

to issues we spend a lot of time talking about and debating but that puts real money, real resources where they are needed: over \$14 billion for issues surrounding tightening our borders, increasing the number of border security agents by 1,000, increasing the number of detention beds by over 1,000, and well over \$14 billion for border security and immigration issues. It is a very important bill.

Over the course of this month I also intend to address other issues surrounding securing our homeland, issues such as the Department of Defense authorization and our military construction bills, all of which focus on getting money down to where it is needed, protecting our homeland, supporting our troops here and overseas.

Also, it was an interesting week in that we had very positive economic developments announced with not just the 5.4 million jobs that have been created over the last 30 months or so, not just the low unemployment—4.6 percent, which is lower than the average of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, or 1990s, but the fact that the deficit is coming down much faster than anyone had anticipated. That is in large part—in most part—because of the pro-growth President-Bush-led policies of less taxation which promotes that strong economic growth. Revenues are coming into the Federal Government with lower tax rates, and the revenues are coming in much faster than anticipated because of those policies. And those increased revenues coming in, by definition, lower that deficit. The deficit is projected this year to be 30 percent lower than what we thought it was going to be just in February, earlier this year.

The important thing to recognize, as we have this great, what we call “macro” or large global prosperity, in the sense of our global or American economy here, with 5.6 percent growth in GDP last quarter, the fastest it has been in years and years—at the same time we have the squeeze that is on our average person, average taxpayer out there today. That is due in part to the high gasoline prices that we are going to see go up again—in part because of the international turmoil in the Middle East, the fact we are 60 percent dependent on the Middle East. Our response on this floor should be and will be to address issues surrounding lowering that dependence on foreign sources of oil. I hope we can do that in the next several weeks.

We had a very positive bipartisan announcement about opening exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. It is bipartisan, so I am very hopeful about that.

Health care is another one of those issues that squeezes people so much because health care prices continue to go up two to three times faster than wages. When that is the case, you get squeezed as an individual. So in spite of

the great macro numbers around the United States of America, the individual feels squeezed with gasoline prices and health care. So small business health plans are something we should come back to, something we need to come back to and address. Most people today work for what we call small businesses. These small business health reform plans allow small businesses and the individuals to have lower health care costs. They slow that growth of health care costs over time and hit at one of the major reasons they feel the pinch.

I mentioned energy. A lot of that focuses on the area called 181, in the Gulf of Mexico. And I mentioned health care costs with the focus on the small business health plans. We have the support of 56 Senators on the floor, and I need 60 Senators to actually pass that bill. So I hope a few more of our Senators will recognize, from a small business perspective, from the perspective of the individual employee, how important it is to allow small businesses to group together, to have the purchasing power to get those lower costs, to get those lower charges just like the big companies can get—the clout, the muscle you can get by grouping small business together.

It is common sense. The American people scratch their heads and say: Why can't you pass it? We have majority support.

We don't have 60 people yet supporting it. We need to work on that, and I think we have to do it sometime this year.

Let me just comment and then I am going to take a short break and I will come back to the floor to make a final comment on stem cells. On Monday we will begin the debate on the three bills—one, a fetal farming bill, a second bill that looks at alternative ways of developing pluripotent cells or embryo-like cells—very exciting research—and a third, the House bill which increases Federal support for embryonic stem cells that are derived from embryos that are otherwise going to be discarded. Those are the exact words in that bill.

We will have very good debate. It will be on Monday and Tuesday of next week. We will have those votes starting at 3:45 on Tuesday. Each of those votes will have 60 votes for passage. People ask why. We all agree to that because we can spend weeks and weeks on the floor of the Senate and with all the filibuster and cloture and the like, that is what you end up with, is you have to have a 60-vote threshold. That is why we have agreed with that.

Mr. President, I will close and will come back and within 10 minutes or so speak on stem cells for about 4 or 5 minutes, and at that time we will formally close.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, on Monday, the Senate will begin debate on three important pieces of legislation under an agreement that was reached between both sides of the aisle several days ago. Those three bills are as follows:

The Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act, a bill sponsored by Senator SANTORUM and Senator SPECTER; second, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, which is the bill from the House, H.R. 810—the House—Castle and DeGette, Senate—Specter and Hatch bill; and, third, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006—the Santorum and Brownback bill.

It was 5 years ago almost exactly—on July 18, 2001, before the administration laid out its policy—that I laid out a comprehensive proposal to promote stem cell research within a strong ethical and moral framework. I proposed at that time on the floor 10 specific interdependent principles. I also laid out a proposal and told policymakers and my colleagues I felt it was our responsibility to assess and to reassess, on a periodic basis, whatever we or the administration does because of the rapidly advancing science that so characterizes this decade or the 21st century.

As this century progresses and as science advances—and it is skyrocketing in terms of the advances that are being made—we are going to continually have to face our responsibility to face the moral and ethical challenges and limits. It is our responsibility, as individuals, as part of this body politic, to reassess whatever constructs we come up with that frame and that govern biomedical research.

It is uncomfortable, it is challenging, and it causes each of us to go back and study the science which can be confusing for everyone, including scientists as well as nonscientists, and to look at the framework—both moral and ethical framework that individuals have and that we have—in representing the people of our States, our constituents.

I said 5 years ago, on July 18, 2001, and I believe now that we must also do all we can to pursue promising alternative strategies that hold the magnificent potential for developing these powerful pluripotent cell lines without damaging or destroying nascent human life.

That is why, in the package we will be looking at Monday, I have asked the

Senate to consider legislation to enhance support for alternatives to embryonic stem cell research.

I have worked very closely with my distinguished colleague from Georgia, who is occupying the chair, on this very issue. I have asked Senators SANTORUM and SPECTER to work together, and they have done a tremendous job in crafting the Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act, S. 2754, in this regard. Their bill is very similar to the legislation that Senator ISAKSON and I and a number of other colleagues introduced last year. And I encourage every Senator to look very carefully at it because I believe every Senator should be able to support that bill.

There is no reason why that piece of legislation should not unite this body and be something that everybody can support.

Third is the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006. People ask the question—and I have been asked over the course of today and the reason I wanted to come back to the floor and close and begin to frame the debate—what is fetus farming? It is the implantation, growth or gestation of an embryo in a human or in an animal for the purpose of aborting that growing fetus for research. Fetus farming is not currently employed. But it is forward thinking because it is a trend that we could inadvertently move to in trying to advance science, and that line should not be crossed. Therefore, Senators BROWNBACK and SANTORUM have proposed legislation that would draw a clear line that should not be crossed—a clear line that is not there today.

Again, 5 years ago on July 18, when I outlined the proposal on the floor, it was covered in an article in the Wall Street Journal on that same day. I outlined my principles. Shortly after—1 month later—the President laid out the administration's policy on embryonic stem cell research.

A lot of people do not pay attention to it today.

The President's legislation was the first Federal legislation to fund embryonic stem cell research. It did so within an ethical framework, a moral and ethical framework. It showed respect for basic human life.

President Bush and I do not differ about the need for strong guidelines supporting embryonic stem cell research. His policy was generally consistent with the principles I set forth a month before his announcement in 2001. However, what has now sort of changed, since that point in time, is science has progressed over the last 5 years, and I feel that the limit on cell lines available for federally funded research, those original limits—given what has happened in science today and what we have learned—are too restrictive.

Because people's views shift, let me refer back to the principle I presented 5 years ago. The fifth principle which I presented on the floor 5 years ago, No. 5, and I quote:

Provide funding for embryonic stem cell research only from blastocysts that would otherwise be discarded. We need to allow Federal funding for research using only those embryonic stem cells derived from blastocysts that are left over after in vitro fertilization and would otherwise be discarded.

I quote that to point out that that was my stance 5 years ago, and indeed when people ask: Why, Senator FRIST, or Dr. FRIST, are you supporting the House bill, you can see the consistency there.

This is very important. H.R. 810, despite its many shortcomings which I mentioned last week, is clearly consistent with that principle. And the bill applies this restriction almost verbatim. The very words "would otherwise be discarded" were from my remarks 5 years ago and is also in the House bill.

All three of the bills the Senate will address raise profound ethical ques-

tions. They will require a lot of thought, a lot of study over the course of the next several days. They are challenging to us as a body and challenging to us as individuals. They merit serious debate. That is why I am pleased, on an issue of this magnitude, that Senators will have an opportunity to have their ideas considered in an orderly, respectful and dignified way and voted on separately and clearly.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, JULY 17, 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:27 p.m., adjourned until Monday, July 17, 2006, at 12 noon.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate July 14, 2006:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. BANTZ J. CRADDOCK, 0000

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate Friday, July 14, 2006:

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

PHILIP D. MOELLER, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2010.

JON WELLINGHOFF, OF NEVADA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2008.

MARC SPITZER, OF ARIZONA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2011.

THE ABOVE NOMINATIONS WERE APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEES' COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.