

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I think it is important now we give Members some indication of what the schedule looks like. Senator DASCHLE and I have been talking about how we can move forward.

I believe we have two amendments that have to be dealt with, with the possibility of votes, at least two votes at 7:30, in order to finish the Treasury-Postal Service appropriations bill. I think there will probably just be one amendment vote and final passage, although there is another amendment that has to be disposed of in that time.

At that point, our plan is to go to the District of Columbia appropriations bill. Work is being done on that now. Senator DASCHLE and I are ready to announce right now that if we can get that done tonight at a reasonable hour, we will not have any votes on Friday. If we have difficulty, if we can't get it done tonight, then we will be in with votes tomorrow. We probably are going to have to be in tomorrow anyway. Senator DASCHLE and I had already planned on being here. We want company. We are still working on nominations tonight, and we might have some we will try to get cleared tomorrow.

Basically, I am saying that if we could get this D.C. appropriations bill completed, then we would not have recorded votes tomorrow. It behooves us all. We are in a good mode now. We are making progress. I urge those who are involved in the D.C. appropriations bill to work aggressively so we can complete this at a reasonable hour tonight. Otherwise, we will see you in the morning at 9:30.

Mr. BYRD. Will the distinguished majority leader yield?

Mr. LOTT. I am delighted to yield.

Mr. BYRD. I hope you will have a session tomorrow without votes. There are many of us who like to make some speeches from time to time. We don't get the opportunity to do that. I would like to give a speech concerning Independence Day, for example, and there are others.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, as I indicated, I thought we might have to have a session tomorrow anyway because of some wrapup business we may need to do. If we have Senators who would like to speak as to the Fourth of July, that is all the more reason. The key question for all other Senators is, will there be votes tomorrow morning or not. That will depend on finishing up the District of Columbia appropriations bill.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. I yield the floor, Mr. President. I believe we have a D.C. unanimous consent request that is ready now.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1283

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we take up and consider the District of Columbia appropriations bill with the following parameters: 40 minutes equally divided on the Coverdell needle exchange amendment, with a second-degree amendment by Senator DURBIN; 30 minutes for Senator DURBIN's tuition assistance program amendment, and 10 minutes for the opposition; 15 minutes for Senator DURBIN's sense-of-the-Senate amendment; the Hutchison managers' amendment, and a final vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. BOXER. Reserving the right to object, I have not seen the needle exchange amendment or Senator DURBIN's second degree, if he has one. I cannot agree to this at this time, until I see the amendment, because it affects a lot of people and it could mean the spread of disease. I need to see the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. We will work with the Senator from California and let her see the amendment. I will ask Mr. COVERDELL to make the amendment available.

TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Minnesota, Senator WELLSTONE, is to be recognized.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I think I follow Senator DEWINE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1200

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to pay for an abortion or to pay for the administrative expenses in connection with certain health plans that provide coverage for abortions)

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Ohio [Mr. DEWINE], Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BROWNBAC, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. HELMS, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. NICKLES, and Mr. HAGEL, proposes an amendment numbered 1200.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of title VI, add the following:
SEC. . No funds appropriated by this Act shall be available to pay for an abortion, or the administrative expenses in connection with any health plan under the Federal em-

ployees health benefit program which provides any benefits or coverage for abortions.

SEC. . The provision of section shall not apply where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term, or the pregnancy is the result of an act of rape or incest.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise to offer this amendment on behalf of myself and Senators ABRAHAM, BROWNBAC, SANTORUM, HELMS, ASHCROFT, MCCAIN, NICKLES, and HAGEL.

This amendment would maintain in force the current law restricting Federal funding for abortions only to cases of rape, incest, or life of the mother. Specifically, my amendment would maintain the status quo that limits Federal employee health plans to cover abortions only in the case of rape, incest, and threat to life of the mother.

This is the same amendment that was accepted during the debate for fiscal year 1999 Treasury-Postal appropriations, the same amendment agreed to by this body during the debate for fiscal years 1996 and 1997. In fact, this is the same language that has been consistently supported by a bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives from 1983 to 1999, with the exception of only 2 years.

I mention all of this to make it very clear to the Members of the Senate that this amendment stakes out no new ground. This amendment maintains the status quo. This amendment has been voted on time and time again by this body, and time and time again this body has accepted it.

The principle is a very simple one—one that goes beyond the conventional pro-choice/pro-life debates that we hear on this Senate floor. I think my colleagues know I am pro-life and, therefore, I wish to promote the values protecting innocent human life. However, I point out that the vast majority of Americans on both sides of the abortion issue strongly agree that they should not pay for someone else's abortion. That really is what this debate is about.

Fairly stated, this amendment is not about the morality of abortion or the right of a woman to choose abortion. Rather, this is a very narrowly focused amendment that answers a key question: Should taxpayers pay for these abortions?

This Senate, this Congress, has consistently answered no. Congress has consistently agreed that we should not ask taxpayers to promote a policy, in essence, of paying for abortion on demand by a Federal employee. My amendment would maintain the status quo that limits Federal employee health plans to cover abortions only in the case of rape, incest, and threat to the life of the mother.

The vast majority of Americans oppose subsidizing abortions. Employers, as a general principle, determine the health benefits employees receive. Taxpayers are the employers of Federal