

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 11:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each. That is on behalf of the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SENATE AGENDA

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, as we move into the final week of the 105th Congress, I am reminded by everything that is going on around us of the importance of our work here. Most Senators would agree that this will be a closing unlike what the majority of Senators have ever seen. It will test each and every one of us and will remind Members just why we are here.

It will test our patience and stamina regarding each and every piece of legislation that we have toiled on throughout the 105th Congress in the last 2 years. We have worked on legislation that has been in the pipeline, and now we are coming down to the small end of the funnel. Just as air, when compressed, picks up velocity, legislation picks up movement in the last week of a session.

The agenda of this Congress has been and should be simple. I gather it has been a simple one. We responded to emergencies all across the land and, yes, beyond the shores of our great land. We responded to the needs of people within our borders, attended to the needs that were a part of circumstances beyond anybody's choosing or control. Basically, that is what we do best.

There is a quality of statesmanship that is a part of each and every one of us who serve here. It will be tested as reality sets in. Some highly important issues to us all will need to be laid aside for another day. Believe me, there will be another day. There will be another battleground.

The decisions that are now before the Senate, should government be placed above all else in the average lives of all Americans? My answer is, hardly. I think it is during these times that we must reassess the role of the Federal

Government and the role each of us must fill. Competition is keen among all who serve the American people at each level of government. Can we forget that we are not a true democracy and remember that we are a Republic? Each State of this great Union plays their important role in the day-to-day business of public service.

The agenda for this week is appropriations, funding the important part of our Government, which could include national security, our relations with the world community, and the economic well-being of our citizens. In other words, ensuring each and every American is not denied the American dream.

As we close the Senate and the 105th Congress, it may be asking something out of the ordinary, but it is not impossible that we lay aside the issues that cloud and delay and wait for another day. This Nation has survived for the past 200 years and will survive another 200 years. Yesterday, we heard announcements coming from both sides of the aisle and many other sources that the other side would risk shutting down the Government should we not fulfill the agenda of appropriations. If the Government is shut down because of a lack of funding, it will be the fault of the other person or party. That was the message this weekend and all day yesterday.

It is time that we reassess what has happened to get us where we are. We have been using delaying tactics either to block or slow progress of the appropriations process—nothing but delaying tactics, pure and simple. Now that we are at this point, someone must be to blame. Do we blame somebody else, or do we blame ourselves? Is there a mindset that the responsibility or the lack of responsibility does not fall on each and every one of us, whether we serve in the legislative arm of this Government or the administrative arm? Are we really saying we don't have the courage to accept the responsibility and suffer the consequences of our own actions? How can we ask our younger Americans to develop a sense of responsibility if we do not do it? Are we a nation of laws or a nation of self-satisfaction and the impulses or emotions of the day?

What we do here matters. It matters more than any one of us can imagine. Now is not the time for posturing. It is time to let the statesmanship that lives in each and every one of us come out and complete the Nation's business. I think the folks who sent us here will appreciate that, the Nation would be better off for it, and so will you as an individual. Then you will have earned and deserve the title of U.S. Senator, serving the people of the greatest nation ever established on this planet.

Mr. President, that is just a reminder, as we move into the closing days, of some problems that we have to deal with before we all go home.

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

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

READING EXCELLENCE ACT

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 404, H.R. 2614.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2614) to improve the reading and literacy skills of children and families by improving in-service instructional practices for teachers who teach reading, to stimulate the development of more high-quality family literacy programs, to support extended learning-time opportunities for children, to ensure that children can read well and independently not later than third grade, 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, which had been reported from the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

TITLE I—PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN READING AND LITERACY

SEC. 101. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN READING AND LITERACY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating parts C and D as parts D and E, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after part B the following:

"PART C—PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN READING AND LITERACY

"SEC. 2251. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

"The Secretary is authorized to award grants to State educational agencies for the improvement of teaching and learning through sustained and intensive high quality professional development activities in reading and literacy at the State and local levels.

"SEC. 2252. ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS.

"(a) RESERVATIONS.—From the amount available to carry out this part for any fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve—

"(1) 1/2 of 1 percent for the outlying areas, to be distributed among the outlying areas on the basis of their relative need for assistance under this part, as determined by the Secretary; and

"(2) 1/2 of 1 percent for the Secretary of the Interior for programs under this part for professional development activities for teachers, other staff, and administrators in schools operated or funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"(b) STATE ALLOTMENTS.—The Secretary shall allot the amount available to carry out this part and not reserved under subsection (a) for a fiscal year to each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as follows, except that no State shall receive less than 1/2 of 1 percent of such amount:

"(1) 50 percent shall be allotted among such jurisdictions on the basis of their relative populations of individuals aged 5 through 17, as determined by the Secretary on the basis of the most recent satisfactory data.