

will now be considered at the State level for the South Dakota Teacher of the Year award. I wish her the best of luck as this process continues.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I was not able to come to the floor as the Senator from North Dakota was expressing himself with regard to the disaster, and I know that the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Minnesota, [Mr. GRAMS], has worked long and hard to work with all of us as we have made the effort to address the extraordinary concerns, the extraordinary difficulties, and the extraordinary pain that people in Minnesota and the Dakotas have faced now for the better part of 6 months. First, the harsh winter months, cold and snow and ice in many cases precluded farmers from feeding their livestock, and in many cases caused the death of hundreds of thousands of livestock, only to be followed by floods and other spring disasters that have left many thousands of people homeless in all three States.

After visits which the President, the Vice President, the Speaker, the House majority leader and others, there was a national commitment to address this problem and to find ways in which to help these people as quickly as we possibly could. There were editorials written about the great bipartisan effort that was made in order to do all we could to address the matter in an expeditious and comprehensive manner.

I am very saddened by what has happened in the last 48 hours. I am troubled by the fact that there are those who still wish to use the effort to provide this assistance to people who need it so badly as the vehicle for an agenda that has nothing to do with the disaster, as a vehicle to address other needs, other concerns that may or may not be legitimate but have absolutely no reason for being associated with this bill, have absolutely no reason for being attached to this legislation.

I am troubled that anybody would use the kind of cynical approach to hinder our efforts to find ways with which to address this problem as quickly and as seriously as we possibly could. We have no business leaving the Senate and leaving the House under these circumstances.

I give great credit to the majority leader as he comes to the floor, because I do believe he made every effort to try to address this problem as successfully as he could. I know he has attempted to find ways in which to extract those problematic provisions from the bill. I know of his efforts yesterday. I am very disappointed that even with his efforts we failed. I also applaud the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Senator STEVENS has done great work in attempting to find ways with which to address this problem.

So I must say, Mr. President, on a bipartisan basis I believe our body has

done a great deal in attempting to avert the extraordinary calamitous circumstances that we are facing right now. It is going to be very difficult to go home, as I will, to speak to the people of Watertown, SD, not only on Memorial Day but at their high school commencement this year and explain what happened, explain why this Congress has left town without completing its work on this very important matter.

Mr. President, there are no words to describe how badly some of us feel, how frustrated, exasperated, and angered we are at these circumstances. We can only hope that upon our return, these political games and these ploys that have nothing to do with this legislation can be averted and we can deal with them far more effectively and address it in a comprehensive way. At that time, we will still, as late as it will be, give people hope that we understand their pain, that we understand their circumstance, and that we will respond as we best know how to do. It is only that hope that allows me with a very heavy heart to leave this town with our work incomplete.

Mr. President, I hope all of us will redouble our efforts as soon as we return. Let us get the job done. Let us do it right. Let us do it understanding completely how difficult a circumstance people in our States and States around the country must now face.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I do have some unanimous-consent requests to make and an Executive Calendar list. First I want to say to the distinguished Democratic leader I understand his feelings and appreciate his comments. We did work to try to get through all the legislative hurdles in moving the supplemental and resolving the problems attached to it. We ran into some procedural limitations there at the end that made it impossible for us to complete it, but we need to get it done. We are going to get it done. We are going to make sure the people of the States that have had disasters are going to get the aid they need.

I have already sent a letter urging everything be done to make sure the funds continue to flow through FEMA and any other agency that has a role in providing disaster assistance, whether it is in South Dakota, North Dakota, Kentucky, or Minnesota.

When we come back, it is going to be one of the two first orders of priority. One, we have to do the budget conference report, which I think will be done very quickly, and then we can really focus on getting the supplemental completed and resolving some of the issues that are critical issues attached to it so that we can come up with a solution everybody can live with on the census question and address the roads problem and also find a way to deal with avoiding Government shutdowns in the future.

I think we can do all of those once we make up our minds to focus on it and

get our minds committed to working on that effort.

#### EXPLANATION OF SELECTED VOTES TO THE SENATE BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, now that the budget resolution has been adopted, I wanted to take a few moments to discuss several of the more important votes that took place.

The first of these was the Hatch-Kennedy amendment. This amendment was characterized as an effort to raise cigarette excise taxes in order to provide health care for low- and moderate-income children. I take exception to that description. There was nothing in the Hatch-Kennedy amendment to ensure that the new taxes would be imposed upon cigarettes or that the additional revenues would be spent on children's health. The net effect of this amendment would have been to raise taxes by \$30 billion and spending by \$20 billion, period. I have several reasons for opposing an amendment of this sort.

First, I am not opposed to taxing cigarettes in order to either reduce taxes elsewhere or fund important programs, and this vote should not be interpreted as such. The net effect of this amendment, however, would be to reduce the net tax cut contained within this resolution—tax cuts targeted at families, education, and pro-growth policies—by \$30 billion. The tax cut contained in this resolution is already less than 1 percent of the total Federal tax burden over the next 5 years, barely adequate to provided badly needed tax relief to families and small businesses. I believe that level is already too low, and I certainly do not support making it smaller.

Furthermore, nothing prevents Senator HATCH, as a member of the Finance Committee, from offering his proposal as part of the reconciliation process. An amendment offered in the Finance Committee to increase tobacco taxes in order to provide additional Medicaid funding for children's health insurance would be in order. I might support it. The amendment considered by the Senate Wednesday, however, does nothing to further the prospects of such an effort.

On the other hand, this amendment does expand the reconciliation instructions of the Labor Committee, where Senator KENNEDY is the ranking member. This amendment would provide the Finance Committee an additional \$2 billion and the Committee on Labor a whopping \$18 billion. Notwithstanding the debate over taxes or children's health, there is no disagreement that both these issues belong in the Finance Committee—not Labor. The construction of this amendment appears motivated more by the jurisdictional concerns of Senator KENNEDY than a concern for children's health.

Finally, Mr. President, this amendment ignores the \$16 billion already