

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Now, that will be the last vote of the night, then. There will not be recorded votes tomorrow, although the Senate will be in session for debate on the NATO enlargement and, hopefully, on an amendment, with a vote on that amendment scheduled for probably 5:30, around 5:30 on Monday. The reason we did this, there is a serious effort underway, on a bipartisan basis, of those who support this legislation to work with the leaders on both sides of the aisle to get a process where we can have a fair consideration of this bill and amendments that are important to the Members, and get to a conclusion on the whole process by late Wednesday afternoon. I think that is fair. I think that Members on both sides would like to do it. But I do think, as is the tradition in the Senate, the leaders on both sides need to work with their Members to develop a process that they can be comfortable with. I think I have shown a willingness to do that, and I believe Senator DASCHLE is going to be working on that with me and the bipartisan supporters of this legislation. Thank you for your effort. I will see some of you tomorrow and the rest of you Monday afternoon.

I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia will be recognized as soon as we have order in the Senate. The Senator from Georgia.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

The Senator from Georgia.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I thank the majority and minority leader for efforts to bring to resolution the ability to deal with this education proposal. I do want to make one comment for which there was not sufficient time in the 15 minutes allotted to each. Mr. President, in the final minutes of the last half-hour allotted to our debate before the vote, once again I heard the suggestion that the amount of tax benefit that would accrue to these 14 million American families that the Joint Tax Committee feel would take advantage of these education savings accounts is minimal and insignificant. Of course, I find it ironic that we would be operating under Presidential veto threats and five filibusters for something perceived to be so insignificant.

What these arguments fail to measure is the other information from the Joint Tax Committee. One says 14 million families will use this; 70 percent of them will be families with children in public schools; and in the first 4 years, these families with, I admit, just a little tax incentive, will save voluntarily about \$5 billion. In over 8 years it will exceed \$10 billion. That is not insignificant. That is putting billions of all new money behind improving education in America.

The Joint Tax Committee says about half of that will go to students in public schools and half in private. That may be. They have not evaluated the fact that sponsors, churches, corporations, friends, neighbors, and grandparents can also contribute to the account. The value of that has yet to be interpreted.

The other argument was that this account tends to benefit the wealthy. The Joint Tax Committee says 70 percent of it goes to families of \$75,000 or less. But I think you have to step back and understand that the governance of these accounts—who can use them, which is pushing towards middle income and lower—is identical, I repeat, identical to the formula that was adopted by the other side and signed by the President for savings accounts for higher education. There is no difference.

So, I find it ironic that we would be arguing about this benefiting someone who they do not think should receive the benefit when it was just fine and dandy when it was signed on the White House lawn last fall. It is the same.

I guess the piece that is forgotten in this debate over how much is saved is they only focus on the interest saved, which is marginal. But they forget that it is the interest on a big piece of principal, and that for most families who open this savings account, the net effect of their savings will be 50 to 100 percent greater than the average family is saving in America today.

If nothing else was done at all, isn't it a good idea to cause Americans to save billions of dollars? But, in fact, it won't be just saved. This money is going to go to help children.

So far, this filibuster—and I will stop with this, Mr. President—this filibuster would keep 14 million families from opening a savings account; 20 million children from benefiting from it; in the first 4 years, \$2.5 billion going behind kids in public schools; \$2.5 billion going behind kids in private schools; 1 million workers who will receive benefit from their companies to extend their education; 1 million students who would have a tax advantage who bought prepaid tuition in 21 States; 250,000 graduate students who would now become eligible for employer-paid continuing education; and 500 schools won't be built because it makes new financing available for school districts across the whole land to build schools, and we are filibustering that kind of growth.

I am very hopeful that the work of the two leaders over the weekend will

untie this knot and we can get on to being a good partner for families with children in schools in America. We sure need to do it. I yield the floor.

Mr. DEWINE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

FAMILY GROUP CONCERNS

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I would like to begin today a discussion on a piece of legislation that I have been working on, and others have been working on, for the past 7 months. I believe this legislation is vitally important to the economic well-being of our country—and I hope the full Senate will have an opportunity to debate this bill in the very near future.

The legislation that I am referring to is S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act.

I have come to the floor on a number of occasions in the past to stress the immediate need to reform the Federal job training system. This need increases each day the Congress does not act.

During the numerous oversight hearings held in the Senate over the last 3 years, we have heard that we face in this country a fragmented and duplicative maze of narrowly focused job training and job-training-related programs, programs administered by numerous Federal agencies that lack coordination, lack a coherent strategy to provide training assistance, and lack the confidence of the two key consumers who utilize these services; namely, those seeking the training and those businesses seeking to hire them.

Throughout the hearing process, I have heard that reform is needed because the economic future of our country depends on a well-trained workforce. Employers at every level are finding it increasingly difficult to locate and attract qualified employees for high-skilled, high-paying jobs, as well as qualified employees for entry-level positions.

Let me just give, Mr. President, one example. Right outside the Capital, right outside Washington, DC, in Northern Virginia, there are 19,000 high-tech, high-paying jobs that remain unfilled because individuals lack the skills to fill them. However, even with the shortage of skilled workers in Northern Virginia, you will still hear radio ads during morning drive time urging people to move to North Carolina to fill high-tech jobs down there.

Ohio faces a similar problem. Manpower, Incorporated recently released a poll which indicated that the Dayton area had a bright future in terms of job growth. Forty-two percent of area companies plan on hiring more manufacturing workers. However, while employers plan to hire, the availability of skilled workers to fill those jobs remains low. A Cleveland Growth Association survey recently showed that employers are becoming increasingly

concerned about the quality and availability of skilled labor which may impede their future growth plans.

According to the Manufacturers Alliance's Economic Report published in January, the mismatch between available jobs and available skilled workers is growing. While wages have increased for those who have the skills in demand, many jobs still go unfilled, and the median duration of unemployment for those who lack the skills remains at recession levels.

Nationwide, the number of unfilled high-tech jobs is estimated to be 346,000 people. The increasing labor shortage threatens our Nation's economic growth and our productivity. This, in turn, threatens one of our greatest domestic achievements—the historic welfare reform.

States and counties under this bill have been given the responsibility of moving people from welfare to work, and this is not an easy task. Many individuals trying to make the transition to work lack the basic skills needed to obtain the available jobs even at the entry level.

Mr. President, the Senate needs to act. We need to develop a job training system that is flexible, a system that provides individuals who are voluntarily seeking assistance with comprehensive education and training services.

We need a system that is accountable, assuring that the training provides leads to a meaningful, long-term employment.

We need a system that provides consumer choice, allowing individuals, not the Government, to choose their education or training provider.

And, we need a system that is driven at the State and local level, not from Washington, DC.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act that I introduced was approved unanimously—let me repeat, unanimously—by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee in September. It represents a belief that we can do better, that we can, in fact, achieve these goals.

During the committee process, we considered the concerns of various groups who have a stake in this bill—elected officials at the State and local level, the business community, family groups, labor unions, education groups and others. It is my belief that this bill balances all the competing concerns to the best of our ability.

Today, we are on the verge of replacing the current system of frustration and providing a framework for success.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act embodies the principles that I have just outlined. The programs incorporated in the legislation include job training, vocational education and adult education. Additionally, it provides strong linkages to welfare to work, the Wagner-Peyser Act, the Older Americans Act, Vocational Rehabilitation, veterans programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, as well as other training-related programs.

It offers a reborn Federal Jobs Corps program. This reborn Federal Jobs Corps program will be linked to local communities for the first time in its 30-year history.

This bill, in short, is a foundation, a road map to a much better system.

Mr. President, while separate funding streams will be maintained for each of the activities under this bill, in recognition of their distinct function, States and localities will be empowered with the tools and the flexibility to implement real reform in order to provide comprehensive services to those seeking assistance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The Senator's 5 minutes have expired.

Mr. DEWINE. I ask unanimous consent to extend for an additional 15 minutes.

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

Mr. DEWINE. However, Mr. President, there is opposition to this legislation, opposition that I, frankly, do not understand. For the most part, the opposition is driven by a lack of understanding of this particular piece of legislation and a fear that our schools are going to be turned into "training" facilities that force children into career tracks.

This is simply not true. This is the last thing—let me repeat, the last thing—that this Member of the U.S. Senate would ever propose, would ever push, would ever write or, frankly, would ever vote for.

Let me answer now, if I can, the most common questions that have been asked about this bill.

The first question: Why is vocational education included in the bill?

Let me try to answer that, and I will. While vocational education mainly serves secondary school students between the 7th and 12th grades, it also provides post-high school vocational services to individuals. Those post-high school services are linked to the training system. The education services provided to 7th and 12th grade students are not linked to the training system. Again, this legislation will not—will not—replace traditional education curricula with job training.

The reforms that are contained in S. 1186 which affect secondary school students will strengthen vocational education. The students that voluntarily choose to participate in vocational education will receive a strong academic and technical education. The provisions insure that students have the choice, an option, to participate in vocational education. Participation in vocational education under our bill remains voluntary.

This bill will not set kids on some kind of preordained career track. It just won't happen.

The next question that has been raised is: Does S. 1186 include national testing?

Absolutely not, it does not include national testing. This legislation does

not authorize national testing. I am opposed to national testing, and I would not introduce legislation that authorizes national testing.

The next question that has been asked is this: Does this bill, S. 1186, increase the authority of the Federal Government over education?

Again, the answer is no, absolutely not. S. 1186 eliminates numerous Federal requirements and mandatory set-asides. It gives States and localities the flexibility, the authority and the funding to design their own vocation education systems which provide academic and technological education to secondary and post-secondary students who voluntarily choose to participate.

S. 1186 streamlines vocational education, reducing the current 20 categorical programs to four. It provides States and localities more flexibility over planning, allowing the State education authority to coordinate post-secondary vocational education with the other programs linked to and coordinated with S. 1186. And, Mr. President, this bill eliminates the Federally required State gender equity coordinator position.

Let me turn to another question that has been raised. Does S. 1186 give the Secretary of Education authority to create national educational standards?

Again, Mr. President, the answer is no. Absolutely not. This Senator would not support such legislation. I would not write it. I would not vote for it. The Secretary of Education, under this bill, is only given the authority to "publish" the performance measures outlined by the legislation. The Secretary of Education cannot arbitrarily mandate standards.

The next question that has been asked: Does S. 1186 expand the School to Work Act?

No. Absolutely not. School to Work is a completely separate program. Let me again state it. School to Work is a completely separate program that is in no way part of or linked to S. 1186. Section 316(d)(2) clearly states that "funds . . . shall not be used to carry out activities that duplicate federally funded activities available to youth." Mr. President, this provision prohibits States and localities from using S. 1186 funding in any way to expand School to Work.

Let me turn now, if I could, Mr. President, to another question that has been asked. Does S. 1186 force students to choose a career path or major?

Again, Mr. President, the answer is absolutely not. I would not be on the floor arguing in favor of this legislation. I would not have spent the last several years working on it, or any piece of legislation that would do this. Section 103 of this bill clearly states that "No funds shall be used—(1) to require any secondary school student to choose or pursue a specific career path or major; and (2) to mandate that any individual participate in a vocational education program, including a vocational education program that requires

the attainment of a federally funded skill level or standard."

Mr. President, I find the idea of forcing students or encouraging students into a career path early in their educational life to be very wrongheaded. I think it is wrong. I think children should have the opportunity to develop, to think about what they want to do. How many of us, even when we got out of high school, knew exactly what we were going to do? Where we were going to go or what our major was going to be? Or, how we were going to spend our life?

So the idea that we track children, I find abhorrent, I find to be wrong. This bill does not do that.

Let me turn to another question that has been asked. Will participation in summer or year-round activities have a negative impact on a young person's participation in school?

Again, the answer is no. S. 1186 does not remove students from the traditional classroom. Section 316(d)(3) of this bill clearly states—"No funds . . . shall be used to provide an activity for youth . . . if participation in the activity would interfere with or replace the regular academic requirements of the youth."

Let me turn to another question. Does S. 1186 transform elementary or secondary schools into job training centers?

No is the answer. Absolutely not. While S. 1186 does establish one-stop customer service centers as the local hub for adult training, section 311(d)(2) states that "Elementary and secondary schools shall not be eligible for designation or certification as one-stop customer service centers . . ."

Let me turn to another question that has been asked. How will S. 1186 affect private, religious, or home schools?

Mr. President, on this one the answer is very simple. It will not affect them at all. Section 104 states that "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to permit, allow, encourage, or authorize any Federal control over any aspect of a private, religious, or home school . . ."

Let me turn to another question. Does S. 1186 allow workforce boards to implement school curricula?

The answer, Mr. President, is no. No, S. 1186 does not undermine the authority of the State education authority or local school boards. S. 1186 does not give any authority over school curricula to workforce boards. In fact, section 316(d)(1) states "No funds . . . shall be used to develop or implement local school system education curricula."

Another question, Mr. President, that has been asked is, does S. 1186 allow workforce boards to bypass the authority of State legislatures?

Again, the answer is no. S. 1186 does not undermine the authority of the State legislative bodies. Section 380 of this bill states that ". . . Any funds received by a state . . . shall be subject to appropriation by the state legislature . . ." This provision, I might point

out, Mr. President, is similar to the language contained in the welfare law.

Let me turn to another question. Does S. 1186 combine education and job training funds?

Again, the answer is no. S. 1186 does not combine education and job training funds. In fact, S. 1186 retains separate funding streams for vocational education, adult education, adult training, and youth activities in recognition of their very distinct functions.

The next question, Mr. President, I would like to address is this. Does S. 1186 create a national, State, and local workforce databank by combining the computer databanks of the Department of Education, Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services?

Again, Mr. President, the answer is no. S. 1186 does not establish any sort of joint Federal workforce databank. However, S. 1186 does reform the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics employment service information system that is used by all unemployed Americans. Under S. 1186, unemployed Americans will be able to receive quality local data regarding job openings so they can get back to work.

Mr. President, throughout my public career, I have advocated giving parents and local communities more control over the education of their children. This legislation does just that.

As for training, this legislation reforms the system put in place by two conservative politicians. The Job Training Partnership Act was written by then-Senator Dan Quayle and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan.

It is my belief, Mr. President, that by removing or reforming outdated rules and regulations, States and localities can move forward, transforming the current patchwork of programs into a comprehensive system, a comprehensive system which will better serve individuals who voluntarily seek assistance.

Mr. President, just like welfare reform, job training reform rests on the leadership of States and localities that have shown innovation and initiative. S. 1186 is designed to encourage more State and more local innovations—moving people from welfare to work.

Mr. President, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act offers a new foundation, a positive framework for success, a roadmap, if you will, to a better system. If we are to achieve the goals we have set—a stronger economy, a better trained workforce, and true and meaningful welfare reform—then we need to act, and we need to act now.

That is why, Mr. President, I am asking for the support of my colleagues today. I am asking for your ideas, your support, and I will continue to push for immediate consideration of this bill by the full Senate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following letters be printed in the RECORD: a letter from the National Association of Manufacturers, a letter from the National Association of

Private Industry Councils, a letter from the National Association of Counties—and I might add to that that each one of these, Mr. President, is an endorsement of the bill—and also a letter from the American Vocational Association and a letter from the State Directors of Vocational Technical Education.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF MANUFACTURERS,

Washington, DC, March 16, 1998.

Hon. MIKE DEWINE,

U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DEWINE: On behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers, (NAM) more than 14,000 member companies and subsidiaries, and the more than 18 million people they employ, we urge you to support S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act when it is brought before the full Senate. This piece of legislation, which would consolidate many federal job-training programs, is an important first step in addressing the well documented "skill shortage" faced by our member companies.

Last year, the NAM commissioned Grant Thornton to conduct a survey of more than 4,500 manufacturers. The survey found that more than nine in ten manufacturers are encountering a skill shortage in at least one job category. Moreover, over 40 percent cited a lack of basic technical skills among workers as a serious problem. In short, the lack of qualified workers, at every level, has reached a crisis point for many manufacturers. The message of the Grant Thornton study is clear: We must provide individuals with the skills they need to succeed. There is no question that life-long training is the key to American competitiveness and worker success in the global economy.

Unfortunately, the current federal job-training system is a complex maze that serves neither trainees nor their prospective employers well. S. 1186 would address these issues by: consolidating many of the current programs and providing more comprehensive services; and providing critical business community involvement in statewide and local partnerships; and holding training providers accountable through recognized industry standards.

The NAM strongly urges you to vote for S. 1186, a bill that enjoys bipartisan support, and to reject any weakening amendments. It is imperative that we adopt job-training consolidation that includes business community participation at all levels and meaningful performance standards.

Our ability to compete in an increasingly sophisticated and technologically advanced marketplace depends on it. Should you have any questions or need further information, do not hesitate to contact me or Sandy Boyd, director of employment policy, at (202) 637-3133.

Sincerely,

PAUL R. HUARD,
Senior Vice President,
Policy & Communications.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCILS,
Washington, DC, March 18, 1998.

Hon. MIKE DEWINE,

Chair, Subcommittee on Employment and Training,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Private Industry Councils (NAPIC), we are writing in support of S. 1186. "The Workforce Investment Partnership Act."

Passage of this legislation will help business remain competitive by giving private sector-led boards the tools they need to address the skill needs of employees and the training needs of job seekers.

Among the many excellent provisions in this bill, the NAPIC Board has identified four compelling reasons to support S. 1186.

The legislation strengthens the private sector voice in the oversight of public employment and training programs. The proposed Workforce Investment Partnerships will ensure that we have a market-driven public employment and training system in place to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers alike. The enhanced role for employers will result in better linkages between job seekers and careers.

It deregulates youth programs, offering communities more options to fashion local strategies that will help young people stay in school and prepare out-of-school youth for careers.

This bill provides the clear balance between state authority and local control necessary for an employment and training system that is both labor-market driven and responsive to local and state wide goals for economic development.

New standards for accountability will guarantee that programs are responsive to the skill needs of employers.

We applaud the work that you and your fellow Senators have done to craft this legislation. NAPIC looks forward to working with you and your colleagues in the coming months to ensure that S. 1186 moves from the Senate floor to conference, final passage, and presidential signature.

Sincerely,

JUDITH BYRNE RILEY,
Chair.
ROBERT KNIGHT,
President.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES,
Washington, DC, March 16, 1998.

Hon. MIKE DEWINE,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DEWINE: The National Association of Counties (NACo), representing America's 3,100 counties in Washington, DC, is pleased to support S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act of 1998. The bill, which would strengthen the nation's workforce development system, will contribute substantially to the quality of America's second chance employment and training system.

NACo believes that this bill will improve the types of workforce services available to our constituents. We believe that it will put in place a system of one-stop career centers that will ensure access to a wide range of client services. We also believe that it will strengthen overall accountability to ensure that workforce development programs meet the expectations of Congress, the Administration, governors, county elected officials and clients. Finally, NACo is of the opinion that S. 1186 will help ensure a highly skilled workforce.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act effectively draws upon the positive experiences of the past and of our hopes for the future to ensure that this nation has the kind of workforce it will need to compete in the global economy and maintain our standard of living.

We applaud the work that you and your fellow Senators have done in crafting this legislation, and look forward to continue working with you in the coming months to ensure that S. 1186 moves from the Senate floor to conference, final passage and presidential signature.

Sincerely,

RANDY JOHNSON, PRESIDENT, NACO,
Hennepin County Commissioner.

AMERICAN VOCATIONAL ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, March 17, 1998.
Hon. SPENCER ABRAHAM,
Senate Dirksen Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of the American Vocational Association (AVA) and the 38,000 vocational-technical educators that we represent nationwide, I urge you to vote in favor of S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act, which may be considered in the full Senate this week.

The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee has worked hard to address the concerns raised by vocational-technical educators about this legislation last fall. We believe the managers' amendment that will be offered effectively addresses the core issues we raised. As we understand it, the managers' amendment includes:

Assurances that funding appropriated for vocational-technical education programs will be directed to school-based programs and cannot be diverted to other areas.

Assurances that education governance authorities at the state and local levels will continue to have jurisdiction over vocational-technical education programs.

A strong focus on professional development for vocational-technical education teachers, administrators, and counselors.

Increased emphasis on technology. Assurances that unified planning will adhere to the requirements of the vocational-technical education provisions.

Effective support for state administration and leadership.

In addition to encouraging the Senate to pass this important legislation, we urge the Senate to accept the House structure of a separate bill for vocational-technical education, apart from job training, when S. 1186 goes to conference with the House version. Further, we will provide detailed comments on our conference priorities, including additional changes that we would like to see to some of the Senate language, as the bill moves towards conference.

We also wish to commend Chairmen Jeffords and DeWine and Senators Kennedy and Wellstone for their leadership and bipartisanship in developing and moving this legislation. If you have any questions about our bipartisanship on S. 1186 or on any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact Nancy O'Brien, AVA's assistant executive director for government relations, or me at (703) 683-3111.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

BRET LOVEJOY,
Executive Director.

STATE DIRECTORS,
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION,
Washington, DC, March 18, 1998.

DEAR SENATOR: The National Association of State Directors of Vocational Technical Education Consortium (NASDVTEC) represents the state and territory leaders responsible for the nation's vocational technical education system. On NASDVTEC's behalf, I write to share our support for the Senate's efforts to enact legislation that authorizes a federal investment in vocational technical education. S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act of 1998, holds much potential for creating expanded and improved opportunities for our nation's students by providing access to quality vocational technical education. We urge you to support S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act of 1998.

NASDVTEC is very supportive of many of S. 1186's features including: a commitment to a strong state role; adequate state-level resources to effect change; assurances that

funds appropriated for vocational technical education can be used only for vocational technical education activities; and a strong focus on technology, accountability and achieving high levels of academic and vocational proficiency.

As we understand it, the manager's amendment will provide the opportunity for greater coordination among programs while assuring that vocational technical education continues to be planned for and administered by education officials, even under a unified plan. While it is our preference that separate legislation be enacted for vocational technical education, we appreciate the additional flexibility provided and the assurance that S. 1186 will build on and strengthen vocational technical education programs and activities that have proven successful.

We wish to commend Chairman Jeffords, Senators DeWine, Kennedy and Wellstone for their bipartisan efforts to bring forward this very important piece of legislation. Thank you for your support of vocational technical education and for your consideration of our views. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/737-0303 if NASDVTEC can be of assistance during your consideration of S. 1186.

Sincerely,

KIMBERLY A. GREEN,
Executive Director.

Mr. COCHRAN addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for 10 minutes.

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

(The remarks of Mr. COCHRAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1806 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, March 18, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,537,178,813,514.71 (Five trillion, five hundred thirty-seven billion, one hundred seventy-eight million, eight hundred thirteen thousand, five hundred fourteen dollars and seventy-one cents).

One year ago, March 18, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,367,674,000,000 (Five trillion, three hundred sixty-seven billion, six hundred seventy-four million).

Five years ago, March 18, 1993, the federal debt stood at \$4,215,542,000,000 (Four trillion, two hundred fifteen billion, five hundred forty-two million).

Ten years ago, March 18, 1988, the federal debt stood at \$2,481,414,000,000 (Two trillion, four hundred eighty-one billion, four hundred fourteen million).

Fifteen years ago, March 18, 1983, the federal debt stood at \$1,227,793,000,000 (One trillion, two hundred twenty-seven billion, seven hundred ninety-three million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,303,380,813,514.71 (Four trillion, three hundred and three billion, three hundred eighty million, eight hundred thirteen thousand, five hundred four-teen dollars and seventy-one cents) during the past 25 years.