place at this time. We will proceed with the debate later in the afternoon.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I take back my time. I look forward to working with Senator LANDRIEU to try to accommodate the concerns she has. I know she is well intentioned, certainly dedicated to the children of the District of Columbia, as I talked about earlier today.

I believe the bill before us is a good bill. I believe the scholarship program before us is a good scholarship program. I believe it is clearly constitutional. I believe it is a good program in the sense, as I discussed earlier this morning, that it is value-added. It is a balanced program. It is a program that provides a third of the money for scholarships for the children, $13 million. This is all new money, $13 million new money for the District of Columbia schools, and $13 million additional money for charter schools. It is a three-pronged approach, a very balanced program. I think the language is good language. The bill before us is a good bill.

In deference to my colleague, with whom I have worked so very closely on this bill over the last few years, certainly we can take some more time to see if it is possible to reach any kind of compromise or accommodation with regard to any additional language that would satisfy her. I am more than happy to take some time to try to do that. I do believe we have a good bill right now. It is a bill that I think is good for the children of the District of Columbia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the limited private school choice provisions in the District of Columbia Appropriations bill.

As you know, private school choice, also commonly known as a voucher, refers to the use of public money to allow a limited number of students to attend a K–12 private school.

As a strong supporter of our Nation's public schools, I certainly appreciate the views of those who believe that public money should be used to improve only public schools.

However, as a member of the Senate's Education Committee, I also strongly believe that if our educational system is to improve, as needed, we cannot remain stuck in the status-quo. We must look for innovative ways to improve our schools. While providing additional money into an educational system can help—money alone is never enough.

I commend the Mayor of Washington, DC—Mayor Anthony Williams—who along with others have all come together in support of an innovative idea to improve the educational system in the District of Columbia: an infusion of money into the public school system along with a limited private school choice option for the District of Columbia.

How fortunate we are to have the leadership of Mayor Williams in the District of Columbia.

The legislation before us does just what Mayor Williams has requested. It adds an additional $40 million in education spending in the District. $27 million of that $40 million will go to the District's public schools and charter schools. The remaining $13 million will be used for the limited private school choice option provided in this bill.

And while some may be critical of spending $13 million on private school choice, I believe it is important to view this money in the context of other education spending.

In comparison to the $13 million we will spend in this bill on private school choice, the Federal Government currently spends about $12.5 billion on the Pell Grant program. And as we all know, the Pell Grant Program provides grants to students to help them afford the cost of tuition at an institution of higher learning, regardless of whether the institution is a public or private one.

Similarly, the proposal before us today will allow certain low-income students in the District to attend private K–12 school.

More specifically, the school choice provisions in this legislation will provide scholarships of up to $7,500 to allow 2,000 low-income students the opportunity to attend private school.

These scholarships will be sufficient in dollar amount to cover the cost of tuition at approximately two-thirds of the private schools in the District. It is my hope that the remaining one-third of private schools in the District, whose tuition is more expensive than $7,500 a year, will consider making special exceptions to also open their doors to the low-income students in the District who are scholarship recipients.

In my view, the proposal supported by Mayor Williams and put forth in this legislation is a win-win situation. The school system gets more money and low-income students are given a unique educational opportunity.

Over 50 years ago, I was given a similarly unique opportunity to obtain a quality education as I was a recipient of the GI bill. The education that I was fortunate enough to receive as a result of the GI bill has allowed me to achieve most of the dreams to which I have aspired. Without the GI bill, I certainly would not be standing here today.

Similarly, the private school choice proposal before the Senate today will provide certain students in the District with an opportunity to receive a strong education. And, along with that education, these scholarships will provide these students the same opportunity I had to achieve my goals in life.

I commend the work and leadership of the chairman, Senator DEWINE, my colleague in the Virginia congressional delegation, TOM DAVIS, Mayor Anthony Williams, the local media, and other philanthropists and community leaders who have worked closely together in support of this private school choice initiative.

It is my intention to support this limited private school choice initiative, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period for morning business until 2 p.m.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DEWINE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate remain in morning business until 3 o'clock.

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

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

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Thank you very much, Madam President.

DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I come to the floor because I have just learned of a decision made by an Oklahoma district judge that the National Do-Not-Call registry is invalid. This is amazing to me.

This is the result, apparently, of a lawsuit filed by the Direct Marketing Association, U.S. Security, Chartered Benefit Services, Global Contact Services, and in InfoCision Management Corporation challenging the Federal Trade Commission's authority to implement the wishes of millions of