

The Senate has passed appropriation bills for the legislative branch, military construction, and homeland security, with 8 others ready for floor action upon our return in September.

After 42 days of consideration during the past 2 years, the Senate has passed an energy bill.

After more than a decade of repression, the Senate has passed the *Burmes Freedom and Democracy Act*.

And to ensure funding of any disasters that may arise prior to the Congress' return in September, the Senate has enacted an emergency supplemental for FEMA funding.

Looking to the earlier part of the year, the Senate, extended unemployment benefits to those who need it—twice; passed the 11 unfinished spending bills from the last Congress; funded Operation Iraqi Freedom; initiated the protection of Homeland by confirming the nomination of the first Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security; maintained fiscal discipline by passing the Federal budget which the Senate failed to do last year; enacted the President's plans to create jobs and stimulate the economy; banned the horrific practice of partial birth abortion; passed the President's faith-based initiative; funded the effort to eradicate the scourge of global AIDS; acted to guard our children against abduction and exploitation by passing the PROTECT Act; improved safeguards from foreign terrorists by enacting the FISA bill; expanded of NATO to include most of the former Warsaw Pact countries; passed a significant arms reduction treaty with enemy turned ally, Russia; taken steps to bridge the digital divide by providing needed funds to historically black colleges; affirmed the constitutionality of using the term "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance; awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to Prime Minister Tony Blair; and provided tax equity to men and women in our Nation's Armed Forces.

This is a record all Senators can be particularly proud of. There is much yet to be done, but we have had an extraordinary first half of the year. Members of the Senate can go back to their States with a good feeling they have made great progress for our people.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will begin a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

The Senator from New Mexico.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, let me speak very briefly in regard to the

Energy bill that we passed here last night. As I just did personally, let me congratulate the majority leader on the decision he and the minority leader, Senator DASCHLE, made to move ahead and take the bill that was developed and had strong bipartisan support in the previous Congress and send that to the conference with the House as the democratically passed bill.

I think that was the right decision. That bill, as many have said, had a strong majority in the previous Congress. I think there were 88 Senators voting for it. There were nearly that many voting for it last night when it, once again, passed the Senate. I think that does allow us to move to the next stage of the process of actually writing a comprehensive Energy bill.

I, like many of my colleagues on the Democratic side, strongly support enacting a comprehensive bill. We have worked very hard to do that in the previous Congress. We worked hard to do that in this Congress, and to assist the majority in the development of the bill.

I believe strongly that the amendments that were offered to the bill that my colleague, Senator DOMENICI, brought to the floor were constructive amendments, were intended to improve the bill, were intended to get us in a better position to serve the needs of the country as far as energy is concerned over the next years and decades.

I think this result is a good one. Like all successful results in Congress, nobody won everything; nobody lost everything. There were wins and losses on both sides. I think that is the nature of compromise. But the end result is the American people will win. We will be able to go to conference now and hopefully develop an Energy bill that will continue to enjoy strong bipartisan support.

That is a challenge, as I see it. We have come a long way in a bipartisan way. We have had disagreements about particular provisions of the bill, but by and large we have been willing to resolve those differences and come up with something that makes good sense for the country. That same process needs to continue in the conference. I am confident it will.

Again, my colleague Senator DOMENICI will chair that conference. We had some disagreement in the previous Congress as to whether the Senate or House chairman should be the chair of the conference. We concluded that, based on precedent and all, in the 107th Congress the House was entitled to that position. But it is obvious now that in this Congress the Senate is entitled to that position. Senator DOMENICI will chair the conference. I hope to be on the conference once the conferees are named, and I look forward to working with him and with all the other members on the conference to try to ensure that we come up with a good bill that meets our long-term energy needs.

Let me, before I yield the floor, just take a moment to thank the staff, the

Energy Committee staff, the cloakroom staff, and Senator DASCHLE's staff, for the hard work they put in getting us to this point on the energy legislation: On the Democratic committee staff of the Energy Committee: Bob Simon, Sam Fowler, Vicki Thorne, Patty Beneke, Mike Connor, Leon Lowery, Deborah Estes, Jennifer Michael, Bill Wicker, Jonathan Black, Jonathan Epstein, Malini Sekhar, Poonum Agrawal, Amanda Goldman, Shelley Brown, and Rosemarie Calabro.

The Democratic cloakroom staff, of course, is essential to all the progress we make here in the Senate. I want to acknowledge them: Marty Paone, Lula Davis, Nancy Iacomini, Tim Mitchell, Tricia Engle, Bret Wincup, Eric Pederson, Joe Lapia, Ben Vaughan.

I thank all of them and also Senator DASCHLE's excellent staff that is essential to all progress, as well, here in the Senate: Mark Childress, Jonathan Lehman, Peter Umhofer, Mark Patterson, and Michele Ballentine.

I think the result we achieved regarding energy was a good one. We now have a lot of work to do this fall when we return on the conference. I look forward to that. I am confident we can succeed in passing a good, bipartisan bill. I hope that will be the result.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, we have passed the supplemental appropriations bill. Because of the lateness of the hour last evening, and the fact that the House had already adjourned, having sent an emergency spending bill to us that basically included disaster relief money to FEMA, almost \$1 billion, we were left with a choice of having to take it or leave it. It certainly was necessary for funding for FEMA for all kinds of emergencies. But, unfortunately, we did not have the opportunity to amend the bill to add additional items of very necessary funding.

One of those is the ongoing investigation into what happened to the Space Shuttle *Columbia*. This commission was established by NASA and headed by retired Navy Admiral Gayman. I have personally visited with them several times, and I am quite impressed with the professionalism of the individual members of the *Columbia* commission.

Certainly I am impressed with the professionalism and the dedication of Admiral Gayman as we anticipate the forthcoming report about what happened to the space shuttle. What was