Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, as I indicated to the majority leader, it is my intent to ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the bill which provides $500 million in agricultural indemnity payments which was agreed to as an amendment to the agricultural appropriations bill, and the bill be read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

Mr. GREGG. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I heard on the other side of the aisle a chorus of "I object." I am not quite sure why.

I was on a show this morning, WCCO Radio, in Minnesota. It is hard to explain to farmers why we can't take the action right now on the indemnity payment, the $500 million. We passed it. The correction would be made later on, but we can get assistance to farmers right now.

Why can't we send this over to the House? I say to my colleagues.

Mr. CRAIG. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I am pleased to yield.

Mr. CRAIG. I helped craft that indemnity payment. It is very important we do work with the House. Senator CONRAD, I, and others, deserve to go to conference. Senator DORGAN was a part of that.

I can understand a rush to immediacy. That is in the next fiscal cycle. I think it is important we deal with it in a fair and balanced way. As it is written, already the circumstances of agriculture have changed significantly enough. We deserve to look at it in a broader spectrum.

We, the Senate, tonight acted to bring some immediacy to the difficulty you are expressing. There may be more to be done in the coming weeks as this whole difficulty with production agriculture canreso on. Mr. Chairman, I hope the Senate, the House, and the Chair appoint the conference.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, let the Record show I am speaking for myself, but let the Record show that there was no objection to moving forward on advance payments for this "freedom to fail" bill, which is just an admission what an awful piece of legislation it was on our side. In addition, we could have gotten a $500 million indemnity payment out to farmers.

People are asking, when are we going to see this happened? People are thinking about a lifetime of 2 months or 3 months.

I hear this discussion that we need to take a broader view, it needs to go over to the floor. I want to go work it in conference committee, and we haven't had a chance to meet yet in conference committee. Do you know how ridiculous that sounds to the people whom we represent?

Mr. President, I will just say I don't think it is just that simple. Obviously, I am not going to change the course of events tonight.

My colleague from Iowa came out here earlier and spoke about this. First, the minority leader asked whether or not we would have unanimous consent to get this indemnity payment out to the countryside, out to families in rural America. Then the Senator from Iowa spoke about it. Then the Senator from North Dakota comes to the floor, after we have agreed to go forward—fast forward the advance payments was just fine with this Freedom to Farm bill. And now we come out and the Senator from North Dakota asks unanimous consent that we get them the $500 million. What did we pass that? I ask my colleagues.

Mr. DORGAN. Almost a month ago.

Mr. WELLSTONE. A month ago.

We get this out now, over to the House of Representatives; they take action this week or next week; and then we get the assistance out to farmers.

And what I hear on this side is this chorus of "No," and then everyone leaves. With all due respect, it is not that simple. I want the farmers in Minnesota, and they cross the country to know that there was an effort made tonight to get some additional help to people above and beyond these advance payments, which will help only a little.

It is a desperate situation. Many people are going to go under over the next several months. There was an effort tonight to get $500 million passed, over to the House, and out to farmers all across the country, especially in those areas that are supposed to get later on. Now, they are gone. And my colleagues on the other side said no. And they are gone.

I will be willing to yield in 1 second. I would like to speak a little bit more about this for another 3 minutes. It is not that simple. I will just say to my colleagues on the other side, I see that it is late at night, but I will just say to them, it is not as simple as saying no. You said no to a proposal, to an effort to get assistance to people right now. We could have had the Senate agree to go forward—fast forward the Freedom to Farm bill. I didn't object to that. If that will help a producer here and there, that is good. Anything that helps get assistance into the pockets of family farmers, I am for that. So I didn't object to that. I told folks this evening I wouldn't object to that.

But, this is not new money at all. This is just a payment that they are supposed to get later on. Now, they missed this payment earlier or at least they will have the option to get it earlier.

I was thinking about the farmer who testified yesterday at our farm policy hearing. This was young fellow from South Dakota who testified. When he talked about putting the crop in this spring, he could barely continue. His chin was quivering, and he had tears in his eyes. He talked about having to find something on his farm to sell in order to get the $500 million. He was going to put it in his crop. Then things would be just fine for him and he was out of money again. He had to sell some of the feed for his cattle that he put aside for this winter. He
Mr. President, the reason there is such a high level of feeling about what is happening in farm country is because we face an unmitigated disaster. In North Dakota, farm income declined 98 percent from 1996 to 1997. The result is massive number of auction sales, and the result is that the Secretary of Agriculture came to North Dakota and his crisis response team said that we are in danger of losing 30 percent of our farmers in the next 2 years. That is a disaster of staggering proportion.

Of course, it is not limited to North Dakota because we have the lowest prices for wheat and barley in 50 years. Those prices continue to crash. I just received a phone call from a farmer back home in North Dakota, who heard this debate occurring and he said, "Don't they know down there that just shuffling payments is not going to solve the problem? Don't they know that this kind of shell game is not what is needed? Why is needed are additional resources for research, for extension, for an international trade war. Don't they know that Europe spends 10 times more supporting their producers than we do supporting ours? Don't they know Europe is spending ten times more than we are supporting exports? Don't they understand that the lowest prices in 50 years, but in addition to that, disasters that are not being addressed?"

The disaster in North Dakota is the outbreak of a disease called scab, a fungus that is loose in the fields, which cost us a third of the crop last year. That combination of the lowest prices in 50 years and losing a third of the crop to this horrible disease, scab, has caused an unmitigated disaster. As I indicated, there has been a 98 percent reduction in farm income from 1996 to 1997, with literally thousands of farmers being forced off the land this year, and many more coming next year. One of the major agricultural lenders in my State called me and told me, "Senator, there is something radically wrong with this country's farm policy. If a State like North Dakota, which is one of the breadbasket States of our country, is in a farm depression, then there is something radically wrong with the farm policy."

Mr. President, I just want to conclude by saying that we do face low prices in North Dakota. It is not just in North Dakota because now it is spreading to other States as well. They are being hit by the low prices, but they are also being hit by these disaster conditions. In different parts of the country, it is different kinds of weather disasters. In Oklahoma and Texas, it is an overly dry conditions, a drought. It's the same thing in Louisiana. In our part of the country, it is overly wet conditions that led to this outbreak of
the fungus called scab. In other parts of the country, it has been hurricanes.

The combined result is a farm crisis worse than anything we have seen since I have been in public life. I have been in public life now for over 20 years.

Mr. President, I hope when we return that we are ready to aggressively address this problem. What we did tonight will help. It is not new money. It just moves money forward. That will be of some assistance. But it in no way solves the problem. We have a crisis of staggering dimensions, and it requires our full response. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, we are now in the closing process for the evening, and we have several matters to be considered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business.

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

MEDIA CAMPAIGN HELPS INFORM CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON ENCRYPTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the continuing efforts of American Computer Privacy (ACP), a broad-based advocacy coalition, to energize the discussion now taking place in Washington on encryption. ACP has a role since they represent industry, private citizens and interest groups from all sides of the political spectrum. The computer industry believes, as do many members in both the House and Senate, that it is time to reform America's outdated encryption regime. Last week, an important step was taken when a multimedia campaign was launched to raise Congressional and public awareness on the encryption issue. This campaign includes television commercials, print media, and an online banner component with such statements as, "would you give the government the keys to your safety deposit box or home?"

In the past few days, television commercials highlighting the need for encryption reform have appeared during Good Morning America, the Today show, Hardball, and Cross Fire.

Mr. President, ACP has an impressive membership which includes such organizations as the Law Enforcement Alliance of America, the Louisiana Sheriff's Association, American Small Business Alliance, Americans for Tax Reform, Electronic Commerce Forum, Information Technology Industry Council, the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and over sixty technology companies.

It's a campaign that includes several intelligence and law enforcement experts such as former National Security Advisor Richard Allen, former NSA Deputy Director William Crowell, former CIA Director George Tenet, former FBI Director William Webster, and former San Jose Police Chief Joseph McNamara. This array adds credibility to their message.

As you are well aware, encryption plays a significant role in our daily lives. This technology scrambles and unscrambles computer text to keep private communications from being read by unauthorized individuals such as hackers, thieves, and other criminals. Encryption protects private citizens from having anything they buy, something over the Internet, ensures that only authorized medical personnel can read a patients' medical records stored on a hospital database, shields tax information that we send to the IRS, and safeguard personal letters that we E-mail to loved ones. Encryption means that American companies can protect confidential employee information, such as salary and performance data; valuable trade secrets and competitive bidding information; and critical tax and market data.

Encryption also benefits America's security by protecting our nation's critical infrastructures, like the power grid, telecommunications infrastructure, financial networks, air traffic control operations, and emergency response systems. Strong encryption thwarts infiltration attempts by computer hackers and terrorists who have destructive, life threatening intent.

Yes, this is a serious issue that truly affects all Americans.

By allowing a public policy that limits its encryption to continue, we risk sending more potential U.S. business overseas. This approach only serves to harm America's economic and national security interest by encouraging criminals to purchase foreign made products now widely available with unlimited encryption strength. By contrast, the broad development and use of American encryption products should be advantageous to our law enforcement and intelligence communities.

I must say that I am deeply troubled by the comments made by Commerce Under Secretary William Reinsch, head of the Bureau of Export Administration, in response to ACP's efforts. Apparently, Under Secretary Reinsch doubts that this initiative will work—that industry and privacy advocates are wasting their money. I disagree. I believe this multimedia campaign is educating the public about the importance of encryption in our every day lives. These advertisements make clear that encryption technology preserves our First Amendment right to freedom of speech and our Fourth Amendment freedom against unreasonable search and seizure. They illustrate that we need strong security to keep all Americans safe from infrastructure attack. And, in the eyes of law enforcement and computer users everywhere must feel confident in the knowledge that their private information will remain private. Clearly, the development and use and strong encryption is critical if Internet commerce is going to grow to its full potential and sustain the economic engine that is driving this country into the 21st century.

I believe this advertising campaign is yet another indication of industry's willingness and desire to find a reasonable solution to the encryption issue. Industry and privacy groups, for example, have been working in earnest with Administration officials for several months. In May, a proposed interim solution to the encryption issue was offered. The Administration responded that it would take five to six months to review the proposal. This reaction in conjunction with Under Secretary Reinsch's recent comments, lead many in Congress from both sides of the aisle to conclude that the Administration, despite what it has been saying publicly, does not want to see a balanced resolution before this Congress adjourns.

Mr. President, I think it is also important to reiterate that the Administration's restrictions against U.S. encryption exports and its proposals to control domestic use just cannot work. Innovation in the high tech industry is relentless and ubiquitous. The government cannot stop it. It is for this reason that industry is trying to persuade the Administration that innovation is the solution to this issue, not the enemy. Two weeks ago, a coalition of thirteen companies proposed a private law enforcement solution that would provide law enforcement with court approved access to computer messages. Clearly, industry leaders want to help officials capture criminals and terrorists. I believe the ideas they have put forward are reasonable and responsible. On the other hand, I do not believe the Administration's response has been forthcoming. Encryption policy can be modernized with the stroke of a pen, but the Administration has shown little willingness or ability. It is up to this industry as it takes appropriate action by implementing a media campaign.

While encryption is a complex and elusive information technology issue, this media initiative reinforces the need for legislation to bring America's encryption policy into the 21st century. The national security and law enforcement communities have legitimate concerns that must be considered. I believe that the best way to deal with their concern is for the President and members of this Congress to bring this legislation that strikes a balance on encryption. Legislation that would help keep private and corporate communications away from