

until Minnesota gets some fairness in this formula. I am not going to let folks, in a back room deal, shaft my State and a lot of the citizens in my State.

I am delighted that the Governor of Minnesota is going to join in this effort to make sure we get a fair formula.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess until the hour of 2:15.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CRAIG).

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996—CONFERENCE REPORT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the conference report. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. LOTT. I announce that the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Oregon [Mr. HATFIELD] would vote "yea."

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey [Mr. BRADLEY] is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 557 Leg.]

YEAS—87

Abraham	Feinstein	Mack
Akaka	Frist	McCain
Ashcroft	Glenn	McConnell
Baucus	Gorton	Mikulski
Bennett	Graham	Moseley-Braun
Bingaman	Gramm	Moynihan
Bond	Grams	Murkowski
Boxer	Grassley	Murray
Breaux	Gregg	Nickles
Brown	Harkin	Nunn
Bryan	Hatch	Pell
Bumpers	Helms	Pressler
Burns	Hollings	Pryor
Campbell	Hutchison	Robb
Chafee	Inhofe	Roth
Coats	Inouye	Santorum
Cochran	Jeffords	Sarbanes
Cohen	Kassebaum	Shelby
Conrad	Kempthorne	Simon
Coverdell	Kennedy	Simpson
Craig	Kerry	Smith
D'Amato	Kohl	Snowe
DeWine	Kyl	Specter
Dodd	Lautenberg	Stevens
Dole	Leahy	Thomas
Domenici	Levin	Thompson
Exon	Lieberman	Thurmond
Faircloth	Lott	Warner
Feingold	Lugar	Wellstone

NAYS—10

Biden	Ford	Reid
Byrd	Hefflin	Rockefeller
Daschle	Johnston	
Dorgan	Kerrey	

NOT VOTING—2

Bradley	Hatfield
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So the conference report was agreed to.

Mr. DOLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, is leader time reserved?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE FACILITATION ACT

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, tonight at midnight, the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act [MEPFA] will expire. Last night at 8:20, a written request for a short-term extension was faxed to my office by the State Department. This morning, I spoke to Secretary of State Christopher about the issue. Until the letter and phone call, my office had received no communication about the need for the latest extension. I know the Secretary is concerned that a delay in extending the act could be read as lack of support for the Middle East peace process. I share that concern, but I am also concerned that we have an administration that refuses to deal responsibly with Congress.

I want to be very clear: the U.S. Senate has gone on the record on repeated occasions supporting the Middle East peace process. We have extended MEPFA three times this year: on June 23, on August 11, and on September 29. Each time the Congress acted promptly. I hope we are able to act today as well.

We support the peace process. We understand the risks being taken by both sides. We understand that peacemaking is not easy, and that the process is subject to disruption. As I speak today, Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank town of Jenin has started. Our lead negotiator in the Middle East, Dennis Ross, called my office this morning from Israel to express his concern over the consequences of not extending MEPFA.

Extending MEPFA allows the President to waive certain provisions of law concerning the Palestine Liberation Organization. It allows the provision of United States assistance to the Palestine authority, and it allows a Palestinian office to operate in the United States. The Foreign Operations Appropriations Conference Report provides for a permanent extension of MEPFA but it is not likely to be enacted soon.

If Congress does not act today to provide another short-term extension, the President's waiver authority will lapse. Under these time constraints, unanimous consent is required to proceed.

Today, I am informed the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator HELMS, will object to any unanimous-consent request extending MEPFA unless the terms of a previous agreement entered into by the full Senate have been met. The last time the Senate extended MEPFA, Senator HELMS and Senator KERRY of Massachusetts worked out an agreement providing for consideration of S. 908, the Foreign Relations Reorganization Act.

For the benefit of all Senators, I would like to briefly review what has

happened over the last month. On September 29, the Senate passed an extension of MEPFA and entered into an agreement providing for consideration of S. 908 after the managers agreed on an amendment. On October 10, Senator HELMS wrote to Senator KERRY and urged him to make some kind of offer. The next day, Senator KERRY responded that "progress was being made" in developing an offer.

On October 19, Senator KERRY met with Senator HELMS and provided an outline—not legislation—of a proposed managers' amendment. Later that day, Senator HELMS made a counter offer to Senator KERRY, changing the amount of savings from reorganization from \$1.2 billion over 4 years to \$2.5 billion over 5 years. Senator KERRY's response was to propose 25 additional changes in the bill and to request unprecedented guarantees about the outcome of a House-Senate conference.

Until this morning, Senator HELMS had heard very little from Senator KERRY or his staff. While staff negotiations have begun, there is no agreement on the central issue of cost savings. Once again, the administration has refused to provide information to Congress about cost information. I hope the Democrat manager, Senator KERRY of Massachusetts, is able to make a legislative agreement today, whether the administration is willing or not.

The State Department wants Senator HELMS to lift his objection to proceeding with MEPFA despite the almost total lack of effort over the last 32 days. Senator HELMS is completely within his rights to object to any unanimous-consent request. I hope that as the day proceeds, Senator KERRY and the administration decide it is finally time to deal seriously with the Senate majority.

Contrary to some of the statements made by the administration, Senator HELMS is not insisting on "getting his way." What he is insisting on is that the will of the majority be heard, and that the Senate simply have a chance to vote on whether to save money by reorganizing our international affairs agencies.

I believe in the importance of bipartisan cooperation. Let me point out that if the administration had not orchestrated a filibuster of S. 908 earlier this year, the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act would have been permanently extended by now—in that same legislation. Unfortunately, due to the administration's intransigence and refusal to negotiate, MEPFA is once again a last-minute demand on a busy Senate schedule.

I hope we are able to work together on MEPFA, and I hope it happens today. I hope a managers' amendment is filed today. However, it is going to be very difficult, if not impossible, to work together on one issue today if there is no cooperation from the other side on moving to conference on the budget reconciliation bill.