the court system. Courts themselves have denied this argument repeatedly. In fact, the United States Supreme Court has rejected this position. Fees run from around $110 to $160. By that time, the filer would have already hired a lawyer, probably for much more than that.

I have here an ad of a lawyer in Texas who says: ''Bankruptcy can be a smart financial move.'' He does not say that bankruptcy is a way to take care of unacceptable debts that you have no chance of paying. This is the what we used to think bankruptcy was for: to help those who, through various circumstances, have found themselves hopelessly in debt. This man says: ''Bankruptcy can be a smart financial move.''

It can be a smart financial move. You can legally—under the current law—defeat legitimate debts. You can just walk away from them, as this man says ''For $350 total.'' And the truth is, that is why we have increased filings of these kinds of advertisements in phone books, in newspapers, in magazines, in the yard sale publications that are passed out free in this country.

These people go to their lawyers and they quit paying all their debts, and they then file for bankruptcy. Virtually every court filing in America requires a fee. And this is a reasonable fee. This fee has so been upheld by the courts. Somebody will pay for the cost of these filings, if it is not going to be those who use this system, then the taxpayers will pay for it. We are talking about a large amount of money and a drain on the system. Also, it would create a large number of court hearings, adding to an already crowded docket.

I am a critic of our court systems on occasion, but I must say that the bankruptcy courts have, done an outstanding job, Mr. President, in handling an ever-increasing caseload. The caseload has doubled. We have not had a doubling of the judges, but they have used computers, they have used staff people, they have used sophisticated measurement techniques, and they have been able to keep up with their caseloads without a massive expansion of the number of bankruptcy judges. If bankruptcy courts are going to have a hearing on everybody that comes before them to determine whether or not there is any way they can pay their filing fee, then we are going to have to add severe costs to the system and more overloading. Judges, along with lawyers and clerks representing people on both sides will run up expenses that could, in fact, exceed the real cost of the filing fee in this matter.

I understand the sentiments behind this amendment. It is something that has been considered for years, rejected consistently, and upheld by the courts. It is a road we should not go down.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. 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. BYRD. Mr. President, what is the business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending question is the Feingold amendment to the bankruptcy bill.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, has the Pastore rule expired for today?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Pastore rule will expire at 12:32 p.m.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak out of order.

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

GETTING BACK TO THE CLASSICS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I was pleased to read an article in the September 15 edition of the Washington Times, titled, ''Classics Back in Fashion at Some Schools.''

Speaking precisely to the point that I have made countless times during my years in the Senate, this article reiterates the need to get back to the basics in education. I would like to get back to the little two-room schoolhouse in which I started along about 1923. I laud those schools that have taken this valuable step back and are getting back to the basics in order to reintroduce classical education into their classrooms.

Who better to teach our students today than the true historians, the poets, and the playwrights of yesteryear. I long for the old McGuffey readers—I still have a set of those old McGuffey readers in my personal library—where the students read poems and wholesome stories that taught them good morals, how to act, how to grow up and be good citizens. The old McGuffey readers. The historians, the poets, and the playwrights of yesteryear, such as Euripides, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, and Sophocles, who were the four great master poets of tragedy throughout the years and were outstanding as writers of tragic plays, their works were among the classics that have built history, influenced the framers of our Constitution, and can serve to enhance our ability to better understand the present and to set goals for the future.

Today, our students are caught up in the MTV generation—some of them—watching mind-polluting television sitcoms, listening to shock radio, and repeating the degrading language that they acquire by digesting this steady diet of unhealthy perversity.

Sadly, many modern classrooms often offer nothing to counteract this flood of popular junk and ignorance, which are smothering our country's students. The classics have been ignored in recent years and replaced by psuedoliterature filled with profanity and violence, and textbooks which do a better job of teaching I don't know what than basic algebra. It alarms me to think that students cannot even begin to identify the great heroes of our past or the authors of the Federalist Papers.

If our Nation hopes to produce better students, students who can match or outperform the competition in international exams, we must return to the basics, return to the great books and history, such as ''Plutarch's Lives,'' Milton's ''Paradise Lost,'' Milton's ''Paradise Regained,'' Daniel Defoe's ''Robinson Crusoe,'' Emerson's essays, Carlyle's ''History of the French Revolution,'' the Bible, the ''Iliad'' and the ''Odyssey.'' Alexander the Great kept a copy of The Iliad under his pillow.

It was called the ''casket copy''. He submitted Homer's ''Iliad'' to Aristotle, and asked Aristotle to critique it. Then Alexander the Great prized it above all other literature.

Shakespeare's 37 plays: I quoted extracts from Shakespeare's 37 plays one year in the Senate.

These are all replete with the history and philosophy that are integral elements in a well-rounded, uplifting education.

When I talk about an education, I mean one that goes through one's lifetime. It doesn't stop with graduating from high school or from college or from getting a Ph.D. in physics, as two of my grandsons have done. It means continuing to educate one's self throughout one's life.

Solon, one of the seven wise men of Greece, said, ''I grow old in the pursuit of learning.'' That is a goal that all of us should emulate: ''I grow old in the pursuit of learning.''

I try to follow in Solon's footsteps in that regard. During the last break I read Cicero's ''Republic''—not Plato's ''Republic.'' I had already done that some time ago, but Cicero's ''Republic,'' and Cicero's ''Law''—and De Tocqueville's ''Democracy in America''—two excellent volumes.

Ours is not a democracy. We are talking about a form of government. Ours is not a democracy. We live in a democratic society and we promote democratic principles. But, as for our form of government, it is not a democracy. So many people loosely and glibly refer to it as a ''democracy.''

One needs only to read the Federalist Papers No. 10 and No. 14, to get a good definition of what is a ''democracy'' and what is a ''republic.'' Madison, in both of those essays, defines and distinguishes between a democracy, as a form of government, and a republic.

So let us continue to study and to learn. Learning can be one of the most rewarding of the human activities. But it must be a lifelong journey.

It ought to be a lifelong journey which carries one across the rivers of changes in events and into the recesses of man's immortal spirit. There is no better way to build upon shallow and superficial knowledge than to ponder the lessons of the past. There is no better way. As Cicero said, ''To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born, is to remain always a child.''

I encourage all schools to give their students this opportunity to grow, to share the lessons of the past, to share history, to read ancient history. Herodotus who wrote about Persia, and who wrote about Egypt, lived somewhere between 484 and 424 B.C.—Xenophon, Thucydides, Sallustius, Polybius, Zosimus, Orosius, Ammianus, Appianus, Arrianus, Caesar himself who wrote the Gallic Wars, Florus, Procopius, Eutropius, Cassius Dio Cocceianus, Livius, Tacitus, Plutarch, Gibbon on The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Read histories of England. Of Rome and Greece.

Read these histories, and read American history, and read the history of the U.S. Senate. These are illuminating. They are uplifting. And we can learn by past events how, in many instances, to deal with current events.

Napoleon said, ''Teach my son to study history. It is the only true philosophy.''

Enjoy the vision of the poets and the philosophers and begin to shape leaders, who can take us confidently into the future because they so well understand the past.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. SESSIONS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to express my appreciation for the remarks of the Senator from West Virginia, and to take this moment to repeat again to him how much I appreciated his remarkable address earlier this week in the Old Senate Chamber in the majority leader's Lecture Series on the History of the Senate. He had the largest crowd I can remember. He had the rapt attention of virtually every Senator as he shared with us the great traditions of this body. Of course, we know that he has written a three-volume history on the U.S. Senate. On Fridays, I am often in the Chair that the Presiding Officer is in today, and I had the occasion to hear him address this body.

I have written two letters congratulating Senators on speeches, and they have both been to Senator BYRD. I remember one of his speeches talked about education. He referred to our textbooks as ''touchy, feely twaddle.'' Too often, I think, they don't have or possess the power of the great historians to uplift, causing us to think and dream about heroic acts. He shared with us on one of those occasions his experience in the two-room schoolhouse where he grew up. I thought then of my grandmother who taught in a one-room schoolhouse. I remember the schoolhouse as I was growing up. Although it has been torn down now, I remember in her library—I don't know how she obtained it—was Macauley's ''History of England,'' Gibbon's ''The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,'' Shakespeare, and other great literary works. She shared those with the elementary schoolchildren in those schoolrooms.

I am of a belief that they were richly educated in that one-room schoolhouse. There is something more significant than color pictures and videos in transmitting what it is that we are about as a people.

I taught in the sixth grade 1 year, and we used what they called Basil Readers. They wrote stories in little pieces, and at the end of them were a lot of questions, and in each story they would add new words. It was all scientifically done, you see. It was to teach them vocabulary and things of that nature. But the children hated them and would not read those books. And around the classroom—it was an old class school—there were a lot of books like I had in my schoolroom—Daniel Boone, the old bluecoat, the Hardy Boys, Tom Swift. And so I started encouraging them to read those books, and they loved them because they were stories that had some meaning and some adventure and showed people in situations which required courage.

At any rate, I say to Senator BYRD, thank you for sharing your opinions with us. You can have a $500 textbook, but if it has no moral message, no meaning to it, does not uplift the spirit and no one wants to read it, then that textbook is not worth very much. Too often I think that is the problem with modern education.

I, again, say how much I appreciate the Senator's remarks and the Senator's leadership in this Senate.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. I express my deep appreciation to the distinguished Senator for his comments. It has been my privilege to serve over these 40 years in the Senate with some great Senators from Alabama.

Senator James Allen was an expert in the rules and procedures. He had been Lieutenant Governor of Alabama, and I believe he told me that as presiding officer over the Alabama lower house, I believe it was, he used the rules of the U.S. Senate. He certainly was very conversant with the U.S. Senate rules, a master of the rules of the Senate, a very able man, and courageous. He had no difficulty in taking a stand even if he stood alone. We were sorry at his untimely passing.

There were other great Senators from Alabama—John Sparkman, who promoted and wrote important legislation dealing with housing; Lister Hill. I can see Lister Hill—that is his desk, I believe it was that desk right there—speaking. He had a fine way of speaking. I believe he told me that he had been named after Dr. Lister—a great English surgeon, Dr. Lister. Senator Hill told me, if I am not mistaken in my recollection, that Dr. Lister had performed an operation on a man who had gangrene in one of his legs. They didn't have the anesthetics in that day and time that they have today. This man went through this excruciating experience and then wrote the poem ''Invictus.'' And the surgeon was a Dr. Lister. Senator Hill was given the name Lister, after that great English surgeon.

I am proud to recall these fine Senators from Alabama who were here when I came to the Senate. I have lately come to appreciate the work of the distinguished Senator who is now standing at the desk of the majority leader, and I appreciate his kind words. I have treasured his letters, and I know that ours is a friendship which will be a lasting one. I shall cherish it.

I thank him for relating his experiences in the little country schoolhouse. It doesn't have to be a massive building with beautiful columns and hallways decorated with shining pieces of furniture. The teacher makes the school. James A. Garfield, hearkening back to his schooldays, said that if he had his old teacher, Mark Hopkins, on one end of the log and he himself on the other there was a university. Those are not the exact words, but they were well spoken.

I am trying to remember a poem about a teacher. It doesn't come back to me just now, except in part:

A Teacher builded a temple
With loving and infinite care,
Planning each arch with patience,
Laying each stone with prayer.

* * * * *

But the temple the teacher builded
Will last while the ages roll
For that beautiful unseen temple
Was a child's immortal soul.

I thank the distinguished Senator.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from West Virginia for his comments. I do share his views about teachers. My grandmother, in her first job—and I have a photograph of the class—had a real rough looking group of poor kids, no doubt. But in that group was an individual who may have been somewhat inspired by her and who went on to become a U.S. Congressman, Frank Boykin, a man of some note. I always claim that whatever he learned, he learned in that first through sixth grade schoolroom when she taught there.

So I think teachers do inspire us. Good teachers understand and are knowledgeable and learned people themselves, and they can then share that. Sometimes I think we spend too much time on process rather than on substance.

I again express my appreciation to Senator BYRD for his leadership of this body, this Senate, for reminding us on a regular basis of what we are about, our heritage here, and calling us to our best and highest instincts.

Thank you, Senator BYRD.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Senator.

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

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

PREVENTING CUTOFFS OF SATELLITE TV SERVICE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have heard from scores of Vermonters lately who are steaming mad. They have been told by their home satellite signal providers they are going to lose some of their home network satellite channels just as the new TV season starts. They have every right to be upset, because it is within the ability of Congress to unmuddle the mess that satellite viewers are facing. The public has every reason to expect Congress to get its act together to do that, and to do it quite promptly.

Under a court order, thousands of viewers, many of them living in my home State of Vermont, are going to be cut off from receiving TV stations. These are TV stations, incidentally, that they are paying to receive. We have 65,000 home satellite dishes in Vermont. The court order directly affects only those subscribers who signed up for service after March 11, 1997, but most subscribers are being warned by the signal providers they are going to soon lose several of the network channels they now receive, several of the network channels they expected to receive, several of the network channels they are paying to receive.

In a rural State like mine, there are many, many areas where the only way you can receive television is by satellite dish. This huge policy glitch is intruding right now into hundreds of thousands of homes throughout the country. It is a royal mess, and Congress and the FCC need to fix it.

I introduced a bill in March of this year with Chairman HATCH of the Judiciary Committee so we could try to resolve this issue before it became a major problem. We have tried since then to push Congress to find a solution. But many viewers have lost their signals already. We are trying to get these bills passed in the next couple of weeks to restore service and to keep other households from losing their satellite TV signals, not just in Vermont but in every State in this country.

I am pleased Senator HATCH and I have worked out arrangements with the chairman of the Commerce Committee and other Senators who have been active on this issue, including Senators DEWINE and KOHL, and what we have worked out significantly raises the prospect that Congress can soon pass a bill to prevent the cutoff of thousands of viewers this month and in October. The good news is that we hope and believe that all Senators can support our approach.

Our legislation would keep signals available to Vermonters and subscribers in other States until the FCC has a chance to address these issues by the end of next February. Our legislation will direct the FCC to address this problem for the future. In fact, our proposal ultimately will mean, as technology advances, that Vermonters will be able to receive satellite TV for all Vermont full-power TV stations, and viewers in other States will be similarly protected. Where this helps all of us is that this effort will eventually promote head-to-head competition between cable and satellite TV providers.

The goal is to provide satellite TV viewers at home in Vermont with more choices, more channel selections, and at lower rates. The evidence is so clear from our hearings: In the areas of the country where there is full competition between cable providers, rates to customers are considerably lower. The same is going to be true when there is greater effective competition between cable providers and satellite signal providers. Over time, the effort will permit satellite TV providers to offer a full selection of local TV channels to viewers—even those living near Burlington, VT, where local signals are now blocked.

I live about 25 miles from Burlington. I get 1½ channels. There are three stations, three network stations, in Burlington. But because I am out on the side of a mountain, I get 1½ channels. Under the rules they are talking about, I would not be allowed to get satellite TV to have those same networks. It is ridiculous. It defies reality. But our legislation will cure that.

Under current law, those families have to get their local TV systems over an antenna. If their situation is like mine, it does not give you a clear picture. These bills we now have before us will remove that legal limitation that prohibits satellite carriers from offering local TV signals to viewers.

What we want is this: That over time, satellite carriers will have to follow the rules that cable providers have to follow, which means they will have to carry, in our case, all local Vermont TV stations—and the same in other States. In addition, Vermont stations will be available over satellite to many areas in Vermont like my own that today are unserved by satellite or by cable. And the second major improvement offered through our legislation is satellite carriers that offer local Vermont channels in their mix of programs will be able to reach Vermonters throughout our State.

People who have spent money on satellite dishes do not know how this thing could become as fouled up as it is. Frankly, I do not either. But I do know that we can correct it, and our legislation will. It is time for this Congress to step up to the plate and solve this policy nightmare. It is now at the door of countless homes, not only in Vermont but throughout the country. Constituents should know they should not have to take, ''Well, not now,'' as an acceptable answer. We have plenty time left in this Congress to correct this.

I commend Senators HATCH and MCCAIN for the leadership they have shown in solving this problem. I am going to continue working with them and I think we are going to get somewhere. I certainly hope we are going to get somewhere, because I don't want to have to tell my neighbors that the Congress has so much time for so many other things but cannot take some time to fix something that directly affects so many hundreds of thousands of people throughout the country.

FORTIETH RATIFICATION OF THE OTTAWA LANDMINE TREATY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in October of 1996, I was privileged to participate in a conference in Ottawa hosted by Canada's Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy. I was there with Tim Rieser of my staff who has done so much work on the issue of banning landmines. We were also accompanied by Bobby Muller, the head of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, a man who was way ahead of most of us in pushing for a ban on antipersonnel landmines.

The purpose of the conference in 1996 was to chart a strategy culminating in a global treaty banning antipersonnel landmines. The Ottawa process was conceived of by Canada and a number of other governments that were fed up with the failure of previous efforts to seriously deal with the mine problem.

Over 70 governments and dozens of nongovernmental organizations accepted Minister Axworthy's invitation to Ottawa. At that conference, to the surprise of everyone present—but certainly to my delight—Minister Axworthy took the courageous step of challenging the world's governments to return in a year's time to sign a treaty that would accomplish nothing less than a total ban on antipersonnel landmines.

It was that bold challenge which enabled the international community to finally move from rhetoric to action. In December 1997, just barely over a year later, 122 governments returned to Ottawa to sign a treaty banning the production, transfer, and use of antipersonnel mines forever.

During the previous year, the United States had refused to participate in the treaty-drafting process. In fact, some U.S. officials dismissed the Ottawa process as a ''sideshow.'' They predicted that without U.S. support, the Canadian effort would eventually run out of steam. They predicted that this treaty would never take effect.

In fact, Mr. President, the opposite happened. A few days ago, Burkina Faso, one of so many African countries whose people have been maimed and killed by landmines, became the 40th state to deposit its papers of ratification with the United Nations, triggering the 6-month period before the treaty formally comes into force.

What many once dismissed as a naive and far-fetched dream is now a reality. In fact, today the treaty has some 129