

Congress pass a balanced budget amendment this year.

Today, we will begin the debate on several different proposals that have been introduced as possibilities. All of these proposals have merit—and I believe that all of them are serious efforts at formulating the best possible amendment to the Constitution.

However, I am concerned that we do not lose sight of our goal. As we engage in this debate, and examine the strengths and weaknesses of the various proposals, I urge my colleagues to remember how important it is to pass a balanced budget amendment. Our debt currently exceeds \$4.3 trillion. Since this House last voted on a balanced budget amendment last March, our debt has increased by more than \$160 billion.

This country needs a balanced budget amendment and the Stenholm-Schaefer amendment is our best hope. While all other proposals will be dead on arrival in the Senate—the Stenholm-Schaefer amendment has the bipartisan support needed to actually pass in the Senate and I urge my colleagues to support it.

□ 1230

THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, as debate begins on the balanced budget amendment, there are two issues we need to keep in mind.

First, the mere ratification of the balanced budget amendment will not balance the budget. Between ratification of the amendment and the year 2002—when the amendment would come into force—we will continue to face yearly deficits of \$200 billion. That is why it is imperative that we stipulate how the deficit will be reduced and why we need to be up front with the American people and explain the detailed steps we will take in balancing the Nation's books.

Second, we have to guarantee that we will not balance the budget on the backs of the States. Shifting spending from the Federal Government to State and local governments is not the answer and—despite the Rules Committee not placing in order my amendment on cost shifting—our State and local governments deserve to be protected from any such attempt to do so.

THE CONSTITUTION: A DOCUMENT INTENDED TO ENDURE FOR AGES TO COME

(Mrs. CLAYTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CLAYTON. Madam Speaker, over a period of more than two centuries, we have amended the Constitution 27 times, 27 times in more than 200 years.

Madam Speaker, the text of the 27th amendment was prepared September 25, 1789, and was not ratified until May 19, 1992, 203 years later.

With this amendment and the amendment for term limits, the majority proposes to ratify the Constitution two times in 100 days. The House Committee on the Judiciary approved the balanced budget amendment in exactly 1 week after we convened the 104th Congress. The Senate Judiciary Committee approved it 1 week after the House did.

Now, 3 weeks after we have convened, we are being asked to actually amend the Constitution and send it to the States. This impetuous pace, this haste, is a far cry from John Marshall's of the Constitution as the document intended to endure for all ages.

Madam Speaker, amending the Constitution is a serious matter. It is not to be done in haste.

CREATE LOAN GUARANTEES HERE AT HOME

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, this morning we have spent a great deal of time in Banking talking about a \$40 billion potential guarantee to Mexico. We heard arguments that the reason we ought to do this is because it is good for America; it is good for Mexico, because Mexico is on our borders; it will create jobs.

As I listened to the discussion, and I give consideration to the fact that so many of us are talking about reductions in various programs, welfare and other programs, I could agree with that if we could also make the same kind of passionate arguments for the creation of loan guarantees in this Third World nation within our borders. If we could conglomerate those communities, give loan guarantees to create small businesses, then those persons we bring off of welfare would have job opportunities in the communities in which they live. When the loans are repaid, we take that money, reinvest it in those communities, create more jobs, create more job opportunities, and then we do not have to worry about growing welfare or other entitlement programs.

Madam Speaker, I believe if we are looking for a way to be able to solve the problem of the growing budget in this area, then the best way to do it is let us talk about loan guarantees, not just for Mexico. If it is good for Mexico, it ought to be good for America to do it here at home.

THE NATIONAL DEBT AND THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, we cannot go on as a nation piling debt on debt year after year. The national debt

is nearly five times higher today than it was when Ronald Reagan became President in 1981. That is a disgraceful, bipartisan legacy of irresponsible spending and tax giveaways.

The total debt of the Federal Government totals more than \$4.6 trillion, more than \$16,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. Interest alone will total more than \$225 billion, more than 10 times all the Federal funds spent on all education programs and assistance by the Federal Government.

Some oppose the balanced budget amendment over genuine concern for the fate of Social Security, child nutrition, education funding, or other meritorious programs. An honest assessment of these programs shows us they have not done well while we accumulated \$4 trillion in debt these last 12 years.

There is not a penny in the Social Security trust fund. It has all been borrowed and spent, replaced by a pile of IOU's.

Twenty percent of my State's children live in poverty and go to bed hungry every night.

We all know the shortfall in education funding. It is time to balance the Federal budget.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 17, TREATMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY UNDER ANY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT REQUIRING A BALANCED BUDGET, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1, PROPOSING A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 44 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 44

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 17) relating to the treatment of Social Security under any constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, if called up by the majority leader or his designee. The concurrent resolution shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution to final adoption without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. At any time after the disposition of the concurrent resolution made in order by the first section of this resolution, the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 1) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The first reading of the joint resolution shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the joint resolution for failure to comply with

clause 2(g)(3) of rule XI are waived. General debate shall be confined to the joint resolution and shall not exceed three hours equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the joint resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the joint resolution shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by Representative Barton of Texas and an opponent, and shall not be subject to amendment while pending. No further amendment shall be in order except those designated in section 3 of this resolution. Each amendment may be offered only in the order designated, may be offered only by the named proponent or a designee, may be considered notwithstanding the adoption of a previous amendment in the nature of a substitute, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to amendment. If more than one amendment is adopted, then only the one receiving the greater number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. In the case of a tie for the greater number of affirmative votes, then only the last amendment to receive that number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted, except that if the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary is one of the amendments receiving the greater number of votes then it shall be the amendment considered as finally adopted. At the conclusion of consideration of the joint resolution for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the joint resolution to the House with such amendment as may have been finally adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. The further amendments that may be offered after disposition of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary are those printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 6 of rule XXIII with the following designations: (a) the amendment numbered 4 by Representative Owens of New York; (b) the amendment numbered 1 by Representative Wise of West Virginia; (c) the amendment numbered 25 by Representative Conyers of Michigan; (d) the amendment numbered 29 by Representative Gephardt of Missouri; and (e) the amendment numbered 39 by Representative Schaefer of Colorado.

□ 1240

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut). The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

During consideration of this resolution, all time is yielded for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, today we begin consideration of what

may well be the most important matter this Congress will consider over the next 2 years, a balanced budget constitutional amendment. In order to make it perfectly clear right up front that the budget is not to be balanced by cutting Social Security, this rule first makes in order a resolution designed to protect Social Security.

The concurrent resolution directs the committees which will be proposing legislation to implement the requirement for a balanced budget to leave Social Security alone.

The concurrent resolution will be debated for 1 hour, and then the House will vote on that issue.

Next, the rule provides the most open and the most fair process that has ever been used by this House to consider a balanced budget amendment.

The record shows that very clearly.

The rule provides 3 hours of general debate on the balanced budget amendment. After general debate, the rule provides first for a vote on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. This is the Barton version of the balanced budget constitutional amendment. It the version which includes the requirement for a three-fifths' vote to increase tax revenues; it is this version that I strongly support.

We need to balance the budget, but we need to do it without making it easy to raise taxes. That really is what this debate is all about. After the vote on the committee substitute, there will then be votes on the five additional substitutes, four of which are to be offered by the Democrats.

This process is much more fair to the minority than at any other time the House has considered a balanced budget amendment. Each of the six substitutes will be debated for 1 hour, with a separate vote taken on each one. And the one that receives the most votes is the version that will be put to a final vote; that is, requiring a two-thirds majority, or 290 votes, to pass.

Finally, the rule provides a motion to recommit, which will give the minority one final chance to offer any amendment which complies with the standing rules of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers of the national debt in this Nation have grown so large that they have become difficult for most of us to really comprehend, even those here, those of us who deal with it every day, much less the American people.

Madam Speaker, the Federal debt has tripled during the last 10 fiscal years to almost \$5 trillion in accumulated debt.

How much debt is that? It is just almost incomprehensible. It is a thousand billion dollars, not a thousand million dollars but a thousand billion dollars five times over. That is how much the accumulated debt is in this country.

The interest alone is projected at \$235 billion for the current fiscal year. That is almost as much as we spend on the national defense of this country, which is the primary reason we formed this

Republic of States in the first place, to provide for a common defense.

Here we are spending just on the interest alone \$235 billion this year. And if interest rates rise, heaven help us. But even if they do not, in just 4 or 5 years the interest we pay out annually to foreign countries, like the Netherlands and Great Britain and other countries that hold our national debt, the interest will rise to \$400 billion a year. What are we going to do to help people who are truly in need then, when all the money is going out either for national defense or just to pay the interest on the annual debt service?

Madam Speaker and Members, the deficit for this year is projected at \$176 billion, and that is underestimated. Next year it is projected to rise to \$207 billion, and that is underestimated. And by the year 2000 it is projected to be almost \$300 billion unless we do something about it. That is in spite of that huge tax increase in 1990 under President Bush and that huge tax increase in 1992 under President Clinton. We are still running debts annually of \$300 billion. What is going on around here?

Madam Speaker, the first step we can take is enacting a real balanced budget amendment.

Now, you have heard these 1-minute speeches here today. The opponents of these constitutional amendments will say that amendments are not necessary because Congress can control the problem any time it wants. That is a true statement.

Well, let me just tell you this: In the last Congress I offered an alternative, and here it is right here. I offered an alternative budget resolution which would have reduced the deficit to zero in just 5 years, and listen to this: Without raising taxes, without cutting Social Security, and without cutting contractual obligations to our veterans.

We balanced the budget and are left with an \$8 billion surplus at the end of 5 years. Let me tell you something: That budget provided for tough spending cuts. It included language saying if Congress did not like the specific spending cuts that are in there—and they are specific and scored by the Congressional Budget Office—Congress could do whatever it wanted. Congress could always substitute those cuts for others. That is what we are going to have to be doing after we enact this constitutional amendment.

But was that adopted? No, this budget was not passed, not on your life. It only got 73 votes; 55 or 56 Republicans and 17 Democrats.

Madam Speaker and Members, we have come to a point where those of us who care about our children and care about our grandchildren—and I have 4 grandchildren, along with 5 children—we are going to have to take a very serious step to put an end to the irresponsible deficit spending that we have been talking about here this morning

and which is drowning this country in a sea of red ink. And it is totally, totally irresponsible. A balanced budget amendment will do just that.

Madam Speaker and Members, no one proposes that such a solution be taken lightly. The problem requires drastic action, and the time is now, it is right now today. The longer we wait the deeper in debt this Nation will be and the more difficult it will be to get out of it. It is almost too late now.

Madam Speaker, Congress has repeatedly shown that it is not prepared to deal responsibly with the problems without some kind of a prod. The enactment of a balanced budget amendment will help to give Congress—and this is the point—it will help to give Congress that prod, that spine, that backbone and, for some who need it, the excuse to do what the American people have to do, and that is to live within our means.

I urge you to vote "yes" for this rule and then for the American people, please vote for the balanced budget amendment. Let us give it to the people to let them ratify it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend from New York, Mr. SOLOMON, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this very closed rule.

Madam Speaker, I am hearing a lot of double talk these days, especially around the word "open." When my Republican colleagues were in the minority, they said that nearly every rule we granted was closed, including rules that provided for time caps and required amendments to be printed in the RECORD. But now that they are in the majority, Republican Members have changed the meaning of the word "open" 180 degrees.

Now a rule that cuts off debate, restricts amendments and refuses to allow Members to work together as the President urged us last night is not just called an open rule but a most open rule. I do not know what that means.

Madam Speaker, Republican flipflops are enough to give a weather vane whiplash.

I have heard my colleagues compare this rule to other balanced budget rules, but what they do not tell you and they do not tell the American people is that every one of the balanced budget rules is the result of either a discharge petition or reported to preempt discharge, and closely imitated the discharge rule.

What they do not say is that I opposed those rules too because they were too restrictive. Check the record.

The last time the discharge rule allowed only the amendments that were made in order the Congress before, I led the opposition because I knew that new

Members and other people had new ideas on the topic and were being stifled. Unlike my Republican colleagues, my position has been consistent.

Madam Speaker, the Republicans would have us believe that constitutional amendments must be considered under a gag rule, that they always are considered under a gag rule. I would like to take this opportunity to say to the American people that this is not true.

□ 1250

In fact, constitutional amendments are usually considered in the Committee of the Whole under an open rule. This tradition, Madam Speaker, began in the very first session of the First Congress when the Bill of Rights was considered. People offered amendments, including perfecting amendments. Some were accepted, some were rejected, and none of them were printed in advance in the RECORD. If an open rule worked for the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, Madam Speaker, if an open rule worked for our Founding Fathers, it should work for us here today with the balanced budget amendment.

Over the past 30 years, Madam Speaker, every single rule reported from the Committee on Rules on a constitutional amendment has been an open rule except those that arrived as a result of a discharge petition or rules designed to preempt discharge. I am talking about rules for amendments dealing with Presidential succession, direct election of the President, granting the vote for 18-year-olds, the Equal Rights Amendment, D.C. congressional representation, and let me repeat, Madam Speaker:

Every one of those rules were open.

But today things have changed. I ask my colleagues to look at what has been excluded by what the Republicans call a most open rule. Look at the new ideas denied debate:

A bipartisan substitute on unfunded mandates; a substitute offered by the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] protecting civil rights legislation; a substitute offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] excluding Social Security and allowing Congress to waive the requirements in case of a recession; a substitute offered by the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. THORNTON] excluding capital investments providing long-term economic returns; a substitute offered by the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] on judicial review; a substitute offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOGLIETTA] requiring a three-fifths vote to reduce funding for low income health, education and employment programs; an amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FATTAH] on natural disasters; amendments offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. NADLER] clarifying the phrase "increasing tax revenues; an idea offered by the gentleman from

Utah [Mr. ORTON] to use sequestration to bring us back to balance.

Madam Speaker, the list goes on, and on, and on.

Let me tell my colleagues all is not lost. There is a chance really to fix this rule. If we defeat the previous question, I will then offer a germane amendment to the rule that will be an open rule and will give us an opportunity to consider a truth-in-budgeting perfecting amendment.

In closing I urge all my Members to vote no on the previous question and then vote yes on the amendment to consider balanced budget under an open rule and to allow the truth-in-budgeting perfecting amendment.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to respond to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] my good friend.

As my good friend knows, A Democrat Member on his side of the aisle had a balanced budget amendment pending before our Committee on Rules in both the 102d and 103d Congresses, and our committee deliberately stalled it and never let it come to the floor.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the very fine gentleman from Kingsport, TN [Mr. QUILLEN], the chairman emeritus of the Committee on Rules.

(Mr. QUILLEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. QUILLEN. Madam Speaker, in my 32 years here in this House, I have always tried to be helpful in passing a constitutional budget amendment. I think it is absolutely necessary that we act today favorably, and that we pass this constitutional amendment without any delay. The people of this Nation demand it, the majority of this House demands it, and I think the majority of the States will ratify it, not only the majority in total, but the majority required. Some of the 50 States today have some kind of a balanced budget amendment, meaning that they cannot spend any more than they take in.

Madam Speaker, Tennessee is a good example of that. We have had it for years, and it works. The Federal Government should have it, and it will work. We should give it a try, and today is the day that we are going to do just that.

I commend the members of the Committee on Rules in the majority for bringing this to the floor of the House, and I know that these amendments, which will be discussed in full, embrace all of the ideas that were introduced that the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] alluded to. I know that we will have an opportunity to discuss those issues, and in the end I certainly hope that this House will act responsibly and favorably and pass this constitutional budget amendment without delay.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], the minority whip of the Democrat Party.

Mr. BONIOR. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], my friend, for yielding this time to me, and I thank my colleagues on the Committee on Rules and on the other side of the aisle for the good work they have done so far this year.

Madam Speaker, the American people have a right to know how we are going to balance the budget, and they are not going to be fooled by fig leaves. They are not going to be distracted by simple solutions. As my colleagues know, in a poll that was released just yesterday, 86 percent of the American people said that Republicans should specify what they intend to cut before passing a balanced budget amendment, and in the President's State of the Union Address that night one idea that went off the charts was the idea that we should be honest with the American people and spell out exactly what is going to be cut to balance the budget.

I say to my colleagues:

"Now the question isn't whether or not you support a balanced budget. The question is, and always has been, how do you intend to get there?"

Now balancing the budget is going to require a mammoth cut totaling over \$1.2 trillion. This will affect every man, every woman, every child in this country for years to come. The American people have a right to know:

"How are you going to get there?"

"How much are you going to cut from Social Security?"

"How much are you going to cut from Medicare?"

"How much are you going to cut from student loans?"

"How much are you going to cut from veterans' benefits?"

Madam Speaker, the American people want to know.

My friend, Madam Speaker, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], just went like this, and we are not going to cut anything. But then he offered a substitute on the budget just last year, let me tell my colleagues what he did cut:

He wanted to eliminate all ag subsidies except for dairy, he wanted 50 percent cut in job training, and he had \$140 billion over 5 years cut in Medicare. I say to the gentleman, "We need to know what you're about doing with this balanced budget amendment."

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I will when I finish with my statement.

Now, Republicans say it is unreasonable, unreasonable to ask us where these cuts are going to come from. Madam Speaker, I guess I was brought up under a different set of rules. I was taught if I were going to do something, I ought to have the guts to say how I am going to do it.

I say to my colleagues, "It's cowardly to say that you're for a balanced budget and then to leave it to future Congresses to figure out how that budget is going to be reached. It's like something a retired auto worker in my district once told me. He said, 'Think about this in common sense terms.' He said, 'I wouldn't sign a mortgage without first knowing how much the monthly payments are going to be. I wouldn't like a mechanic to do major work on my car without first getting an estimate on what the repair bill is going to be.' So he said, 'I don't see why it's so unreasonable to say that before we have a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget, we first have some idea how that budget will be balanced.'"

Madam Speaker, I know the majority leader says that, if the American people saw the details, that our knees would buckle. Well, I say to my colleagues, "I would guess that, if your bank gave an estimate on your monthly mortgage payments that would cause your knees to buckle, you might think twice about buying that home."

We all know what is going on here. We all know why knees would buckle. My colleagues do not want to come clean with the American people because they do not want them to know the truth, and the truth is they are going to slash Social Security, they are going to slash Medicare, they are going to slash veterans' benefits, they are going to pick the pockets of our seniors and balance the budget on the backs of senior citizens and children because that is what the Republicans have done traditionally, and if that is not true, if I am wrong, then show us it is not true. I say to my colleagues, "Show us your hand. Show us how you intend to balance the budget."

Each and every one of these substitutes that we have before us today and tomorrow should be forced to reveal exactly what cuts they intend to make to balance the budget.

□ 1300

Madam Speaker, they way this rule is written right now, that is not the case. I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question and let us bring an open rule that applies a truth test to every substitute that is before us today. The American people deserve better than what I think this gutless bill we have before us now provides. They want to know, and they deserve to know, the truth.

I think, Madam Speaker, it is way past time that we gave it to them.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS], a very distinguished member of the Committee on Rules.

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Madam Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-

BALART], for yielding me this time, and I congratulate the chairman of the Committee on Rules for revealing the true specific plan to achieve a balanced budget, showing that it can be done.

Madam Speaker, on November 8 of last year, the American people elected us to fulfill a contract. That contract includes allowing a vote on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. And not just any balanced budget amendment, but specifically one that would permanently protect the American taxpayer from further unwarranted tax hikes—tax hikes like the one in President Clinton's 1993 reconciliation—that come in the name of deficit reduction. The American people signaled on November 8 that they want us to vote on the Barton amendment, and to require a three-fifths supermajority to raise taxes. And that's what we will do here today—as promised. Today's modified open rule is fair. It provides guidance to navigate through the 44 substitutes offered—including many overlapping proposals—by bringing forward four Democrat substitutes and one bipartisan alternative. There was ongoing consultation with the minority, and the minority leader was given the opportunity to designate priority amendments. There is some merit in all of the proposals—notably the Schaefer substitute, which offers a well-known balanced budget amendment that this House has come close to adopting several times in the past. But make no mistake, this debate focuses on the version of the balanced budget amendment that Americans said they wanted, the one included in the Contract With America. Some in this minority will no doubt complain that one or another specific proposal is left out of the process. But the American people understand that this debate should focus on the big ideas—and we won't be sidetracked by those who oppose balancing the budget and are using every excuse to slow down passage of the balanced budget amendment. American's did not vote for delay—they voted for action—now.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the bipartisan Commission on Entitlement Reform and as a Representative from Florida, I am quite familiar—if not acutely aware—with the situation facing Social Security. According to all the experts, the Social Security trust fund will continue to run a surplus until at least 2012—and it is not expected to add to the deficit until 2029. The idea that passage now of the balanced budget amendment will mean immediate and drastic cuts in Social Security benefits is a scare tactic pure and simple. That is just not the truth. In fact, as demonstrated by the Entitlement Commission findings, the greatest threat to Social Security comes from our annual red ink and mounting debt—if allowed to continue, interest payments on the debt alone could eventually squeeze all other programs—Social Security included—out

of the picture. Make no mistake, Social Security is off-budget, and it will stay that way. The Flanagan resolution—House Concurrent Resolution 17—made in order under the rule, shows our firm resolve in this respect. The situation is serious: We are currently in debt to the tune of \$4.6 trillion, a figure that continues to grow by over \$200 billion a year. Madam Speaker, in light of this I was startled to hear the ranking minority member of the Judiciary Committee testify to the Rules Committee that the national debt is currently being reduced. I'm not sure how he arrives at this, since every year that we run a deficit, we add to our national debt. Surely the minority is not advocating still bigger debt for our children to bear. In closing I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the Barton amendment.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. BEILENSON].

(Mr. BEILENSON asked and was given permission to extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEILENSON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], former chairman of the Rules Committee, and our ranking member, who has so ably helped us protect the rights of the minority and the citizens of our country through his work on this committee. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, this is certainly not the open rule that we had been promised, and while it is not entirely closed, we are all disappointed in the restrictive nature of this resolution for the consideration of a measure so momentous as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

As has been well noted by the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], the history of the manner in which constitutional amendments have been considered, clearly shows that the use of the open rule is the wisest approach, and the one that appears to have been most often used when the threat of a discharge petition was not pending, as is currently the case.

Even more disappointing, under this rule no perfecting amendments are allowed. If even a few of the proposed perfecting amendments had been made in order, we could have accommodated most of the major concerns about the legislation, and given Members of the House a chance to express their feelings on a number of very important additional issues—issues which are precluded from considering under this proposed rule.

This is an immensely significant matter that we are dealing with, and we should do everything in our power to ensure that we take this step—if, in fact, we are going to do it—as carefully, and as thoughtfully, as possible.

There clearly were a handful of very fundamental and important issues that should have been allowed to be considered as perfecting amendments, such as

one to consider alone the three-fifths requirement to increase tax revenue—a perfecting amendment proposed by Mr. VOLKMER—and another to require truth in budgeting proposed by the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CONYERS].

In addition, several substitutes that were not made in order would have provided us with the opportunity to further improve the final product of this debate.

I refer particularly to the substitute offered by the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. THORNTON], which sought to define capital budgets by going beyond investments for physical infrastructure alone, to include also investments in developmental capital such as education and training.

We should also have been allowed to consider, either as a perfecting amendment or as a substitute, the suggestion of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] for keeping the minutiae and complexity of changes in the budget process itself out of the Constitution, allowing it to be handled separately as legislation, and thus providing us with a choice for a simpler constitutional amendment.

And, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] offered several good proposals, including one that would allow Congress to approve an unbalanced budget during a time of national security emergency, short of a declaration of war, which is required in the pending proposal.

This rule, unfortunately, does not give us that opportunity, and it should be rejected.

Madam Speaker, through the course of this debate, however, I hope that it will become abundantly clear why the House should not give final approval to any of the alternative versions of this legislation.

As a longstanding proponent of eliminating Federal budget deficits, and as a Member who has acted to achieve that result by supporting and voting for many, many unpopular measures to reduce deficits over the past dozen years, I share the feelings of frustration which have led most of our colleagues to conclude that amending our Constitution is our only hope for solving the Federal Government's persistent budget deficit problem.

The enormous deficits the Government has run for the last decade and a half are, without a doubt, the leading policy and political failure of our generation. By running huge deficits, we have produced a soaring debt which requires that we spend 14 percent of annual Federal budgets on interest payments. We have done a grave disservice to future generations of Americans who will be saddled with that debt; and we have damaged our Nation's economic prospects by allowing the debt to consume more than \$200 billion a year that could otherwise be used for much-needed investment, in both the private and public sectors.

These huge deficits, and the debt they create, are also a large part of the reason why voters are angry at Congress and why so many feel that our political process just does not work.

But the solution to the deficit problem is not to amend the Constitution; writing a balanced budget requirement into our Constitution does nothing in and of itself to bring revenues and

spending into balance. The solution is to act to cut spending and, if necessary, raise taxes. That is what the President and Congress did successfully in 1993, and that is what we should do this year and in the years ahead until the Federal budget is finally balanced.

Voting for a constitutional amendment to balance the budget is easy; it does not require cutting any spending program or raising anyone's taxes. It sounds good, and it allows us to say that we are for balanced budgets. But the truth is, it is bad policy.

Passing a constitutional amendment to balance the budget would give Congress an excuse not to reduce the deficit until the year 2002. It would allow us to say that we have done something about the deficit when, in fact, we will have done nothing real about it.

In fact, if the House and Senate approve any of these proposals, what we will have done is relegate the responsibility for deciding Federal budget policy to the States. They will have to debate whether they want to ratify this amendment; they will have to decide if Congress is capable of bringing Federal revenues and spending into balance; they will have to guess how Congress is likely to act in response to a balanced budget requirement. At a time when we are trying to reach out and improve relationships with our counterparts at the State level, passing this amendment will undermine all of our efforts to come to terms with which responsibilities to our citizens should be handled at the Federal level, and which by the States.

I believe that it is highly unlikely that three quarters of our States will ratify any version of this constitutional amendment. They know that if the Federal Government is under a balanced budget requirement, they are likely to face deep cuts in Federal aid—cuts which will require them to make substantial cuts in spending or to raise taxes at a time when most of them already face that unpalatable choice.

Moreover, States will realize that the balanced budget requirement for the Federal Government will be far more onerous than those that the States themselves operate under. Most States require a balanced operating budget, but allow borrowing for capital spending. To the extent that they are able to categorize spending as part of their capital budget, they are able to borrow extensively. Unless the substitute offered by Mr. WISE is adopted, there will be no such distinction for the Federal budget.

But if, in fact, enough States ratified the amendment, Congress would undoubtedly go to great lengths to find ways not to comply with it. Recall what happened under the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, which Congress passed in 1985; when the President and Congress operated under a requirement to reduce deficits to specified levels each year and produce a balanced budget within 5 years, we did everything possible to circumvent the requirement and avoid hard choices. We used unrealistic economic assumptions to produce inflated estimates of revenues, we moved programs off budget, and we delayed payments into future years. When we ran out of creative bookkeeping methods, we changed the deficit-reduction requirements and, finally, abandoned the requirements altogether.

Just as our inability to comply with Gramm-Rudman-Hollings in an honest way fueled public cynicism toward Congress, so too

would our almost-certain response to a constitutional requirement to balance the budget.

The reason that Congress would try to find ways to avoid complying with a balanced budget requirement is the same reason we did not comply with Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, and the same reason we are not voting to balance the budget right now: there is no political support for the deep program cuts and large tax increases that would be required to bring spending and revenues into balance. We may agree, in the abstract, that want to balance the budget, but we also realize that the draconian spending cuts required—if the budget is balanced through spending cuts alone—are not supported by most Americans.

A constitutional requirement to balance the budget is not going to suddenly give us the political support and the political will to cut spending cuts and raise taxes. In fact, I would point out that many of the Members of the House who are most enthusiastic about a constitutional amendment to balance the budget are the same Members who are equally, if not more, enthusiastic about cutting taxes. And, not surprisingly, they are finding themselves unable to develop a plan to show how we can produce a balanced budget by the year 2002.

Even if all tax-cut proposals were abandoned, Congress would need to cut spending or raise taxes from projected levels by more than \$1 trillion between now and 2002 to balance the budget. There is no doubt in my mind that if we were voting on an amendment which also contained the actual measures—the spending cuts and tax increases—which would balance the budget by 2002, there would be very few votes for it.

There is another reason we ought not to enshrine a balanced budget requirement in the Constitution: A balanced budget is not always good economic policy. A requirement that would force Congress to cut spending or raise taxes in the middle of a recession could be disastrous for our economy. We need flexibility in Federal budget policy to counter the swings in the economy and the negative effects they cause. Some of the alternatives before us would allow Congress to override a balanced budget requirement by majority vote; but, if that is the case, what is the purpose of such a constitutional amendment?

On the other hand, the alternative proposed by Representative STENHOLM anticipates the possible need for deficit spending by allowing expenditures to exceed revenues if three-fifths of both Houses of Congress vote to approve deficit spending. That provision, however, would enable a minority of Members—whether partisan, regional, ideological, or otherwise—to control the outcome of a decision on this matter, just as the Barton alternative, requiring a three-fifths vote to raise taxes, would do on that question.

By giving minorities in both Chambers the power to demand concessions in return for their votes—and the power to veto, in effect, legislation supported by a majority of Members—this provision would make it extraordinarily difficult for Congress to govern. It would severely constrain Congress in its ability to respond effectively, and in a way supported by a majority of Americans, to the problems facing our Nation.

Finally, we have little understanding of how a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget would be enforced—what would happen if Congress failed to match revenues

and spending. It is not clear whether the President or the courts will enforce this—or whether it could be enforced at all. If the resolution of a budget imbalance is left to the courts, it would put unelected Federal judges in the position of deciding our Nation's fiscal policy.

Mr. Speaker, for all of these reasons, the proposals before us to amend the Constitution to require a balanced budget should be rejected, and the rule before us, as I said at the beginning of my statement, should be rejected as well. Let us resolve, instead, to build on the work we began last Congress when we enacted legislation that is, in fact, reducing deficits by half a trillion dollars over 5 years.

Ms. PRYCE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Claremont, CA [Mr. DREIER], a member of the committee.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking my friend, the gentlewoman from Columbus, OH [Ms. PRYCE] for yielding me this time, and I rise to congratulate the gentlewoman as well as the gentlewoman from Utah [Mrs. WALDHOLTZ], the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-BALART], and the other new members of the Rules Committee for the superb work they are doing, joining the force of SOLOMON, QUILLEN, GOSS, and so forth.

Let me say that on this issue of the balanced budget amendment, it is fascinating to listen to the arguments that are being made in opposition to this rule by a number of my friends. I think it is important for us to take an historical perspective in looking at this issue.

□ 1310

I know my friend, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS], raised a number of these points. But it is worth noting that over the past 14 years, we have seen the balanced budget amendment brought up to the House floor on four different occasions. Never once, never once did the Committee on Rules report out a rule that provided the wide range of options that are being provided under this rule.

The other thing, there was a fascinating argument made upstairs, and my friend, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Ms. SCHROEDER], raised great concern about this. The Committee on the Judiciary only had an 8-hour markup on this measure when they met. In previous Congresses, they did not allow 8 minutes of markup, much less 8 hours. So to argue that there was not an opportunity for wide ranging debate in this markup is preposterous.

I think when we listen to the overwhelming hue and cry that has come from across this country to balance the budget, we have the President who spoke here last night, and most of us concluded that it was not the President's finest hour. In fact, it was not the President's finest 2 hours here last night. It seems to me that we need to note that they are all calling for us to

immediately provide a list of exactly how we plan to balance the budget.

Well, I say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, they are well aware of the way the budget process works. We have a Committee on the Budget. The responsibility for outlining those things lies with that committee, not with a particular piece of legislation like this amendment.

Clearly we know that we have the responsibility to bring those proposed cuts forward, and it is going to be done under the standing rules of this House, something which tragically in the past have been ignored, but something which we are doing our darnedest to stick to just as well as we possibly can.

I also am concerned about the fact that behavior in the past has seen the other side use that ridiculous king-of-the-hill procedure, whereby the last standing measure, the last one voted on, even though it may not have gotten the greatest number of votes in the House, is carried. We have modified that so-called king-of-the-hill procedure so that the provision which has the highest number of votes will be the one that carries. It seems to me that we need to realize that we are, were the deliberative process, bringing this forward in a fair way, and I urge my colleagues to support this balanced approach to the balanced budget amendment.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HALL].

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I too rise in opposition to this rule. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that this rule is some sort of move toward openness. But let us look at what the rule actually does.

This is a closed rule. The Committee on Rules received 44 requests for amendments from Members of this body, yet only 5 were made in order, in addition to the committee substitute.

Debate is choked off on many, many issues that directly affect the American people. People want to know what the programs are that will be cut under this amendment. Will they lose their Social Security, what is going to happen to Medicare, what about programs like disaster relief, education benefits, or crime prevention? How much are we going to have to cut defense?

I have part of one of the largest air bases in the world in my district. What is going to happen to that air base under this particular amendment?

We need to be fair and up front with ourselves and with the American people. Therefore, I am going to vote against the previous question, which allows us to bring up a resolution known as the truth-in-budgeting resolution. This resolution simply requires us tell the American people what programs will be cut in order to achieve a balanced budget.

I do not think that is too much to ask. I am particularly concerned with the effects of this balanced budget

amendment on some of our successful antipoverty programs. According to the Children's Defense Fund, a balanced budget amendment could result in approximately 7.6 million children losing school lunches, 6.6 million children losing Head Start opportunities, and 231,000 blind and disabled children losing basic income supports through SSI. And the list goes on and on.

There is no doubt that balancing the budget requires tough cuts and very difficult choices. But that debate should take place in an open forum, truthfully, and up front.

I offered a number of amendments to the rule yesterday in the Committee on Rules, allowing Members' ideas to be brought to the floor and debated. Those amendments had to do with Social Security, taxes, low-income programs, civil and human rights and the disabled. They were defeated every time by a partisan vote.

Let us really show the public we can have an open and fair debate. Vote against the previous question, and vote "no" on this closed rule.

Ms. PRYCE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Madam Speaker, today marks another historic day in the life of the 104th Congress as the new Republican majority continues working to fulfill its promises to the American people. On opening day, we adopted a sweeping set of congressional reforms to make the House more open, efficient, and accountable. Last week, we overwhelmingly approved a long-overdue measure to bring this institution into compliance with the same laws it imposes on the rest of society.

Last Thursday, as part of our plan to reduce the burden of Federal regulations, we began debate on discouraging the practice of imposing costly, unfunded, Federal mandates on States, local governments, and the private sector. And today, as we proudly begin debate on this historic rule, the House moves one step closer toward adopting a constitutional balanced budget amendment, the very cornerstone of our contract's plan to restore fiscal sanity to the congressional budget process.

Madam Speaker, Congress can and should balance the budget without being forced to do so. But the fact remains, it hasn't. And with a Federal debt nearing \$5 trillion and budget deficits in 33 of the past 34 years, it is clear that Congress is unable to solve the Nation's fiscal crisis entirely on its own. Some Members just don't have the stomach or the desire to make the tough decisions.

The time has finally come to give constitutional expression to a policy practiced by thousands of families and businesses across America every day: learning to live within our means. Without constitutional constraints to deficit spending, future generations of Americans will be forced to bear the costs of our excesses. We should be

ashamed to leave this legacy to our children and grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, let me say that I fully appreciate the seriousness of this legislation. And the rule which we have recommended is abundantly fair as it allows the House to consider six different versions of the balanced budget amendment, four sponsored by Democrat Members, one by Republicans, and one bipartisan proposal.

The fact that the House will soon consider a balanced budget amendment just 3 weeks after opening day is proof positive that the new Republican majority is serious about keeping its promises to the American people. I congratulate Chairman SOLOMON and the leadership for bringing this fair rule to the floor today. In terms of fairness it is light years ahead of what we've seen in Congresses past. I strongly urge its adoption by the House.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would like to read a statement: "With every closed rule, millions of voters are disenfranchised when their duly elected representatives are prevented from offering relevant amendments to bills we consider."

These are the words stated by the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. PRYCE] at a press conference held by the Rules task force on April 23, 1993.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST].

Mr. FROST. Madam Speaker, for some time I have been a supporter of a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In the 16 years I have served in this body, I have seen the public debt triple to well over \$4 trillion and have watched as the Congress has struggled to bring the Federal budget and the deficit under control. Until recently, we in the Congress, working with Presidents both Republican and Democratic, have had only limited success in curbing the spiraling growth of Government spending. Thanks to the policies instituted in the last Congress, we are now witnessing a steady downward path of the deficit, but I remain convinced that stronger measures are called for if we are to finally, once and for all, bring the budget of this Nation into balance. And, for that reason, I will support passage of a constitutional amendment when the House votes tomorrow.

However, Madam Speaker, in spite of my record of support for just such a constitutional amendment, I must rise in opposition to this rule. My Republican colleagues made a number of points yesterday during our markup of this rule saying that it provides for the consideration of more options than have been considered in the past few years.

□ 1320

But I would like to clarify a point. In the past the rules providing for consideration of balanced budget constitutional amendments have not been re-

ported from the Committee on Rules. Rather, they have been considered by discharge petition or the Committee on Rules has simply reported a rule tracking the provisions of a discharge petition about to reach the floor, thereby limiting the terms of debate.

My Republican colleagues will respond by saying this rule provides for the most free and open debate ever granted to a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. But I would like to say that this rule does not really provide for the free and open debate promised by Republican candidates for election to the 104th Congress. This rule reported by the Republican majority has limited the opportunities for Members to express their views on how to bring about fiscal restraint. The chairman notified the Members of the House that the committee might limit the consideration of amendments to those printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD last Friday as well as to those amendments submitted in the form of amendments in the nature of a substitute. Yet the Republican rule contains a provision providing for the consideration of a concurrent resolution which not one Democratic member of the committee saw until yesterday, just prior to our markup.

The Republican majority on the Committee on Rules recommended a rule that included consideration of five substitutes to the joint resolution. The Republican majority on the Committee on Rules rejected 23 amendments offered to the rule by the Democratic members of the committee during our markup. Not one single amendment was agreed to during the markup by the Republicans.

A variety of reasons were offered. Time constraints prevented additional debate on further amendments. The rule makes in order four Democratic alternatives as well as one bipartisan alternative. Debate in previous Congresses was far more restrictive.

Madam Speaker, I do not understand the need to limit debate.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FROST. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, with all due respect, and the gentleman is one of the most respected Members of this House, in the Congresses that he has been here for 16 years, he has voted for every one of those restricted rules that far more restrict Members on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. FROST. Reclaiming my time, Madam Speaker, I point out to the chairman that his party ran on a platform of open rules. I know that this gentleman is sincere. I know that this gentleman intends to have open rules. But for some reason we did not have an open rule in this particular case.

For that reason, I must oppose the rule.

Mrs. WALDHOLTZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman

from Miami, FL [Mr. DIAZ-BALART], a member of the committee.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, as we debate this fair rule for consideration of this very important constitutional amendment, I ask the question: Why is there a very serious financial crisis in Mexico today that we are dealing with precisely in this Congress because of its worrisome effects? Because of lack of confidence by the international financial community on the ability of Mexico to pay on debt that will shortly be coming due. Investors will no longer buy bonds there due to uncertainty regarding whether they will be paid, whether those bonds will be paid when they mature. In other words, when they come due.

Now, if our own debt continues to increase indefinitely, even though, for example, even economists like Keynes, who believe in stimulation of the economy through deficit spending occasionally, he never, for example, supported permanent deficit spending.

If our debt would continue to grow indefinitely, \$4 trillion, \$5 trillion, \$6 trillion, \$7 trillion, theoretically, and then there would one day be doubt as to our creditworthiness, God forbid if that ever happened, who would bail us out, Madam Speaker? Who would bail us out? The International Monetary Fund? No, we pay more into the International Monetary Fund than anybody else? Germany, Saudi Arabia? Who would bail the United States of America out, Madam Speaker? Is it acceptable to depend on other countries to theoretically bail us out? No, it is not.

We must stand on our own for our children and for their children and their grandchildren, and we owe it to them to be able to stand on our own and maintain due to fiscal responsibility now and an end to fiscal irresponsibility, the economic security into the future that we require, that is why we need to pass this rule and this constitutional amendment.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT].

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, I would like to put this debate in perspective for the American people. The Constitution empowers the Congress of the United States to balance the budget. But the Congress evidently cannot do that or does not want to do that anymore. So the Congress wants to empower the Constitution to balance the budget.

Now, Members would think by now Congress might have learned. It started out with Gramm-Latta, then it went to Gramm-Kemp, then it went to Gramm-Rudman. Now it is going to be Gramm-constitution in a 2-minute drill no less.

I say to the Congress, this is going to turn into Gramm-bankrupt. Because Congress has to balance the budget. And let us look at the facts. The Amer-

ican people are saying, OK, we gave the Republican Party the authority.

You are in charge. You want a balanced budget. You chair the committees. Bring out the balanced budget. We know you cannot do that with a \$300 billion deficit, \$5 trillion debt and \$300 billion of interest payments. But in 10 years from now the Constitution is going to balance the budget with \$7 trillion of national debt, \$500 billion in interest on that payment, but the Constitution is going to do it.

It is not the Constitution, Congress. It is the Tax Code. It is not the Constitution, Congress. It is the trade laws.

The President did not mention the \$153 billion record trade deficit yesterday and 20,000 jobs for every \$1 billion in deficit, that is 3 plus million jobs at \$30,000 a piece.

Congress should be wise to remember history. There was a popular saying during the depression by working people that said, Harding blew the whistle, Coolidge rang the bell, Hoover pulled the throttle, and all American jobs went to hell.

By the way, if Thomas Jefferson had a constitutional requirement to balance the budget, Thomas Jefferson would not have been able to consummate the Louisiana Purchase.

It is the Tax Code and trade policies, Congress. We are killing jobs. We are penalizing achievement. We are rewarding dependency, and we are insulting the intelligence of the American people.

Let me say this: No Hail Mary pass at the last minute to empower the Constitution to balance the budget is going to solve our problems. It is jobs. You will find them in our Tax Code and our trade laws. And why do we not start dealing with it.

Mrs. WALDHOLTZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Madam Speaker, today we have an opportunity to prove that we hear the people's voice demanding real change in this Congress and could keep our commitment to them. As families sit down to plan their household budget, to pay the rent or the mortgage, to buy back-to-school clothes for the kids, or to repair the car, they want to know why Congress does not have to do what they have to do, balance their budget.

Families make priorities. They give up some things they would like to do for things they need to do. And as Congress moves to balance its budget, as we must do, we are going to have to make some difficult choices.

But I have great faith in the American people that not only do they expect us to make these decisions but they will support us in making these decisions if we work with them and talk with them and listen to them and spend their money wisely on things they value most.

We need to pass a balanced budget amendment to give this Congress the

fiscal discipline it has repeatedly proven it does not have.

The rule that we have reported provides for the most inclusive, open, honest debate on a balanced budget amendment in the history of the Congress.

Of critical importance, this rule will allow us to reaffirm, through Concurrent Resolution No. 17, our commitment to our seniors that we will not use Social Security to balance the budget.

□ 1330

Seniors will not pay the price for this Congress' past mistakes. The fearmongering by those less concerned about the peace of mind of our seniors than their own political agenda should end.

At the same time, Madam Speaker, this rule will allow us to protect our children by ending Congress' reprehensible habit of spending away their future. Madam Speaker, it is long past time to pass a balanced budget amendment, and this rule will allow us to do that. I urge my colleagues to join with me in keeping our word to the people who sent us here, and to support this rule and pass a balanced budget amendment.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute and 20 seconds to the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. THORNTON].

(Mr. THORNTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THORNTON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], the ranking member, for yielding time to me.

Truth in budgeting is important. It is important to know what programs will be cut and priorities will be protected.

Last night President Clinton told us of the heroic act of Jack Lucas and commended all veterans who are willing to risk their lives for us, and he said, "We owed them a debt we could never repay." He then challenged us, as we make cuts in Government spending, to remember our obligations to our children, parents, and others who have risked their lives by protecting education, Social Security, and Medicare, and veterans' benefits from those cuts.

Madam Speaker, my proposed amendment would have accomplished those goals. Last night, Madam Speaker, I was pleased that this suggestion received a standing ovation from both sides of the House, for these are truly nonpartisan goals.

That is why I am so puzzled by the Committee on Rules' decision not to allow a vote on this balanced budget amendment, which has bipartisan support and would accomplish all of these goals. I find it truly amazing that even though our veterans put their lives on the line in defense of our democracy, we are not allowed today to even have a vote on whether to honor our commitment to those who have risked their lives for our democracy.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to point out that truth in budgeting is important. We need to know where the cuts will fall.

The refusal to allow a vote to protect education, Social Security, Medicare, and veterans' benefits means that those benefits are fair game for the budget ax. We need an open rule so we can have truth in budgeting.

Mrs. WALDHOLTZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Lakewood, CO [Mr. SCHAEFER].

(Mr. SCHAEFER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAEFER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 44. Madam Speaker, I want to commend the leadership and the Committee on Rules for putting together a rule that fulfills two items that, I believe, are the cornerstone of our party's Contract With America.

The first is an early vote on the balanced budget amendment, and for the first time ever, we have not had to resort to end-running a reluctant leadership for trying to get a balanced budget amendment on the floor. I think this rule does that.

It is the first item of business that brings up the contract version of the BBA sponsored by my good friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BARTON]. I strongly urge every one of my colleagues to support the three-fifths tax limitation version of the amendment.

The rule also fulfills another cornerstone of the contract, and that is of open and fair rules. This carefully crafted rule ensures that we let the American people know who does and does not support tax limitation, while at the same time maximizing the likelihood that this body will send a balanced budget amendment to the States for ratification.

Mr. STENHOLM. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHAEFER. I yield to my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM], who has worked long and hard on this issue.

(Mr. STENHOLM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STENHOLM. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the rule today. While I had offered a suggestion for a little different kind of a rule, I believe on close analysis this is a fair rule for purposes of debating the relevant issues that will come before us today.

Madam Speaker, I would say, as one of the coauthors of the Schaefer-Stenholm amendment, to those who are concerned about Social Security benefits, education, and all of the other extremely important endeavors, there is nothing in our substitute that has anything to do with a negative effect on any of those issues. That will be brought out in general debate.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 44 allowing for the consideration of

House Joint Resolution 1, as well as five substitute amendments to that language.

I want to commend the Republican leadership for its prompt consideration of this critical matter. As this body knows, it has taken herculean efforts on the part of many Members, both Democrat and Republican, to bring this issue to the floor during the last three Congresses. In each case, we filed discharge petitions to the rules allowing for the consideration of these matters. In each case, we crafted rules which granted a fair and open debate on the major contending approaches to amending the Constitution for purposes of requiring a balanced Federal budget. And in each case we, unfortunately, fell just short of the two-thirds support necessary for passage.

I am supporting this rule because I believe it allows for debate on those relevant issues of greatest concern to House Members. While I had suggested an alternative way to handle the rule which the committee did not adopt, I believe that this rule is fair and I am pleased, Chairman SOLOMON, to be able to support it today.

My great, great hope is that this year, at last, will be the final time to deliberate this issue. It is time for us to get the amendment behind us so that all of this energy can be focused, instead, on the actual process of achieving a balanced budget.

All of the hours my staff and I, not to mention so many others, have been required to put into this issue notwithstanding, I know that our forbears showed remarkable wisdom and foresight when they made it so difficult for us to amend the Constitution. This is no minor task we will be undertaking for the next 2 days.

When we Representatives take our oath of office, we swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States. That oath must not be taken lightly. This is no place for games-playing. It is no place for seeking political advantage. It is no place for irresponsible, short-sighted self-interest.

I hope that the remarks which fill the debate of the next 2 days, regardless of whether the speaker be favorably or negatively inclined toward the amendments, reflect the seriousness of our endeavor.

Because when these 2 days are over, regardless of the final outcome of these votes, we will find ourselves still facing the cancer of debt which is destroying the fiscal flesh and bones of our country. Regardless of whether you vote yea or nay on House Joint Resolution 1 or on any of the amendments, each individual Member must be willing to say, "This is what I did today to make our country a better place."

I appeal to both sides, let us deliberate this issue straightforwardly and honestly. Especially to the freshmen Members I would say, please evaluate this issue on its merits, not on its internal or external politics. There is no such thing as an easy vote on a constitutional amendment.

I come here prepared to work hard these next 2 days and my hope is that the hard work will pay off with 290 votes on final passage. But as I said last year at the beginning of this debate, come Friday I'll have the same gameplan whether the BBA wins or loses and whether the tax limit wins or loses. Regardless of how many votes there are, I'll be working hard for the rest of the year to chip away at our monstrous deficit. Next week I'll be work-

ing with PETER VISCLOSKEY to develop a revised enforcement implementation plan. This spring I'll be working with Chairman KASICH and Ranking Democrat SABO on the first installment of the 7-year glidepath to a balanced budget. Teaming up with JANE HARMAN and CHET EDWARDS, I will push for some of those budget process reforms that we believe will make a difference in the way business is done around here. Joining with DAVID MINGE, DAN MILLER, and other porkbusters I will seek to keep our appropriations bills clean and lean.

My wish is that even those who vote against the constitutional amendment—in fact, especially those who vote against a constitutional amendment—are ready to join me in saying, "This is what I did this Congress, this year, this day, to take the debt off of my children's shoulders."

Again, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and, subsequently, to support the balanced budget amendment.

Mr. SCHAEFER. Madam Speaker, I urge support of the rule.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA].

(Mr. BECERRA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose the rule proposed for House Joint Resolution 1, the balanced budget amendment. I support balancing the Federal budget, but I believe, as an elected Representative of the people, that I owe them the responsibility and respect to tell them how I will do so. This balanced budget amendment does not do that.

The Republican leadership, as the new majority, made a commitment to procedural rules for open debate and fairness. But sadly, the rule before us now is closed. Closed.

I have an amendment that I would like to offer. It provides for rainy day funds for purposes of emergencies, natural disasters. But I cannot offer it on the floor of this House today, even though I think it is a very worthy amendment, especially for folks in California, where I am from, where we are suffering tremendously. We cannot do that. That is a closed rule.

Madam Speaker, we have to admit that we really have entered the world of Alice in Wonderland when Democrats end up fighting harder than Republicans to keep Republican promises.

It is time, Madam Speaker, that we try to do the people's work and give the people their day in court. It is a slap in the face to our constituents when we cannot even come up here and to propose amendments that are valuable and will affect the Nation's course of history, because we are talking about an amendment to the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, I urge everyone to vote against this rule.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER], a member of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. LINDER. Madam Speaker, this is an extraordinary day for those of us

who have held dear to the Reagan-Bush axiom that the Federal Government is too big and it spends too much. For too long Government has been incapable of managing its finances in a responsible manner, and the passage of a balanced budget amendment is an important first step in assuring that this Nation is fiscally sound as we move into the 21st century.

Madam Speaker, I also strongly support the rule, which will allow consideration of a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. Many duplicate amendments were offered to the Committee on Rules, but I am pleased that six distinct constitutional amendments will be considered on the House floor in the coming days.

Madam Speaker, it is important to note that in the past the House refused even to hold a markup on this bill. I believe that the Committee on Rules has been extraordinarily fair and prudent in approving twice as many minority amendments as majority amendments in this debate.

The balanced budget amendment with the three-fifths tax limitation provision will force Congress to curb its spending, and will go a long way toward eliminating Government waste and Government abuse of taxpayer dollars.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah [Mr. ORTON].

(Mr. ORTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this closed rule. In this and the last two Congresses, I have filed a balanced budget amendment which is not a dilatory amendment. It is a substantial amendment which the Committee on Rules refuses to allow to be brought here to the floor and voted upon.

Madam Speaker, it is a unique concept. It is the only amendment which requires actual receipts and outlays to be balanced, the only amendment with an actual enforcement mechanism. When presented to the Committee on Rules, the chairman said "We have 46 amendments. We can't possibly take them all to the floor." Why not? Why not? Is it because there are other issues in the contract to discuss?

This is the Contract With America, the Constitution of the United States. Only 16 times in the last 200 years have we amended this Constitution. There is nothing more important.

Suppose that Thomas Jefferson had taken, then, the floor of the Constitutional Convention and said "We don't have time to listen to all of you. We are going to take 5 ideas, debate them, and then vote."

□ 1340

We would have never have had the opportunity to hear of the great compromise which created the House and Senate. We would have never had this Constitution.

Oppose the rule. Vote against the rule. Allow us to bring all of the ideas about changing this document.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, yielding myself 30 seconds, I would point out to the gentleman from Utah that Thomas Jefferson was not at the Constitutional Convention; he was the Ambassador to France at the time. The gentleman from Utah last year voted for the very closed restrictive rule. Now he is complaining about it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Colorado [Mr. ALLARD].

Mr. ALLARD. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the gentleman's leadership for the fight in the balanced budget amendment. He has been a very dedicated soldier in this regard.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the rule. The deficit this year is forecast to be \$176 billion. This is actually down from several years of deficits well in excess of \$200 billion.

The accumulated national debt is now \$4.7 trillion. This includes both debt held by the public and debt owed to the trust funds. If we do nothing, the deficit situation will grow far worse. Current CBO projections show the annual deficits increasing to over \$300 billion a year after the turn of the century.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support the balanced budget tax limitation amendment included in the Contract With America, the Barton language. If that version fails to garner 290 votes, I will support the alternative language offered by my good friend from Colorado, DAN SCHAEFER.

The current amendments before this House are directed at ending annual deficits. This is great. It means that in 2002 we will at least have stopped adding to the accumulated debt. But by then, we will still have an accumulated national debt of over \$6 trillion, and our children will have to pay interest on this accumulated debt for every year in the future. That interest will force Federal taxes to be higher than they should be.

Under current CBO forecasts, Federal spending will grow an average of 5.3 percent a year. In order to achieve a balanced budget, we must hold that rate of growth at 2 percent, and we can still pay for the tax cuts. This means that instead of spending \$2.5 trillion more than if we froze spending, we can spend \$1 trillion more. It is clear to me that we can and must do this for our children.

Last November the American people sent a clear message to Congress. They want us to pass the toughest balanced budget amendment that we can. This is how I will cast my vote.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, might I inquire as to the time remaining on both sides of the aisle?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut). The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON]

has 3 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. SOLOMON. I would just say to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] that we will be closing on this debate.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT].

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, may I inquire, is the gentleman yielding his remaining time to the minority leader?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Yes. The gentleman from Massachusetts had 4 minutes remaining and has yielded 4 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri.

(Mr. GEPHARDT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEPHARDT. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat this gag rule so that we can shred the veil of secrecy that shrouds this amendment and tell the American people what is really at stake in this debate.

My colleagues, when we talk about tacking amendments on to the Constitution of the United States, we are talking about the most sacred responsibility we have as legislators: To ensure that the document that has steered our ship of state for more than two centuries advances the goals we share as a nation, openness, fairness, opportunity for all. That is why I think it is crucial that a balanced budget amendment, an amendment that would touch on every aspect of the lives of our constituents, is considered in an open, fair, and honest manner.

I would urge and urged yesterday an open rule for this debate, one that allows every amendment that has been presented to be considered by the House, every argument that has been presented to be heard, and every avenue for having a constitutional amendment to be understood.

How else will the American people know that we looked before we leapt? You see, for Democrats, the question is not whether we balance the budget, the question is how we balance the budget, and who is affected and how they are affected.

When we ask our friends on the other side of the aisle what gets cut, whose belt will be tightened, to borrow the words of my good friend the Republican leader, "Their knees buckle."

So we say we are not signing this contract until we can read the fine print. That is why I asked for a vote during this consideration of the balanced budget amendment on a statute that I call the honest budget bill that would force the Congress to say in a budget resolution exactly how we want to balance the budget before the amendment is sent out to the States. But this rule refuses to allow us to consider that legislation.

So my question is, is there a hidden agenda here? Is there somewhere in here a veiled attack on Social Security

or Medicare which some of our friends on the other side have threatened in the past? Our States have a right to know. And our people, most importantly, have a right to understand how this budget will be balanced.

I know the Republican majority is trying to move fast on the contract. I think it is because the contract is losing ground with every passing opinion poll. The reality is the more that the people know about the contract, the less they like it, and I sympathize.

But is this not what democracy is all about? Giving people the information that they deserve to make informed, educated, choices about their own lives? Even if it means sometimes our contracts, our ideas, our proposals, are rejected and we have to go back to the drawing board.

I urge Members, vote for the previous question, defeat this gag rule. If this amendment is not good enough to withstand the bright light of truth, then, my friends, it is not good enough for the American people.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GEPHARDT. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MOAKLEY. I think the minority leader misspoke. We want to vote against the previous question.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Vote no on the previous question. The gentleman knew what I meant.

Madam Speaker, let me end with this last point. This is perhaps the most important legislation we will consider in our whole time in the Congress. There is not a more important, far-reaching bill or bills than this set of proposals.

I urge Members to allow the fullest possible debate. This bill will affect our people's lives more than anything we will vote on in the time we are in the House of Representatives.

Vote no on the previous question, vote against the gag rule. Let all of the alternatives be debated in a completely open rule.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 3 minutes.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I would just say the distinguished minority leader is absolutely right, this is probably going to be the most important vote we will cast in our career in this Congress. The balanced budget amendment is going to do what the American people want us to do for a change.

I would just have to take exception with the minority leader calling this a gag rule. He has been here longer than I have, but for the last 4 successive, preceding Congresses, he has voted personally, as has everyone on his side of the aisle, for a much more restrictive gag rule than this one will ever be.

□ 1350

This is a fair rule in which we took into consultation the minority leader and other Members of his party.

Let me just say this, Madam Speaker, the Democrat minority leader is using the faulty argument that we should not require a balanced budget until Congress adopts a detailed plan for balancing that budget.

Using that kind of logic, if today's House Democrats had been in charge at the time of Pearl Harbor, we would still be debating today over a detailed plan for winning the war in the Pacific, before we could vote on a declaration of war.

That is what this is, the same analogy, the deficit is the war we are fighting today. We are not going to be forced to deal with it until we recognize we are under attack, declare war on it, and then set about mobilizing and planning to win that war.

Having said that, Madam Speaker, before I close and move the previous question, let me explain that since we reported the rule yesterday, it has been called to our attention that there is a discrepancy in the Committee on the Judiciary report between the total votes cast for and against amendment No. 6 on the actual number of the Members listed by name as voting for and against the amendment. I appreciate the minority calling this to our attention so we can correct this mistake by way of an amendment to this rule.

We hope we can work cooperatively in insuring that our new accountability rules will work for the good of the House and for the public.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SOLOMON

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. SOLOMON: On page 2, at line 19, insert after "clause (2)(g)(3)" the following: "or clause 2(l)(2)(B)".

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, out of courtesy to the minority, I ask unanimous consent for 10 additional minutes for this rule, and that I be permitted to yield 5 minutes of that time to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] for the purposes of controlling that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] will be recognized for 5 minutes and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] will be recognized for 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON].

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I have already explained the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the proposed amendment to this rule waives clause 2(l)(2). This clause reflects changes made on opening today to require that committee reports accurately reflect

all rollcall votes on amendments in committee.

Madam Speaker, the point of order that lies against the Committee on the Judiciary report is the very same point of order that applied to the unfunded mandates bill.

The Committee on Rules majority also failed to waive the point of order on the unfunded mandates bill.

On January 19 the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KANJORSKI] made a parliamentary inquiry to establish for the RECORD that the point of order applied, but he did not press in that point of order.

The minority does not wish to obstruct, but it is our responsibility to call the majority as it tries to circumvent the very rules we adopted on opening day.

If the new majority believes it is important to require an accurate tally of each rollcall vote on amendments in committee, they should do it. At a minimum they should include a waiver in the rule when they do not live up to their own requirements.

To depend on our good graces not to press points of order week after week just cannot be acceptable.

I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOGLIETTA].

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule. This restrictive rule did not allow many important and substantive substitutes. One of the substitutes offered and not allowed was one that I offered.

My substitute mirrored other balanced budget substitutes requiring the Federal Government to achieve a balanced budget. It would have required a three-fifths majority to raise taxes. However, it contained one important difference. It would also have required a three-fifths majority to cut spending for programs supporting the safety net for the poor.

Specifically, it would have protected these programs respecting subsistence, health, education, and employment. It is my belief that these programs which comprise the safety net for America's most vulnerable citizens deserve protection.

Programs likely to be slashed include LIHEAP, Head Start, mass transit, and the list could go on and on. Too often poor families and their children are the least heard in Washington. They deserve to be heard and they deserve to be heard on my substitute.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this rule.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], the minority whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Massachusetts for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I want to point out to my friends and colleagues here this afternoon, we started off this session

with the first two rules being closed, and then we adopted a package of rule reforms, some of which we agreed with, some of which we did not.

Our point here today is to make it clear to you that we intend to make you live by the rules and the reforms that we instituted on that first day of session.

We had one other chance to do what we are raising this afternoon and that is to raise a point of order on the rule as it came out of the committee on the unfunded mandates bill. We did not do that because we knew it would delay, and we could not go on with the business of the House, and we let it go. The issue was basically the same as it is today, that the report language coming out of the Committee on Rules was not complete, in fact it was inaccurate.

So, I just want to make it very clear this afternoon that we are determined to speak up and to protect the rule reforms that were instituted in this House and to prevent our Members from being gagged, from discussing these important issues as they come before this body. We are not going to tolerate further points of order requests without proper consultation and consideration for the needs of the people on our side of the aisle.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut). The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] has 30 remaining seconds.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. RICHARDSON], our Ambassador to Korea.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I wish to add my voice to the opposition to this rule for two reasons that have been stated very eloquently. First, the rule does not protect programs important to the public, from severe cuts; and, second, I think that truth-in-budgeting provision is critically important to have.

Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition of the rule for two reasons: Although I support a balanced budget, this rule does not protect programs like Social Security and Medicare, important to the public from severe cuts. Second, this rule precludes the truth-in-budgeting pension—we need to explain what programs we are cutting and be honest about what a balanced budget means.

Madam Speaker, when we are facing a possible total of \$1.2 trillion in cuts from this amendment over the next 7 years, an open rule to fully examine the impact of those cuts and to protect important programs is certainly in order. Many of the substitutes denied by the Rules Committee would have helped protect Social Security and other programs important to health and education. Apparently, the Rules Committee would like to continue the illusion that passing a balanced budget amendment will mean no pain for any parts of our population in actually getting to a balanced budget.

Madam Speaker, what is wrong with leveling with the American people about what pro-

grams could be cut while balancing the budget? Many hard-working Americans rely on programs such as Medicare and Social Security to give them economic security and a safety net in times of trouble.

Madam Speaker, we should defeat this rule and allow for one that would bring about careful consideration of the impact of this amendment and help protect programs important to the public from deep budget cuts. We need a rule that reduces the rhetoric and increases honesty in cutting the budget. That's what the public wants to see.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I just will say, when the gentleman makes the motion on the previous question I hope that the Members will vote no on it, so we can get an open rule that the gentleman from New York will be proud of. If he thinks this is the most open rule, we are going to give him a most, most, most open rule.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

But let me just say to my good friend, this may not be a completely open rule, but it is the most fair rule that ever came to this floor for a balanced budget amendment.

Let me just say the minority whip had mentioned that the report coming out of the Committee on Rules was in error. It was not a report from the Committee on Rules. We do not make errors. It was out of another committee. Second, I would just point out that what this is all about is that there was a miscalculation on counting the yeas and nays on a recorded vote in the Committee on the Judiciary. This simply is to take care of that little miscalculation.

Second, we want to abide by these rules. You know, we have one which now requires committee reports coming out of the committees to simply record the yeas and nays of the individual members and how they voted. That is part of Speaker GINGRICH's orders to this House to be open and fair and accountable and let the American people, and I will use the word again, "be accountable." Let the American people know how we vote here on the floor of this House and in committees.

There were a great many proposals developed by the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] and the committee that I served on concerning the reform of Congress that went on to, as you know, to shrink the size of this Congress itself by a third, cutting off 700 jobs and shrinking it, shrinking this Congress, setting the example of what we are going to do to the Federal Government in shrinking Government and returning it to the private sector.

There were a whole slew of these. I will not get into all of those now. I do appreciate the consideration of the gentleman.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, it is particularly important that we have full and open debate on the balanced budget amendment on the floor of the House, because we most assuredly did not have full debate in committee. Amending the Constitution is a step we

should not take either lightly; I cannot think of a matter which is more deserving of our most thoughtful and careful deliberation.

The Subcommittee on the Constitution gave this amendment less than 7 hours of time in actual debate and markup. We spent less than 6 hours, if you exclude the time the majority spent with amendments perfecting their own version of the bill. This is astounding—I have spent more time making my children's Halloween costumes than I was allowed to spend in committee debating an amendment to our fundamental document of governance. The Constitution of the United States deserves better from all of us.

When debate in subcommittee was arbitrarily cut off, without any advance notice that there would be a limit to debate, significant issues had yet to be debated by the committee, including:

The effects of the amendment during times of recession, and whether the amendment would result in pro-cyclical, rather than counter-cyclical, spending;

The role of the courts in interpreting and enforcing the amendment, including questions of standing; and

What changes the amendment would bring about in terms of Presidential authority.

Further, the debate the committee did engage in left very significant questions unanswered. We ended the committee process without clear answers to questions of basic definition and implementation, including what is a tax revenue, and what isn't, and what is an outlay.

The most fundamental question that remains unanswered is one that every American is entitled to have answered, because every poll on this issue shows that it determines whether or not Americans support this amendment, and that is what cuts will be made to balance the budget. Polls show that Americans support this amendment if it means cuts in defense, but not if it means cuts in Social Security or Federal support for education. What are we saying to the American people? "Trust us; we'll tell you about the cuts later?" That is paternalism, not democracy. And we Members of Congress cannot know what those cuts might be, because our knees will buckle. Instead, we hear only that they will be draconian if Social Security is off the table, as everyone says it will be. Mr. Speaker, it is indefensible to ask the Members of this House to vote on a matter before we have the details.

We need full and open debate, and must guarantee that Americans will have the details on how the budget will be balanced before the constitutional amendment goes to the States for ratification.

Our duty to the Constitution is paramount. It is essential that the floor debate provide us with what the highly abbreviated committee process did not: a thorough examination of what this amendment would mean to the American people in terms of the budget cuts it would bring about. I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule.

Mr. SOLOMON. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the amendment and on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut). The question is on ordering the previous question on the amendment and on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MOAKLEY. How does the gentleman go about getting a vote on the previous question, a separate vote on the previous question?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion is not divisible.

Mr. MOAKLEY. I am sorry, on the amendment to the rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is putting the previous question by voice vote. Those in favor will say "aye," those opposed will say "no."

In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. I have a further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The previous question is ordered.

Mr. SOLOMON. Are we now putting the question on the amendment to the resolution and not on the resolution itself or on the previous question?

Mr. MOAKLEY. I object. I am sorry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The previous question has just been ordered by voice, and the gentleman from Massachusetts is on his feet.

Mr. MOAKLEY. I object to the vote, Madam Speaker, on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts objects to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present, makes a point of order that a quorum is not present. A quorum is not present, and under the rule, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 5(b)(1) of rule XV, the Chair may reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote, if ordered, on the amendment to the resolution and on the resolution. Those in favor of the question will vote aye, those opposed will vote nay.

Members will record their votes by electronic device on the question of ordering the previous question on the amendment and the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 196, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 37]

YEAS—233

Allard	Bilirakis	Camp
Andrews	Bileye	Canady
Archer	Blute	Castle
Armey	Boehlert	Chabot
Bachus	Boehner	Chambliss
Baker (CA)	Bonilla	Chenoweth
Baker (LA)	Bono	Christensen
Ballenger	Brownback	Chrysler
Barr	Bryant (TN)	Clinger
Barrett (NE)	Bunn	Coble
Bartlett	Bunning	Coburn
Barton	Burr	Collins (GA)
Bass	Burton	Combest
Bateman	Buyer	Cooley
Bereuter	Callahan	Cox
Bilbray	Calvert	Crane

Crapo	Hunter	Quinn
Cremeans	Hutchinson	Radanovich
Cunningham	Hyde	Ramstad
Davis	Inglis	Regula
Deal	Istook	Riggs
DeLay	Johnson (CT)	Roberts
Diaz-Balart	Johnson, Sam	Rogers
Dickey	Jones	Rohrabacher
Doolittle	Kasich	Ros-Lehtinen
Dornan	Kelly	Roth
Dreier	Kim	Roukema
Duncan	King	Royce
Dunn	Kingston	Salmon
Ehlers	Klug	Sanford
Ehrlich	Knollenberg	Saxton
Emerson	Kolbe	Scarborough
English	LaHood	Schaefer
Ensign	Largent	Schiff
Everett	Latham	Seastrand
Ewing	LaTourette	Sensenbrenner
Fawell	Lazio	Shadegg
Fields (TX)	Leach	Shaw
Flanagan	Lewis (CA)	Shays
Foley	Lewis (KY)	Shuster
Forbes	Lightfoot	Skeen
Fowler	Linder	Smith (NJ)
Fox	Livingston	Smith (TX)
Franks (CT)	LoBiondo	Smith (WA)
Franks (NJ)	Longley	Solomon
Frelinghuysen	Lucas	Souder
Frisa	Manzullo	Spence
Funderburk	Martini	Stearns
Galleghy	McCollum	Stockman
Ganske	McCrery	Stump
Gekas	McDade	Talent
Gilchrest	McHugh	Tate
Gillmor	McInnis	Tauzin
Gilman	McIntosh	Taylor (MS)
Goodlatte	McKeon	Taylor (NC)
Goodling	Metcalf	Thomas
Goss	Meyers	Thornberry
Graham	Mica	Tiahrt
Greenwood	Miller (FL)	Torkildsen
Gunderson	Molinari	Upton
Gutknecht	Moorhead	Vucanovich
Hall (TX)	Morella	Waldholtz
Hancock	Myers	Walker
Hansen	Myrick	Walsh
Hastert	Nethercutt	Wamp
Hastings (WA)	Neumann	Watts (OK)
Hayes	Ney	Weldon (FL)
Hayworth	Norwood	Weldon (PA)
Hefley	Nussle	Weller
Heineman	Oxley	White
Herger	Packard	Whitfield
Hilleary	Paxon	Wicker
Hobson	Petri	Wolf
Hoekstra	Pombo	Young (AK)
Hoke	Porter	Young (FL)
Horn	Portman	Zeliff
Hostettler	Pryce	Zimmer
Houghton	Quillen	

NAYS—196

Abercrombie	de la Garza	Harman
Ackerman	DeFazio	Hastings (FL)
Baesler	DeLauro	Hefner
Baldacci	Dellums	Hilliard
Barcia	Deutsch	Hinchey
Barrett (WI)	Dicks	Holden
Becerra	Dingell	Hoyer
Beilenson	Dixon	Jackson-Lee
Bentsen	Doggett	Jacobs
Berman	Dooley	Jefferson
Bevill	Doyle	Johnson (SD)
Bonior	Durbin	Johnson, E. B.
Borski	Edwards	Johnston
Boucher	Engel	Kanjorski
Brewster	Eshoo	Kaptur
Browder	Evans	Kennedy (MA)
Brown (CA)	Farr	Kennedy (RI)
Brown (FL)	Fattah	Kennelly
Brown (OH)	Fazio	Kildee
Bryant (TX)	Filner	Kleczka
Cardin	Flake	Klink
Chapman	Foglietta	LaFalce
Clay	Ford	Lantos
Clayton	Frank (MA)	Laughlin
Clement	Frost	Levin
Clyburn	Furse	Lewis (GA)
Coleman	Gedjenson	Lincoln
Collins (IL)	Gephardt	Lipinski
Collins (MI)	Geren	Lofgren
Condit	Gonzalez	Lowey
Conyers	Gordon	Luther
Cottello	Green	Maloney
Coyne	Gutierrez	Manton
Cramer	Hall (OH)	Markey
Danner	Hamilton	Martinez

Mascara	Payne (NJ)	Stenholm
Matsui	Payne (VA)	Stokes
McCarthy	Pelosi	Studds
McDermott	Peterson (FL)	Stupak
McHale	Peterson (MN)	Tanner
McKinney	Pickett	Tejeda
McNulty	Pomeroy	Thompson
Meehan	Poshard	Thornton
Meek	Rahall	Thurman
Menendez	Rangel	Torres
Mfume	Reed	Torricelli
Miller (CA)	Reynolds	Towns
Mineta	Richardson	Trafficant
Minge	Rivers	Tucker
Mink	Roemer	Velazquez
Moakley	Rose	Vento
Mollohan	Roybal-Allard	Visclosky
Montgomery	Rush	Volkmer
Moran	Sabo	Ward
Murtha	Sanders	Waters
Nadler	Sawyer	Watt (NC)
Neal	Schroeder	Waxman
Oberstar	Schumer	Williams
Obey	Scott	Wilson
Olver	Serrano	Wise
Ortiz	Sisisky	Woolsey
Orton	Skaggs	Wyden
Owens	Skelton	Wynn
Pallone	Slaughter	Yates
Parker	Spratt	
Pastor	Stark	

NOT VOTING—5

Bishop	Fields (LA)	Smith (MI)
Cubin	Gibbons	

□ 1420

Mr. WILSON changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut). Accordingly, the previous question is ordered on the amendment to the resolution and on the resolution.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] to the resolution, House Resolution 44.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As announced earlier, this is a 5-minute vote, and the Chair may reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the time for electronic voting if the next vote is called for.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—aye 253, noes 176, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 38]

AYES—253

Allard	Boehner	Chrysler
Andrews	Bonilla	Clement
Archer	Bono	Clinger
Armey	Browder	Coble
Bachus	Brownback	Coburn
Baker (CA)	Bryant (TN)	Collins (GA)
Baker (LA)	Bunn	Combest
Ballenger	Bunning	Condit
Barr	Burr	Cooley
Barrett (NE)	Burton	Cox
Bartlett	Buyer	Crane
Barton	Callahan	Crapo
Bass	Calvert	Cremeans
Bateman	Camp	Cunningham
Bereuter	Canady	Davis
Bilbray	Castle	Deal
Bilirakis	Chabot	DeLay
Bliley	Chambliss	Diaz-Balart
Blute	Chenoweth	Dickey
Boehlert	Christensen	Doolittle

Dornan	Kim	Riggs	Markey	Pastor	Stokes	Hayes	McHugh	Seastrand
Dreier	King	Roberts	Martinez	Payne (NJ)	Studds	Hayworth	McInnis	Sensenbrenner
Duncan	Kingston	Rogers	Mascara	Pelosi	Stupak	Hefley	McIntosh	Shadegg
Dunn	Klug	Rohrabacher	Matsui	Peterson (FL)	Tejeda	Heineman	McKeon	Shaw
Ehlers	Knollenberg	Ros-Lehtinen	McCarthy	Pickett	Thompson	Herger	Meehan	Shays
Ehrlich	Kolbe	Roth	McDermott	Pomeroy	Thornton	Hilleary	Metcalf	Shuster
Emerson	LaHood	Roukema	McHale	Poshard	Torres	Hobson	Meyers	Sisisky
English	Largent	Royce	McKinney	Rahall	Torricelli	Mica	Hoeckstra	Skeen
Ensign	Latham	Salmon	McNulty	Rangel	Towns	Hoke	Miller (FL)	Smith (MI)
Everett	LaTourette	Sanford	Meek	Reed	Trafficant	Horn	Minge	Smith (NJ)
Ewing	Laughlin	Saxton	Menendez	Reynolds	Tucker	Hostettler	Molinari	Smith (TX)
Fawell	Lazio	Scarborough	Mfume	Richardson	Velazquez	Houghton	Montgomery	Smith (WA)
Fields (TX)	Leach	Schaefer	Miller (CA)	Rivers	Vento	Hunter	Moorhead	Solomon
Flanagan	Lewis (CA)	Schiff	Mineta	Roemer	Visclosky	Hutchinson	Morella	Souder
Foley	Lewis (KY)	Seastrand	Mink	Roybal-Allard	Volkmer	Hyde	Myers	Spence
Forbes	Lightfoot	Sensenbrenner	Moakley	Rush	Ward	Inglis	Myrick	Stearns
Fowler	Lincoln	Shadegg	Mollohan	Sabo	Waters	Istook	Nethercutt	Stenholm
Fox	Linder	Shaw	Moran	Sanders	Watt (NC)	Jacobs	Neumann	Stockman
Franks (CT)	Livingston	Shays	Nadler	Sawyer	Waxman	Johnson (CT)	Ney	Stump
Franks (NJ)	LoBiondo	Shuster	Neal	Schroeder	Williams	Johnson, Sam	Nussle	Talent
Frelinghuysen	Longley	Sisisky	Oberstar	Schumer	Wilson	Jones	Oxley	Tanner
Frisa	Lucas	Skeen	Obey	Scott	Wise	Kasich	Packard	Tate
Funderburk	Manzullo	Skelton	Olver	Serrano	Woolsey	Kelly	Parker	Tauzin
Gallegly	Martini	Smith (MI)	Ortiz	Skaggs	Wyden	Kim	Paxon	Taylor (MS)
Ganske	McCollum	Smith (NJ)	Orton	Slaughter	Wynn	King	Payne (VA)	Taylor (NC)
Gekas	McCrery	Smith (TX)	Owens	Spratt	Yates	Kingston	Peterson (MN)	Thomas
Geren	McDade	Smith (WA)	Pallone	Stark		Klug	Petri	Thornberry
Gilchrest	McHugh	Solomon				Knollenberg	Pombo	Tiahrt
Gillmor	McInnis	Souder				Kolbe	Porter	Torkildsen
Gilman	McIntosh	Spence	Bishop	Fields (LA)	Rose	LaHood	Portman	Torricelli
Goodlatte	McKeon	Stearns	Cubin	Gibbons		Largent	Pryce	Upton
Goodling	Meehan	Stenholm				Latham	Quillen	Vucanovich
Goss	Metcalf	Stockman				LaTourette	Quinn	Waldholtz
Graham	Meyers	Stump				Laughlin	Radanovich	Walker
Greenwood	Mica	Talent				Lazio	Ramstad	Walsh
Gunderson	Miller (FL)	Tanner				Leach	Regula	Wamp
Gutknecht	Minge	Tate				Lewis (CA)	Riggs	Watts (OK)
Hall (TX)	Molinari	Tauzin				Lewis (KY)	Roberts	Weldon (FL)
Hancock	Montgomery	Taylor (MS)				Lightfoot	Rogers	Weldon (PA)
Hansen	Moorhead	Taylor (NC)				Lincoln	Rohrabacher	Weller
Hastert	Morella	Thomas				Linder	Ros-Lehtinen	White
Hastings (WA)	Murtha	Thornberry				Livingston	Roth	Whitfield
Hayes	Myers	Thurman				LoBiondo	Roukema	Wicker
Hayworth	Myrick	Tiahrt				Looney	Royce	Wilson
Hefley	Nethercutt	Torkildsen				Lucas	Salmon	Wise
Heineman	Neumann	Upton				Manzullo	Sanford	Wolf
Herger	Ney	Vucanovich				Martini	Saxton	Young (AK)
Hilleary	Norwood	Waldholtz				McCollum	Scarborough	Young (FL)
Hobson	Nussle	Walker				McCrery	Schaefer	Zeliff
Hoekstra	Oxley	Walsh				McDade	Schiff	Zimmer
Hoke	Packard	Wamp						
Horn	Parker	Watts (OK)						
Hostettler	Paxon	Weldon (FL)						
Houghton	Payne (VA)	Weldon (PA)						
Hunter	Peterson (MN)	Weller						
Hutchinson	Petri	White						
Hyde	Pombo	Whitfield						
Inglis	Porter	Wicker						
Istook	Portman	Wolf						
Johnson (CT)	Pryce	Young (AK)						
Johnson, Sam	Quillen	Young (FL)						
Jones	Quinn	Zeliff						
Kanjorski	Radanovich	Zimmer						
Kasich	Ramstad							
Kelly	Regula							

Schumer	Thompson	Ward
Scott	Thornton	Waters
Serrano	Thurman	Watt (NC)
Skaggs	Torres	Waxman
Skelton	Towns	Williams
Slaughter	Trafigant	Woolsey
Spratt	Tucker	Wyden
Stokes	Velazquez	Wynn
Studds	Vento	Yates
Stupak	Visclosky	
Tejeda	Volkmer	

NOT VOTING—7

Bishop	DeFazio	Stark
Chenoweth	Fields (LA)	
Cubin	Norwood	

□ 1439

Mr. CRAMER changed his vote from "no" to "aye."

So the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I am a duly elected Member of this House, and I am a member of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, which is ably chaired by a fellow Pennsylvanian, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. CLINGER]. We have been in a markup for a good part of today on a line-item veto, a very serious legislative matter to come before the House. We just recessed so that we could come to the floor in response to the bells ringing.

I would like to know whether there is some opportunity or protection in the rules that would allow Members like myself to be here for the debate on the floor on what is an important matter and hear the debate so that we are casting votes that are informed votes rather than to be handling one matter of business someplace else and then rushed to the floor.

I think this is a matter than should be of concern to Members on both sides of the aisle. I admit that I am new. I come from the Pennsylvania Senate, but this is at least, in my perception, no way to run a railroad.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania will be advised that yesterday the House adopted a motion permitting committees to meet during the 15-minute debate.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I thought that was in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is the responsibility of the gentleman from Pennsylvania to vote in the House, and how he works out his time otherwise between his committee and the floor is a matter for him to decide.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry. I thought that the motion that was handled in the House yesterday that the Chair referred to had to do with the carrying on in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, are we in the Committee of the Whole?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. No, we are not in the Committee of the Whole. This is the House meeting.

It is the responsibility of the gentleman from Pennsylvania to cast his vote in the House. It is his responsibility to decide how he allocates his time between committee and the House floor.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chair. I hope that the House will consider my comments.

TREATMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY UNDER ANY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT REQUIRING A BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. FLANAGAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 44, as designee of the majority leader, I call up the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 17) relating to the treatment of Social Security under any constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of House Concurrent Resolution 17 is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 17

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That, for the purposes of any constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, the appropriate committees of the House and the Senate shall report to their respective Houses implementing legislation to achieve a balanced budget without increasing the receipts or reducing the disbursements of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund to achieve that goal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. FLANAGAN] will be recognized for 30 minutes and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. FLANAGAN].

Mr. FLANAGAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who claim that adding a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution would jeopardize Social Security benefits. The truth is the other way around, failure to pass a balanced budget amendment is what will harm Social Security.

It is the evergrowing Federal debt and interest payments that truly threaten Social Security. The balanced budget amendment is a way to put a halt to the spendthrift ways of Congress. Dr. Robert Myers, Social Security's former chief actuary and deputy commissioner has given his support to a balanced budget amendment as a means to protect Social Security. Dr. Myers has stated the case clearly as to how the Government's fiscal irrespon-

sibility threatens Social Security. Dr. Myers said:

In my opinion, the most serious threat to Social Security is the federal government's fiscal irresponsibility. If we continue to run federal deficits year after year, and if interest payments continue to rise at an alarming rate, we will face two dangerous possibilities. Either we will raid the trust funds to pay for our current profligacy, or we will print money, dishonestly inflating our way out of indebtedness. Both cases would devastate the real value of the Social Security Trust Funds.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Jake Hansen, the vice president of government affairs for the non profit organization, the Seniors Coalition, recently elaborated on Dr. Myers' comments in a speech he gave to the National Taxpayers Conference. Mr. Hansen's speech, entitled, "The Balanced Budget Amendment: Key to Saving Social Security," was published in the January/February 1995 issue of the Senior Class, a bimonthly publication of the Seniors Coalition.

But more to the point today, Mr. Speaker, I bring to the House floor Concurrent Resolution 17, a resolution that places Members of Congress clearly on record as being committed to fulfilling the promises of the past when the Federal Government established Social Security.

Specifically, this resolution directs the Congress to leave the Federal Old Age and Survivors Insurance trust fund and the Federal Disability trust fund alone when it is forced to comply with the balanced budget amendment.

House Concurrent Resolution 17 is a straightforward resolution that does two things: First, it directs the appropriate committees of the House and Senate to report to their respective Chambers implementing legislation to achieve a balanced budget amendment; and second, it requires that in doing so, the committees shall not do anything to increase Social Security taxes or reduce benefits to achieve that goal.

Mr. Speaker, what that means is that the budget cannot be balanced on the backs of those currently paying Social Security taxes or on the backs of those currently receiving Social Security benefits.

The majority leadership thought it appropriate to report my resolution to the floor today before the House considers House Joint Resolution 1, the balanced budget amendment. Their reasoning, with which I completely agree, is that this resolution is necessary to fend off attacks by the critics of a balanced budget who claim that somehow proponents of a balanced budget amendment have secret plans to slash Social Security. Mr. Speaker, this has no basis in fact. Most Members of this body, including myself, have already been on record as pledging to protect the retirement benefits of the elderly. My resolution simply ensures that Members of Congress keep their Social Security protection pledge.

As an original cosponsor of House Joint Resolution 1, I believe the best