Mr. LOTT. I am glad to yield to Senator DORGAN.

Mr. DORGAN. Inquire of the majority leader about the schedule. My understanding is that he is intending to bring the Interior appropriations bill to the floor. I wonder if the majority leader might tell us about the plans he has with respect to the reconciliation bill. Would that be the bill that follows the Interior appropriations bill?

Mr. LOTT. Yes. The reconciliation bill, which provides for the tax relief package, would be next after the Interior appropriations bill. We would like to go to that tonight and begin opening statements. But regardless of what happens with Interior, we will be on the reconciliation bill by 10:30 or quarter to 11 tomorrow morning.

We have to have some time in the morning for debate with regard to the juvenile justice bill, which is going to conference. But that should be completed about 10:30 or 10:45.

Mr. DORGAN. Because of the time limitations on the reconciliation bill, I have the intention, I am curious, of the majority leader that that would consume all of the time tomorrow and Thursday?

Mr. LOTT. That would be our intention. Of course, under the rules dealing with reconciliation, you have 20 hours for debate on the tax relief package. Included in that 20 hours would be debate on amendments, although the vote time on amendments would not count against the 20 hours. So it would be our intention to go through the day and into the night on Wednesday and all day Thursday on this subject and into the night. If we finish the bill Thursday night, then it would be our plan at this time for that to be the conclusion of the week.

I hope we would have already done the Interior appropriations bill. If we can't get it done because of problems that develop Thursday or, as you know, if amendments are still pending when all time has expired, we go through this very unseemly process on voting during what we call a "votarama," with one vote after another and only a minute or two between the votes to explain what is in them.

I hope we won't have that problem this time. But if we can't get it done Thursday night, of course, we would have to go over into Friday. But under the rules, we should be able to finish it not later than Friday and, hopefully, even Thursday night.

We had indicated earlier a desire to go to the Agriculture appropriations bill early next week and, hopefully, complete the Agriculture appropriations bill. We then have the option to go back to the reconciliation conference report.

Mr. DORGAN. I will just observe, if I might, that one way to avoid a lot of recorded votes is to accept a lot of amendments.
in Missouri; section 341, another environmental rider relative to energy efficiency; and, finally, section 342, the one referred to by the Senator from California, the environmental rider on crude oil and royalty for purposes of the evaluation question?

Mr. GORTON. The Senator from Illinois is correct on all four.

Mr. DURBIN. Out of the 13 objectionable environmental riders, 4 objectionable by the administration, 4 are being stricken by this unanimous consent request, and all others are in the bill for consideration and subject to rule XVI, or any other appropriate motions.

Mr. GORTON. Or any amendment which may be proposed.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Washington.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I could inquire of the Senator, is the Senator saying that the administration supports the introduction of Grizzly bears into Idaho and the other State?

Mr. DURBIN. I think the administration's concern is that they allow for any amendment the Administration of interest to individual Members. But by terminating low priority programs and making selective reductions in others, we have been able to provide targeted increases for certain high priority programs.

The committee has provided a $70 million increase for the operation of the national park system, including $27 million for the Sitka National Historical Park and $18 million to support the Alaska and Hawaii National Historic Parks. This increase is further indication of the Senate's commitment to preserving and enhancing our national park system while remaining within the fiscal constraints of the balanced budget agreement. The Senate bill puts funding for the operation of our parks at a level fully $277 million higher than the fiscal year 1995 level, and 82 percent over the amount provided a decade ago.

For the other land management agencies, the bill provides an increase of $27 million for the Fish and Wildlife Service, including more than $13 million for the operation of the national wildlife refuge system. The bill increases the Forest Service operating account by $17 million, including significant increases for recreation management, forest ecosystem restoration, and road maintenance.

As always the case, putting this bill together has been a tremendous challenge. While I am extremely grateful that Senator STEVENS, in consultation with Senator BYRD, was able to provide the subcommittee with an increase over its original 302(b) allocation, the amount contained in this bill is still slightly below the fiscal year 1999 enacted level. I wish to point out to my colleagues, however, that this does not mean that delivery of programs can be continued at the current level simply by holding appropriations even with last year.

The programs funded in this appropriation bills are highly personnel-intensive, supporting tens of thousands of park rangers, foresters, and Indian Health Service doctors. As such, maintaining the current levels for Federal personnel and increases in rent charged by the General Services Administration—increases over which the subcommittee has no control—place a significant burden on Interior bill agencies. The committee must choose either to provide funds to cover these costs, or require agencies to absorb them by reducing services or finding more efficient ways of delivering programs. For fiscal year 2000, these fixed costs amount to more than $300 million. While the committee has provided increases to cover a majority of this amount by drawing on carryover balances and reducing low priority programs, some agencies will be forced to absorb a portion of their fixed costs.

Given the necessity of funding most fixed costs increases within an allocation that is slightly below the current year level, there is little room in this bill for new programs, existing programs, or additional projects of interest to individual Members. But by terminating low priority programs and making selective reductions in others, we have been able to provide targeted increases for certain high priority programs.