

[Rollcall Vote No. 295 Leg.]

## YEAS—96

Abraham	Edwards	Lott
Akaka	Enzi	Lugar
Allard	Feingold	Mack
Ashcroft	Feinstein	McConnell
Baucus	Fitzgerald	Mikulski
Bayh	Frist	Moynihan
Bennett	Gorton	Murkowski
Biden	Graham	Murray
Bingaman	Gramm	Nickles
Bond	Grams	Reed
Boxer	Grassley	Reid
Breaux	Gregg	Robb
Brownback	Hagel	Roberts
Bryan	Harkin	Rockefeller
Bunning	Hatch	Roth
Burns	Helms	Santorum
Byrd	Hollings	Sarbanes
Campbell	Hutchinson	Schumer
Chafee	Hutchison	Sessions
Cleland	Inhofe	Shelby
Cochran	Inouye	Smith (NH)
Collins	Johnson	Smith (OR)
Conrad	Kennedy	Snowe
Coverdell	Kerrey	Specter
Craig	Kerry	Stevens
Crapo	Kohl	Thomas
Daschle	Kyl	Thompson
DeWine	Landrieu	Thurmond
Dodd	Lautenberg	Torricelli
Domenici	Leahy	Voivovich
Dorgan	Levin	Warner
Durbin	Lincoln	Wyden

## NAYS—3

Jeffords	Lieberman	Wellstone
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## NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The conference report was agreed to.

## MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object, I want to ask the majority leader a question before we move forward. I have been waiting with amendments that speak to the pain and suffering of farmers in my State. Are there going to be opportunities for me, as a Senator from an agricultural State, to bring forth substantive amendments that will speak to what has happened to the farmer? Will there be vehicles or opportunities to come to the floor and introduce amendments and pass legislation that will help farmers in my State?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I was under the impression we had already done the Agriculture appropriations bill for this fiscal year, and it did include some disaster and drought money.

That conference is meeting right now, or will be meeting during the day and has been meeting, to make sure we are giving proper consideration to the negative impact of low prices on agriculture in America and also to assess as best we can the impact of the drought. The Senate has already considered that. It was subject to amendment. We do also wish to make sure bankruptcy laws are applicable and necessary action is taken. I know Senator GRASSLEY is working, along with

colleagues on both sides of the aisle, to make sure the bankruptcy laws and their benefits are available to our farmers.

We certainly are working very aggressively to try to make sure we address these problems appropriately. I don't think we need to revisit a whole number of amendments in this area on the bankruptcy bill itself. I think when we get to bankruptcy we should be on bankruptcy and not use that as an "in basket" for every problem that may be on some Member's mind.

However, I think I have answered the question. We are working on agriculture needs. Hopefully, within the week we will have an agreement, and we will be voting on that bill either later on this week or early next week.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object, let me simply follow up with a question. My understanding is the conference committee has not met for the past week; second, I know Senator BYRD and Senator DORGAN will speak about what is or is not in the bill. In this appropriations bill, we were not able to come out with any legislation that dealt with the price crisis, the whole question of concentration of power that dealt with what is happening to the family farmers.

Is the bankruptcy bill the pending business after the morning business? Will we bring the bankruptcy bill to the floor with opportunities for Senators to introduce amendments that will make a difference for family farmers? Will we have that opportunity?

Mr. LOTT. I cannot answer that question at this time.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object, I will do everything I can between now and however long it takes, if I am the last person standing, to insist I have a right as a Senator from Minnesota to come to the floor and introduce legislation that will speak to the pain and suffering of family farmers in my State. I will not stop colleagues from speaking in morning business, but forthwith I will have to stay on the floor until I have a chance to make a difference for farmers.

Mr. LOTT. I wonder if the Senator might want to take this up in the Agriculture Committee and with Members of the Senate who are involved and work with the appropriators on both sides of the aisle. They are working now to try to deal with these issues.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object, Democrats have not been involved in that Appropriations Committee to my knowledge in terms of any meeting over the last week. Second, with all due respect to the majority leader, we are an amending body. Quite often we come to the floor with amendments. We especially come to the floor with amendments when we are dealing with a crisis situation.

We are dealing with a crisis situation in rural America. It is not business as

usual. I am going to insist that I have the right to come to this floor with amendments that will speak to farmers in Minnesota and around the country to make a difference.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DORGAN. Reserving the right to object, I will not object, but I want to correct a misimpression on the floor. The conference committee in the agricultural appropriations area has not been meeting. I am a conferee. I would know if they are meeting. There is no meeting. It adjourned in the middle of last week. There has been no meeting since. I read the speculation in the newspapers and in the press that there have been agreements made. In fact, one suggestion indicated the majority leader had signed off on certain things. I have no idea who is reaching these agreements. I have no idea whether that is accurate.

It is not accurate to say the conference committee is meeting. The conference committee is not meeting. No Democratic member of the conference committee is able to meet because the conference is not in session.

I will not object either, but I will say there are some who think it is appropriate to have a conference between the House and the Senate on something this important—and it is one of the most important issues to my State dealing with this farm crisis—and it be done behind closed doors with one party in secret, and an agreement is brought to the floor of the Senate which says take it as it is or leave it.

That is not the way it will work. I do not have the capability to make things happen that I want to have happen, but I can slow things down.

I wanted to correct the impression left when the majority leader said the conference has been meeting. The conference has not been meeting. It adjourned nearly a week ago. We passed our bill in the Senate August 4. It is now October. With the urgent crises in farm country, we have slow motion going on and no conference at all. I hope the majority leader can agree with me that the way we are supposed to legislate is to have a conference; that when we call meetings with conferees, we have Republicans and Democrats there, we debate the issues, and we take votes. I wanted to correct the misimpression there has been a conference committee meeting. I am a conferee. That committee has not been meeting, and it should.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.  
The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT  
AGREEMENT—H.J. RES. 68

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following morning