

such unobligated funds in that account as may be necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties under this part during October, November, and December 1995. Funds transferred under the preceding sentence shall remain available until December 31, 1995.

“(B) The account referred to in subparagraph (A) is the Department of Defense Base Closure Account established under section 207(a) of the Defense Authorization Amendments and Base Closure and Realignment Act (Public Law 100-526; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note).”

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I am pleased to sponsor an amendment that would authorize the Department of Defense to fund the Base Closure and Realignment Commission for the remainder of calendar year 1995.

The law establishing the Base Closure Commission authorized the Department of Defense to fund the operations of the Commission using fiscal year 1991 authorization. Unfortunately, the Department's 1990 estimate of the Commission's operating expenses fell short of actual requirement. This shortfall is due to the extensive travel required of the Commission to visit each base on the Secretary of Defense's closure list and attend the numerous hearings required to make the process as fair and open as possible. Additionally, the Commission had to purchase a new computer system to support its operation.

Mr. President, in my judgment the Base Closure Commission has provided a valuable service to the Nation. The funding, which is estimated to be less than \$300,000 is necessary for the Commission to archive at files and prepare the appropriate closeout reports. I am advised that the Department of Defense is prepared to provide the necessary funds from existing authority, but needs this legislation authority.

Mr. President, this is an appropriate use of the Defense Department funds and I urge adoption of the amendment.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, this relates to the Base Closure Commission for the remainder of the calendar year for 1995. It is my understanding it has been accepted on the other side.

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, we have cleared this amendment. I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2109) was agreed to.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the amendment was agreed to.

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, as far as I know, this concludes the matters relating to the pending measure. On behalf of the distinguished majority leader, I am prepared to address some wrapup items for the evening.

Mr. NUNN. I thank my friend from Virginia and look forward to further debate on the bill tomorrow morning.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO U.S.S. "SOUTH DAKOTA" VETERANS

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, with a sense of pride and honor I rise today to pay special tribute to Floyd Gulbrandson, Al Rickel, Charles Skorpik, Willie Wieland, and the rest of the crew of the U.S.S. *South Dakota*, one of the most decorated battleships during World War II. Commissioned on March 20, 1942, the U.S.S. *South Dakota* quickly became the flagship of Admiral Nimitz's 3rd Fleet, and originally was intended to host the Japanese surrender which ultimately was held on the U.S.S. *Missouri*.

Stretching more than 600 feet and displacing more than 43,000 tons of water, the U.S.S. *South Dakota* defended our Nation in World War II by traveling across 276,000 miles of ocean with massive firepower which included nine 16-inch guns, sixteen 5-inch guns, sixty-eight 40-millimeter guns, and seventy-six 20-millimeter guns. During her years of active service, more than 7,000 brave individuals would serve aboard the *South Dakota*. Collectively, the crew of the U.S.S. *South Dakota* endured her many battles and earned several distinguished awards, including the Navy Unit Commendation, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with 13 battle stars, the World War II Victory Medal, and the Navy Occupation Service Medal.

Mr. President, I want to highlight some of many moments of naval combat from the many successful battles experienced by the crew of the U.S.S. *South Dakota*. On October 26, 1942, the U.S.S. *South Dakota* entered its first battle with a freshman crew on deck and was attacked by 180 enemy bombers in what is now known as the Battle of Santa Cruz Island. Defending both the *Enterprise* and *Hornet* aircraft carriers, the U.S.S. *South Dakota* offered a bold retaliation of gunfire that shot down an unprecedented 30 enemy aircraft and helped render two enemy aircraft carriers inoperative. For their valiant action during the repeated attacks and heavy fire, Captain Gatch was decorated with the Navy Cross, the crew was presented with the Navy Unit Commendation and the U.S.S. *South Dakota* received its first of 13 battle stars. That was an extraordinary beginning to an extraordinary vessel that symbolized gallantry, honor, and service at sea.

Mr. President, on October 25, 1962, the first and only U.S.S. *South Dakota*, one of the greatest battleships ever to sail during World War II, was sold for

scrap metal. Although gone, the U.S.S. *South Dakota* continues in the memory of those who served on her decks. I am proud of the heritage of the U.S.S. *South Dakota*. She was instrumental during World War II in fighting successfully for the freedoms we now enjoy. I commend the brave crew of the U.S.S. *South Dakota* for their courage and commitment to duty. In honor of the crew, their dedicated service, and the memory of this great battleship, I have asked the Secretary of the Navy to name one of the new attack submarines the U.S.S. *South Dakota*. That would be a fitting tribute—to have one of the next generation's great submarines carry the same name of one of America's truly great battleships.

REPUBLICAN MEDICARE CUTS AND THE SO-CALLED COALITION TO SAVE MEDICARE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today, the Republican disinformation campaign on Medicare went into high gear. The leaders of the Republican Party have entered into an unholy alliance with the insurance industry to raid Medicare by raising costs for senior citizens and turning Medicare over to private insurance companies.

The overall Republican goal is to cut Medicare by \$270 billion in order to pay for their \$245 billion dollar tax cut for the wealthy. To achieve those harsh cuts in Medicare, senior citizens will be forced to pay more—far more—for the Medicare benefits they now receive. To line up the insurance industry on their side, the Republicans are offering the industry the chance to get its hands on Medicare and earn vast additional profits at the expense of senior citizens.

The phony Republican coalition to save Medicare is now clear for all to see. It includes representatives of wealthy individuals and businesses who care about tax cuts, not senior citizens. It includes private insurance companies who want the elderly to be forced to give up Medicare and buy their policies.

Republicans pretend they want to save Medicare. What they really want to save is their tax cut for the wealthy.

Republicans pretend they want to restore the solvency of Medicare and save the trust fund. But I say, you cannot trust Republicans who talk about the trust fund. The Republican cuts in Medicare are deeper—far deeper—than any cuts needed to keep Medicare solvent.

The fundamental issue is not keeping Medicare solvent—it is keeping Republicans away from Medicare.

Democrats know how to keep Medicare solvent, and we will do it. We will do it without raising costs for senior citizens, without forcing senior citizens into HMO's without forcing them to give up their own doctors and without turning Medicare over to the tender loving hands of the private insurance industry.