

Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1) making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid amendment No. 3395, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid amendment No. 3396 (to amendment No. 3395), to change the enactment.

Reid amendment No. 3397 (to amendment No. 3396), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3398 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 3395), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3399 (to amendment No. 3398), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 3400, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3401 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3400), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3402 (to amendment No. 3401), of a perfecting nature.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

BEN NELSON

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, with the retirement of Senator BEN NELSON at the close of the 112th Congress, the Senate will lose one of its most respected members, and a distinguished career in formal public service will come to an end. I use that adjective "formal," because it's hard to imagine BEN NELSON not finding new avenues for public service as a private citizen in the years ahead.

Senator NELSON and I come from neighboring States in the rural, upper Midwest, and we have much in common. But we differ in at least one respect: I come from the small town of Cumming, IA, population 351; BEN comes from the big city, McCook, NE, population 8,000.

Senator NELSON is often described as one of the most conservative Democrats in the Senate, frequently voting with the minority party. I prefer to describe him simply as the most independent Democrat in the Senate, a progressive at heart who—like so many from our part of the country—is also deeply imbued with respect for traditional values and fiscal prudence.

As we all know, Senator NELSON prides himself on reaching across the aisle to get things done. He is a pragmatist, not a partisan. He has never al-

lowed ideology or party to stand in his way of doing what he believes is right for Nebraska and the United States of America.

As my colleague on the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Senator NELSON has been a passionate advocate for family farms and rural America, and he has been a leading advocate for increasing the use of clean, renewable biofuels in order to decrease our Nation's dependence on foreign energy sources.

As a member of both the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans Affairs, no one has been a stronger supporter of both active duty and retired servicemembers.

BEN NELSON has been a successful CEO of an insurance company, a popular two-term governor of Nebraska, and, for the last 12 years, an accomplished and effective United States Senator. He has been a wonderful hunting colleague of mine on more than one occasion.

Our friendship, of course, will continue. And I wish BEN and Diane the very best in the years ahead.

JIM WEBB

Mr. President, in these final days of the 112th Congress, the Senate is bidding farewell to a very special member, the junior Senator from Virginia, Senator JIM WEBB.

He came to this body with unique and extraordinary credentials: a graduate of the Naval Academy and first in his class of 243 at the Marine Corps officer school at Quantico, a much-decorated combat veteran of the Vietnam War, and Secretary of the Navy during the Reagan administration.

I would point out one more of his sterling credentials. I guess I can say this now, because he is retiring, and a political opponent will not use it against him: JIM WEBB is an intellectual with a passion for ideas and knowledge. For goodness sake, he writes books, excellent books, the kind that win glowing reviews in the New York Times, and get turned into documentaries on the Smithsonian Channel.

Senator WEBB has put this past experience to superb use here in the Senate as an active member of the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Veterans Affairs, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

To his great credit, before coming to the Senate, he was an outspoken critic of the invasion of Iraq, warning that it would be a unilateral war with no exit strategy. After the invasion, he was equally outspoken in challenging the Bush administration's conduct of that war.

At the same time, as a member of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, he worked hard to pass legislation to provide enhanced education benefits for veterans, a 21st century GI Bill, for those who have served in the military since the attacks of 9/11.

I admire JIM WEBB as a friend and colleague. I have the greatest respect

for his life-long commitment to protecting America's national security, and fighting for economic and social justice here at home. There is no question in my mind that JIM will find other avenues for public service in the years ahead. I certainly wish JIM and Hong Le all the best in the years ahead.

JOE LIEBERMAN

Mr. President, with the close of the 112th Congress, our friend and colleague Senator JOE LIEBERMAN is retiring after nearly a quarter century of dedicated service in this body to the people of Connecticut and the United States.

As we all know, Senator LIEBERMAN is a fiercely independent Senator who prides himself on speaking his conscience and reaching across party lines in order to get things done. He is a pragmatist, not a partisan. Yet he has never allowed his ideology or his party or what is popular to stand in the way of doing what he believes is right for Connecticut and the United States of America.

In the years since Senator LIEBERMAN left the Democratic Party to become an independent, he has sometimes disagreed with his colleagues on this side of the aisle, but he has never been disagreeable. To the contrary, he has been unfailingly decent, gracious, and reasoned. He has been unfailingly a gentleman and a friend, a person with a great sense of humor and always has a smile. It is these sterling personal qualities that are a big reason he will be greatly missed by Senators on both sides of the aisle.

During his four terms in this body, Senator LIEBERMAN has earned a reputation as one of the Senate's most influential and knowledgeable voices on interests of national security. In the wake of the attacks of 9/11, he was the lead sponsor of the bill to establish the Department of Homeland Security. As chairman of Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Senator LIEBERMAN has been a vigilant leader in safeguarding America.

Throughout his distinguished tenure in this body—and before that as a Connecticut State senator and attorney general—JOE LIEBERMAN has been a proud and principled progressive with a passion for social and economic justice for all Americans.

To cite just one example: Senator LIEBERMAN deserves enormous credit for introducing and successfully championing legislation to repeal the military's discriminatory don't ask, don't tell policy, which banned patriotic gay and lesbian Americans from serving openly in our Armed Forces.

As we all know, JOE LIEBERMAN is a person of deep faith, a faith that inspires him to public service and informs his progressive vision for America. Last January, when he announced his decision to retire, he said:

I go forward with a tremendous sense of gratitude for the opportunities I have had to make a difference.

With Senator LIEBERMAN's retirement in the days ahead, a truly distinguished career in formal public service will come to an end. I use the adjective formal because it is hard to imagine that JOE LIEBERMAN will not be finding new avenues for public service as a private citizen.

Senator LIEBERMAN's career in this body will end, but our friendship will continue. I know that his smile and his gracious unfailingly gentlemanly ways will also continue. I wish JOE and Hadassah much happiness in the years ahead.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. First, I want to thank my colleague and neighbor Senator HARKIN for his timely remarks, and particularly for noting that we have been hunting partners. As a matter of fact, that has been in the news today. Not only has Senator HARKIN noted our exploits together, but in this morning's Washington Post the senior Senator from New York noted that I have taken him pheasant hunting in Nebraska as well. I am going to be known not only for my hair but perhaps for hunting as well, so I appreciate that.

Mr. HARKIN. Would the Senator yield?

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Of course.

Mr. HARKIN. The Senator has been a great friend. I enjoyed hunting with my friend before, and I read that in the paper before about Senator SCHUMER going out.

Here is a real test for my friend from Nebraska: Aren't I a better shot than CHUCK SCHUMER?

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. He noted that he learned to shoot at camp and that he was a marksman, so that is probably a dispute I should not get in the middle of.

Mr. HARKIN. No, the Senator doesn't want to get in the middle of that.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. I thank the Senator very much for his kind remarks.

It is, obviously, a difficult time to speak about leaving the Senate, and I did that earlier. I leave with a great deal of melancholy and with a lot of friends and a lot of hope for the future of our country.

DAN INOUE

I rise today to express my support for passage of a 5-year farm bill and call on the House to act on this critical piece of legislation before Congress adjourns this year.

However, first I would like to briefly note how sorry I am at this moment—as I know we all are—about the passing of our good friend, Senator Dan Inouye. I would like to briefly reiterate the

sentiments expressed by a number of my colleagues.

Senator Inouye was a man of courage and wisdom. He represented his State and country proudly. He will be sincerely missed.

As everyone knows, today Senator Inouye lies in state just a few steps away from this Chamber. It is an honor the very few—only 31—have ever received. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to serve with the Senator. I thank him for his friendship and guidance and offer the most sincere condolences to his family.

THE FARM BILL

I appreciate the opportunity to make those remarks, and I would now like to turn to the farm bill, which is a critical piece of legislation in the Senate. We produced a bipartisan bill that cuts spending by \$23 billion. Agriculture represents 2 percent of the Nation's budget, and \$23 billion represents 2 percent of the spending cuts proposed in the deficit legislation Congress worked on last year but could not pass because of extreme partisanship.

As we work in these final days to reach a deal on how best to reduce spending in government and set a trajectory for the future, I am disappointed that the House was unable, or perhaps unwilling, to follow the example the Senate has given. By moving forward in passing a farm bill, we would save money, create a market-oriented safety net, eliminate direct farm subsidy payments, streamline, simplify, and consolidate programs. It would also create jobs our economy needs to grow.

I am disappointed this is not moving forward. The House's inaction is causing a continuing uncertainty for our Nation's producers as they begin to plan for the next planting year. It also affects our financial institutions which provide lending for our farmers, ranchers, and small-town rural businesses that benefit from the commerce provided by a strong agricultural economy.

Unfortunately, this comes at a time when farms throughout the entire State of Nebraska and across the country are also dealing with the worst drought conditions since the 1930s. The Senate farm bill addresses this crisis through the elimination of subsidies, replacing them with the Agriculture Risk Coverage, or what is known as the ARC, Program. It is a program that provides producers with a market-oriented, straightforward choice to determine how best to manage their operations risks. The safety net is then bolstered by expanded access to profit shares, which serves as the focal point of risk management and will ensure that farmers are not wiped out by severe weather or economic conditions.

The Senate farm bill also reauthorizes the 2008 farm bill permanent disaster relief programs and makes them retroactive to cover producers harmed by the 2012 drought. This includes the Livestock Forage Disaster Program,

which provides compensation for the eligible livestock producers who have suffered in critical places such as Nebraska which has been hard hit by the drought and wildfires this summer, not to mention the continuing drought at this time.

I could go on regarding all the major reforms and improvements that the Senate farm bill makes to conservation, rural development, renewable fuels, in addition to the reforms of the commodities and livestock programs. However, without the House acting on any farm bill legislation—let alone the Senate bill which is a solid reform-minded bill, which strikes the right balance between the need to cut spending while maintaining a strong safety net—it will all be for naught. It is disappointing that jobs and our Nation's stable supply of food, feed, fuel, and fiber continues to be put at risk because of inactions spurred on by partisan gamesmanship.

As we seek to find commonsense solutions to the fiscal and legislative challenges before us in Congress, I urge the House to now act on the 5-year farm bill. It will help us achieve savings, bring needed reforms to commodity programs, and provide our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities the certainty they need to continue to be the world leader in agricultural production.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I would like to give my farewell address. We spent a lot of time in my office writing out a long speech. However, once I read it, I realized it is more emotional than I thought, and we set that speech aside. Last night I made a lot of notes of what I wanted to say, and then I realized this morning that I was just trying to get the last word on a lot of the politics we have been discussing, so I set that aside and decided to speak from my heart.

Certainly, this is much more emotional than I thought, and as I look around this room, the realization that I am standing on the Senate floor speaking for the last time is a lot to digest. It makes me very appreciative of the privilege we have all been given by the American people, and particularly those who have come before us and who have given their lives for us to have the opportunity to settle our differences in a civil and democratic way. This is a great opportunity and privilege to share a few thoughts before I go on to the next phase of my life.