

So on a very personal basis on behalf of the Senate, I wish you God's grace in everything you do, DAN COATS.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair recognizes the Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I want to add to the wonderful words that were said about Senator DAN COATS by our distinguished majority leader. He has affected many of us. I think by his example we have all been enriched in this body, and in the U.S. Congress. We thank him very much.

#### BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 1998

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the bankruptcy reform bill that we have just proceeded to and to say that this is a very important reform bill.

I want to commend Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY for the work he has done on this bill and to specifically talk about one part of this bill which was very important to me. That is the homestead exemption that is a part of the Texas Constitution.

I worked with Senator GRASSLEY and Senator HATCH when this bill was coming to the floor earlier this month to make sure that, by the time the bill was finished, it would take into account those States that have constitutional provisions, as my State does, which provide for some sort of homestead exemption.

In my home State of Texas, we have had a homestead exemption under our bankruptcy laws and in the constitution since the 1840s, actually; this is not something that has come about lately. But because many farmers and ranchers were very worried about losing their livelihoods if they ever got into a temporary situation—they were worried that they would lose their ability to maintain their families and their livelihoods—so we have a constitutional provision. It was important to me that we keep it.

The first bill that passed out of the Senate did not have that. But I had the assurance of Senator GRASSLEY that he would work with me to make sure that a State like mine would not be overrun on this very important point. And, in fact, Senator GRASSLEY is true to his word. I cannot say enough good things about the fact that he kept his word to the letter. We were able to come to an agreement that kept the Texas constitutional provision for the homestead exemption intact. That is in the bill that will go forward.

I hope we will be able to pass this bill, send it to the President, put it on his desk, and that he will sign it. But if in fact that isn't the case, I hope we will be able to work on this next year to have real bankruptcy reform so that people will not be able to willingly walk away from their debts, but nevertheless that will also take into account

that there are States which have constitutions about which we feel very strongly, that this is a part of our heritage. It is one that I will work tirelessly to see continued.

Mr. President, I thank the Presiding Officer. I appreciate very much the opportunity to work on this with Senator GRASSLEY and Senator HATCH. I hope we will prevail either in the next few days or in the next year.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank the Chair.

#### SENATOR WENDELL H. FORD

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, as the majority leader noted, this is a bitter-sweet time for many of us. We bid colleagues farewell and we recall the times we have had together. In some cases, we have worked together and shared friendships for many years.

I have been asked to do something somewhat unusual tonight. I have been asked by the staff of our distinguished Senator from Kentucky, my dear friend, Senator FORD, to read a letter they have composed to him for the Congressional RECORD.

I am delighted that Senator FORD is on the floor to hear this personally.

So, as requested, I will read the letter, which was written by his staff. I know my own staff shares these feelings for Senator FORD. The letter is dated October 9, 1998.

OCTOBER 9, 1998.

DEAR SENATOR FORD: After several weeks of tributes, receptions, dinners and other special events in your honor, we're sure that a man of your humble nature is probably ready to have people quit making a fuss and let you leave town as unnoticed and as low-key as possible.

However, these weeks have given us the opportunity to hear others tell you what we've also known all along: your legacy of serving our state, your labor of love on behalf of all Americans, and the unflinching kindness you've shown during your time in the United States Senate will never be forgotten.

On top of just being a plain 'ole good boss, you've also been a mentor, a teacher, and someone we could always look up to for guidance and support, no matter the situation. But most importantly, you've been a friend to all of us.

You've given us the opportunity on a daily basis to personally witness the countless hours of hard work you put in on behalf of Kentuckians. We've seen you stay into the early morning hours here in the Senate during an all-night session, and then rush to catch an early morning plane for a commitment back home. We've seen you toil late into the night working on a conference committee, only to have you beat us into work the next morning with a smile and joke for everyone.

These are some of the things your Kentucky constituents may never have known. But at the same time, we know they've benefited greatly from your accomplishments on their behalf and your never-ending desire to see that all Kentuckians, no matter their station, have the tools and opportunities to lead successful and productive lives.

As we've heard you say many times, it's been a good run. And we could not let today pass without letting you know how much it's meant for us to have had the opportunity to work with you, to learn from you, and have you as our favorite Senator.

Sincerely,

YOUR STAFF.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, let me thank my good friend, the Democratic leader, TOM DASCHLE, for reading this letter. I didn't know it was coming.

I really do not know how to respond to it, except to thank my staff. We claim to do a lot of things around here. And if we did not have loyal, faithful, hard-working, dedicated, intelligent staff, not only in our offices but here on the floor, we would not get accomplished near as much as we do.

So I thank them from the bottom of my heart. And I hope that in the last few days I will not get so cantankerous that they will want to expunge the RECORD of this letter.

#### 56 BIT ENCRYPTION IS A GOOD START, BUT IS NOT ENOUGH

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the White House recently announced that it would allow some relaxation of its encryption export controls to allow the sale of strong encryption products to companies in the finance, insurance, and health sectors and to certain companies engaged in electronic commerce. While the specific details have yet to be articulated in revised regulations, it appears that the Administration is finally heeding Congress' calls to modernize its export control regulations. While this action is a step in the right direction, I believe the Administration is still moving too slowly and incrementally. Even with these proposed changes, there are still a number of other businesses and consumers who will not be able to utilize strong American-made encryption products. Since export restrictions will remain in place, foreign suppliers will continue to develop and sell strong encryption products in the international marketplace without real competition from U.S. providers. Putting \$60 billion and over 200,000 American jobs in jeopardy over the next few years.

Unfortunately, the Administration continues to pursue an outmoded policy that supports the broad use of 56-bit encryption for the vast majority of computer users. As my colleagues are aware, the government-approved 56-bit Data Encryption Standard was recently cracked last July in just 56 hours. This is particularly alarming because it was accomplished using a single computer instead of the thousands that were linked together just a few months ago to achieve the same result in 39 days.