

(The remarks of Mr. BAUCUS pertaining to the introduction of this legislation are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. the Senator from Missouri.

SOUTHWEST MISSOURI STATE LADY BEARS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, while we in the Senate are working hard exploring the mysteries of campaign finance reform, many Americans are enjoying the annual tradition known as "March Madness." In Missouri, we are particularly fixated on "the March to the Arch" where St. Louis is hosting the final four of the Women's NCAA basketball tournament. In the final four are a couple of teams from somewhere in Indiana and Connecticut but in Missouri, we will be cheering for our Southwest Missouri State University Lady Bears. They started out as a low seed, but they are two upset wins away from a national championship. The Lady Bears are coached by Cheryl Burnett who, in her 14 years at SW Missouri, has posted a 274-117 record winning 70 percent of her games.

In recent years, the residents of my home State of Missouri have been privileged to witness many great sports legends, from George Brett and Derrick Thomas in Kansas City to Mark McGuire and Kurt Warner in St. Louis to Springfield's own Payne Stewart. Today I recognize the achievements of the Southwest Missouri State University basketball team and, Jackie Stiles—our newest sports legend.

On March 1 of this year, in front of a sell-out, standing-room-only crowd, Jackie broke the record for most career points scored by a women's basketball player in NCAA Division I, a record that has stood since 1989.

Ms. Stiles is the Nation's leading scorer at 30.7 points per game and the career total is a whopping 3,253 points. Monday night, in Spokane, Washington, Southwest Missouri State rolled over the home team Washington 104 to 87. Jackie Stiles left the game to a standing ovation from 11,000 fans rooting for the opposing team.

Fans in her hometown of Claflin, KS, enjoyed watching her compete in basketball, track, and tennis at the high school level. They watched as she scored more points in the history of Kansas prep sports than any high school basketball player—boys or girls. Her decision to play NCAA Division I basketball at SMS was made after all of the top women's college basketball programs tried to recruit her. Her choice has been applauded time after time over the last 4 years as fans pack into Hammons Student Center to cheer on the Lady Bears team.

Jackie Stiles has led Division I teams in average points per game the past 2 years and was nominated for the prestigious ESPY award, the Naismith Award, and was recently named to both

the Associated Press and the Sports Illustrated Women's All-American First Team. The awards she has earned throughout her career are too numerous to list. Beyond the many honors she has earned we should recognize her for something more important than records and awards. Jackie Stiles has become a role model to the many young people who dream of the kind of achievements she has accomplished. The best thing about this is that she is showing them the way to achieve their goals. First, by being a role model and setting a fine example for young people everywhere. In the words of SMS Lady Bear's head coach Cheryl Burnett, "She really is the kind of role model that an athlete should be . . . Jackie is a tremendous ambassador for women's basketball and athletics in general."

Whether she is breaking records on the court or reading to elementary students, Jackie embodies a spirit of excellence. Second, Jackie Stiles has reached the pinnacle of women's college basketball by combining her talent with more hard work than most can comprehend. She is the product of a small mid-western town and reflects the values you would expect to find in a town of just over 600—hard work, friendliness, dedication, and devotion to family. She has distinguished herself from many sports heroes with her humility which was evident in her recent ESPN interview where she gave credit to the team and the program rather than accepting it for herself. I agree the team deserves a lot of credit, but so does Jackie Stiles.

When Jackie broke her wrist during her sophomore year of high school she did not let it get her down. Instead, she learned to shoot left handed and still averaged 26 points per game. That is also when she began her now-famous 1,000 shots per day practices that kept her in the gym all hours of the day and night. It is that kind of work ethic that builds champions, and that I stand to honor today. She puts her team first and plays unselfishly on the court. When she scored 56 points in a game she gave the credit to her coaches and her teammates, as well as to the enthusiastic fans from Southwest Missouri that have lined up to see her play the last 4 years.

Her team-centered focus on winning games, not personal accolades, sets Jackie Stiles apart. And, finally, it is her focus on being a scholar-athlete, maintaining a high grade point average while dealing with the intense pressures of being in the national spotlight. Thank you, Jackie, for choosing Southwest Missouri State University, and for setting an example for young people everywhere with your hard work and humility. Those are the true things of which champions are made.

I congratulate Coach Burnett, Ms. Stiles, the entire team and University for this great achievement or making it to the Final Four. I plan on attending the game Friday night game in St. Louis to see one of those Indiana teams

dispatched by the Lady Bears. I say to my friends from Indiana, while Indiana may be known for men's basketball, I predict this weekend will make Missouri host to the capital of college women's basketball.

Mr. President, I see no one seeking recognition, so I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORZINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the hour of morning business be extended until 2:15 and that the half hour for the proponents and opponents of the bill be maintained to follow that.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. 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. THOMAS. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

THE UPCOMING BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we are having a little pause in the subject of campaign finance reform, thankfully. We have been at it for some time. Hopefully, we will be through this week soon. It is a very important issue, but I am anxious, as most of us are, to move on to some of the other issues before us. Probably the most important one is that of the budget.

Each session, of course, is important and vital. It is important for us to have a budget. You can argue about the details of the budget, but the fact is that a budget is more than just a piece of paper with our spending plans on it. The budget is what defines where we are going to go over the next 2 years and into the future. It defines, as well, what our priorities are, which is a very important issue. It causes us to look ahead as to where we ought to be doing things that strengthen America, things that we ought to be doing that help put this economy back in place. Hopefully, we will be working on that budget next week.

The President has put forth a budget. Our Budget Committee will come forth

with a budget. I believe the Republican budget addresses the priorities of the American people. It puts us on the continued road of a balanced Federal budget which, of course, for many years we didn't have. We had deficit spending and we continued to increase the debt. We now, largely because of a strong economy, have a situation where we have not only a balanced budget, but a surplus which is, of course, in many ways a very happy thing to have. We have a priority, I hope, of continuing to save Social Security for seniors, not only for the immediate future but for a distance in the future where young people will be able to have benefits from the Social Security they pay in from the very first day on the job. We can commit ourselves to do that by assuring the dollars that come in that are designed for Social Security are used for Social Security.

We have a priority to improve and strengthen Medicare—obviously, one of the things that affects many people. We have to deal with pharmaceuticals and with many of the things that go together to strengthen the Medicare. In terms of dealing with the future and dealing with young people, we need to deal with our national debt which, of course, is very large. I believe we have a responsibility to begin to pay that down. Some people want to pay it down immediately, which is not practical in terms of the fact that the money is invested. But over a period of 10 years under this budget, we can pay that publicly held debt off. I think that is what we ought to do. We have an obligation to do that. We have spent the money and now we should not leave the debt over to the other people.

We are committed to improve educational funding, and we need to do that, to give every school an opportunity. We always get into the argument—of course, a valid argument—about which I feel strongly, and that is whether or not dollars that go from the Federal Government out to education should be used only for purposes that are defined in Washington, which I think is wrong, or should there be an opportunity given for people in local and State levels to use the money as they determine it is most needed for their particular school. And then, finally, we have an opportunity, which I hope we will take full advantage of, to return the surplus tax overcharges to the American taxpayers. Return the money to the people who have paid.

Of course, we also have a challenge with our economy weakening. It has weakened over the past year. We have an opportunity to do something more immediate on tax changes and put more money back into the economy in the short run. I am hopeful that we will do that.

The budget the President has proposed, the budget we will be talking about, does strengthen and reform education. It provides the Education Department with the largest percentage increase of any Federal department. It

triples the funding for children's reading programs.

It does protect Social Security. It preserves Social Security by locking away all of the \$2.6 trillion Social Security payments that will be paid in and the surplus for Social Security.

It strengthens defense, which has to necessarily be one of our priorities. We have not, over the past several years, done what we have needed to do to keep our defense the toughest in the world, or have the oversight to make an evaluation of where we are on weapons, or to do something for the volunteer service to encourage people to be in the military, or to do something about the living conditions of our military personnel.

We need to protect the environment. Right now we are faced with a challenge, a crisis in energy, and much of that will have to be resolved by more production, by, as in my State of Wyoming, producing more resources for energy.

As we do that, we must equally be concerned about protecting the environment. We are being challenged by organizations that say: If you are going to protect the environment, you cannot have access, you cannot use those lands at all. Those are not the choices. We can, indeed, have access to public land. We can, indeed, utilize those resources and allow people to hike, hunt, produce on those lands, and, at the same time, protect the environment.

Next week is going to be one of the most challenging weeks as we deal with the budget, our priorities, and what we are going to do about the surpluses. Americans are paying the highest percentage of tax of gross national product, higher than World War II. That should not be the case, and we have an opportunity to change it.

We have an opportunity to let local people and the States be involved in the decisions rather than dictating from Washington, as we have become accustomed to over the last number of years.

We have an opportunity to do some things, and I am excited about that opportunity. It is very important we pass a budget. If we do not do that, we will not be able to deal with tax reductions, which I think are terribly important, not only as a matter of fairness to the American people but as a matter of helping this economy and moving it forward as quickly as we can.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CLINTON). The Senator from Missouri.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Madam President, we will have many important debates over the coming year on this Senate floor. Debates about tax cuts, spending priorities, education and defense, health care and agriculture. But none of these debates will be more important to the future of our democratic process than the debate over campaign finance reform.

From the time I sat at our kitchen table balancing the books on my husband's earliest campaign to his race for the U.S. Senate, I have witnessed the changing face of campaigns.

Last year's U.S. Senate race in Missouri shattered all previous records. The two opposing campaigns spent almost \$18 million. This figure does not include spending by the state parties or outside interest groups.

For \$18 million, Missouri could have done any one of the following:

- built two new elementary schools;
- hired 500 new teachers;
- sent 3800 students to the University of Missouri;
- provided day care to an additional 5000 low-income children;
- put 9,000 new computers into our schools.

There is no accounting of the hours and effort that went into raising these large sums of money. It is time and energy I am sure all Senators would rather spend discussing the issues and dealing with problems affecting their constituents.

The traditional face-to-face visits with voters at the State fair, the local diner or a town hall play a much smaller role in modern political campaigns. Instead, candidates introduce themselves with costly and skillfully packaged commercials.

According to a recent study, viewers in the Kansas City area were exposed to over 22,000 campaign commercials during the 2000 election cycle. At 30 seconds apiece, that is the equivalent of 187 straight hours of campaign ads. The same study showed that the number of ads nationwide has nearly tripled since 1998. Without reform, there is no end in sight.

Not only do candidates air ads to get their own message out, they must also respond to negative attacks. More and more, our political discourse is turning away from an honest discussion of the issues affecting the average American. Personal attacks and outrageous distortions are all too common.

What are the consequences?

Today, Americans are more cynical and more disconnected from the government than ever. They read of huge contributions from special interest groups and wonder how one small voice can possibly be heard over the shouts of large donors to political campaigns.

Election day for them is not a celebration of self-government, but a finale to months of nasty, negative messages that have invaded their homes and mailboxes.

To rejuvenate our democracy, we must change the common perception and reality that our political system is dominated by big money. To wean American politics from these excesses will be costly and painful, but we must begin.

While many reforms are necessary, purging the system of unlimited donations to campaigns through so called "soft money" is a necessary first step.

Some would argue that passing McCain-Feingold will hurt the Democratic Party, but I say if we do not pass