

TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS AND LONG-HAUL TRUCKERS

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, just in the time we have remaining, I really would like for us to move forward on this legislation and, indeed, on other legislation that is important to people's lives.

I want to speak to three different questions.

First of all, on the Murray amendment—and presumably we will have more time for debate; I do not know whether or not we have a filibuster that is going to be sustained or whether or not there is going to be some agreement, but I want to thank Senator MURRAY for her good work.

I tell you, people in Minnesota, as we look at I-35 coming from the south, are interested in safe drivers and safe trucks and safe highways. They are interested in their own safety. Frankly, I think it is terribly important that all of us support Senator MURRAY's amendment.

For my own part, I also want to give a lot of credit to what Congressman SABO from our State of Minnesota has done on the House side. He basically has said, we are not going to have the funding to grant the permits because there is just simply no way that right now we are going to be able to have any assurance that the safety standards are going to be there.

I want to make one point that perhaps was brought up yesterday in the debate but which I think is really important as well. As a Senator, I do not really make any apology for also being concerned about—above and beyond safety—the impact this is going to have on jobs in our country, frankly, the impact of NAFTA on jobs in our country.

In particular, I think the very powerful implications of all this are as we see more and more subcontractors crossing the border at maquilas, it is far better, from the point of view of people in Minnesota, that the subcontractors to our auto plants or to other parts of our economy are located in the United States. With a lot of the transportation being done by American trucks, that is what happens.

The Bush administration is pushing this full force, and they are not even interested in respect for the safety standards.

The other thing that is going to happen is, you are going to have more and more subcontractors basically located in Mexico because Mexican trucks take whatever is produced there right to wherever it needs to go in the United States, thus eliminating a lot of other jobs.

So I think this is not just about truckdrivers, not just about Teamsters, not just about safety—all of which I think is very important—I think it is also about living-wage jobs in our own country. It is also about our economy. Frankly, in some ways, though I support the Murray amend-

ment, I really appreciate Mr. SABO's effort. And we will see what happens on the floor of the Senate, whether or not we will have an amendment similar to Mr. SABO's amendment in this Chamber.

But I think, at the very minimum, we have to insist on the safety standards, and, at a maximum, eventually we are also going to have to have yet more honest discussion about this new global economy and where people fit into it. All that happened in Italy and all that happened in Seattle I would not defend—not all of it, by any means, but what I will tell you is that there are an awful lot of people in our country and throughout the world who are raising very important justice questions. They are not arguing that we are in a national economy alone. They are not arguing that we ought to put up walls on the borders. But they are arguing, if we are going to have a new global economy and we are in an international time, then above and beyond it working for large financial institutions and multinational corporations; it ought to work for working people; it ought to work for human rights; it ought to work for consumer protection; it ought to work for small producers; and it ought to work for the environment.

Frankly, I think that is part of what is being debated in this Chamber. We have a very, what I would call incremental, pragmatic amendment, which Senator MURRAY has done an admirable job of defending. I am amazed other Senators believe this goes too far by way of assuring basic safety on our highways. I think we need to defend Senator MURRAY's effort.

Above and beyond that, I have some real questions about whether or not all of this will be enforced and then properly certified. Then above and beyond that, I have some real questions about these trade agreements and the impact they have on whether or not we will have living-wage jobs for the people in our country to enable people to earn a decent standard of living so they can support their families.

And above and beyond all that, eventually, I am telling you—it may not be this year; it may be 5 years from now; it may be 10 years from now—we are going to design some new rules for this international economy, so that rather than driving environmental standards down, or wages down, with a complete lack of respect for human rights, we can have the kind of standards that lift up people's lives.

A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, since we are, for the moment, stalemated here, I rise to express my strong commitment to our moving forward on a prescription drug benefit. Obviously, we will not be able to do it now, but people in the country are certainly interested in the politics that speak to the center of their lives.

I want to see us eventually pass a bill that calls for health security for all citizens. Before we do that, we ought to have a decent prescription drug benefit. I recommend to my colleagues a Sunday story in the New York Times, front-page story by Robert Perrin. I forget the name of the coauthor; I apologize.

The gist of the piece was that it is going to be very difficult, within the \$300 billion allowance over the next 10 years because of the tax cuts, to have a benefit that is going to work for a lot of elderly people. If the premiums are too high and the copays are too high and the deductibles are too high, many people can't afford it. Quite to the contrary of the stereotype of greedy geezers traveling all over the country playing at the most swank golf courses, the income profile of elderly people is not high at all. Disproportionately, it is really low- and moderate-income people.

So, A, people will not be able to afford the benefit. And then, B, if we don't deal with the catastrophic expenses—that is to say, after \$2,000 a year, people should not be paying any more additional expenses—then it is going to be a proposal or a piece of legislation that is going to invite mutiny. People are going to say: We thought when you campaigned that you made a commitment to us. We thought you made a commitment to affordable prescription drugs. But you are not willing to do it.

I have introduced a piece of legislation called MEDS. At a very minimum, we are going to have to understand \$300 billion over 10 years will not do the job. We have to understand that this tax cut that has boxed us all in is a huge mistake. We are going to have to be intellectually honest with the people in the country, and we are going to have to find our courage. Frankly, I predict we will revisit—the sooner, the better—this tax cut proposal. It is too much Robin Hood in reverse, too much going to the very top of the population. And now we are without the revenue and the resources to do well for people with an affordable prescription drug. "Affordable," that is what everyone campaigned on.

In addition, yesterday Senator ROCKEFELLER, chairing the Veterans' Affairs Committee, had Secretary Principi come in. He is a good man. I have a great deal of respect for him. I think he cares deeply about veterans. He was talking about prescription drug benefits within the VA. I asked him several times whether or not he felt that their global budget and the discount they insist on has enabled them to hold down the cost. The copay for veterans for prescription drugs right now is \$2. He said: Absolutely.

Maybe what we are going to have to do—there are Republicans who will agree; I hope all the Democrats agree—is also have some cost containment. We have 40 million Medicare recipients. I suppose we might be able to say that 40

million Medicare recipients represent a bargaining unit and we want a discount from these pharmaceutical companies that are making excessive, obscene profits.

There are a lot of issues people care about. There are many issues on which we need to move forward. In particular, in order to do well by people, we are going to have to be not only intellectually honest, but we will have to have some political courage—political courage to talk about the ways in which this tax cut bill puts us in a strait-jacket and amounts to a miserable failure from the point of view of our being able to do well for people and from the point of view of our being willing to live up to our promises. Everybody who ran for office talked about an affordable prescription drug benefit.

In addition, we are going to have to challenge some of the profits of the pharmaceutical industry and have some cost containment so this works.

VICTIMS ECONOMIC SECURITY AND SAFETY ACT

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, today I am going to introduce legislation, the Victims Economic Security and Safety Act, with Senator MURRAY—she probably will not be able to be at the press conference because she is doing such an admirable job of standing her proper ground for safety—Senator SCHUMER and Senator DODD; and Representatives CAROLYN MALONEY and LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD on the House side.

Basically, this legislation deals with what is a huge problem; that is to say, estimates are that as many as 50 percent of the victims of domestic violence have lost jobs in part due to their struggle. The same thing holds true for victims of sexual assault.

The legislation addresses three or four issues. No. 1, it would provide emergency leave for those women—sometimes men, almost always women—who are having to deal with the battering and with the violence, be it in the home, be it sexual assault, be it stalking. It will allow them to take some time off from work to see a lawyer, to see a doctor, to do what they need to do.

No. 2, it would extend unemployment compensation to people who are forced to leave their jobs in order to provide for their own safety and their children's safety. Amazingly, this happens in about 50 percent of the cases: Quite often for these women, the man—be it the former husband, a stalker, somebody who has assaulted them sexually—will come to their workplace and constantly be there. And in order to be safe, in order sometimes literally to save their lives, in order for their children to be safe, they then have to leave work. We want to, with documentation, be able to provide some unemployment compensation.

No. 3, it would prohibit discrimination against victims of domestic and

sexual assault. This is critically important. What happens is the employer—and some of the employers are great—sometimes says: This is creating a lot of trouble. Therefore, we fire you.

That is the last thing in the world you want to do.

It also provides protection from insurance company discrimination. There is no reason why women should be battered again by an insurance company that says: We understand that this guy has come to work, is threatening you, that you have this problem. We don't think you are a good bet for health insurance.

Finally, it provides tax credits to companies that will provide the programs and the help.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Nevada.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended for another 10 minutes.

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

STALKING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Mr. REID. Madam President, before the Senator from Minnesota leaves the floor, I wish to say was not able to hear all of his statement but most of it. He mentioned what we need around here is political courage. That is something that is not lacking in the service of the Senator from Minnesota.

I appreciate his legislation regarding stalking and domestic violence. Stalking is a very evil thing, for lack of a better way to put it. I can't imagine how difficult it is for people who are stalked.

Senator ENSIGN and I had the misfortune of having somebody who was stalking us. It was very serious. He felt he had been aggrieved in Mexico and that we should do something about it. Of course, there was nothing we could do about it. It became a very big burden on my staff. He wouldn't leave my office. Finally, in an effort to get attention, rather than shoot one of my staff members or me, he shot himself in front of my office. He survived the gunshot wound and proceeded to continue to harass us. He was convicted and sent to prison. I only say that because if people of our stature and in the public awareness have difficulties, I can't imagine people who don't have the U.S. marshals and other people protecting them. So we need to do more. It is a very insidious thing. We need to do a better job of training law enforcement, although they are trained much better than they were regarding domestic violence. We need to have judges who better understand domestic violence.

I am anxious to look at the Senator's legislation. It sounds as if it is heading

toward the correct destination. We need to focus more attention on this national problem.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Nevada and tell him that, as we move forward, we will talk about some companies that have put together model programs. Again, unfortunately, what a bitter irony that for too many of these women—part of what this is all about is control. They have had the courage to move out of the home because the home is very dangerous for them and very dangerous for their children. Still, about every 15 seconds a woman is battered in the United States. Maybe this guy will come to work—and basically he doesn't want her to be working, so that is part of her independence. He will stalk her and make threats. Then all too often the employer will basically let her go, saying it is too much trouble. Then where is she? Quite often, she is forced back into a horrible situation. In about 50 percent of the cases, it happens where the guy or woman comes to work and the threats are made.

We are saying there has to be a way we can provide additional help and support. So we do a number of different things for those who have been victims of violence in homes, sexual assault, and stalking. A number of things are in this legislation. I think it would make a huge difference. I thank my colleague for his comments.

Mr. REID. I will say one more thing to the Senator. There are more animal shelters than there are domestic crisis shelters in America. In Nevada, a rapidly growing community, we are so understaffed. We have a lack of facilities. These brave women are willing to break away from this domestic violence, and we are having trouble finding a place for them to go. It is a really difficult situation, not only in Nevada but all over the country. It is a national problem. We have helped with some national moneys but not nearly enough.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank my colleague.

In addition, even if women have been in shelters, there is no affordable housing.

Mr. REID. Madam President, 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.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.