CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE
November 19, 1999

S. 1975

S. 1975. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the tax on generation-skipping transfers to eliminate certain traps for the unwary and otherwise improve the fairness of such tax; to the Committee on Finance.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

THE GENERATION-SKIPPING TRANSFER TAX AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. MACK: Mr. President, today Senator Breaux and I join in introducing legislation to correct serious problems in the allocation of generation-skipping transfers to GST exemptions. This legislation would provide relief to taxpayers for missed allocations of the GST exemption and would make the exemption allocation automatic, in place of the current law requirement that the taxpayers take an affirmative step to claim the exemption. This proposed change was included in the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999, but failed to become law due to the President's veto of that bill.

Under this legislation, the GST exemption is automatically allocated to "indirect skip" transfers made while the donor is alive. An indirect skip is a transfer of property subject to the gift tax that is made to a GST trust. Direct skips (generally, transfers solely for the benefit of grandchildren) are already covered by an automatic allocation rule. An individual may elect not to have the automatic allocation rule apply to an indirect skip. Also, under this legislation, the GST exemption may be allocated retroactively when there is an unnatural order of death. If a lineal descendant of the transferor predeceased the transferor, then the transferor may allocate the unused GST exemption to any previous transferor or transfers to the trust on a chronological basis.

This legislation also provides authorization and direction to the Treasury Secretary to grant extensions of time to make the election to allocate the GST exemption and to grant exceptions to the time requirement. If such relief is granted, then the value on the date of transfer to the trust would be used for determining GST exemption allocation.

Mr. President, this important legislation which deserves enactment at the earliest possible date, asks unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1975

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Generation-Skipping Transfer Tax Amendments Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. DEEMED ALLOCATION OF GST EXEMPTION TO LIFETIME TRANSFERS TO TRUSTS; RETROACTIVE ALLOCATIONS.

(a) In General.—Section 2632 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to special rules for allocation of GST exemption) is amended by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (e) and by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsections:

(c) Deemed Allocation to Certain Lifetime Transfers to GST Trusts.—

(1) In General.—If any individual makes an indirect skip during such individual's lifetime, any unused portion of such individual's GST exemption shall be allocated to the property transferred to the extent necessary to make the inclusion ratio for such property zero. If the amount of the indirect skip exceeds such unused portion, the entire unused portion shall be allocated to the property transferred.

(2) Unused Portion.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the unused portion of an individual's GST exemption is that portion of such exemption which has not previously been—

(A) allocated by such individual,

(B) treated as allocated under subsection (b) with respect to a direct skip occurring during or before the calendar year in which the indirect skip is made, or

(C) treated as allocated under paragraph (1) with respect to a prior indirect skip.

(3) Definitions.—

(A) Indirect Skip.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'indirect skip' means any transfer of property subject to the tax imposed by chapter 12 made to a GST trust.

(B) GST Trust.—The term 'GST trust' means a trust that could have a generation-skipping transfer with respect to the transferor unless—

(i) the trust instrument provides that more than 25 percent of the trust corpus must be distributed to or may be withdrawn by 1 or more individuals who are non-skipping beneficiaries;

(ii) before the date that the individual attains age 46, or

(iii) upon the occurrence of an event that, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary, may be expected to occur before the date that such individual attains age 46;