I say to my friend, the junior Senator from Montana, who has done such a good job in getting this bill to this point, the holdup is on that side. Maybe if we go into a quorum call Senator Burns will be gracious enough to see if he can move this along. Until that happens, my experience is this bill is in a flounder.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the distinguished whip.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, it is my hope that we can do this by 4 o’clock this afternoon. There is no need for us to dillydally around here when we have other things to do. I only have one thing I have to do at 2 o’clock this afternoon. I have to introduce a couple of judges who have been nominated to the Montana district court system. By the time I get that done, 4 o’clock should be in view.

We should be talking about amendments right now. There is no reason why we cannot move this bill to final conclusion tomorrow.

Mr. REID. I believe the Senator from West Virginia still has the floor, if I can make another comment.

Mr. BYRD. Surely.

Mr. REID. It is my thought, if the two managers agree, that at 12:30 p.m., if there is still a problem with hotlining, a unanimous consent request be made and if anybody objects to it, they are going to have to come here in person to object to it. That is my suggestion. On a bill as important as this, we need to have the Senators, not the staff lurking in some of these rooms around the Capitol complex making objections for their Senators.

After we go into a quorum call, upon consulting with the two managers, I make the suggestion that perhaps that is what we should do.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Nevada, the majority whip, for his suggestion. I like it. We have just heard Senator Burns voice his opinion.

Mr. BURNS. We will do everything we can to get that taken care of. We do not want to close anybody out either, understanding the sensitivity of that. I believe we have made a reasonable request. I thank the chairman.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BYRD. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, there being no Senators seeking recognition and having discussed the following request with the distinguished majority whip and the distinguished manager on
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. With the consent of Senator BYRD, I ask unanimous consent that the order for first-degree amendments to H.R. 2217, the Interior appropriations bill, be rescinded, and the roll be closed at 4 p.m. today, Wednesday, July 11.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 880

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I send to the desk an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) proposes an amendment numbered 880.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 157, line 7, insert "Protection" after the word "Park".

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be temporarily laid aside.

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

The Senator from Illinois.

AMENDMENT NO. 879

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), for himself and Mr. DAYTON, proposes an amendment numbered 879.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 194, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

SEC. 1 . PRELEASING, LEASING, AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.

None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to conduct any preleasing, leasing, or other related activity under the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) or the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.), within the boundary (in effect as of January 20, 2001) of a national monument established under the Act of June 8, 1906.

On page 194, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

SEC. 1 . PRELEASING, LEASING, AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.

None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to conduct any preleasing, leasing, or other related activity under the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) or the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.), within the boundary (in effect as of January 20, 2001) of a national monument established under the Act of June 8, 1906.

What it boils down to is, there are certain lands in the United States which have been designated as important national treasures. We call them national monuments. Virtually every President in the last century, save three, decided to designate certain areas of land in America that were so important they wanted to preserve them so that future generations could enjoy the bounty which God has left us. There are those, of course, who see that land not as a great treasure to be enjoyed but as a resource to be used. The purpose of my amendment is to stop oil and gas drilling on national monuments across the United States.

We owe the existence of many of America's natural treasures to pioneers of yesterday. Their appreciation of our rugged, untamed new country gave them the foresight to preserve many of our natural resources and public lands for future generations to enjoy.

Theodore Roosevelt was one such pioneer. In 1906, he established Devils Tower in Wyoming, the first national monument.

Right outside this Chamber in the hallway, is one of the most remarkable busts of a former Vice President—the bust of Theodore Roosevelt. Every time I walk by it, I can just feel the life in that piece of stone. He has his jaw stuck out as if he is ready to take on the world. I can imagine in 1906 when Teddy Roosevelt said to a lot of people in this country: You know we have resources in this country that are worth fighting for and worth preserving, and we are going to do it. There were probably people standing on the sideline saying that Teddy Roosevelt was crazy, that he certainly did not want to set aside land that might have had great value to our future. Yet he did it. Not only did he do it; he established a standard that President after President followed.

The Republican Party of which Theodore Roosevelt was a proud member at one time, certainly was that party of preservation and conservation. It set a standard that the Democratic Party followed, and I am glad they did.

We have to take care of these treasures that don't know the difference between parties, the treasurers which our children and future generations should enjoy. Roosevelt said this at one point, and his words I think tell the story: "We must ask ourselves if we are leaving for future generations an environment that is as good or better than what we found."

That is simple. That inspired him in 1906 to create the first national monument at Devils Tower, WY. Unfortunately, not every President has been inspired by Teddy Roosevelt. Sadly, I come to the floor today because of threats by this new administration in Washington to at least consider the option of drilling for oil and gas in these national monuments across the United States.

Some leaders in Washington lack the foresight of our Founding Fathers and pioneers. They hide today behind the shield of an "energy crisis"—an energy crisis which they believe that we have to change all the rules, saying we can no longer keep this land at least protected so future generations can enjoy it. They say because of our need for energy we have to break a lot of rules; we have to start drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: we have to start drilling in the national monuments; we have to start looking for oil and gas in places that a lot of Americans honestly believed we had decades ago.