leader to complete action on this important legislation as early as possible today.

I certainly thank my colleagues for their attention.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein.

Mr. FEINGOLD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I thank the Chair.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. FEINGOLD. I rise today, with my friend and colleague, Senator WELLSTONE, and others to start up the conversation again about the need to clean up our election system and pass meaningful, bipartisan campaign finance reform. I am pleased to announce that as of yesterday the so-called McCain-Feingold legislation now has reached a milestone of having 30 cosponsors in the Senate, with the addition of the distinguished senior Senator from West Virginia, Senator ROBERT BYRD, as a cosponsor.

The senior Senator from Minnesota, of course, was a leader on this issue long before I got here and continues to be, not only in our legislation but on other aspects and ideas about how we can clean up this system.

One of the things that really highlights the importance of this issue is the type of work that was recently done by Public Citizen in releasing a report that lays out the fact that the McCain-Feingold bill, and I am sure other alternatives as well, really would make a difference, that had we done the job last July the elections of 1996 would have looked very different.

They have analyzed three components of the legislation. One is the voluntary limits on overall spending that candidates would agree to in order to get the benefits of the bill. They analyzed the fact that the McCain-Feingold bill would ban soft money completely, as any good reform proposal must do. And Public Citizen analyzed the requirement in the bill that if you want the benefits of the bill, you cannot get more than 20 percent of your total campaign contributions from political action committees.

Very briefly, since I want to obviously hear from the Senator from Minnesota, I just want to report what the figures were. Over the last three election cycles, had these provisions been in the law and had all candidates for the U.S. Senate in 1992 and 1994 and 1996 abided by the limits, $700 million less would have been spent on these campaigns—$700 million. That is just for Senate races in three cycles; in other words, just one whole series of Senate races for 100 seats—$700 million of less spending. It would have been $259 million in less spending overall by candidates because they would have agreed to an overall limit for their State; $50 million less in political action committee receipts and $450 million less in soft money.

I wish to indicate, since some get in the Chamber and say this is a proincumbent bill, the Public Citizen report shows it is just the opposite, absolutely the opposite of a proincumbent bill. This is a prochallenger bill. Ninety percent of the Senate incumbents over the last three election cycles exceeded the limits for the McCain-Feingold bill—90 percent of the incumbents. Only 24 percent of the challengers exceeded these limits. So the challengers in most cases would have been the ones who would have been more likely to get the benefits of the bill; 81 percent of the incumbents exceeded the 20 percent PAC limit and only 13 percent of the challengers exceeded the 20 percent PAC limit.

So there are many arguments that are posed against the bill, most of which do not hold water, including the notion that the bill is unconstitutional. We will address that on another occasion, but today I thought I would just use a few minutes of this time to indicate that this notion that this bill is protection for incumbents is false and just the opposite is the case as is indicated by Public Citizen.

At this point I would like to——

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I wonder whether the Senator will yield for a question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I was listening to my colleague from Wisconsin, and I thank him for leading this reform effort, in fact I thank Senator MCCAIN and other Senators as well. I know the Presiding Officer has done a lot of work and has spoken out about trying to really reduce the role of big money in politics.

The question I ask my colleague has to do with this whole issue of incumbents and challengers. It has been said sometimes that the debate about campaign finance reform is really less a debate between Democrats and Republicans and all too often is more a debate between ins and outs; that, if anything, part of the inertia here and the slowness to embrace reform and the fierce opposition has to do with the fact that right now the system is really wild for those people who are in office.

My question for my colleague is does he feel some sense of urgency and will he consider coming to the floor every week now with other colleagues—the two of us are sort of getting started. There are a number of Senators who feel very strongly that this is a core issue, the influence of money in politics, and the most important thing we could ever do would be to pass a significant reform measure. Is my colleague from Wisconsin beginning to feel as though it is really going to be important that every week from now on for Democrats and Republicans who are serious about reform to be out on the floor and beginning to frame the issues, especially focusing on what are going to be the solutions?

Mr. FEINGOLD. I do really thank the Senator from Minnesota. In fact, I would very much like to join with him in coming out here each week, assuming we are permitted the time. This is the time to start this effort in the Chamber. We had great help from the President of the United States in endorsing the legislation and getting us off to the right start at the beginning of the year when there was a great deal of attention paid to this issue.

Obviously, there are other priorities; the whole issue of balancing the budget has taken much of center stage for the last few weeks and obviously is now on a track, whether one likes it or not, that is moving in a direction that will be resolved one way or another.

That is why I think this is the time, as the Senator from Minnesota is suggesting, to have an awful lot of the conversation here on the floor between now and the day we pass campaign finance reform be about this issue. We have to talk to the American people this way and in every other way about what the real facts are about this issue because it has been often distorted.

For example, the point of the Senator from Minnesota about whether or not this is really a Republican-Democrat issue. It is not. The Public Citizen report, for example, points out there is not a lot of difference between the parties in terms of this issue: 54 percent of the Democrats who ran for the Senate in the last three election cycles exceeded the limits; 59 percent of the Republicans exceeded it. It is not a vast kind of difference, and the Members here really know that. The problem is somehow encouraging Members, incumbents here to realize that their lives and their jobs would be better and the opportunities for others who want to run for office would be better if we do this. But I think we do need to be out here talking about this, if not on a daily basis at least on a weekly basis, to let people know this is a serious effort and that we do intend to succeed.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I wonder if my colleague will allow me to share a concern with him and get his response. Let me tell you what my worry is. I do not have any doubt that people in the country know that too much money is spent, that they know there is too much special interest access, that they know all of us spend too much time raising money. I have no doubt that people understand that. As a matter of fact, I think one of the things that is making it more and more difficult for people to get involved at the grassroots level is when they see these huge amounts of money contributed by some folks and some interests and then they get a letter: We would like you to make a $10 contribution and be involved in our grassroots effort.

They are a little cynical, and they figure: Come on, give us a break; we know the people who are most involved in this process. It is not us and our family.

This is the core issue for a representative democracy. But my concern is that the Rules Committee starts next week, and there will be an effort, as I have at least looked at a preliminary list of witnesses—not to talk about any particular witness—there is going to be a pretty strong effort on the part of the Rules Committee, which I have called in the Chamber of the Senate, a merry-go-round for reform, to basically frame this issue and the issue will be not enough money is spent; all we need is disclosure so that we can make people realize how bad it is, without doing anything to make it better. As I look at the ways in which the Rules Committee moves forward starting next week, I see the beginning of the debate. I see the beginning of the debate.

So I say to my colleague, will he agree with me that it is going to be important for those of us who are committed to reform, Democrats and Republicans—and there is a pretty significant group—to start coming out on the floor? We will figure out the vehicles, and it is not necessarily amendments, but there are always ways of speaking. Should we not now every week be out here framing this issue and over and over again saying what are going to be the solutions to these problems and are we or are we not going to take action in this Congress?

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I think we have to do this on the floor, in part because of the witness list. We went through this last year, where the committee hearings were used for a great deal of time and you did not get the feeling that the goal was to find a solution or to pass a bill. The goal was to sort of talk it to death. The floor is a superb place to do this.

In fact, I would say to my friend from Minnesota, I think one of the best editorials that has been written on this subject, that I think we can sort of elaborate on on the floor in the coming weeks, is something from the Washington Post of April 21, 1997, entitled, ''Skirting the Real Scandal.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent this editorial be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 21, 1997]

SKIRTING THE REAL SCANDAL

The subject that has been most discussed by the politicians thus far this year has been not the budget, nor the state of the economy, nor the various aspects of health care nor peace in the Middle East. It has been campaign finance—and the discussion has been almost entirely fraudulent. It is widely agreed, and rightly so, that we are in the middle of a campaign finance ''scandal,'' and both parties are forced by convention to express their indignation at that. But they are huffing and puffing about a problem that neither is willing to describe accurately—for the good reason that both are complicit in it and have a vested interest in perpetuating precisely what they must denounce. It is like one of those plays in which the characters can't or don't communicate and instead spend their time talking past one another and the truth. The point keeps getting missed—on purpose.

The basic problem is that the cost of conducting a campaign for federal office has been bid up to a point that is destructive of the very democratic process it is said to represent. The cost at both the congressional and presidential levels is obscene. One reason may be that so many of the candidates, lately including those for president, have had so little to say. It's not just TV that's expensive. Blur is expensive. In any case, the candidates and parties increasingly have responded to the cost by overriding or circumventing even the relatively modest set of rules put in place in the 1970s in response to the last great fund-raising scandal, that of the Nixon administration.

The rules imposed then were meant to limit the extent to which offices and officeholders can be bought, but in last year's presidential race, both parties tossed them almost completely out the window. Both pretended to abide by the law while raising money in amounts and from sources that the law forbids, and the amounts were huge. It is hard to decide which was worse, the pretense or the excess. The law is written in such a way that the violators could be fairly confident that they would suffer no penalty; this beat has no real cops.

That is the fundamental scandal that neither party will confront. The president, safely past his last campaign, claims now to want to strengthen a set of rules whose weaknesses he led the way in exploiting. The claim is unconvincing. He converts his own excesses into an agenda. Most of the congressional Democrats don't want to talk about the excess in the system either. In part, they seek to protect the president, in part to protect themselves: What could be so wrong, after all, with a system that elected them? The Republicans have the hardest time of all, because they are the stoutest defenders of the system that they attack the president for having used to such advantage.

Because no one can quite afford to talk about Topic A, they all talk about topics B, C and D: What are the ground rules going to be for the various congressional investigations of the subject? Should or shouldn't the attorney general seek appointment of an independent counsel? The Justice Department says one reason it hasn't gone to such lengths is that so much of the fund-raising at the center of the dispute involved so-called soft money rather than hard, meaning money that went to the Democratic National Committee rather than to the president's campaign organization. The law, the department's career prosecutors say, doesn't apply to soft money, so technically they have no violations to prosecute. And technically that may be so, but of course the point is that in the last campaign the distinction between hard and soft money disappeared. Both parties raised much more hard money than the law allows and merely called it soft to avoid regulation. The Republicans could make that point; it would strengthen their argument for an independent counsel. But they are the last to want soft money regulated. They want a counsel, but not a counsel who might insist on strict enforcement of the campaign finance laws.

The whole question of an independent counsel, and of turning what happened last year into a criminal as distinct from a broader civic offense, is to some extent a red herring. We don't mean to suggest that there ought not be a criminal inquiry, and in fact several are going on. An independent counsel continues to look into the sprawl of issues called Whitewater, including whether an effort was made to buy the silence of possible witness and former associate attorney general Webster Hubbell. A Justice Department task force and congressional committees are looking into the fund-raising squalor. If people committed crimes in the course of that fund-raising, they ought to pay the price, whoever they are. And the truth—the full truth—ought to be extracted from them, whether criminal or not.

But the churning about the lurid particulars of how that money was raised last year ought not be allowed to take the public eye off the broader questions: What do you do about the solicitation system generally? How do you keep electoral outcomes, and the policy outcomes to which they lead, from being bought? The politicians—both parties—are conducting a kind of mock debate about the lesser issues as a diversion and an alternative to dealing with the central one. That's the ultimate scandal, and they should not be allowed to get away with it.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, let me just read the last paragraph of this. The editorial basically talks about the way in which Members of Congress are very skilled about talking around the edges of this thing: Foreign contributions are the problem, or the problem is what the White House did, or what we need is an investigation, or what we need is an independent counsel, or we need investigations—all so you can talk about everything but the need to actually pass reform. This is what they identified, and I thought the last paragraph was effective. As it says:

> But the churning about the lurid particulars of how that money was raised last year ought not to be allowed to take the public eye off the broader questions: What do you do about the solicitation system generally? How do you keep electoral outcomes, and the policy outcomes to which they lead, from being bought? The politicians—both parties—are conducting a kind of mock debate about the lesser issues as a diversion and an alternative to dealing with the central one. That's the ultimate scandal, and they should not be allowed to get away with it.

Mr. President, I think that is exactly what the Senator from Minnesota is referring to, talking around the edges, using the committee process to avoid talking about what is really going on, the need to change this big money system, and to talk about it on the floor.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, if my colleague will just yield for one other question, another concern, and then I will leave the floor and let him conclude. I wonder whether the Senator from Wisconsin would agree with me that—I mean, in, oh, so many ways—what we see happening in the country is every election year we see cited the figures: People spend more and more money in the campaigns and fewer and fewer people participate. People are really losing heart.

I have said before that I do not see it as corruption as in the wrongdoing of individual officeholders. But I see systemic corruption, where these campaigns have become TV-intensive, relying on huge amounts of money and, therefore, you have this huge imbalance of influence and power where too

few people give way too much of the money that is given, and are given access and influence, and too many people are left out of the loop. This becomes a real problem for a representative democracy because it is not true any longer that each person counts as one and only one.

So I ask my colleague whether he would agree that it is going to be important, not just for us to speak 20 minutes a day, but now for us to begin to get together? I ask him whether, as a leader in this effort—and he has been a leader of this effort —whether we might really be reaching out to other colleagues who feel very strongly about this, who really want people in our country to believe in the political process—all of us should want to change this—and get some people together and come out on the floor of the Senate? We are going to keep framing this issue and we are going to keep calling for reform and we are going to make it crystal clear that we are not going to let the Senate, or the Congress, become a politics of diversion on this.

It is fine to identify problems. If some people want to say we do not have disclosure, fine. If some people want to say it is influence of foreign money, fine. If some people want to say it is just the rules that have been broken and no more than that, fine. But the people in the country know too much money is spent, there is too much special access, there is too much time spent raising money, and we have to build the McCain-Feingold bill that is out there. We want to move that forward and we want to eventually have an up-or-down vote.

Does my colleague agree that we need to start turning up the heat?

Mr. FEINGOLD. Not only do I agree, but I ask the Senator and I make sure we reach out to Members of both parties in this body who are cosponsors, and others who I think are very interested in reform and have not yet chosen to cosponsor it, to do just that.

There are myths about the legislation and about the effort that have been perpetuated in an effort to make the public ignore the issue, thinking it cannot be resolved. But the facts speak differently. There have been newspaper articles indicating that we have fewer cosponsors than last year. That is just false. We have 30 Members of the U.S. Senate as cosponsors of this bill. I guess if we do not come out here on the floor and start to indicate these facts, it is very hard for the average citizen to relate to it.

One of the reasons it is hard for them to relate to it is, when they start hearing about $100,000, $200,000 contributions, it is pretty hard for them to feel invited into the process. It is pretty hard for them to believe that anything will ever change. They are so used to believing that this system and this town is dominated by interests and powers that they cannot control, that the people of the country, when they are asked in a poll, may not say that campaign finance reform is the No. 1 issue. I think, if you ask them whether they think we ought to do the job and whether it is important, of course they would say yes. Many would support almost every aspect of the legislation we are proposing.

But, for the average citizen, if you asked them what is their No. 1 concern, what are they going to say? They are going to say, ''We are concerned about our kids' education, we are concerned about crime in our neighborhood.'' Those are the things that people should identify, should feel free to identify, and they should not have to worry about a system that has gone out of control so far away in Washington. That is not the stuff of the daily lives of people in this country. That is not what it takes to make ends meet.

But the fact is, until we clean up this system here, the ability of this Government to assist those families in getting through and making ends meet will be seriously compromised. When we reach the point that Members of this body get on the floor and say that what the problem is is that we do not have enough money in politics, and then we do not pass a piece of legislation, and then we have an election—we find out the result. More money was spent in these last elections than in any other election and we had the lowest voter turnout in 72 years. That is not just a fluke. It is because more and more people are feeling that they are no longer part of a system that is supposedly premised on the notion of one person one vote.

So, today begins the effort to speak here on the floor on a regular basis—not just about the McCain-Feingold bill, but about the fact that we are not going to allow this year to pass without an effort to bring this issue back to the floor. Again, my lead author on this bill, the Senator from Arizona, Senator MCCAIN—I always have to apologize for his being right and my being wrong last year when he said it would probably take a scandal to get this passed. I said, please, don't say that. I want to get it passed this year. But he was right. It took something like the abuses of the 1996 election to get people in this body, to get people across the country, to realize that this just is not a quantitative change in what has been happening in elections since 1974. What happened was a qualitative change, a major change in the way in which elections are conducted.

Basically, the current election system is falling apart through the use of loopholes and abuses and how much money people are willing to raise through soft money and their own campaigns.

So our goal here is to make sure everyone knows this issue is not ''not there.'' It will become one of the dominant issues, not just in the media and the newspapers, as it has been, but it will become one of the dominant issues here in the floor in the not too distant future.

How much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator has 2 minutes 28 seconds remaining.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I yield the remainder of my time and I yield the floor.

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

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, what is the order? How much time does each Senator have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under a previous order, the Senator from New Mexico, or his designee, is recognized to speak up to 15 minutes, but at 10 o'clock, the order also requires that the bill be laid down.

Mr. DOMENICI. Also required to do what?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That the pending bill will be laid down. Technically, the Senator from New Mexico has approximately 11 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DOMENICI and Mr. WYDEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 718 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. DOMENICI. I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO MOE BILLER

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, today I want to recognize one of America's great labor leaders—Moe Biller, president of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL–CIO—on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his hiring by the Postal Service.

On May 8, 1937, Moe Biller was hired as a postal clerk in New York City by what was then called the U.S. Post Office Department, beginning a long career of service to the American public. At the same time, Moe became a postal union member and activist—a journey that led him to the presidency of his New York City local in 1959 and then to the presidency of the national APWU in 1980.

Moe's six decades of service included 2 years during World War II in the Army's Adjutant General Corps from 1943 to 1945, where most of his service was in Northern Ireland. We thank him for this service as well.

Moe's steadfast and determined struggle on behalf of all postal workers led to enactment of the Postal Reform Act of 1970. By virtue of that legislation, postal workers were given the right to bargain for wages, benefits, and working conditions under the National Labor Relations Act. These events also led to the merger of five separate craft unions into the APWU in 1971, an historic event in postal labor history in which Moe played a leading role.