

I also announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) is absent attending a funeral.

On this vote, the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) is paired with the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON).

If present and voting, the Senator from New York would vote nay and the Senator from Nevada would vote aye. I therefore withhold my vote.

I further announce that, if present and voting the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) would each vote no.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 213 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	DeWine	Miller
Allard	Dole	Murkowski
Allen	Domenici	Nickles
Bennett	Enzi	Roberts
Bond	Fitzgerald	Santorum
Breaux	Frist	Sessions
Brownback	Graham (SC)	Shelby
Bunning	Grassley	Smith
Burns	Gregg	Snowe
Campbell	Hagel	Specter
Chafee	Hatch	Stevens
Chambliss	Hutchison	Sununu
Cochran	Inhofe	Talent
Coleman	Kyl	Thomas
Collins	Lott	Voinovich
Cornyn	Lugar	Warner
Craig	McCain	
Crapo	McConnell	

NAYS—44

Akaka	Edwards	Levin
Baucus	Ensign	Lieberman
Bayh	Feingold	Lincoln
Bingaman	Feinstein	Mikulski
Boxer	Graham (FL)	Murray
Byrd	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Cantwell	Hollings	Nelson (NE)
Carper	Inouye	Pryor
Conrad	Jeffords	Reed
Corzine	Johnson	Rockefeller
Daschle	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Dayton	Kerry	Schumer
Dodd	Kohl	Stabenow
Dorgan	Landrieu	Wyden
Durbin	Lautenberg	

PRESENT AND GIVING A LIVE PAIR—1

Reid

NOT VOTING—3

Biden Clinton Leahy

The bill (S. 2986) was passed, as follows:

S. 2986

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. INCREASE IN PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT.

Subsection (b) of section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking “\$7,384,000,000,000” and inserting “\$8,184,000,000,000”.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. LOTT. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

● Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I was not able to participate in today's debate

and vote on the extension of the national debt limit. I was attending the funeral of a great civil rights leader in Delaware, Jane E. Mitchell. Had I been here to vote, Mr. President, I would have cast a symbolic vote against an extension of the debt limit. Today's fiscal mess, the transformation of historic surpluses into record deficits, is not an accident. It is the inevitable outcome of policies that consistently ignored evidence and experience.

When we launched out on a course of tax cutting, with expanding domestic and international obligations and responsibilities, many of us in Congress argued that we could not afford to do everything, that we needed a fiscal policy that matched our revenues with our expenditures. Some tax cuts, especially for the middle class, were needed, tax cuts that could have revived job growth and aided economic recovery. Instead, we have a policy that calls for permanent tax cuts that overwhelmingly favor those who are already well off. When twice the administration asked us to appropriate funds for our military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, I stood here on the Senate floor and said that we should pay for those obligations with smaller tax cuts for our wealthiest taxpayers, and not just pass the bill on to all our children.

We are here today because that advice was ignored, those hard choices were ducked, and the bill for our decisions will be sent to our children and grandchildren, in the form of the additional debt we will authorize today. It did not have to be this way, Mr. President. In the next Congress, the threat of massive deficits, which have made us increasingly dependent of foreign lenders to stay afloat, will still be with us. My symbolic vote against raising the debt limit would have been a protest of the policies that have brought us to this point, and a demand that we change course.●

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

MANDATORY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue of importance not only to South Dakota producers

and ranchers, but to producers and ranchers all across America.

The issue involves a program that would not only provide positive benefits for our agricultural producers, but ensure consumer choice in the grocery store aisle and on the dinner table.

There are efforts underway, unfortunately, to gut the mandatory country-of-origin labeling law that was incorporated into the 2002 farm bill, a farm bill signed into law by this President, and which should be supported by this administration. I rise today to express concern that the fiscal year 2005 omnibus appropriations measure may contain provisions which would weaken or replace mandatory country-of-origin labeling with a voluntary country-of-origin labeling program.

As you will recall, last year the Senate overwhelmingly supported a resolution that Senator DASCHLE introduced instructing conferees to strike any language which would delay the implementation of a mandatory labeling program. The omnibus conference recessed hastily, and consequently no opportunity existed to debate and vote on that matter. In any event, the fiscal year 2004 agriculture appropriations bill, the vehicle for the fiscal year 2004 omnibus, contained language delaying country-of-origin labeling by 2 years for all covered commodities with the exception of farm fish and wild fish. This language was adopted by only a small margin in the House. I rise today to urge my colleagues in the Senate to convey their support for this measure and the importance of mandatory country-of-origin labeling.

It is no secret that this administration has voiced its support for resumption of trade of live Canadian cattle, and it is only a matter of time before our producers feel the economic impact of this decision. When USDA opens the floodgates, and if our mandatory labeling program is gutted, consumers will have no way of determining where their meat comes from. And I worry that the Canadian border will reopen before we have resumed trade relations with some of our key export markets. That presents a dangerous situation for our producers, and I fail to see why the administration would continue to cheer large agribusiness while the burden of our faltering export markets is borne by the individuals feeding this great Nation.

Country-of-origin labeling retains support from over 80 percent of American consumers, and recently about 95 consumer and producer groups, representing over 50 million Americans, wrote Congress to express their support for a mandatory food labeling program. They also conveyed their opposition to any effort to turn this program into a voluntary program in the 2005 omnibus appropriations measure. Country-of-origin labeling has overwhelming bipartisan support, and the majority of our trading partners have already implemented a country-of-origin system in their respective countries. It is time to