

Whereas cooperation between individuals and Federal, State, and local officials can help increase preparedness, save lives, reduce the impacts of each hurricane, and provide a more effective response to those storms;

Whereas the National Hurricane Center within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce recommends that each at-risk family of the United States develop a family disaster plan, create a disaster supply kit, and stay aware of current weather situations; and

Whereas the designation of the week beginning May 21, 2006, as "National Hurricane Preparedness Week" will help raise the awareness of the individuals of the United States to assist them in preparing for the upcoming hurricane season: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of the President in proclaiming the week beginning May 21, 2006, as "National Hurricane Preparedness Week";

(2) encourages the people of the United States—

(A) to be prepared for the upcoming hurricane season; and

(B) to promote awareness of the dangers of hurricanes to help save lives and protect communities; and

(3) recognizes—

(A) the threats posed by hurricanes; and

(B) the need for the individuals of the United States to learn more about preparedness so that they may minimize the impacts of, and provide a more effective response to, hurricanes.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will be held on Monday, June 12, 2006, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony regarding the implementation of Sections 641 through 645 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the Next Generation Nuclear Plant Project within the Department of Energy.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send two copies of their testimony to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150.

For further information, please contact Clint Williamson at (202) 224-7556 or Steve Waskiewicz at (202) 228-6195.

A PRODUCTIVE WEEK

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, over the next 20 minutes or so, we will be wrapping up what has been a very busy but very productive week, moving to a period which will begin with the celebration of this weekend, in the sense that a lot of people will be with families back at home, back with their constituents, back in their communities,

but we will move very quickly to our Memorial Day recess. I will have a few statements to make, a few words to say on what will be going on, on Monday.

We have had a very successful week in the sense that we have completed another nomination thus far. We will have a few more in a little bit that we have agreed to on both sides. We have completed an immigration bill that we worked on for about a month—initially, for 2 weeks, then a pause, and then for the last 2 weeks—a bill that, as I said yesterday, does reflect the will of this body. Not everybody agrees with it. Not anybody, I think, agrees with everything in that legislation. But it is comprehensive legislation that demonstrates that we are governing, addressing the very real problems, real challenges that face us in America today.

MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT

Mr. FRIST. When we come back we will deal with a range of issues. I will have a little more to say about that in a bit, but the first issue we will come back to has to do with another institution, the institution of marriage.

Throughout human history and culture, the union of a man and a woman has been recognized as the essential cornerstone of society. For millennia, marriage has served as a public act, a civil institution to bind men and women in the task of producing and nurturing their offspring. In some eras it has existed apart from romance, love, and mutual regard. In ours, we have embraced the ideal of marriage that deepens and enriches the bonds of love, that grows with every shared memory, endeavor, and challenge: husband and wife, father and mother, building a family and a community over a lifetime.

At its root, marriage is and always has been a public institution that formalizes that family bond—its intent to further the community's interest in successfully rearing the next generation of healthy and prosperous citizens. But now, this fundamental institution is under attack. There is a concerted effort underway to redefine marriage against millennia of human experience and against the expressed wishes of the American people. Activist courts are usurping the power to define this social institution. And if marriage is redefined for anyone, it is redefined for everyone.

The threat is real. Just last year voters in 13 States passed by enormous margins State constitutional amendments protecting marriage; 19 States have State constitutional amendments also to protect marriage, and 5 more States have amendments pending. In total, 45 States have either State constitutional amendments or laws to protect marriage.

Tennessee will give voters the opportunity to voice their opinions on the sanctity of marriage this November. It

is one of seven States with similar amendments pending to their constitutions. If a marriage protection law passes in Tennessee, we will join those 45 other States that have approved legislation that defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman and, indeed, no State has ever rejected an effort to protect traditional marriage when it has been on the ballot.

So with this progress at the State level that expresses the overwhelming support of the American people, what is the problem? Why does it need to come to the floor of this body?

Voting for marriage on the State ballot is not enough to protect the institution. I need to explain. Because same sex marriage advocates cannot win at the ballot box, activists are continuing their campaign to convince State and Federal courts to rewrite traditional marriage laws. Currently, nine States have lawsuits pending challenging marriage laws. In five States, courts could redefine marriage by the end of the year—California, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Washington.

In California, Maryland, New York, and Washington, State trial courts have already followed Massachusetts and found the definition of marriage in their State constitutions unconstitutional. All these cases are on appeal.

Already we have seen a Federal judge in Nebraska overturn a democratically enacted Nebraska State constitutional amendment protecting marriage. That ruling is now under appeal in the Eighth Circuit. Another Federal case in Washington challenges the constitutionality of the Federal Defense of Marriage Act. The case is stayed, pending resolution of litigation in the Washington State Supreme Court.

Because of these attempts to overturn State laws and constitutional amendments, this Senate needs to act. The American people deserve a full debate on this foundational issue before marriage is redefined for everyone. That is why, when we return from the Memorial Day recess, I will bring the marriage protection amendment to the Senate floor to ensure the definition of marriage endures and remains true to the wishes of the majority of the American people.

The amendment is straightforward. The amendment is simple. It reads:

Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the Constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman.

That is it. It is simple, straightforward—it is two sentences. The truth is, on the question of marriage, the Constitution will be amended. The only question is whether it will be amended by Congress as the representative of the people or by judicial fiat. Will activist judges amend the Constitution or will the people amend the Constitution to preserve marriage as it has always been understood?