November 18, 1999

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my statement, Senator ROCKEFELLER from West Virginia be allowed to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BYRD. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CRAIG. Yes.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I forgot to mention the specific names of two Senators cosponsoring this amendment. They are Nevada Senators, Mr. REED and Mr. BRYAN. I wanted to mention their names for the RECORD.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I am glad the Senator from West Virginia has included our two colleagues from the State of Nevada. Today, Nevada is probably the lead mining State in our Nation as it relates to the production of gold.

For the last hour you have heard probably some of the most eloquent statements spoken on this floor on the issue of coal mining. The Byrd amendment does not deal only with coal, although it is extremely important, and the public attention of the last week has been focused on a judge’s opinion about coal, coal mining in West Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and up and down the Appalachian chain of this country.

But the amendment also has something else in it that my colleague from West Virginia and I agreed to some time ago: When we talk on this floor about mining, when we talk about the economy of mining, the environment of mining, and the jobs of mining, we would stand together; that we would not allow our political differences to divide us. Because if you support the economy of this country, you have to stand together.

I am absolutely amazed that the Speaker of the House or the senior Senator from West Virginia would get a letter from the White House of the kind to which both he and the Senator from Kentucky have referred. Lying? I hope not. Uninformed? I doubt it. Here is the reason I doubt their lack of information.

For the last 7 years, this administration has been intent on changing current mining law. I am referring primarily to the law of 1872. I am referring primarily to hard-rock mining on public lands, because the laws that the