to the positions described under subsection (a), beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2)(A) The Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall take such actions as directed under subsection (a) on and after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) Subsection (c) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEE TO REPORT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, June 17, the Special Committee on White-water have until midnight to file any reported items.

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

RESOLUTION ON CHURCH BURNINGS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand that perhaps there had been some misinformation about passing a resolution with regard to the church burnings that have been occurring. We all agree this is a despicable act and one that the Senate wants to speak on in a resolution.

I have discussed this matter with the distinguished Democratic leader. It is our intent to work together to see if we cannot come to an agreement on whether there would be a bipartisan bill tomorrow so that we can express ourselves and express the Senate's feeling on this very important matter. It is our intent to pursue that with those who have offered resolutions to address this issue.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, let me express my hope that we can do just as the majority leader has suggested. There is great interest in the Senate in putting this body on record in a way that will allow us to express ourselves on these hideous fires. We can do that, and I hope we can work together to find a way, a resolution, that will allow us to do that as early as tomorrow. I intend to talk to Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN and Members on my side. We will work with the majority leader to see if we can make that happen.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I note that Senator HUTCHISON, the Senator from Texas, has been very interested in this. She will be involved in trying to work that issue out. Also, Senator FAIRCLOTH has some legislation in this area. We will be working on this together to get it done in a very quick fashion.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1745

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, June 18, 1996, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 433, S. 1745, the DOD authorization bill for debate only prior to recess.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, let me just point out that when we considered the scheduling of the State Department authorization bill some time ago—in fact, as I understand it, it was December 7, 1995—I had an opportunity to conduct a colloquy with the majority leader at the time, Senator DOLE. I asked him if it was his intention to bring up the chemical weapons convention at some point during the second session of Congress. His answer was that it was his intention to consider the convention in a reasonable time period, once the convention is on the Executive Calendar.

It has been on the calendar now since April 30. I fully appreciate that the distinguished majority leader is just beginning to put his plans for the legislative schedule together and I would not expect that he would have a date certain, but I ask the majority leader whether the chemical weapons convention could be considered, and if it is his intention to consider the treaty at some point in the future as we take up this particular bill that is very important to many of our Members, and I think some clarification with regard to his intent would be very helpful.