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Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, September 5, 1995)

The Senate met at 9 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, You have called the men and women of this Senate to glorify You by being servant-leaders. This calling is shared by the officers of the Senate, the Senators' staffs, and all who enable the work done in this Chamber. Keep us focused on the liberating truth that we are here to serve You by serving our Nation. Our sole purpose is to accept Your absolute Lordship over our lives and give ourselves totally to the work of each day. Give us the enthusiasm that comes from knowing the high calling of serving in Government. Grant us the holy esteem of knowing that You seek to accomplish Your plans for America through the legislation of this Senate. Free us from secondary, self-serving goals. Help us to humble ourselves and ask how we may serve today. We know that happiness is not having things and getting recognition, but in serving in the great cause of implementing Your righteousness, justice, and mercy for every person and in every circumstance in this Nation. We take delight in the paradox of life: The more we give ourselves away, the more we can receive of Your love. In our Lord's name. Amen.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the pending business.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4) to restore the American family, reduce illegitimacy, control welfare spending, and reduce welfare dependence.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Dole modified amendment No. 2280, of a perfecting nature.

Feinstein modified amendment No. 2469 (to amendment No. 2280), to provide additional funding to States to accommodate any growth in the number of people in poverty.

Conrad-Bradley amendment No. 2529 (to amendment No. 2280), to provide States with the maximum flexibility by allowing States to elect to participate in the TAP and WAGE programs.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Chair. I inquire if the Conrad-Bradley amendment is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CAMPBELL). The Senator is correct.

AMENDMENT NO. 2529

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. MOYNIHAN], for Mr. CONRAD, for himself and Mr. BRADLEY, proposes an amendment numbered 2529.

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

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in the Friday, September 8, 1995, edition of the RECORD.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, the Conrad-Bradley amendment is based on the four principles of requiring work, protecting children, providing flexibility for States, and promoting the family structure. Our amendment fundamentally reforms the welfare system by allowing States to choose between the pure block grant approach of the Dole bill and a program that maintains a safety net for children, provides an automatic stabilizer for States, and includes the funding to pay for them.

None of us can predict the future. If there are floods in Mississippi, earthquakes in California, a drought in North Dakota, or some economic calamity in Colorado, a flat-funded block grant approach may not meet the need. We should retain the automatic stabilizer that allows a State to receive the help it requires. After all, this is the United States of America, not just 50 separate States.

Our amendment allows States to choose the Dole approach or the Conrad-Bradley option for 4 years. After that, the State may continue its program or switch to the other approach at their option. Our option provides States with complete flexibility to design work requirements, job training programs, to determine eligibility and sanctions. It allows States to set time limits of any duration for participants, provided that no participants are terminated if they comply with all State requirements.

The Conrad-Bradley amendment expands the State flexibility already included in the Dole bill. It uses States as laboratories to experiment, to find what is effective in welfare reform strategies. Although the States will have almost total flexibility to design their own welfare programs, they will do so without the risk that a natural disaster or economic collapse will prevent them from protecting children and families.

The Dole proposal before us already includes such an option for the food stamp program. If an option to choose between a pure block grant approach and a system that automatically adjusts for the need is appropriate for food stamps, I suggest we should provide the same option for the Dole AFDC block grant.

According to CBO, our amendment provides protection for children and States while saving \$63 billion over 7 years, compared with the \$70 billion of

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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