

Mr. STEVENS. Pardon me. I do thank the Senator for yielding. I apologize and yield back to the Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding the Senator from Minnesota has the floor?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota has the floor for 10 minutes.

Mr. REID. The Senator from Minnesota has the floor. I know his urgency, being able to speak for up to 10 minutes, but there are a number of Senators who are concerned about whether or not we are going to have a vote. It appears, based on what the Senator from Alaska said and interchanges with the Senator from Arizona, we are not going to have a vote on appropriations bills today. That seems very clear. So unless there is a vote on some other issue, or on a motion to proceed to it, I don't think we will have a vote.

Mr. MCCAIN. If the Senator will yield, I am still hoping the leadership will agree to take up this bill. The chairman of the Appropriations Committee says he is not in the leadership. I have seen the Senator from Alaska have significant effect on the leadership from time to time. What I am hoping is we can get this issue resolved and move forward with the Transportation appropriations bill.

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield further? Without question, there will be a vote on the motion to proceed to the Transportation appropriations bill today—without any question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period for morning business to end at 11 a.m. The Senator from Minnesota has the floor for not to exceed 10 minutes.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, one has to keep a twinkle in one's eye, I guess. I am glad we are going to vote on something. I do not mind being here Monday early or Friday late as long as we are working. Sometimes it is a little maddening when there are other things you want to do back in your State that you think are important and you do not know if we are going to have a vote.

I am glad we are going to vote on something and move forward.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT AND TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, in the spirit of moving forward, I thank colleagues for the bipartisan work on the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. I especially thank Senator BROWNBACK with whom I have had a chance to work very closely on this bill. There are other key people as well.

This conference report, without going into all the details, which will come to the Senate I hope—"pray"

may not be too strong a word—probably Tuesday—it looks as if we are just now working out a time agreement. I thank all Senators for their cooperation.

What is important about this legislation is that we have one part of it that deals with trafficking, which I want to talk about in a moment, and the other is the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act which received a huge vote in the House of Representatives.

The Violence Against Women Act, VAWA, has made a huge difference. I could talk for hours about the shelters, about the hotline, about the ways in which police take violence against women more seriously, about the ways in which the country takes this more seriously. Still, about every 13 seconds a woman is battered in her home, and still there are somewhere around 3 million to 10 million children who witness this.

We have to do even better. I look forward to a couple of efforts next year, one dealing with a program which will electronically link all of the shelters, so with one phone call, one, you will know where to go and can be saved, and, two, it will focus on the children who witness this violence. I feel good about the fact we are going to move forward with this. It certainly appears that way. I thank all Senators who have been willing to cooperate.

I also feel good about the trafficking bill on which I have had a chance, as I said, to work with Senator BROWNBACK.

So colleagues know, these two pieces of legislation have a lot of integrity in how they interrelate with one another. One deals with violence against women, children, and families. There are a number of women organizations around this country that have worked on this. They made this possible. And the strong voices of Senators—from Senator BIDEN to Senator LEAHY to Senator BOXER and others—have made a huge difference.

I started on the trafficking legislation 3 years ago. I do not even know if it is appropriate to brag, but it is not about me. My wife Sheila said this is something we really should do. There has been great help from a lot of Senators.

Again, I thank Senator BROWNBACK and also Representatives CHRIS SMITH and SAM GEJDENSON for their help and work, and CONNIE MORELLA is always there on all these issues. I will talk more about staff and the great work by people after this passes. It has not passed yet, but I think we are there. I say to Senator REID, I believe we are there in terms of finally getting a time agreement and we can move this forward.

We are talking about the trafficking of some 2 million women, and mainly girls, for the purposes of forced prostitution and forced labor, some 50,000

to our country. This rivals drug trafficking in terms of how scummy it is and how exploitative it is.

What happens is these women, girls, in countries that are going through economic chaos and disarray are recruited. They are told they will have an opportunity to be a waitress, an opportunity to come to another country, such as our country, and make an income and be able to build a good life.

This happened at a "massage parlor" 2 miles from here in Bethesda where these girls were forced into prostitution. What happens is, these young women, young girls, do not know their rights; they do not know what they are getting into. They come to these countries, and then it becomes a nightmare.

This legislation focuses on prevention. We have an outreach through AID with some of the nongovernment organizations and others who really do the information work so that young girls, young women, know what might be happening to them, know about trafficking, know what the dangers are, and hopefully will have some knowledge about this before they are exploited. That is the first piece.

The second piece is the protection piece. The bitter irony is that all too often one of these young girls, young women, steps forward and says: This is what is happening to me. If they should escape from it, they then are deported. So the victim is the one who ends up being punished. There is a temporary visa extension for 3 years, and then decisions are made after that.

There are services for these women and girls. I say "girls" because we are talking about children, too, 12, 13 years of age. In Minnesota, we have a very, I think, holy place called the Center for the Treatment of Torture Victims. When women and children go through this hell, there is a whole lot that needs to be done to help them rebuild their lives. We have a provision for those services.

The final thing is prosecution. If you are going to be involved in the trafficking of a girl under the age of 16 for purposes of forced prostitution, you can face a life sentence. We should take this seriously. We will be the first country to pass such strong legislation, the first Government in the world. This will be a model for a lot of other governments around the world.

This is one of the best human rights pieces of legislation in the Congress in some time. I am not objective because I have had a chance to be a part of it. I am proud of the fact that we are going to do this. I am proud of the fact that it is going to be linked with the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. And I am proud of the fact the Senate next week, I hope early on, right after Yom Kippur, the Jewish holiday, will take decisive action and will pass this most important human rights legislation. I say to all

colleagues, please cooperate. Please, let's do this. This will make a difference. It will make a difference.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before the Senator from Minnesota leaves the floor, I want to make a couple comments. There have been, as the Senator indicated, a number of people who have worked very hard on domestic violence. Senator JOE BIDEN authored the original legislation and has been a model for what has transpired since then.

I say in the presence of the Senator from Minnesota that since he came to the Senate, this has been an issue he has worked on passionately. I appreciate the work he has done.

The Senator from Minnesota mentioned his wife Sheila. I remember the work the two of them have done together.

I remember the display they put in the Russell Building, which certainly dramatized the need for continuing the work in this area. There are many unique partnerships in America today, but one of those that I admire greatly is that of PAUL and Sheila WELLSTONE. They have worked on these issues together. I think it goes without saying that the good work the Senator has done would not be as good but for the involvement of his wife.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Senator REID from Nevada is very gracious towards lots of Senators. That is just the way he is. I thank the Senator very much.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SAFETY AND THE TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I want to emphasize the bipartisanship of the request made by my distinguished chairman, the Senator from Arizona, to get some kind of consent for S. 3059, the bill dealing with, of course, the defective equipment. We had extensive hearings.

Let me emphasize several things that we learned during the hearings.

One, generally speaking, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has been—I do not want to say defunct; I will use an elaborate; dormant. The testimony showed there had not been a single recall ordered by the National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration in five years. They had not ordered a recall.

Now, of course, I have kept up on this because I have had to stand in the well defending my trial lawyer friends who really bring about far more safety than one would normally suspect. In the 5-year period, there have been 99 million recalls. And everybody can write a thank-you note to Mark Robinson in the Pinto case. He never collected a cent in his punitive damages. But once industry realized there could be just that—lawsuits—then they began to voluntarily have recalls. And that is what occurred here.

This defective tire situation, causing multiple deaths—over 100 that we know about in the United States—was not a result of recalls ordered by NHTSA. More or less, the lawsuits, even though gagged, had really brought it to the attention of NHTSA to get off the dime, wake up, and start acting.

So we brought together now a measured safety precaution where this will not occur again. And again, it has been simmered down somewhat from the unanimous vote. We have been working, on both sides, with consumer product safety officials, with the tire companies. I talked to the tire companies themselves. Their main objection, in a way, to that bill was dealing with foreign defects, in reporting foreign defects and otherwise. Of course, you can call it the A tire here in the United States and manufacture the B tire in another country like it is different, but it is the same tire. So we would want to know about the recalls in Saudi Arabia, which started first, in order to bring the attention here of the Firestone defect.

So we worked it out. Now here we have a unanimous report out. The distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee, as he just said a moment ago, had no objection to that bill coming up because he voted for it to be reported favorably to the floor of the Senate. Otherwise, the distinguished majority leader, as a member of our committee, voted for it. So there has to be an untying of this snarl or knot so that we can get things done.

The only reason we cannot get it done is that we cannot offer an amendment to the conference report. If the conference report were an item just called up, we could call up this amendment, have a time limit for 10 minutes to a side, and easily adopt or reject the amendment, which was the bill, S. 3059. But, of course, it is a conference report, and under the rules we cannot just bring it up as an amendment. I say that so everybody will understand.

But as the distinguished chairman of our committee, Senator MCCAIN, pointed out, we could easily agree to give it some kind of consideration—an hour to a side. It could be called up so we can stop this indiscriminate killing on the highways due to faulty equipment.

I think it ought to be emphasized that we found this out really as in getting past the gag orders. I do not like these gag orders, but sometimes they do promote settlements of judicial disputes. So we do not have anything in the bill in relation to the gag orders. But when you get lawsuits—that means that you have gone to a lawyer; you have a serious injury or you maybe have a death case, or whatever it is—so when you get multiple lawsuits, then that notice is given, of course, to NHTSA, and we can act from there.

But it is a studied, deliberate, measured response. Generally speaking, they don't ever agree. I do not want to infer the industry agrees this is a good bill, but listening to them, they didn't have any serious objection that I can discern.

I support 100 percent Senator MCCAIN's movement on the floor. He is not holding things up. We can get a Transportation conference report to the President here on Friday. We can come in here on Tuesday, if there is a holiday on Monday. We can easily get it to the President.

And as has been indicated, it has already been approved. We know the White House folks watch and make sure their concerns are taken care of in the measure. So whether it gets there Friday, gets there Tuesday, next Wednesday, let's get on with having safety in America.

The Senator from Arizona standing in the well is not being an obstructionist whatsoever, but trying to promote safety where everybody is agreed. But, as he said, there is a "fix" on somewhere because why can't we just call up the bill and get an agreement and everything else of that kind?

Our distinguished leader, the Senator from Nevada, says perhaps there is not going to be any vote in the Senate. And the Senator from Alaska, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee says, oh yes, we are going to have a vote to move to proceed. But that is not going to get us anywhere because with the vote to proceed, we will still have plenty of time to talk. And we will talk into next week, and talk into Tuesday and Wednesday, and everything else, to show to the American people that there is some kind of responsibility with this political entity here, the Senate.

Heavens above, when we have everybody agreed—it is totally bipartisan—why can't we move deliberately and bring it up and have a vote on it?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time in morning business has expired.

Mr. HOLLINGS. I yield the floor.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. DODD. May I inquire? Would it be possible to extend morning business a few minutes beyond the 11 o'clock hour?