poultry inspection activities of the Food Safety and Inspection Service, it provides total funding of $377 million, a $53 million increase from the 2000 level, for USDA and FDA programs and activities included in the President's Food Safety Initiative.

Turning to ''Division B'', the reported bill recommended a net total of $2.2 billion for emergency and regular supplemental appropriations and rescissions for the fiscal year 2000.

A number of these provisions have been enacted into law as part of the conference report on the fiscal year 2001 Military Construction Appropriations Act. The substitute amendment deletes those provisions and makes other accompanying technical and conforming changes to Division B of the reported bill.

The Chairmen of the various Appropriations Subcommittees may speak to those provisions in Division B of the reported bill under their respective jurisdictions.

However, for programs and activities within the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Subcommittee, Division B, as modified, recommends $1.1 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2000.

Supplemental appropriations for emergency housing and relief to farmers as a result of the North Carolina hurricane and other natural disasters; for the Farm Service Agency to meet high workload demands; and to offset the assessment on peanut producers for program losses have now been enacted into law.

The remaining emergency supplemental appropriations recommended in the bill reported to the Senate still must be addressed.

These include the $13 million requested by the President to cover a shortfall in available funding for crop insurance premium discounts; $35 million to support ongoing acreage enrollments in the Conservation Reserve and Wetlands Reserve programs; and an additional $130 million for the Rural Community Advancement Program.

Just as devastating to producers as losses from hurricanes, drought and other natural disasters are losses from new and emergent diseases and pest infestations. The bill provides authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to compensate growers for losses as a result of the plum pox virus which has devastated the stone fruit industry; citrus canker; Mexican fruit fly; grasshoppers and Mormon crickets; and Pierce's disease, a new problem plaguing the grape industry.

In addition, emergency assistance totaling an estimated $443 million is recommended for dairy producers and $450 million for livestock producers.

Mr. President, this appropriations bill was reported by the Committee on May 10th. It was one of the first of the thirteen fiscal year 2001 appropriations bills to be reported to the Senate by the Appropriations Committee.

Although the companion bill was reported from the House Appropriations Committee around that same time, on May 16th, the House did not begin consideration of the bill until June 29. The House resumed consideration of the bill immediately following the July recess and passed the bill on July 11 by a vote of 339–82.

There are approximately 26 legislative days remaining before the October 1 start of the fiscal year. It is my hope we can expedite the Senate's consideration of this bill so we can go to conference with the House and get this bill to the President as quickly as possible.

I thank the distinguished Senator from Wisconsin, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. KOHL, as well as other members of the subcommittee, for their support and cooperation in putting this bill together. It is never easy to determine funding priorities, or to balance the many competing and legitimate needs that confront agriculture in this bill and stay within the subcommittee's required spending limitations. I believe this bill represents a responsible funding recommendation. I ask the Senators to give it their favorable consideration.

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. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2886

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I understand that S. 2886 is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2886) to provide for retail competition for the sale of electric power, to authorize States to recover transition costs, and for other purposes.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading, and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. 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. MURKOWSKI. 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. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for a period of about 15 minutes, or until the leader seeks recognition.

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

ENERGY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to chat a little bit about energy this evening because there are several misconceptions relative to the position that the United States is currently in relative to the high gasoline prices that we have been subjected to in the last several months.

First of all, the bad news is, there is no relief in sight. What we currently have is a situation where, simply, the available refining capacity associated with gasoline production and the demand is such that the two lines are almost parallel. In other words, our ability to produce gasoline and the current consumption of gasoline are about equal. So as a consequence, in reality, we are drawing down our reserves. This is at a time when normally our reserves would be substantially higher.

There is a reason for this. I think the American people should understand and appreciate reality because what we have is a situation where our refining capacity has been reduced dramatically over the last 8 years. We have lost about 37 refineries in the United States during the last 10-year period. There has not been a new refinery built in the United States in almost two decades.

What we have, then, is a concentration of our existing refineries operating at near full capacity, producing the requirements associated with the public's demand for gasoline, coupled with the problems associated with meeting the Clean Air Act, which mandates certain reformulated gasolines in various parts of the country.

We had testimony before the committee of which I am chairman, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, earlier last week. One of the principals with the Environmental Protection Agency identified that the Environmental Protection Agency, under their interpretation of the Clean Air Act, has mandated as many as nine specific cuts of reformulated gasolines that have a regional application around the country. That means in California you have one type of reformulated gasoline. You have another type in Chicago. You may have another type in Atlanta.

These have gone into effect as a consequence of the June 1 new mandates for reformulated gasoline in various parts of the country. What this means is, the refineries have to separate and move and store separately these different cuts of gasoline. The cost, of course, is significant from the standpoint of what the American public has to pay.

We have seen, since the spiraling price of crude oil over the last year—where a year ago prices were $11, $12, $13, $14 a barrel—an average price of nearly $30 a barrel this year.

The difficulty we experience is, having become so dependent on imported