

world—burdened by \$175,000 of debt because that baby's adult parents and the people they elect to Congress have failed to take responsibility to make sure that baby would be born into a world of prosperity, opportunity, and freedom. Instead, the baby has been born into a world that has that freedom and opportunity but also is burdened by \$175,000 in debt.

There are a lot of challenges that lie ahead, and I have other charts I won't bother the Members of the Senate with here today, but we have to have an important debate here as we write the Federal budget. I agree with the Senator from New Hampshire, this is not the President's budget. As a matter of fact, everybody knows what happens to a President's budget, whether it is a Democrat or Republican in the White House. It is basically "dead on arrival" at Congress. I could say it another way. The President proposes and Congress disposes the budget. But it is our responsibility to write that budget, and we should do so in a way that is fiscally responsible.

We should also do it in a way that addresses the real pinch that average Americans feel when they fill up their gas tank and find that gasoline is \$3.25, \$3.50 a gallon, on its way to \$4 a gallon probably this spring; and when they find that their health care costs continue to go up year after year after year such that they have less and less disposable income. Those are the sorts of things we ought to be paying attention to—reducing taxes, eliminating the debt, taking responsibility for that, and taking care of those bread-and-butter issues that the American people care about, because those are the ones that impact their quality of life on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

#### CPSC REFORM ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 2663, which the clerk will report by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2663) to reform the Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide greater protection for children's products, to improve the screening of noncompliant consumer products, to improve the effectiveness of consumer product recall programs, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

AMENDMENT NO. 4090

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I have an amendment at the desk, No. 4090, that I wish to call up.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mr. PRYOR] proposes an amendment numbered 4090.

The amendment is as follows:  
(Purpose: To correct a typographical error.)

On page 87, line 11, strike "cigarette" and insert "Cigarette".

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, we are today, once again, starting the debate on the Consumer Product Safety reform bill. This is a very important piece of legislation, and I am sure Senators from all over the country have heard from their constituents about this because we saw last year a record number of product recalls, especially in the toy area. We saw last year recall after recall after recall, and some of the news stories that made the headlines were about lead in toys, but certainly the recalls last year were not in any way, shape, or form limited to lead.

Lead is a very serious problem. We deal with lead in this legislation. In fact, we virtually ban lead in all children's products. That is a very important new safety rule. If the Senate adopts this measure, the new safety rule would be that there is a very tough scientifically based lead standard for toys.

When I say "virtually ban," I do think it is important for my colleagues to understand that we can probably never absolutely get rid of lead in any product because there is some lead out in the atmosphere. It is a naturally occurring element. But we virtually ban lead in all children's products.

Another thing that we do, which I think is very important, is illustrated by this chart, and that is we recognize the changes in the U.S. economy. The last time the Senate reauthorized this legislation, which was in 1990 or 1992, we have to think about what the U.S. economy looked like. If you think about how many imports we had coming into this country from overseas, one of the things this chart illustrates is the number of imports in dollar figures, starting in 1974 and going up here to the year 2006. The actual numbers and the years aren't as important as the trend line. You can see what is happening with imports coming into this country.

We all know we are getting more and more imports, and one of the things I think we need to fight for is our U.S. manufacturing base, but that is not the discussion we are having here today. We are seeing more and more imports coming into this country. However, at the very same time, over the very same years, if you go to this bottom chart, again starting in 1974 and going up to this year, you will see what the Consumer Product Safety Commission's staff has done year by year.

Unfortunately, you see it peak in about 1980 or so, and then it starts to drop off dramatically. Here again, the numbers are not as important as the fact that you see this downward trend when it comes to employees at the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The reason that is important—and, by

the way, the numbers are 420 full-time employees, and at the height of the agency there were about 900. But those numbers are not as important as the trend. You can see that today we have less than half of the full-time employees at the CPSC as they did 20 years ago.

The problem is when you compare these two charts. Again, I totally understand we can work more efficiently today with things such as computers and telecommunications and all that. We can work more efficiently. We can do more with fewer people. I do acknowledge that. But when you look at how the imports have grown and how the Consumer Product Safety Commission staff has shrunk, that explains why you see a record number of recalls. That explains why you see millions and millions of products being pulled from the shelves last year. Because as the Consumer Product Safety Commission has become less capable, less able to deal with the changes in the import economy, what you are seeing is more and more dangerous products coming into this country.

I don't think it is an accident. My colleagues need to know that I don't think it is an accident that last year every single toy recall—and we will talk more about this in a few moments—but every single toy recall from last year was made in China. None of these were U.S. made. In fact, they weren't made in any other country except China. So we need to reexamine the priorities of this agency. We need to restructure the agency in such a way that it meets the needs of the changing U.S. economy. We need to help this agency right here, when it comes to dollar amounts and full-time employees for this agency.

Again, it may be another discussion where we try to help the U.S. economy here in the number of imports and try to manufacture more products here—that is another bill and that will come at some point in the future—but right now this is what we are focused on, is trying to make sure that the Consumer Product Safety Commission is equipped to handle the changes in the U.S. economy.

Mr. President, I see Senator KLOBUCHAR is here, and she wishes to say a few words. I will be on the floor all day today. I encourage my colleagues to come down and talk to me if they have amendments. Certainly we have seen a growing list of amendments. My hope would be that all the amendments would be germane and that we could maybe get a bipartisan agreement on amendments.

I know Senator STEVENS has been very good to deal with on this legislation. He and I have not talked about any of the amendments yet. I think our staffs have been talking with each other. But I encourage my colleagues to come to the floor when it is convenient, or send their staff over when it is convenient to talk about whatever